Faith Schools, Tolerance and Diversity

Exploring the Influence of Education on Students’ Attitudes of Tolerance

Helen Everett

Edited by Jan Germen Janmaat, Edward Vickers and Henry Everett
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Faith schools constitute approximately one third of all state-maintained schools and two fifths of the independent schools in England. Nevertheless they have historically been, and remain, controversial. In the current social climate questions have been raised about the ability of faith schools to promote community cohesion and, by the same token, to promote tolerance. This research explores one aspect of this debate by looking at the effect that faith schools have on their students’ attitudes of tolerance. As well as asking what differences exist between students in faith and non-faith schools, it also looks at which aspects of the schools might be impacting on the students and affecting their attitudes of tolerance. Using a mixed methods approach, this study investigates six English secondary schools, faith as well as non-faith, from both state and independent sectors. The complexity of the concept of tolerance is also explored, incorporating different understandings and objects of tolerance.

Although not generalizable to the whole population of faith schools, the findings suggest that the categorisation of schools into faith/non-faith has little relevance when considering their effects on tolerance. In only one school were significant differences found in the students’ attitudes of tolerance which could be related with any certainty to any particular aspect of the school itself. The students in the Muslim Independent school were found to be less tolerant of those whose behaviour contravened Islamic teachings, and it is suggested that the school impacted on this attitude through less effective development of its students’ cognitive skills, and the way it nurtured their religious identity. The research also finds that students in both the faith and non-faith schools were less tolerant of religious out-groups than they were of some other groups in society, which was seen to result from the nature of the contact with those of other faiths provided by the schools.

Helen Everett Helen Everett was a Research Manager at the National Foundation for Educational Research at the time of her death in September 2015. She had recently completed a project in Pakistan, evaluating the effectiveness of an examination board. Before returning to full-time study at the Institute of Education, she had taught Science in a variety of English secondary schools: comprehensive, independent, grammar, mixed, boys, girls. She had travelled extensively in India and Muslim countries, and Islam and education became her major research interest. She sought to investigate whether a paradigm of “fundamentalist” education might be found, in both Christian and Muslim settings, and how apparently closed religious outlooks impacted on children in education.
For Henry
and
in memory of my parents,
Sam and Joyce Totterdell
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Preface

Helen embarked on a journey into virtually unknown territory when she started researching the link between faith schools and student attitudes of tolerance in 2009. Her decision to focus on this topic proved visionary because shortly after she completed her PhD thesis the Trojan Horse affair\(^1\) reignited the debate about the role of schools – and faith schools in particular - in community cohesion and the integration of religious minorities into British society. Partly in response to this affair, and as part of a more encompassing effort to combat radicalization and stop young people from joining the warring parties in Syria, the government called on schools to actively promote ‘Fundamental British Values’ and report instances of radicalization to the authorities. The fact that the government considered tolerance and mutual respect to be one of these values (along with democracy, the rule of law and individual liberty) made Helen’s thesis of immediate relevance to these policy developments. Sadly, Helen herself will not witness the wider public recognition that her research will now receive, as she prematurely passed away in September 2015. As a tribute to her and her excellent thesis, which offers important new insights into the link between faith schooling and young people’s attitudes towards diversity, we have adapted her study for publication in Palgrave’s Education, Economy and Society series. We hope that this will bring her work the attention that it deserves.

Aside from its analytical insights, Helen’s thesis offers an urgently needed “fact-finding” contribution to the ongoing debate about the consequences of faith schools for social cohesion and inter-community relations. This emotionally charged debate has tended to be dominated by ironclad theoretical premises and political ideology. Information on what different types of faith schools are actually teaching and about the effect of this teaching on student attitudes towards diversity has until now been thin on the ground. This book thus enables a more informed discussion of whether faith schools help develop more harmonious relations between different ethnic and religious groups or exacerbate division. Set against the background of radicalisation among a small minority of Muslim youth and intolerance towards immigrants - and Muslims in particular - among some White British youngsters, Helen’s solid scholarship will surely attract attention in both academic and policy circles. It should help ongoing attempts to combat intolerance through programmes such as the Prevent strategy and the Fundamental British Values initiative.

This study is unique in examining a range of faith and non-faith schools in England, encompassing a variety of religions and denominations and both the

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\(^1\) The Trojan horse affair refers to an alleged organised attempt by Islamists to take over the governing body of a number of schools in Birmingham to introduce an Islamist or Salafist ethos in them.
independent and state-sponsored sectors. This enables a much more complete assessment than has hitherto been possible. What makes it stand out in particular, however, is the rigorous and eclectic methodological approach employed to study the consequences of school socialisation for student attitudes towards diversity and toleration.

As editors, we felt we should make as few substantive changes to the manuscript as possible, as we would not want to make revisions that Helen might not have agreed with. We have therefore restricted our revisions to language editing, trimming the methodological discussion and reducing duplication. (We will send Helen’s original thesis to interested readers upon request.) Another reason for abstaining from more substantive changes was that both reviewers were very positive about the manuscript and recommended publication as it currently stands.

As with any piece of scholarly writing, so Helen’s work makes certain omissions. The full range of faith schools has not been captured, with Jewish schools for instance not featuring in Helen’s selection of schools nor indeed Anglican schools, which make up the vast majority of schools of a religious character in England (but which Helen would say were of an utterly different character from those faith schools that were studied). One of the reviewers also pointed out that the perspective of allegedly far-right Christian schools in England and their attitudes towards people not sharing their view of the world is missing but Helen would have vigorously defended this point, as she had consciously tried to study an Evangelical Christian school that was as “extreme” as she could find. That the reviewer did not find their views as right-wing as anticipated was not for want of trying on Helen’s part. It is also worth pointing out that this research dealt only with schools in England, and that the fieldwork was mostly conducted in the southeast of the country. There are areas of the UK - most notably Northern Ireland, but also some of the large post-industrial cities in northern England and Scotland - where the legacy of faith-based communalism remains far more salient. Obviously, limits of time, resources and difficulty in gaining access to the more exclusive faith schools played a role here. For instance, Helen tried to gain access to a Muslim state school, but was rebuffed by each that she approached. Helen provided an excellent justification, though, for the schools that she did select (see the final section of Chapter 2).

Another theme that demands fuller consideration relates to normative religious beliefs about tolerance. In other words, what does Christian and Muslim religious doctrine say about engaging with people of other faiths? This is a modern problem with great relevance for Muslims as the scope for theological (rather than juridical) discussion and development is said to be limited in most traditions of their faith. Some have claimed that there is a lack of historical theological resources in Islam for dealing with people of other faiths other than from a position of political domination. As is well-known, the Qur’an mostly urges respect for “the people of the book”, who are taken to be Jews and Christians, (extended by later commentary to
include Zoroastrians), but this is problematic as a basis for general tolerance, as it is very clear that pagans and “idol-worshippers” are excluded. For post-colonial Christians the general tenor was set by the Second Vatican Council, whose decree “Nostra Aetate” of 1965 made plain the need to relate to people of other faiths on some other basis than seeking to convert them, and whose constitution “Lumen Gentium” of 1964 recognized that salvation was possible outside the Church. It is important to recognize how momentous a step that was for the Roman Catholic Church, but of course other Christian bodies do not have the same capacity for the development of doctrine, and many seek for specific guidance in scripture (interpreted by reason in the light of contemporary culture). The New Testament contains material such as Acts 4;12, which if taken literally seems completely exclusivist, but also much more ambiguous verses, such as John 10;16, or John 14;6, which provide scope for inclusivist interpretations. Most mainstream Christian theologians have followed the Vatican II approach to revelation as personal and relational, which implies a personal and relational understanding of truth, offering a theological basis for genuine religious tolerance, but there remain many Christians (and some Christian bodies) for whom the “plain sense” of scripture makes this a troubling approach. Both Christianity and Islam, as historically-based religions, are challenged by radically new historical circumstances, and some branches of each faith respond with more agility than others.

Helen touched on this issue partially by making a distinction between denominations with inclusivist and exclusivist conceptions of salvation (a Christian concept that is not precisely replicated in other belief systems, but will stand as shorthand for being right with God). Exclusivist conceptions concern the belief that salvation is only open to members of the faith, and Helen argued that such conceptions are linked to greater intolerance towards people of other religions. An issue that could have been explored in greater depth is whether a dogmatic upbringing in the faith, precluding critical examination of established doctrine and associated with didactic instead of child-centered pedagogy, is really associated with an impaired development of cognitive sophistication and critical faculties. Helen’s findings strongly suggest that this is the case, but this is an area in which further research is urgently needed.

While this study indicates that certain kinds of faith schools can have a detrimental effect on their students’ propensity to empathise or engage actively with those of other faiths, it does not support claims that this is true of faith schools as a whole. Indeed, as Helen emphasises throughout, the differences amongst most schools in her sample were negligible, with the notable exception of the Muslim Independent School, and the partial exception of the Evangelical Christian Independent School. It is perhaps significant that both these schools stand outside the state education system. The 2017 general election saw one party, the Liberal Democrats, include in their manifesto a pledge to eliminate ‘faith-based selection’ in
state-funded faith schools, on the grounds that this is discriminatory. This study provides no evidence that selection as currently practiced by state-funded faith schools significantly impinges upon students’ capacity or willingness to tolerate religious ‘others’; these schools appear not to foster discriminatory attitudes amongst their students. However, there may be other reasons for objecting to selection, not just on faith grounds or in terms of its implications for the socialisation of students. If Helen’s findings prove generalisable (something that further research must determine), it may be that critics of state-funded faith schools would be wiser to focus less on their ‘faith-based’ nature as such than on their role in maintaining an element of selectivity in our state-funded system of education.

A key strength of this book is that it engages widely and critically with relevant existing literature and builds on it with robust empirical research. It identifies concrete ways in which schools can promote tolerance, thus addressing a gap in research on faith schools and their students’ attitudes towards diversity and tolerance. It will constitute a welcome addition to the reading lists for courses in initial teacher education, general education, and sociology. It is also accessible to general readers interested in the potential for schooling to contribute to fostering tolerance or intolerance. While set in the British context, it will be of interest to those concerned with other countries characterised by increasing diversity where faith schools play an important role in the education system. It will be essential reading for students interested in the links between religion, schooling, diversity and social cohesion.

Jan Germen Janmaat, Edward Vickers and Henry Everett

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There are a great many people who have helped me through this PhD and the MRes which preceded it, many of whom are unaware of the help they have given. However, there are some people who deserve a particular mention.

I want to begin by thanking those who made the project possible. First of all I would like to thank the six schools, and the two schools who were part of the pilot, for agreeing to participate in the research, as well as all the participants, students and staff, within the schools. Without them there would be no research. Having been a teacher myself I am very aware of the myriad of calls on a school’s time and I am very grateful that these schools found time and space to cope with, and accommodate, a researcher. I also want to extend my thanks to the ESRC for funding this research and the MRes which preceded it. Their financial support meant that I could concentrate solely on the PhD and had one less thing to worry about.

Throughout the process there have been some specific people who have given me continued and ongoing support in a variety of ways. I would like to thank Marjeta Sulaj for her unfailing faith in me that I would complete it, and my brother for his belief in me, and whose own PhD experience showed me very clearly how not to write up a PhD. My friend Gloria has also given me amazing support. Not only has she listened patiently to my ramblings as well as reading and commenting on the final draft, she also quietly, but firmly, encouraged me to take breaks. I would also like to thank Sadaf Rizvi for her encouragement and advice throughout the PhD and for her helpful comments on the final draft.

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always done so in a positive and productive way. Although they have given me advice they have always encouraged me to develop and have confidence in my own ideas.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 Introduction

In 2005 David Bell (Guardian, 2005c), the then Chief Inspector for Schools, made a speech on citizenship in which he suggested that many faith schools needed to adapt their curricula to ensure that children ‘acquire an appreciation of and a respect for other cultures in a way that promotes tolerance and harmony’ and that ‘pupils should know the positives of a diverse community and its importance in a world where too many communities are fractured’. He expressed concern that ‘many young people are being educated in faith-based schools, with little appreciation of their wider responsibilities and obligations to British society’ (ibid). Within the speech explicit reference was made to Muslim, Orthodox Jewish and Evangelical Christian schools.

David Bell’s remarks were interesting in that they were a public questioning of Government policy at a time when New Labour was promoting faith schools (Annette, 2005; DfES, 2005), but they were not novel, being part of a much wider, and ongoing, debate surrounding the place of faith in education, which in recent years has focused on the effect of faith schools on Community Cohesion. This book looks at one particular aspect of this debate around faith schools and Community Cohesion: the effect of faith schools on their students’ attitudes of tolerance.

1.2 Faith Schools and their Effect on Tolerance

Faith schools make up about one third of all state-maintained schools in England as well as being numerous in the independent sector, and as such are a significant provider of education. Schools of faiths other than Christianity have historically existed in England; Jewish schools, for instance, have been part of the maintained system since the inception of the Dual System in 1902 (Gates, 2005). Since the wave of immigration in the 1960s, however, a greater number of faith schools catering to a variety of faiths have emerged. Most of these, due to well-documented issues over state funding, emerged in the independent sector (Ansari, 2000; Walford, 2001). Concerns about the increasingly secular nature of teaching within state schools meant that a number of New Christian or Evangelical Christian
schools also began at this time (Baker and Freeman, 2005; Everett, 2006; Walford, 1995; Walford, 2002) and the number of these schools continues to rise (Christian Schools' Trust, 2009).

At the time of writing there were about 4,500 Anglican, 2,000 Roman Catholic, 100 ‘Other Christian’, 2 Sikh, 37 Jewish, and 8 Muslim schools in the English state sector, to which a Hindu primary was just being added (Krishna-Avanti Primary School, 2011; Times, 2007). The majority of faith schools in the state sector are Voluntary Aided (VA) which means that 90% of the capital funding is provided by the state, with the rest coming from voluntary parental contributions or from the faith groups themselves. In VA schools the school site and buildings are owned by the faith group and the school is able to select pupils on the grounds of faith adherence, appoint staff on the basis of faith and appoint a majority of the governing body (DFE, 2011b). VA schools still have to follow the English National Curriculum and are inspected by Ofsted, but they are allowed to adopt their own RE curriculum, which may focus exclusively on their own faith. In addition there are other schools which come under the faith school label, such as Voluntary Controlled (VC) schools, and the situation is becoming ever more complex as a number of the new Academies and Free Schools are also being sponsored and run by faith groups or by groups with faith associations, such as Oasis or The United Learning Trust (Oasis, 2011; United Learning Trust, 2011).

Faith schools have historically been controversial within the English education system (Murphy, 1971) and, as I discuss below, debates have intensified since the 1990s. Concerns over faith schools are quite wide-ranging, encompassing issues with admissions (Allen and West, 2009; Schagen and Schagen, 2001), autonomy (Callan, 1985; MacMullen, 2007; McLaughlin, 1985) and segregation (Barker and Anderson, 2005; Pring, 2005). Increasingly, questions have been raised about faith schools’ ability to promote Community Cohesion (Berkeley, 2008; Ofsted, 2009) and within that whether faith schools promote the same values as those of the wider society, among them tolerance (MacEoin, 2009). Although there is an academic aspect to this debate which I discuss in greater detail in Chapter 2, much of it is played out in the public domain with faith schools being a popular topic in the media (for example Channel 4, 2010; Guardian, 2001b; Guardian,
2006b). Various groups have also expressed concern over the negative impact that faith schools might be having on students’ attitudes of tolerance (British Humanist Association, 2001; Guardian, 2006a; National Secular Society, 2008).

The nature of the concerns expressed by these critics in the media is often imprecise. What is being tolerated, or not tolerated, is rarely defined and where it is made explicit tolerance is usually seen as involving those of other faiths (Channel 4, 2010; Guardian, 2001a), or occasionally particular groups such as homosexuals (Guardian, 2008a; Hunt and Jensen, 2007). Why faith schools should be bad at promoting tolerance is often not explained in these criticisms. Frequently cited arguments are that faith schools segregate on grounds of faith (Guardian, 2001b; Guardian, 2008b) and that the schools indoctrinate (Channel 4, 2010; Guardian, 2006b). The desire of these schools to nurture a specific religious identity arouses, for some, concerns about the supposed narrowness or exclusivity of the beliefs, values and norms associated with that identity.

The criticisms of faith schools over their inability to promote tolerance, and by extension Community Cohesion, are strenuously denied by the schools, associated faith groups and some commentators (AMS, 2009; Guardian, 2005a; Immanuel Ministries, 2005; Odone, 2008). Those involved in faith schools generally see no contradiction between their task of religious nurturing (or the religious values they teach) and the promotion of tolerance (AMS, 2009; Brine, 2009). In his review of the impact of Church of England faith schools on Community Cohesion, David Jesson (Church of England Archbishop’s Council Education Division, 2009) found that a higher proportion of faith secondary schools were rated outstanding on Community Cohesion than was the case for community schools, although he found no difference at the primary level. He thus concluded that ‘Faith schools play an important and positive role in both promoting Community Cohesion and Equality of Opportunity whilst taking positive steps in eliminating discrimination’ (ibid, p.6). In 2009, the London Diocesan Board for Schools presented similar findings highlighting the fact that 92% of their schools were judged by OFSTED as good or outstanding on Community Cohesion, compared with 60% of non-faith schools (London Diocesan Board for Schools, 2009). Faith schools see themselves as under attack over their ability to promote tolerance and Community Cohesion, and
feel that the expectations on them are higher than on non-faith schools. This in turn is creating resentment and frustration.

As will become evident in Chapter 2, despite being a widely debated topic little empirical work has actually been done in this area, meaning that rarely does any discussion go much beyond claim and counter-claim. In many ways my own experience of faith schools has been a motivation for this research. I am on the (Anglican) London Diocesan Board for Schools and am a practising Anglican. I have taught in a girls’ independent school which has a religious foundation. Although the faith aspect of this school is not prominent, nevertheless it still makes reference to ‘traditional Christian values’ on its website (St Gabriel’s School, 2011). Finally, I myself attended a Roman Catholic girls’ independent school for my secondary education. The criticisms of faith schools in respect of tolerance do not reflect my own experience. However, one experience at school did indicate to me the way that faith schools could close down debate and indoctrinate. In a Year 9 RE class, in which for some reason we had ended up talking about purgatory, the teacher only referred to the official Roman Catholic position and simply stopped the discussion when that position was challenged. This lesson has always stayed in my mind (possibly due to the way that the class reacted to the debate being restricted), but it does mean that I can conceive of a situation in which some faith schools could be negatively impacting on their students’ attitudes of tolerance. It is this nagging seed of doubt which has motivated me to explore this topic further, and which has led me to pose the central question around which this study is oriented: **What effect do faith schools have on their students’ attitudes of tolerance?**

This overall research question is approached by considering two sub-questions. The first considers to what extent, and in what ways, the attitudes of faith school students differ from those in non-faith schools. The school is not the sole influence on, or source of, the attitudes held by its students. Therefore the second sub-question is concerned with the way that the school impacts on its students’ attitudes of tolerance; essentially, what is the ‘school effect’?

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2 This view was expressed in several informal interviews that I had with a variety of faith school heads in the early stages of this research.
1.3 A Note on Terminology

In this study, the term ‘faith schools’ is used to denote those schools which were the main focus of this research, schools which are understood to be ones which seek to nurture a particular religious belief. However, there are various terms, often used interchangeably (for example see Jackson, 2003 note 4 p. 100), which are also employed when referring to schools which have formal links to religious organisations, both in the state maintained and independent sectors (see Gates, 2005 for an overview of funding arrangements), none of which satisfactorily encompass the nature and variety of these schools (Parker-Jenkins, Hartas and Irving, 2005). This section will briefly discuss the most frequently employed terms, and explain why the term faith school has been adopted.

Some nomenclature is clearly inappropriate in this research. In some cases, for example ‘Voluntary Aided’ or ‘Voluntary Controlled’ schools, the terms in question apply only to the state maintained sector. Nor do these terms apply to Academies and Free Schools, some of which are also associated with faith groups and which are becoming more numerous. Other terms, such as ‘Denominational’ and ‘Church Schools’, are situated within a Christian context, and as such are inappropriate in this research which looks across faith traditions. The tendency for the term ‘Religious School’ to be used to refer to supplementary schools in which the faith is taught, such as madrassa and occasionally Sunday schools (for example Ansari, 2000; Halstead, 2002), as well as to day schools, means that this term also seemed potentially confusing.

Currently, the three most commonly used terms are ‘School with a Religious Character’, ‘faith school’, and ‘faith-based school’. ‘Schools with a Religious Character’ was adopted by the UK government in the School Standards and Framework Act in 1998 (Parker-Jenkins, Hartas and Irving, 2005). Apart from being an unwieldy term to use, this term requires that schools are designated as such by The Secretary of State for Education, and again this only strictly applies to schools in the maintained sector (DfE, 2012). Schools of this type need to fulfil at least one of
a set of criteria regarding governance and premises (see Appendix E for the list of criteria).

The term ‘faith school’ emerged in the light of the report *Schools Building on Success* in 2001. This report was seen as indicating a willingness to accommodate the increasing number of schools run by non-Christian faith groups, and the term faith schools likewise reflects this inclusiveness (Parker-Jenkins, Hartas and Irving, 2005). In addition to being used in the academic field, this term has been widely adopted, being frequently employed in policy discourse (for example Faith in the System (DCSF, 2007a)). This is also overwhelmingly the term that is used in the media and public debate, such as the speech given by David Bell (Guardian, 2005b) referred to earlier in this chapter.

The final term ‘faith-based schools’ reflects a deeper discussion over the nature and distinctive features of schools associated with faith groups. Short (2002), in a footnote to his article on faith schools and social cohesion, highlights this when he distinguishes Catholic, Muslim and Jewish schools from Anglican ones, noting that ‘the charge of social divisiveness relates only to those faith schools that admit children from the founding religious community’ (p.570). Here Short subdivides faith schools on the grounds of the nature of the education. Halstead (2002) makes a similar distinction, proposing three categories of faith schools: those which minister to the whole community, those which emphasise intellectual and spiritual nurture, and those which restrict admission to members of their own faith. The distinction which emerges is between schools in which the intention is religious nurture, which is about strengthening religious commitment and preservation of ‘the faith and its associated cultural identity’ (Halstead, 2003, p. 282), and those where the emphasis is religious education more narrowly conceived. Although Jackson (1997) challenges the sharp distinction generally made between religious education and religious nurture by people such as Ninian Smart and John Hull, he still considers the distinction to be ‘conceptually and institutionally important’ (Parker-Jenkins, Hartas and Irving, 2005, p. 34). This distinction has led to the emergence of the term ‘faith-based schools’ which is used to describe those schools where the primary aim is faith nurture (Parker-Jenkins, Hartas and Irving, 2005).
This research is situated within a public and policy discourse. Therefore, although the term ‘faith-based schools’ would be appropriate in this research, I have chosen to employ the term ‘faith school’ as this is the term which is more commonly used in a public and policy setting. A working definition of the term faith school as employed in this research is given in Appendix E.

1.4 The Increasing Debate Over Faith Schools

Whilst faith schools have always inspired controversy, concerns and debates have intensified over the past twenty years or so. The nature of the debate too has changed, with a major focus now being related to the schools’ ability to promote Community Cohesion, of which ‘tolerance’ is a defining feature. The reasons for this increase are complex and stem from a number of different factors, many of which interact. Whilst not professing to be exhaustive, the following discussion will briefly mention some of what I see as the important factors in fuelling the faith schools debate.

The increased religious diversity of the UK since the Second World War and the increasing demand from immigrant faith groups for recognition of their religious identity has served to return faith and religion to prominence at a time when many in the West were forecasting a terminal decline in religion (Smith, 2008; Wilson, 1969). For some faith groups, establishing faith schools has been a way to preserve their religious identity and traditions (Merry, 2007). This in turn has reawakened older debates around the place of faith in education that had previously raged amongst established Christian denominations in the UK.

Two further new factors are the introduction of the Citizenship curriculum within schools and the requirement on schools to promote Community Cohesion. Public policy has in recent years designated schools as important sites for developing positive attitudes of tolerance of diversity. As a result, whether a school promotes tolerance has become a significant issue in a way that it was not in the past, when it was merely one of many vague expectations that schools were expected to fulfil.

Citizenship instruction was introduced into secondary schools as a discrete subject in 2002 (Kiwan, 2008). The 1998 Crick report (Crick, 1998) had begun this
process, although it is generally felt that the riots in the north of England in the summer of 2001 closely followed by 9/11 provided the final impetus for the decision to include Citizenship in the English curriculum (Kiwan, 2008). The first version of the Citizenship curriculum mainly concentrated on political aspects of citizenship. The Adjegbo (2007) report recommended a change and the inclusion of a new strand which explicitly considered identity and diversity, entitled ‘Identity and Diversity: living together in the UK’. This was strongly underpinned by the concept of multiple identities and understanding, respecting and tolerating these. This new curriculum was introduced in September 2008 (QCA, 2008a; QCA, 2008b).

Since September 2007 (DCSF, 2007b), all state-maintained schools have been required to promote Community Cohesion. This objective came to the fore in the aftermath of speeches, such as that by Trevor Phillips in which he warned that England was ‘sleepwalking into segregation’ (Phillips, 2005), and at a time when English multicultural policies were being seen as having led to a situation where communities were living parallel lives (ibid; Sen 2006). The urgent need for action on Community Cohesion was further prompted by the London bombings in July 2005, the result of ‘home grown’ terrorists claiming to act in the name of Islam. The school’s crucial community role in being ‘a focal point for local communities and helping to build mutual respect and understanding’ (DCSF, 2008, p. 3) was highlighted in the Home Office’s ‘Prevent Strategy’ designed to tackle violent extremism (Home Office, 2008a; Home Office, 2008b).

These factors are coloured by two overarching elements. The first has already been alluded to. The rise of Islamic terrorism has clearly heightened and increased fears about the negative social impact of faith generally and Islam in particular. The second is what is seen by some as a rise in an aggressive, fundamentalist form of secularism (Almond, 2010; Madan, 1998), and the ‘New Atheism’ expounded by people such as Richard Dawkins and Christopher Hitchens. Rather than ignoring faith, this ‘New Atheism’ and the more aggressive secularist agenda actively challenge it and in so doing ironically increase its prominence in the public sphere.

This recent intensification of debate over the place of faith in public life along with the significant proportion of faith schools in the English education
system have heightened concerns over faith schools and their ability to promote
tolerance. The lack of empirical research in this area means that this book is not
only necessary, but also timely.

1.5 A Brief Overview of this Book
In attempting to explore the research questions in as comprehensive a manner as
possible this study considers a range of understandings of tolerance and objects of
tolerance, and examines a variety of schools which were selected not only to
represent different faiths, but also to enable comparison on the basis of other
criteria (this is discussed in detail in Chapter 2). It was decided that a mixed
methods approach would be the most effective way to explore these various
understandings of tolerance. A questionnaire would allow a broad overview of the
students’ attitudes in each school, whereas semi-structured student interviews
could look in more depth at the reasoning behind the tolerance responses and at
more subtle and nuanced expressions of tolerance.

What began to emerge during the fieldwork and subsequent analysis of the
questionnaire and interview data was that one school, the Muslim Independent
school, was significantly different in several respects from the other schools from
which data had been collected. A consequence of this is that as the book progresses
there is an increasing focus on this one particular school, an emphasis that was not
anticipated at the beginning of this research. It should be emphasised at this point
that the findings presented in this book apply only to the schools in this research
and cannot necessarily be generalised to the whole population of faith schools in
general or Muslim schools in particular.

Few differences were seen between the other three faith schools which
participated in the research and their non-faith counterparts. Correspondingly no
significant differences were noted between their students’ attitudes of tolerance. In
respect of all the schools a significant finding was that students across the board
expressed lower tolerance towards members of other religious groups than
towards groups differing on other identity markers, such as immigrants and those
on the margins of society, for example youth ex-offenders.
The Muslim school differed from both its faith and non-faith counterparts in several ways. In contrast to the other faith schools, critical examination of the faith was restricted in the Muslim school. The way that the students’ religious identity was nurtured and portrayed also differed, with a greater emphasis being placed on its distinctiveness and on right practice, and there was also a strong perception of threats towards Islam. Although not universal throughout the school, the quality of teaching did appear to be lower in the Muslim school and this in turn was related to the lack of training and non-Western background of some staff. Differences too were detected in the students’ attitudes of tolerance, most significantly towards those whose behaviour was seen to contravene Islamic teaching.

This thesis suggests that these findings concerning students’ attitudes of tolerance could be related to particular aspects of the schools examined in the course of this research. It suggests that the finding in both faith and non-faith schools of lower tolerance being shown towards members of religious groups than towards other groups in society was related to the quality of contact with members of (other) faiths which the schools provided for students. In the Muslim school the lower tolerance shown towards those whose behaviour contravened religious teaching was related to two aspects of the school; the formation of the religious identity and the way that the school less effectively developed its students’ level of cognitive sophistication. But the book also argues that the findings in this research might be related to discourses found outside the school in the wider society. In the case of the difference in tolerance shown towards members of a different religious group, the relevant external discourses are secularism and multiculturalism, and, in the case of the findings in the Muslim Independent school, they are discourses found within some interpretations of Islam around critical examination of the faith, and Islamophobia.

Since tolerance is a complex and frequently ill-defined term, Chapter 2 discusses definitions and interpretations of this concept. It begins by defining how the term is used in this research before discussing the origins of the concept of tolerance and the ways in which education can be seen to affect it. It proceeds by considering what research has been conducted into the effect of faith schools on
students’ attitudes of tolerance and related attitudes. Finally, in the methodology section, it will look at how these various understandings of tolerance and interpretations of its relationship with schooling have been investigated and measured in this study.

Chapters 3, 4 and 5 present an analysis of the schools in which the fieldwork was conducted, generating hypotheses which relate aspects of the schools to predicted tolerance outcomes. Chapter 6, also based on research carried out in the schools, analyses and compares the students’ attitudes of tolerance, and presents the findings from this analysis. In Chapter 7, the hypotheses generated in Chapters 3, 4 and 5 are tested against the tolerance findings from Chapter 6, and the findings are discussed and tentative conclusions drawn. The implications of these findings and conclusions are considered both in relation to schooling, and to the wider social context. This final chapter also includes a discussion of the limitations and significance of this study, while suggesting areas for further research.
Chapter 2: Understanding Tolerance

2.1 Introduction

The main question investigated by this research is the effect of faith schools on their pupils’ attitudes of tolerance. Tolerance is a term widely used in everyday life, but the concept is a complex one which encompasses a multitude of related, but subtly different nuances. This familiarity means that precisely what is meant by the term is rarely made explicit. Although subtle, some of the differences in usage are significant for this research, making it necessary to understand the concept of tolerance in more detail, and make explicit what is understood by the term. Due to constraints on space much of the discussion in this chapter is necessarily brief, focusing on aspects of particular importance for the present study.

Tolerance, or more precisely intolerance, is closely associated with other widely used terms such as social conflict (which can be seen as an extreme form of intolerance) and prejudice. As much literature uses these terms more or less interchangeably I have also reviewed research which looks at these associated concepts when trying to understand tolerance and its relationship to education. However, recognising that the conflation of these terms is not universally accepted I will briefly expand upon the relationship between prejudice and tolerance.

The interchangeable use of prejudice and intolerance carries with it the suggestion that the two are in some way linked. The distinction used by Paul Vogt is helpful in that he sees prejudice as a feeling, whereas tolerance is a ‘behavioural disposition’ (Vogt, 1997, p. 36). The two can therefore be linked, but that link is not inevitable. Having feelings about a group, or being prejudiced towards that group, does not necessarily mean that a person will act on those feelings and behave in an intolerant way towards them. This understanding of these terms does suggest that there is a good deal of overlap and that research into prejudice is likely to inform us about tolerance, although caution must be exercised in making any direct extrapolation. Some would disagree with this approach, arguing that the two dispositions differ at the causal level. For example Oliver Cox (1970) strongly disagrees with the conflation of racial prejudice and social intolerance, maintaining
that racial prejudice is caused by exploitation whereas social intolerance is grounded in persecution, suppression and power struggles.

This chapter begins by defining how tolerance is understood within this research before briefly highlighting the main theories relating to the origin of the concept of tolerance. Next it looks at the relationship between education and tolerance generally, and finally, more specifically, research covering faith schools and tolerance.

2.2 Defining Tolerance

2.2.1 Introduction

The concept of tolerance is widely held to be problematic (Horton, 1996). This section begins by giving a broad definition of tolerance before illuminating more specific aspects which lie beneath the definition, and thus how tolerance is understood in this research.

2.2.2 A Provisional Definition of Tolerance

At a basic level tolerance is generally seen to consist of two components (Creppell, 2003). First there is some element of ‘disapproval/disagreement with practices, beliefs, or persons’ (ibid, p.2) with most people agreeing that you do not tolerate something that you already approve of or endorse (Walzer, 1997). Although not always acknowledged, within this assumption is the understanding that it is legitimate to disapprove of or dislike certain things (Quillen, 2005).

The second component of tolerance is that despite disapproval of some group, behaviour, belief or way of life, persons doing the tolerating do not constrain others who hold that view or behave in that way (Creppell, 2003). Trying to convince them otherwise is permissible, but stopping or coercing them is not. Combining these components provides a basic definition of tolerance:

‘Tolerance is intentional self-restraint in the face of something one dislikes, objects to, finds threatening, or otherwise has a negative attitude towards’ (Vogt, 1997, p. 3).
This definition of tolerance is implicitly working from a liberal perspective, which views tolerance as operating between individuals. However, some other cultures and some faith groups would conceptualise tolerance in a different way. Kymlicka (1996) highlights this point when commenting that Western democracies have a distinctive form of tolerance based on ‘individual freedom of conscience’ (p. 82). The most relevant alternative perspective in respect of this research is the communitarian one. Many Islamic societies and Islam in general are seen to have strong communitarian underpinnings (Sen, 2006) and although I would not claim that this is an official or widely held stance, Roman Catholicism has been linked to communitarianism, particularly through the work of Alistair Macintyre and Charles Taylor (Annette, 2005; Swift, 2001).

The communitarian understanding of tolerance emphasises the group over individual freedoms of conscience, and considers that the liberal tradition places too little emphasis on community, thus ‘alienating us from one powerful source of human fulfilment and social cohesion’ (Callan and White, 2003, p. 102). The conception of the human good is seen to be by necessity ‘grounded in the thought and practice of some particular tradition’ (MacIntyre and Dunne, 2002, p. 12) and thus it is impossible to show reciprocity and to respect others’ beliefs without holding beliefs of one’s own (Trigg, 2007).

The communitarian approach sees tolerance operating at the group level rather than that of the individual, and this can be at the expense of tolerance of the individual (Walzer, 1997). Groups tolerate each other’s practices and beliefs without interference. Within the group, alternative lifestyles and beliefs may be tolerated at the individual level, but not if they are seen to threaten the cohesion of the group (Kymlicka, 1992; Walzer, 1997).

Understandably, given that England is a liberal Western democracy, discussions about faith schools and tolerance conceptualise tolerance from a liberal perspective. But this raises questions, which this research does not have space to address, about the extent to which a school should be criticised for failing to promote a conception of tolerance to which the community it serves does not subscribe.
In order to use the above definition of tolerance as a basis for this research, the meanings of the two components of tolerance (disapproval/dislike and constraint) need to be clarified.

2.2.3 Component 1: Dislike and Disapproval

The first question is, what is it that is being disliked or disapproved of, or what is the object of tolerance: is it a group, an action, a belief, or a way of life (Horton, 1996)? Those who criticise faith schools in this area tend generally to focus on defined out-groups, such as other religious groups and homosexuals (British Humanist Association, 2001; Guardian, 2010). By referring to specific identity markers, the Citizenship curriculum (QCA, 2008a; QCA, 2008b) too can be seen to be using specific groups as objects of tolerance. David Bell’s speech in 2005 (Guardian, 2005c), quoted in the previous chapter, could be interpreted as referring to a different object. While his comments could be interpreted as referring to particular groups, they more likely apply to differences in ideas, beliefs and, possibly, behaviour that are not explicitly tied to specific groups.

In the present study, therefore, in order to be able to explore the criticisms made of faith schools it will be necessary to consider a variety of objects of tolerance: both groups, in this case mainly based on the six markers given in the Citizenship curriculum (QCA, 2008a; QCA, 2008b), and situations where there is a difference in beliefs.

A second aspect of this dimension concerns the underlying reason for the objection; is the objection based on moral grounds or on emotional grounds more akin to dislike? John Horton (1996) strongly maintains that only forbearance of something where the justification for disapproval is based on a moral principle can be considered tolerance, and therefore must be based on something more than the agent’s own perspective. Others would see this separation of motives into two distinct groups as a very difficult, often impossible, task. Instead they would see the two grounds as existing at opposite ends of a spectrum (Warnock, 1987). The difficulty of separating motives means that the latter position is the one taken in this research, although motivations are discussed.
Besides the issue of what 'tolerance' itself involves, the related question of who decides what groups or behaviours should be accorded tolerance is also crucial. This research is partly prompted by criticisms made over the alleged inability of faith schools to promote tolerance. The objects of tolerance that feature in public debate therefore tend either to be determined by education policy (e.g. identity markers highlighted in the Citizenship curriculum), or to reflect the concerns of certain groups that express concerns about faith schools in this regard. Although there is an important discussion to be had concerning why particular identity markers were highlighted by the Citizenship curriculum in the first place, this lies beyond the scope of this book.

2.2.4 Component 2: Constraint and Behaviour
The second component in the definition of tolerance refers to exhibiting restraint in some way. Walzer (1997, pp. 10-11) posits a continuum in the expression of restraint, and this seems a good place to begin this discussion. He sees five levels of expression, any of which could be legitimately understood as indicating tolerance:

1. Resigned acceptance for the sake of peace
2. Benign indifference to difference
3. Moral stoicism – others have rights even if they express them in unattractive ways
4. Curiosity; perhaps even respect, a willingness to listen and learn
5. Enthusiastic endorsement – diversity of God’s creation or necessary condition of human flourishing

The idea of a continuum of outcomes also features in Lynn Davies’ work on teaching about conflicts (2011). She identifies various ‘actions’ which occur as ‘a result of teaching and learning’ (ibid, p.105) about conflict. In Davies’ continuum the outcomes run between negative conflict and positive conflict, involving a distinction between passive and active responses. It is this aspect, at the positive conflict end of the continuum, which I see as overlapping with Walzer’s (1997) continuum. At the active end is ‘dialogue and encounter’ and ‘challenge to violence’ (Davies, 2011, p. 105), which can be seen to relate to Walzer’s fifth level of
willingness to learn and the enabling of human flourishing. At the passive end, Davies specifically equates tolerance with indifference, a concept that tallies with Walzer’s level 2.

This idea of a continuum likewise relates to a consideration of the social and ethical outcomes of tolerance.

Tolerance is seen by some as a virtue and by others as being associated with a negative judgement, ‘mere toleration’ (Weissberg, 2008, p. 16) as it is often termed (see also Cranston, 1987). The above continuum helps in the understanding of the basis of this debate. The concept of tolerance at the negative end of the continuum (roughly corresponding to Walzer’s levels 1-3) can be seen to relate to the concept of tolerance advocated by Locke, sometimes referred to as ‘classic tolerance’ (Weissberg, 2008). Locke’s perceived need for tolerance came out of a very specific religious context, although it was not solely restricted to relations between religious groups (Cranston, 1987; Williams, 1996). He maintained that as faith could not be enforced and had to be adopted voluntarily it was ‘irrational not to endure limited diversity’ (Quillen, 2005, p. 5). Tolerance for Locke was about allowing the Other to exist and follow their own beliefs and practices, but nothing more. What should be tolerated was seen to have definite limits (Locke and Gough, 1966).

On the whole, however, people do not wish to be ‘merely tolerated’ (Horton, 1996, p. 36), and this brings us to the understanding of tolerance as a virtue. This concept of tolerance, relating to Walzer’s level 3, can be seen to draw on the work of John Stuart Mill and his emphasis on plurality. He acknowledged that different visions of the good life and different paths to knowledge existed (Quillen, 2005). Whilst not claiming that all these visions and paths were good, nevertheless error was in itself not bad, and was necessary for stimulating debate which could enable one to come closer to the truth.

The form of liberalism resulting from this therefore sees the ability of a person to pursue and revise their own conception of the good life as a fundamental right. Although contested, autonomy is seen as important for pursuing a fulfilling life (Kymlicka, 1996). However, where tolerance is concerned, I would suggest that the most important underlying aspect of the fulfilling life argument is the respect
for human dignity or humanity. This implies allowing individual choice and freedom and therefore is closely related to human rights. Although we may believe that another person is wrong, overriding respect for their humanity, and therefore their right to choose and revise their own versions of the good life, compels us to tolerate that which we may find objectionable (Scanlon, 1996).

All the understandings of the outcomes of tolerance so far have required a person to refrain from acting. However, the notion can be extended further to suggest that tolerance requires us to help others to actively pursue their concept of a good life (Mendus, 1987). ‘Respect for human dignity suggests that we have an ethical obligation to others that goes beyond simply allowing them to be autonomous.’ (Quillen, 2005, p. 8). This can be seen to relate to Walzer’s levels 4 and 5 which is, I suggest, the furthest extreme of what could be contained within the original definition of tolerance.

In some understandings of tolerance, however, the outcome goes beyond respecting autonomy and encouraging other conceptions of the good (Margalit, 1996). One line of reasoning which extends from the work of JS Mill is that our fallibility means that we are not able to judge between varying conceptions of the good life, and thus no one set of beliefs is any better than another (Graham, 1996).

A different view is taken by Popper (1987), who argues that fear of being intolerant results in us feeling that we must tolerate everything, but warns that in doing so ‘we are in danger of destroying liberty – and toleration with it’ (ibid, p.17). These two views signal a move away from one of the foundational elements of tolerance, which involves some element of dislike or disapproval, and therefore expecting a school to produce students who subscribe to such a relativistic interpretation is seen, for the purposes of the present study, as exceeding the definition of tolerance.

Two final issues are sometimes raised with respect to the outcome of tolerance which need to be mentioned in passing. The first is whether one can be tolerant of something that one is not in contact with (Mendus, 1987). The second is whether one can be tolerant of something when one is not in a position to actually repress or suppress it (Creppell, 2003). The present study explores the extent to which criticisms of faith schools in respect of tolerance are valid, and thus works...
within a framework in which certain assumptions have been imposed from the outset. The naming of identity markers in the Citizenship curriculum implies that the students will be in contact with these groups and that they are in a position to suppress them. Hence no further consideration is given to these debates here.

### 2.2.5 Opposing Tolerance

It should be acknowledged here that the assumption made by those who criticise faith schools is that tolerance is a worthwhile value, which all schools in a liberal democracy should be promoting. I personally subscribe to this view, seeing it as providing what Scanlon (2003) describes as ‘a framework of mutual respect’ (ibid, p.193). This framework gives me a means of living with the diversity of beliefs and lifestyles which I encounter in my everyday life. However, this is not a universally held view of tolerance. As this research is concerned with whether faith schools do affect tolerance, rather than entering into debates around whether schools should be promoting tolerance in the first place, the main criticisms will be only briefly mentioned here.

Horton (1996) sees that many liberals have an uneasy relationship with tolerance. Although they see it as necessary, nevertheless it has an element of undesirability about it in that it implies censure or disapproval of others. Others reject tolerance completely. Some argue that tolerance is a ‘vice foisted on the world by hegemonic liberalism’ in order to ‘make the world safe for liberalism’ (Oberdiek, 2001, p. 17). In encouraging us to tolerate that which we know is wrong, doubts are sown about our deep beliefs, meaning that we lose confidence in our own convictions. This in turn undermines group solidarity, which ultimately threatens liberalism. Others see tolerance not just as supporting or legitimating liberalism, but as more generally reinforcing social elites by disproportionately benefiting dominant groups (Jackman, 1996; Vogt, 1997). As Oberdiek (2001) says, tolerance can be seen as the ‘self-proclaimed prerogative of the arrogantly powerful’ (p.18).

Jackman (1996) maintains that tolerance disguises brutal power relations and masks inequalities ‘by directing attention to the diffusing of conflict without regard to its underlying causes’ (ibid, p.46). A related criticism is voiced by Marcuse
who believes that tolerance can lead to a situation in which people refuse to take sides, with this supposed neutrality actually protecting the powerful in their oppression of weaker groups. A similar point is made by Moore (1969) when he argues that tolerance encourages indifference, which again means that people fail to act against injustice.

2.2.6 Tolerance and Education Policy

Finally, before going on to discuss the origins of tolerance it is pertinent for this research to consider the assumptions that typically frame education policies and those who criticise faith schools for failing to promote tolerance. However, these assumptions are rarely made explicit. The language used in the Citizenship curriculum specification (QCA, 2008b) suggests that at a minimum level tolerance implies respect for others. If viewed in conjunction with the Community Cohesion agenda, tolerance may even be interpreted as helping people to pursue their concept of the good life. This would imply that the desired tolerance ‘outcome’ corresponds roughly to Walzer’s levels 4 and 5, but as this is unclear in public debate and policy discourse, the present study keeps alternative understandings of tolerance ‘in play’. How this is operationalised is discussed in the next chapter.

2.3 The Origin of Tolerance

A necessary question to ask in respect of understanding tolerance is where tolerance, or intolerance originates. Research into this area can be considered on a continuum (Weatherell, 2004). At one end the attitude is seen to be innate and biologically determined, whereas at the other end social context is the key element, with the individual’s thoughts being socially constructed. This section will briefly discuss the work suggesting that tolerance is biologically determined before focusing on theories which see tolerance as having a predominantly psychological, socially constructed origin. Within this a further distinction will be made between those theories which see tolerance as related to the individual and those which see it as having a group component, as these two components are not seen as being mutually exclusive.

2.3.1 Sociobiology
The notion that attitudes may have a genetic component is something which William McGuire (1973) says is considered ‘only with trepidation’ (p.49) because of the way that it has been, and can be, used as a justification for genocide, oppression and the perpetuation of social and economic inequalities.

Contemporary sociobiological arguments relating to tolerance focus on natural selection, arguing that a genetic disposition of hostility or selfish behaviour towards strangers, in particular those who are not of one’s own kinship group, protects the gene pool. The individual may not survive, but protection of the group ensures that the common genes will (McGuire, 1973; Weatherell, 2004). The favouring of in-groups over out-groups can thus be considered to be genetically determined.

However, few sociobiologists maintain that the genetic component is the only, or even the most important, aspect of attitude determination. Nor do they suggest that genetic determination rules out the possibility of attitude change (McGuire, 1973). Most acknowledge that social context plays a crucial role in shaping attitudes.

**2.3.2 The Cognitive Dimension: Stereotypes**

Some researchers working on the cognitive dimension of attitudes consider us to be naturally predisposed to tolerance rather than intolerance. Allport (1954), in his book *The Nature of Prejudice*, ascribed the origin of prejudice to a thinking error based on ‘faulty or inflexible generalisation’ (Weatherell, 2004, p. 190). These generalisations can be described as stereotypes in which traits or attributes are associated with certain groups of people, preventing them from being seen for their unique characteristics (Weatherell, 2004). This process involves an evaluation aspect in which the out-group is denigrated and the in-group glorified.

Stereotyping becomes an inevitable short cut, an idea furthered by social psychologists in the 1960s who came to see it as ‘a consequence of the way human minds are structured to process information’ (Weatherell, 2004, p. 191). The mind is unable to cope with the vast array of information unless it somehow files it into

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3 The majority of research in this area has focused on racial prejudice rather than tolerance specifically.
categories. Thus here the deterministic feature is that information will be categorised and stereotypes will be formed, not what each stereotype contains.

2.3.3 Tolerance and Prejudice: The Individual Dimension

Although some may consider that there is a genetic determinism to prejudice, our social and legal order is underpinned by belief in free will which enables us to make ethical choices that override our biological urges. In the first half of the twentieth century much work was done on the nature of prejudice and intolerance from a psychological point of view. The origins of intolerance and prejudice were located in the individual psyche, which, in the aggregate, shaped group dynamics. Although briefly mentioning other authors, this section will concentrate on the influential work of Adorno (1969) and his concept of the authoritarian personality.

2.3.4 Adorno and the Authoritarian Personality

Early in the twentieth century, Dollard proposed two theories to try and explain racial prejudice: the Frustration-Aggression Hypothesis and the Scapegoat Theory (Milner, 1983). For Dollard, aggression was the result of frustration. The target of this aggression was a generalised form of the original cause. If there was a strong inhibiting reason why the cause of the aggression could not be targeted, for example because the target was in a particular authority role, aggression would be displaced onto others. These ‘scapegoats’ were often minority groups (Milner, 1983). Although these theories could account for prejudice on an individual level they failed to adequately explain mass behaviour or why certain groups remained targets over a prolonged period.

The influence of Freud and Marx, the atrocities of World War II, and fear of the rise of fascism in the USA seem to have provided the inspiration for the work of Adorno (Roiser and Willig, 2002). He related the behavioural cause of intolerance to a disturbed personality, a particular personality type, which he termed ‘the authoritarian personality’ (Milner, 1983). This personality type included a ‘constellation of attitudes’ (Milner, 1983, p. 23) and, because prejudice was related
to personality characteristics, the authoritarian person was more likely to express prejudiced attitudes (Weatherell, 2004).

Strong links have been made between this disturbed personality type and a person’s upbringing and early socialisation. Thus intolerance is not considered as part of a person’s nature, but is embedded early in a person’s life. Parents of those who go on to display this personality type are often strict, but inconsistent, disciplinarians, and thus their children become obedient, but also ambivalent in their attitudes to authority. The resulting personality tends to be conventional, conformist, rigid, obedient and deferential to authority, and intolerant of ambiguity (Milner, 1983; Weatherell, 2004).

The need to form a favourable self-image and parental image means that feelings of hate and ambivalence towards one’s parents are often displaced. Conformity means that these feelings are also repressed until they can be legitimately expressed (Milner, 1983). Thus, according to Adorno, the Nazi party and their hatred towards the Jews and other minority groups enabled those with an authoritarian personality to express their suppressed ambivalence in a socially supported manner. He argues that people with authoritarian personalities did not cause fascism, rather that fascism was appealing to those with authoritarian personalities. Adorno believed that the incidence of people with authoritarian personalities was high in Germany at that time due to prevalent child rearing ideologies. A main criticism of his work contests the likelihood of this occurring on such a large scale (see for example Weatherell, 2004).

One question raised by Adorno’s work related to the degree to which this authoritarian personality could be modified. The concept of a 'personality' implies a degree of permanence, and thus little scope for remedial action, with change possible only through laborious developmental therapeutics. However, the use of five different scales – one personality and four attitudinal scales - led other researchers to consider that the effect is actually one of authoritarian attitude, rather than personality (Jacob, 1957; Roiser and Willig, 2002). Attitudes can be modified by interventions, such as those used in many schools to tackle racism and homophobia, in which negative stereotypes are challenged (for example Stonewall, 2011).
A methodological challenge to Adorno’s work came from Milton Rokeach (1960). Rather than disputing the concept of the authoritarian personality, he criticised the way that it was measured, in particular the use of the F-scale which he saw as ‘directed primarily (not solely) at bigots on the political right’ (Rokeach and Bonier, 1960, p. 15) and therefore picking up solely right-wing authoritarianism. He suggested that there were two types of intolerance: content intolerance, which is about the actual belief (what and who is being tolerated), and structural intolerance, which relates to the way the belief is held and in particular the extent to which people’s belief systems are open or closed (dogmatic). Open or closed mindedness relates to ‘the extent to which the person can receive, evaluate, and act on relevant information received from the outside on its own intrinsic merits, unencumbered by irrelevant factors in the situation arising from within the person or from the outside’ (ibid, p.57). For Rokeach, the F-scale principally measured content intolerance whereas he saw the authoritarian personality as being more closely related to structural intolerance.

The Rokeach Dogmatism Scale was devised to measure degrees of authoritarianism, but rather than considering specific objects of tolerance this scale approached tolerance from a cognitive dimension, looking at structural intolerance. Comparisons of the scales used by Adorno to measure authoritarianism and the Dogmatism Scale have shown them to be highly positively correlated, thus the Rokeach Dogmatism Scale has become widely accepted as a measure of general authoritarianism (Hanson, 1968). Despite criticisms and predictions of an end to research in this area many studies still draw on this work (Ray, 1991; Roiser and Willig, 2002), with many social psychologists considering that personality contributes to intolerant and prejudicial attitudes.

Before concluding this section it is necessary to mention some research of particular relevance to this study, which found a high prevalence of authoritarian personality types represented in Evangelical/fundamentalist Christian congregations in the USA, but not in other Christian denominations (Feagin, 1965; Rokeach and Bonier, 1960; Wilson, 1985). I am not aware of similar research relating to other faiths. In addition, Lesser (1985) reports on the high positive correlation between the incidence of authoritarianism in parents and their
children. The combination of these various findings raises the possibility that any difference in tolerance seen in the faith school students may be as a result of background characteristics, in particular their upbringing. The prevalence of people with an authoritarian personality is greater in some religious groups, meaning that within these groups the parents and consequently the children are more likely have this type of personality. A student may be less tolerant because they have a more authoritarian personality which itself is a result of their parental background and not of the school. Therefore, I have considered it necessary to try to control for differences in authoritarianism in this research.

2.3.5 Tolerance and Prejudice: The Contribution of the Social

A major concern about the authoritarian personality thesis related to its focus on the individual and intra-individual interactions rather than on the social context (Tajfel and Turner, 1986). Critics pointed out that in so far as the racism and intolerance seen in Nazi Germany, for example, was a ‘collective social action’, it was hard to account for it with reference to individual psychology (Weatherell, 2004, p. 200). This has led to a body of work in the field of social-psychology which considers the effect of the social context, and group membership, on tolerance. The two principal theories in this field, Realistic Group Conflict Theory and Social Identity Theory, are discussed below.

2.3.6 Realistic Group Conflict Theory (RCT)

Oliver Cox maintained that social intolerance resulted from a power or status struggle where the dominant group would not tolerate the minority who they saw as ‘inimical to group solidarity or a threat to the continuity of the status quo’ (1970, p. 393). Following in this Marxist tradition, John Rex (1981) in his book Social Conflict concurred with the power struggle idea, concluding that the basis of all conflict was to be found in politics and, ultimately, economics.

Related to this is the work by Sherif and Sherif based on what is known as ‘The Summer Camp Experiment’ (Sherif, 1967; Weatherell, 2004). During the summer camp the Sherifs and their team worked at the camp and manipulated the situation, assigning the boys to various groups and then setting tasks and
competitions and monitoring their responses and behaviour. It was concluded that inter-group hostilities, an extreme expression of intolerance, were a result of conflicts of group interests – in the case of the summer camp, prizes in competitions. None of the boys on the summer camp were maladjusted and thus a second conclusion was that psychological maladjustment (related, for example, to childhood trauma) was not a prerequisite for inter-group hostilities and prejudice.

The theory developed by LeVine and Campbell (1972) and Sherif (1967) which resulted from this and related studies became known as Realistic Group Conflict Theory (Stephan and Stephan, 2000). At the basic level this maintains that ‘real conflict of group interests causes inter-group conflict’ (Campbell, 1965, p. 287), but the causal sequence linking the two is seen to involve several stages. LeVine and Campbell assert that ‘group conflicts are rational in the sense that groups do have incompatible goals and are in competition for scarce resources’ (1972, p. 30). This competition results in a perception of the out-group as a threat and conflict with the in-group, which in turn fuels dislike for the out-group; the greater the threat, the greater the hostility. An increase in in-group solidarity and identification accompanies any intensification of competition (ibid).

2.3.7 Social Identity Theory (SIT)

Realistic Group Conflict Theory (RCT) sees tension between groups emerging as a result of conflicts of interest and competition over scarce resources (LeVine and Campbell, 1972). Work by Tajfel in the 1960s concluded that although competition for scarce resources might be sufficient to bring about inter-group conflict, this could also arise in the absence of any competition. He also argued that RCT failed to fully explain increased levels of positive attachment to and identification with the in-group or the way some minority groups paradoxically displayed positive attitudes towards the dominant out-group whilst denigrating the in-group (Tajfel and Turner, 1986).

The work conducted by Tajfel, referred to as ‘minimal group studies’, indicated that inter-group bias could be initiated in settings when there was no obvious source of competition and where group membership was relatively low; ‘The mere perception of belonging to two distinct groups – that is, social
categorisation *per se* – is sufficient to trigger inter-group discrimination favouring the in-group’ (Tajfel and Turner, 1986, p. 13). It was argued that instead of a direct relationship between group status and group competition, as suggested by RCT, the relationship was mediated through social identity, where social identity is seen as ‘that aspect of a person’s self concept based on their group membership’ (Turner and Onorato, 1999, p. 18).

Conflict for resources becomes neither sufficient nor necessary for inter-group conflict; instead, the important factor is group identification. These observations led to the development of Social Identity Theory, which would extends RCT rather than dismissing it (Tajfel and Turner, 1986).

Before examining this theory in more detail, it is pertinent to note certain criticisms of it. ‘Minimal group studies’ were challenged by Gerard and Hoyt (1974) (cited in Tajfel and Turner, 1986), who suggested that the experiments were partially rigged, since the act of informing the subjects of the respective groups in itself raised an expectation in the subjects that group was a relevant category. Subsequent studies used observer-subjects who failed to observe or predict any bias on the part of the subject. These further studies only served to confirm the ease with which this in-group favouritism/ out-group discrimination could be triggered (Tajfel and Turner, 1986).

More general criticisms of Social Identity Theory focus mainly on its claims to universality. Research has suggested that in some societies, such as Polynesia, where there is a greater emphasis on generosity, the subjects do not seek to maximise group difference, choosing fairness instead. However, it has been shown broadly to hold in a European and North American context (Weatherell, 2004).

The Social Identity approach maintains that we possess two types of identity. The first is our personal identity which is derived from our unique characteristics and experiences and is the identity which is used and directs us when we interact with people on a personal, individual basis (Herriot, 2007). The second is our social identity. It is important at this point to reiterate that neither personal nor social identities are seen as fixed, but are instead dynamic and ‘a function of perceived and contextual factors’ (Turner and Onorato, 1999, p. 24). Sherif observed that there was a ‘psychological discontinuity’ (ibid, p.17) between
behaviour that is informed by the two dimensions of identity (the discontinuity hypothesis), and thus those taking the SIT approach would consider it inappropriate to extrapolate behaviour exhibited in an inter-personal context to a broader social one (or vice versa).

In Social Categorisation Theory, which emerged from and is closely aligned with, SIT⁴, Turner expanded on the notion of the self. He suggests that at times we do not perceive ourselves as ‘I’, but instead as ‘we’ and operate as such when ‘the social collectivity becomes the self’ (Turner and Onorato, 1999, p. 22). A consequence of this ‘we’ identity effectively becoming part of the self is that the person’s social actions are largely directed by it (Herriot, 2007).

At a basic level, the Social Identity approach suggests that when people become or consider themselves as members of a group they form or attain a social identity. Under certain conditions people evaluate themselves in terms of this group membership through comparison with other groups. It is considered a psychological necessity that this comparison should result in a positive evaluation which is achieved through inter-group differentiation (Turner, 1999). A slight difference in emphasis between SIT and RCT is indicated here. In RCT, the cause of the inter-group conflict is explicit. In SIT the cause of the threat to the in-group’s self-esteem is not the main focus of interest, as it is to some extent in RCT; rather, the focus of the theory is on the way that group self-esteem is maintained, and the way that this affects a person’s behaviour towards members of the designated out-group.

Once social categorisation has been initiated, Tajfel sees a sequence of steps occurring which results in positive in-group distinctiveness and links these various processes (cited in Turner and Onorato, 1999, p. 18). This sequence is considered to be:

Social categorisation → Social (intergroup) comparison → Social identity → Positive in-group distinctiveness

⁴ SIT is frequently used as an overarching term which includes Social Categorisation Theory (See Herriot, 2007)
If the evaluation is negative or there is a perceived threat to a particular social identity then there are three ways that a person can go about changing that evaluation. These are discussed below after the introduction of another aspect of the theory.

2.3.7.a Inter-group Continuum

A second aspect of the theory which has to be considered is what Tajfel refers to as the interpersonal/inter-group continuum (Tajfel and Turner, 1986). The continuum describes the nature of the social interaction between individuals. At the personal end all interaction is determined by individual characteristics whereas at the group end of the spectrum their membership of a social group is the important criterion. The position along the continuum is determined by psychological and social factors such as whether a person sees the group they belong to as having permeable or impermeable boundaries. The closer a person tends, in any given situation, towards the inter-group end, the more likely it is that they will act using their social rather than their personal identity (Hogg, 2006).

2.3.7.b Changing the Evaluation

The motivating factor within this approach is the maintenance of a positive group evaluation which is achieved through making the groups positively distinct. There are various ways that this positive social identity can be achieved or maintained if the social identity is perceived to be threatened.

The first is through individual mobility (Tajfel and Turner, 1986). A person who is discontented with the evaluation of their group may choose to disassociate themselves from the group or to leave the group entirely. This does not change the group’s status or evaluation and is a purely personal action. This course of action is only open to those who see themselves as ‘socially mobile’.

Social Creativity is the second of the options for gaining a more positive social identity. This involves altering the group itself and making it more positively distinctive, and Tajfel and Turner posit three ways that this may be achieved (Tajfel and Turner, 1986, pp. 19-20):

a. Making comparison on some new dimension
b. Changing the values assigned to attributes, so making something which was seen as negative now become positive.

c. Changing the out-group against which the comparison is made.

The final strategy is that of Social Competition or Bias. This is the only strategy which may result in lower tolerance and thus warrants our attention here.

2.3.7.c Employing the Strategy of Social Competition

The strategy of Social Competition is not necessary for achieving or maintaining a positive in-group evaluation, but is one possible strategy. A number of criteria increase the likelihood that this strategy will be employed, thereby heightening the significance of group membership in directing action (Herriot, 2007; Tajfel and Turner, 1986; Turner and Onorato, 1999).

Criterion 1: Identification

One important - not to say obvious - criterion that has to be met for group identity to direct action is that a person should actually identify with the group in question. Hogg asserts that:

‘if they [possible group members] have no sense of belonging, do not identify, and do not define and evaluate self in terms of the properties of the group then they are unlikely to think, feel and behave as group members’ (Hogg, 2006, p. 117).

Identity is of course not a black-and-white quality. Particular identities can be more or less accessible or dominant (Herriot, 2007). A distinction can be made between identities which are ‘chronically accessible’ and those which are ‘situationally accessible’ (Hogg, 2006, p. 119). The former are valued, important and frequently deployed or invoked, and the latter relate to more specific situations (ibid).

Criterion 2: The Salience of the Identity

This overlaps with the first criterion, but focuses more on the social context. In order that inter-group comparisons and evaluations can be made the person must first perceive that a group is present in that context, implying that a particular
group identity must become mindful or salient (Herriot, 2007; Hogg, 2006). If I walk into a room full of people, each person in that room has multiple social identities. The question is which groups, if any, do I perceive as present? One factor which determines any categorisation is the social context, so for example if I was at an interfaith event I would probably be more inclined to categorise others on the basis of faith rather than occupation. But it will also reflect the groups a person identifies with (Herriot, 2007). For example, on a visit to Liverpool recently I found myself categorising the people with whom I interacted mainly on the basis of their accents; Liverpudlian (or at least Northern) or not. One factor which determined that categorisation was the context of being in Liverpool, but the second related to my own identity as a ‘southerner’. Contrasting that with the experience of a friend who is also a southerner, but is in addition a great Everton supporter, when visiting Liverpool he would almost certainly, to some extent, have been inclined to categorise the same group into Everton or Liverpool supporters. Social context is important, but so too are other identities.

Other elements also help to determine which identities are salient. It is important that the in-group is ‘perceived as positively differentiated or distinct from the relevant out-groups’ (Tajfel and Turner, 1986, p. 16). The meta-contrast principle extends our understanding of this by proposing that the salience of an identity increases when the differences within one’s own group are less than the differences between one’s own and a different group (Herriot, 2007). The way that this maximisation is achieved is through the process of depersonalisation whereby the member’s personal characteristics are ignored whilst those characteristics which relate to their group identity are highlighted. The in-group form what is known as a ‘prototype’, which Herriot describes as ‘fuzzy sets of characteristics which are believed to describe group members’ (Herriot, 2007, p. 31), and this is how one group can distinguish itself from another. Prototypicality relies heavily on notions of conformity, which can include specific beliefs, but also dress and norms of behaviour (ibid). In contrast, the out-group is stereotyped based on the characters of out-group members (ibid). The more diverse the out-group is the more tightly defined the in-group needs to be in order for there to be clear distinction between the groups (ibid). The more the distinction is made between
the in-group and the out-group, the more likely it is that the group identity will direct behaviour and the higher the chance of inter-group bias (ibid).

**Criterion 3: Which Groups are Relevant**

Comparison and potential conflict will only be directed towards those groups perceived as relevant. Relevance is associated with ‘evaluative significance’ (Tajfel and Turner, 1986, p. 16), which may be determined by a number of factors such as proximity (for example there is little to be gained for a religious tradition in the UK in comparing itself with a religious tradition only found in South America), but also similarity and situational salience. The latter can be linked to the notion of security and threat. The more threatened a group feels its position to be, the more insecure it will become and the higher the likelihood that it will try to regain its positive self-esteem through inter-group competition (Herriot, 2007).

**Criterion 4: The Perceived Social Structure of Inter-group Relations**

The likelihood of social bias becoming a strategy for achieving positive group identity is also influenced by a group's perceived degree of permeability. Individuals in groups perceived as impermeable cannot leave or disassociate themselves from the group in order to join a group perceived as having higher status. Consequently, they are more likely to resort to aggressive forms of inter-group competition. As Herriot describes it, in extreme cases when the group is impermeable and threatened ‘the in-group has nothing else to lose; its members are stuck where they are, they feel threatened. All they can do is fight’ (Herriot, 2007, p. 35).

**2.3.8 Summary**

This section has demonstrated that the origins of tolerance and intolerance are complex. Various theories have been presented here in isolation, but in reality these are rarely treated as mutually exclusive. This section has also highlighted that tolerance is not solely related to a person’s individual characteristics and identity, but can also be influenced by their social identity. I shall further develop this point at the end of this chapter, where I discuss how it might suggest a difference
between faith and non-faith schools with implications for the way that they influence tolerance.

First, however, I consider current debates concerning the relationship between schools and tolerance and why faith schools might be problematic in this regard. Before beginning this discussion, as this research is primarily concerned with faith schools, it is necessary to briefly consider why many people consider that faith or religion and tolerance are antithetical.

2.4 Tolerance, Religions and Faith

One aspect of inter-religious conflict and intolerance between different faith groups is likely to be related to group identity, as discussed above. But is there also something more inherent in religion, or particular religions, beyond this group identity, which could make their members less tolerant? Richard Dawkins, Christopher Hitchens and the other ‘New Atheists’ argue that there is. Others dispute this inevitability. Although wars and conflicts have been fought, and terrible acts of violence and persecution perpetrated in the name of religion, examples of religion exerting a positive influence on society and social cohesion can also be cited (Allport and Ross, 1967), for example the work of people such as Archbishop Desmond Tutu in South Africa and the Dalai Lama, as well as many interventions which occur at the local level. Many would maintain that wars and conflicts which on the surface are about religion are, under the surface, about power (e.g. Northern Ireland), with religious differences deployed as a useful rallying cry (for example Allport, 1954). It is therefore necessary to look deeper into this area and consider when intolerance is likely to arise.

The relationship between religion and tolerance at a particular point in time rests on two factors: theological understanding and group identity, which itself can be seen to relate to the geopolitical situation. In the current climate in the West, geopolitical discussions focus strongly on Islam, and to a lesser extent the rise in fundamentalism generally (see amongst others Bennett, 2005; Esposito, 1999; Huntington, 2002; Lewis, 2003; Lewis, 2004; Netton, 2006; and Said, 1995). The complexity of the debates means that space does not permit more than a fairly superficial survey here. However, some aspects will be revisited in later chapters.
when I discuss religious group identity and tolerance. This section therefore focuses on theology and belief. An important point to emphasise is that the embodiment of theology has not been, and will not remain, static (D’Costa, 2009).

2.4.1 Theology and Tolerance

As detailed in Chapter 3, this research focuses on schools run by Muslim and Christian groups, and therefore the discussion here principally relates to these two faith traditions. In trying to consider Christianity and Islam within the same framework, I am conscious of being open to criticism for equating concepts some may regard as incommensurable, but I feel it is both legitimate and necessary to impose a common analytical framework.

Most followers of both Islam and Christianity would doubtless maintain that their own religion is one of tolerance. But both the Qur’an and the Bible contain verses which can be, and have been, interpreted as justifying intolerance. For example, whilst the majority of Muslims would see Surat 9 verse 5 in the Qur’an (which says that idolaters should be slain unless they convert) as referring to a very specific context and group (Pickthall, 1997), some Muslims associated with extremist groups have invoked this passage to justify intolerance (Cook, 2000, p. 34). Some fundamentalist Christians have likewise seen their battle with Satan, who works through ordinary people, as justified by verses such as Ephesians 6: 10-20, which are couched in militaristic terms (Thomas and Freeman, 1996). Why do some believers act on these verses and others ignore them? The important element in understanding intolerance is not merely what is believed, but also the space where the belief and the manner in which it is held (the nature of the belief) interact.

The term fundamentalist has to be used with caution on account of its pejorative connotations. Although it originated in a Christian context, it is now frequently applied to other religions and even in non-religious contexts (Ruthven, 2004). Fundamentalism generally denotes a conviction that one particular interpretation of the faith alone has possession of the unique inerrant truth (The Truth) (Tétreault, 2004). It is usually associated with a reliance on scripture, typically seen as delivered through divine revelation (Ruthven, 2004). If believers thus hold that they are in possession of The Truth, singular and complete, they may
easily be led to the view that other beliefs are false and unworthy of toleration. In Christian history, the Inquisition is a well documented example of this. Fundamentalists are by the same token liable to view any challenge to their belief as threatening and illegitimate. A slightly clearer understanding as to why some religious groups may be less tolerant can be gained by considering the threefold typology for the theology of religions developed by Alan Race. This is widely used, although modified forms of this as well as other typologies do exist (Race and Hedges, 2008). (For critiques see, for example, D’Costa, (2009) and Markham,(1993)).

Race’s typology gives three basic categories ‘into which Christian responses to other religions can be fitted’ (Race and Hedges, 2008, p. 17). The particular emphasis is on salvation, but the categories also include ideas and beliefs about truth, authority, revelation and scriptural inerrancy. Although in its original form the typology refers solely to Christianity, the categories have been adapted and the understanding of salvation modified for use across different religions, including Islam (see for example Abou El Fadl, Cohen and Lague, 2002; Hick, 1995). The broad categories are:

**Exclusivist:**
Salvation can only come through Jesus Christ or, in the broader interpretation, only members of the faith will enjoy paradise. This is often associated with a broadly fundamentalist approach.

**Inclusivist:**
Salvation is only through Jesus Christ, but other religions may provide paths to salvation. In the broader interpretation, although those professing the faith believe that theirs is the true way to salvation, they acknowledge the possibility that other religions are part of God’s plan of salvation. Faithful adherents of other creeds may also gain salvation by following their own paths.

**Pluralist:**

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5 For a wider discussion of fundamentalism particularly in relation to schools see Everett (2006).
Jesus Christ’s is one revelation among many, thus there are various different, equally valid paths. In the broader interpretation, there are many equally valid paths to salvation.

In addition to the motivation associated with a fundamentalist position in respect of faith, those who subscribe to an exclusivist theology may be supposed to have a further reason for showing lower tolerance or intolerance towards the Religious Other. If the ultimate end point of faith is salvation (however that is understood), then if one’s theological understanding of salvation is exclusivist it makes little sense to tolerate any other religion. More than just being wrong, a person who follows such a path is effectively damned. Furthermore, other religions can potentially lure you away from the right path. It could be argued that an exclusivist theology makes it much harder to see value in the faith of others. The faith of others is worthless, since only one’s own, true, faith will bring salvation. Helping others to lead a different life, seen by Walzer (1997) as part of demonstrating higher degree tolerance, is not just pointless, but is actually sentencing them to eternal damnation.

On the other hand, although a faith group with an inclusivist theology maintains that its way of life is the best way to salvation, it can support the notion that other ways of life can be valid and therefore to some extent worth pursuing. Thus helping others to pursue their way of life is not pointless, and tolerance can be shown. In recognising other paths to salvation as equally valid, a person holding a pluralist understanding of faith should have little trouble helping others to pursue their faith and have no theological motivation for being intolerant.

Most practising Christians in the UK today fall into the inclusivist category (Hick, 1995). The change in the Roman Catholic stance over the past 150 years is well documented; since Vatican II the mainstream Catholic position can be considered inclusivist (Cardinale, 1966). However, members of some Evangelical denominations, such as Pentecostalists, tend more towards exclusivism. As with Christianity, variation exists amongst Muslims in this regard, but many interpretations of Islam espouse an exclusivist theology.
2.5 Education and Tolerance

Implicit in the criticism of faith schools in respect of tolerance is the assumption that education, and more precisely schools, can and do shape students' attitudes in this respect.

Some research has suggested that the link between education and tolerance is certainly not universally true or straightforward (Green, Preston and Janmaat, 2006; Jackman, 1973; Jackman, 1978; Jackman and Muha, 1984; Merelman, 1980). The effects of education are often dependent on other factors, with some studies making reference to the importance of prior socialisation in either negating or moderating the effect of education (Hagendoorn, 1999). Similarly, Green, Preston and Janmaat (2006) have found that when considered cross-nationally there is no correlation between aggregate levels of education and tolerance. Intervening factors at the in-country level appear to moderate the educational effect.

Nonetheless, a considerable body of research claims that education does have a positive effect on increasing tolerance, and on other related attitudes (Haegel, 1999; Jacob, 1957; Plant, 1965). When compared to other social factors including religion, professional status, gender and age, Haegel (1999) concluded that education had the biggest impact on tolerance (see also de Witte, 1999; and Halman, 1994). The present study research goes beyond just asking whether faith schools affect their students’ attitudes of tolerance, to consider which aspects of the school are relevant in this respect.

2.5.1 Why and How Does Education Affect Tolerance?

If we assume that education can be a major factor in the reduction of intolerance, it is important to understand why this is and how schools influence tolerance. Previous research suggests that this is a highly complex area, and that the mechanism whereby schools shape tolerance or intolerance is far from straightforward or well understood. Matters are complicated by the fact that this set of issues has been approached from two angles, sociological and psychological, and that different studies conceive of tolerance in different ways, with some, for example, looking at prejudice, whilst others focus on ethnocentrism.
In order to structure discussion in this area, this section categorises the research into how education impacts on tolerance under three headings based on those proposed by Vogt (1997).

- Cognitive Sophistication
- Socialisation
  - Indirectly through personality
  - Directly through the curriculum
- Contact

These categories should be seen as loosely demarcated and overlapping. Although others have also tried to impose some order on research in this area (for example, Hagendoorn, 1999) Vogt’s categorisation gives a comprehensive coverage of both the psychological and the sociological literature on this topic as well as being the most practical one to assign to the real school context. I now examine the three categories in turn.

2.5.2 Cognitive Sophistication

In Vogt’s (1997) classification, increased cognitive sophistication is an indirect route by which education may affect tolerance. In a number of studies the ability of education to increase tolerance through its effect on cognitive sophistication is seen as a very important, if not the most important, contribution it can make in this area (Bobo and Licari, 1989; Selznick and Steinberg, 1969, cited in Vogt, 1997).

As few studies consider the whole process, I will look at this in two stages: the effect of education on cognitive sophistication and the effect of cognitive sophistication on tolerance.

The term cognitive sophistication is just one of many used to describe the ability to ‘process large amounts of information and to differentiate’ (de Witte, 1999). Other terms used include reasoning skills, critical thinking, intellectual
flexibility, reflective judgement and cognitive complexity (de Witte, 1999; Pascarella and Terenzini, 2005; Vogt, 1997). This multiplicity of overlapping, but at times quite specific, terms is confusing, therefore in this discussion the term cognitive sophistication is used to refer to all these various terms and aspects.

In their study How College Affects Students, after controlling for background characteristics Pascarella and Terenzini (2005) conclude that college has a positive impact on ‘general cognitive skills and intellectual growth’ (ibid, p.164). Various mechanisms have been suggested to explain how schools might increase cognitive sophistication. Pascarella and Terenzini (2005) highlight learning in which abstract concepts are developed from concrete examples⁶, as well as problem-solving and social interactions with staff and students which focus on ‘ideas or intellectual matters’ (ibid, p.174) (see also Torney-Purta, 1990). Others see cognitive sophistication as increased simply through schools role in expanding knowledge, which supposedly brings with it an openness to new ideas (Bobo and Licari, 1989; Hyman and Wright, 1979; Zellman and Sears, 1971). Others have suggested that the ‘cognitive “climate” of schooling’ (Vogt, 1997, p. 140) is important. Cognitive climate here refers to the school’s degree of organisational flexibility or rigidity, and can also relate to the nature of the learning. It is often argued that complex learning tasks, particularly if accompanied by some degree of autonomy, may increase intellectual flexibility (Miller, Slomczynski and Kohn, 1985).

Most noticeably in higher education, and particularly in the Western tradition, debate, critical engagement and discussion have been frequently employed, and and their importance emphasised (Vogt, 1997). In England, critical thinking skills are included in the key skills or processes to be developed in many subjects such as KS3 and 4 Citizenship (QCDA, 2011) and GCSE RE (for example AQA, 2011b) as well as being available as a stand-alone subject at AS/A2 level (for example AQA, 2011a).

The positive link between cognitive sophistication and various forms of tolerance has been posited in a number of studies. Some of these focus on one

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⁶ This stress on developing more abstract concepts from concrete examples is very much the basis behind CASE ‘Thinking Science’ which has now been adopted in the KS3 Science programme of study in many schools in England (Adey et al., 1995).
specific aspect of cognitive sophistication such as divergent thinking (Zellman, 1975; Zellman and Sears, 1971), whereas others see a positive correlation between various forms of cognitive abilities and tolerance (Sidanius, 1985; Sidanius and Lau, 1989).

Studies by Peri (1999) and de Witte (1999), whilst not directly considering cognitive sophistication, see it as important in counteracting the negative effects of the intervening variables which operate between increased education and increased tolerance. These intervening variables include conformism and traditional values (Peri, 1999) and authoritarianism, anomie and cultural localism (de Witte, 1999).

Tolerance is not a simple, single process, but instead involves complex decision-making (Jones, 1980a; McClosky, 1964). A person with a higher level of cognitive sophistication gains a better understanding of the complexity of arguments and an increased ability to consider causal relationships (Hagendoorn, 1999; Pascarella and Terenzini, 2005; Vogt, 1997). Increased reasoning ability helps people to subject traditional societal norms or group prejudices to rational verification and thus renders them less prone to ‘the passive acceptance’ (Peri, 1999, p. 24) of those norms (see also Haegel, 1999).

Higher cognitive sophistication is also seen to result in a more consistent approach to problems (cognitive consistency). People become more likely to make decisions on the basis of principles, such as human rights, rather than emotions (Chong, 1993; Vogt, 1997). This means that they are more able to relate abstract beliefs to specific instances and be more consistent in applying principles across contexts (Haegel, 1999; Sniderman and Gould, 1999).

Bobo and Licari’s research (1989) whilst finding that the ‘cognitive sophistication measure accounted for a large share (approximately 33%) of the effect of education on tolerance’ (Bobo and Licari, 1989, p. 298) nevertheless also suggests that this route to tolerance has limits. They concluded that higher levels of cognitive sophistication only work in cases where the tolerance is directed at moderately disliked groups, but has no effect when tolerance of ‘extraordinarily disliked groups’ (p. 305) is considered.
The positive outcomes of the acquisition of higher cognitive skills are disputed by Jackman and Muha (1984), who suggest that these skills can instead lead to greater ideological sophistication. Rather than producing more open or liberal views, this instead allows the dominant group to better protect or justify its dominant position.

Thus much previous research suggests that education, mainly at the higher levels, can have a positive effect on tolerance, with cognitive sophistication acting as a mediating variable - but a number of studies also indicate that this relationship is by no means straightforward or inevitable.

2.5.3 Socialisation

Education can be seen to affect tolerance through socialisation of the students into societal norms. This can work indirectly through the effect it has on the personality, and more explicitly through the curriculum.

2.5.3.a Indirectly – Personality

Personality here is understood as referring to the underlying basis on which the person acts, seeing these foundational values or ‘enduring orientations’ (Sniderman and Gould, 1999) as stable and long-lasting (Vogt, 1997), if not fixed. In an abstract way personality has no obvious link to tolerance. The link emerges in the light of the beliefs, values and norms which are considered beneficial and important in a given society. In liberal England tolerance is one such value (Miller, Kohn and Schooler, 1986; Suzman, 1973). In order for society to function effectively people, and particularly in this case children, need to be socialised to endorse and internalise these values (Durkheim and Wilson, 1961). There are many socialising agents, including the family, and the important role which schools play in this process has been well documented (Dreeben, 1968; Jackson, Boostrom and Hansen, 1973; Miller, Kohn and Schooler, 1986).

Relatively little of this socialisation takes place through the formal curriculum (de Witte, 1999; Dreeben, 1968; Inkeles, 1973). In their study *The Moral Life of Schools*, Jackson et al. (1973) talk about the ‘formative potency of these
institutions [schools] [which] extends far beyond the goals of the official curriculum’ (ibid, p.xii). Thus although schools are major socialising agents, they perform this function in a variety of ways, indirect (through routines and rituals) as well as direct or explicit.

A number of research studies have found a link between education and tolerance through socialisation. A positive effect was found by Haegel (1999), who saw the link working directly through the ‘reproduction and transmission of a value system’ (Haegel, 1999, p. 44). Although not disputing a link, some other studies see this as more complex and as involving an interaction with culture (Holsinger, 1973; Inkeles, 1973; Inkeles and Holsinger, 1973; Suzman, 1973) with some suggesting that this positive effect is only found in cultures where there is a liberal tradition of tolerance (Winkler, 1999).

Sniderman and Gould (1999) would see education as working indirectly by instilling more foundational values which, when activated, result in tolerance; for example the acquisition of the value of equality which can then be related to non-discrimination towards people on the basis of race. This focus on instilling foundational values is close to that proposed by Kohn (Vogt, 1997), who sees education as developing personality traits which are ‘conducive to the development of tolerant attitudes’ (Vogt, 1997, p. 120) rather than directly instilling the value of tolerance itself. Kohn’s approach overlaps with the work on cognitive sophistication, in that his main focus is on reducing the person’s reliance on conformity and submission to external authority, which he sees as having a negative impact on the ability of a person to act in a tolerant manner (see also Miller, Kohn and Schooler, 1986; and Nielsen, 1977).

Research has also suggested various aspects of schools which may be beneficial in helping their students to develop more tolerant personalities (Jackson, Boostrom and Hansen, 1973). Some of these are direct, such as spontaneous interjections or moral messages on posters, but many involve implicit moral practice, whether of the school as a community or of the teacher (Dreeben, 1968; Ehman, 1980; Haegel, 1999; Keith, 2010), and relate to the idea that morals and attitudes are ‘caught, not taught’ (Jackson, Boostrom and Hansen, 1973, p. 11). Merelman (1980) contends that too often any positive impact is cancelled out by
the authoritarian nature of many schools which give little credence to student views and agency. Finally, a school climate conducive to encouraging tolerance is frequently portrayed as one which includes work which encourages the students to become more self directing, where the students have a degree of autonomy, rote learning is discouraged and independence of thought encouraged, and students feel free to ask questions and to disagree with the teacher (Ehman, 1980; Miller, Kohn and Schooler, 1986; Nelson, Wade and Kerr, 2010; Torney-Purta, 2001; Vogt, 1997).

2.5.3.b Directly – Through the Curriculum

This section looks at the way schools directly influence or teach tolerance through the curriculum. It is frequently claimed that curricular content affects tolerance through influencing the perception of out-groups (Haegel, 1999; Winkler, 1999), in particular by raising the barrier of erroneous information and reducing the reliance on stereotypes (Peri, 1999).

Despite espousing tolerance as a core principle, the English school curriculum notably fails to prescribe how and what should be taught in this area, something it has in common with many other countries. As Vogt comments

‘Tolerance very often is featured on governments’ and educators’ lists of goals they aim to promote in the school curricula. Tolerance often becomes one of those empty goals that sound important but also commit educators to very little. Seldom has explicit attention been paid to what tolerance in fact is and, therefore, to how one could hope to teach it’ (1997, p. 177).

Within the English school curriculum the two most explicit areas which link to the direct teaching of tolerance are PSHEE\textsuperscript{7}, which focuses more on moral tolerance, and Citizenship, which concentrates more on political tolerance (QCDA, 2011). Some aspects of RE also have this function. But within each subject it is difficult to pinpoint where tolerance is specifically located. Both Citizenship and

\textsuperscript{7} Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education
PSHEE are compulsory in English state schools, but the PSHEE programme of study is not statutory. In neither case do they have to be taught as discrete subjects, but can be embedded within other areas of the curriculum.

Citizenship, Civics and moral education in various forms are part of the curriculum in many countries, but there is remarkably little research evaluating such programmes (Janmaat, 2008a). The majority of studies which have considered the effect of Civics programmes on attitude formation and tolerance rarely see them as particularly effective in this regard (Ehman, 1980; Hagendoorn, 1999; Kiwan, 2008). Ehman’s (1980) research suggested that the curriculum was effective with respect to students acquisition of political knowledge, but not in changing attitudes (see also Niemi and Junn, 1998). The 2009 ICCS study (Nelson, Wade and Kerr, 2010) found that there was a positive relationship between civic knowledge and tolerance in the English sample, but that the vast proportion of this knowledge came from background sources rather than the schools’ Citizenship and PSHEE programmes.

Too much time teaching facts rather than engaging in discussion (Nelson, Wade and Kerr, 2010) and, related to this, the teaching of slogans and principles of tolerance rather than its real life application (Zellman, 1975), have been suggested as possible explanations for the negligible impact of citizenship programmes. So too has teachers’ fear of the repercussions of dealing with some of the more contentious issues (Vogt, 1997; Zellman, 1975). Others suggest that most information is gained from sources outside the school and thus that the school is teaching little that is new (Janmaat, 2008a; Nelson, Wade and Kerr, 2010). The perceived restriction on certain discourses within the school (for example support of the BNP) has been found to result in students who endorse these views becoming unwilling to connect with any teaching in this area (Cockburn, 2007).

A few research studies point to an inconsistent effect, depending on the nature of the student population. Jones (1980b) found that the effectiveness of different aspects of the curriculum varied with age. School climate was found to be most important at the youngest age (aged 9); strategies which encouraged

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8 ICCS: International Civic and Citizenship Education Study (See IEA, 2011)
participation most effective at age 13; and enhancement of knowledge most significant at age 17. Germ Janmaat (2008a), looking at ethnic minority students, also highlights a disproportionate effect in the case of civic attitudes in general which could be explained by ‘information redundancy’ (Janmaat, 2008a, p. 50). The dominating group was seen to have more access to information on relevant topics from family, peers and other media than did their disadvantaged counterparts, and thus the amount of novel information the school was supplying to the dominant students was less than was being supplied to the disadvantaged students. Janmaat concluded that:

‘schools can fulfil a useful role in helping disadvantaged groups to catch up with the dominating group and thus creating a more equal distribution of knowledge, skills and attitudes among the student population’ (Janmaat, 2008a, p. 50).

2.5.4 Contact

As discussed above, Allport (1954) ascribed the origin of prejudice to a thinking error. As a way of correcting these thinking errors and thus reducing prejudice, he proposed the ‘Contact Hypothesis’. In its original form, any contact between groups was considered beneficial in this regard, with the basic idea behind the theory being that contact between antagonistic social groups would ‘undermine negative stereotypes’ as well as reducing mutual antipathies (Donnelly and Hughes, 2006, p. 496). This is seen to result from a reconceptualisation whereby prejudice and stereotypes are reduced and changed through increased knowledge and understanding about the group. Subsequently the theory was refined to include criteria, discussed below, which should govern the nature of the contact, such that contact would only be considered to yield positive results if these were satisfied (Donnelly and Hughes, 2006; Short, 2002; Short, 2003; Smith, 1991; Vogt, 1997). Contact alone is considered unlikely to have positive results.

Unlike more traditional work on inter-group relations, which sees increasing knowledge about other groups as important for reducing prejudice and anxiety, the Contact Hypothesis also emphasises emotions. The ability to empathise with other people’s perspectives is considered better in this regard and works by ‘raising
interest in the welfare of others, arousing feelings and perceptions of injustice, altering cognitive representations of the target group members and inhibiting stereotyping by taking the perspective of a member of another group’ (Davies, 2008, p. 91).

The criteria for contact to yield positive results are (Vogt, 1997):

1. Contact must be introduced swiftly and firmly, and enforced and respected by an authority. Thus schools need to take an active and full part in the project and cannot merely rely on the students just mixing (Donnelly and Hughes, 2006).

2. The contact must be meaningful and be sustained over a period of time. Some, for example Genesee and Gandara (1999), contest the necessity of contact for improving inter-group relations. Research conducted by others such as Pettigrew and Tropp (2006) indicates that even casual contact can improve attitudes and behaviours, although the causality of this can be contested and studies in this area have been criticised as subject to self-selection bias (Vogt, 1997). However, most scholars in this field maintain that although contact is necessary for improved inter-group relations, it is not sufficient in itself (Gurin, Nagda and Lopez, 2004), implying the need for the contact to be ‘meaningful’, the most opaque of all the Contact Hypothesis criteria. Meaningfulness in this context is seen by many as involving something more than casual contact (Donnelly and Hughes, 2006) - what Dixon et al. (2005) refer to as a ‘deeper form of contact’ (ibid, p.697).

Although there is no consensus over what this deeper contact should involve, some argue that it should help students to consider the significance that a particular ‘thing’ has in someone’s life and should promote the idea of a shared humanity (Donnelly and Hughes, 2006; Rutter, 2005; Yablon, 2011). Others stress the importance of perspective-taking (Banks and Banks, 2004; Batson, Early and Salvarani, 1997). Some element of the engagement should be at the personal level to enable friendships to develop (Donnelly and Hughes, 2006), but also involve shared experiences so that the two
groups become emotionally engaged (Davies, 2008; Smith, 1991). It should also ensure that underlying tensions are tackled and explored (Donnelly and Hughes, 2006; Gallagher, 2004; Yablon, 2011), something which can be related to Gurin et al.’s (2004) requirement that contact should stimulate students to ‘re-examine even their most deeply held assumptions about themselves and their world’ (ibid, p.32). Several research studies have noted how difficult this is to put into practice, as schools and teachers maybe reluctant to go into what they see as dangerous and contentious places (Cockburn, 2007; Gallagher, 2004; McGlynn et al., 2004; Richardson, 2006).

3. The groups must have equal status within the contact situation. This criterion is one which is easy to conceptualise, but harder to achieve in practice, particularly when the groups, which are often in conflict, are in a majority-minority situation as a number of studies attest (Davies, 2008; Donnelly and Hughes, 2006; Vogt, 1997).

4. The contact should involve cooperation rather than competitive goals, in a cooperative, not competitive setting. As Sherif’s (1967) study shows, group loyalties quickly change in a competitive environment, and the aim of the contact is not to exchange one cause of conflict for another (Section 2.3.6). Participation in shared projects has been shown to increase friendly interactions and inter-racial friendships (Patchen, 1992, cited in Vogt, 1997).

Whether contact does bring about the desired results is debatable, with much research and evaluation having produced mixed results, and in some cases badly managed contact has been found to exacerbate inter-group animosity (Reed, 1980 cited in Vogt, 1997). Contact has been shown to increase prejudice in some cases by reinforcing stereotypes, particularly if the contact is not sustained (Cockburn, 2007; Donnelly, 2004a; Donnelly, 2004b; Smith, 1991). The effectiveness of contact is also questioned when the animosity is based on real differences of interest rather than just ignorant prejudice, or when there is a large gap between the two groups (Davies, 2008). As can be seen from the discussion above, fulfilling
the necessary criteria is not always straightforward and this may in part account for
the inconsistency seen in the results of research in this area (Dixon, Durrheim and
Tredoux, 2005).

Other critiques of the Contact Hypothesis focus on methodological issues,
particularly the nature of the sampling of the groups and the lack of realism in the
contact (Donnelly and Hughes, 2006). Questions have also been raised regarding
the extent to which the Contact Hypothesis actually changes understandings about
the group as a whole, or merely changes them towards particular members of the
group, specifically those with whom the contact has been made (Short, 1993; Vogt,
1997).

Despite these questions over its effectiveness, the Contact Hypothesis has
been remarkably influential in the policy arena. In England, various reports, such as
those into the riots in northern England in 2001 and the Runnymede report
(Berkeley, 2008), have suggested that greater contact is imperative for better
relations, and it has become an important part of the Community Cohesion agenda
(Cockburn, 2007; Davies, 2008; DCSF, 2007b).

On the basis of this hypothesis, it has been widely assumed in educational
circles that schools with mixed populations are beneficial for tolerance. This
assumption can be seen to underpin many of the recommendations relating to
schools found in the Cantle Report (Cantle, 2001), following the riots in Bradford in
2001. The assumed benefits of mixed school populations can also be seen in the
desegregation policies introduced in the USA in the 1960s (Vogt, 1997, p. 153), and
the setting up of integrated schools and other interventions in Northern Ireland
(Donnelly, 2004a; Donnelly, 2004b; Donnelly and Hughes, 2006; Smith, 1991; Smith,
2001). Returning to the English context, the Contact Hypothesis can be seen to
underpin some of the criticism of faith schools in respect of tolerance, as I discuss
further below. There is, however, a growing body of research which holds that the
effects of diversity on school populations are not always positive (Janmaat, 2010;
Janmaat, 2008b), and that the effects may be inconsistent across different groups
(Janmaat, 2010; Schofield, 2001).

2.6 Faith Schools and Tolerance
In the previous section we saw that education has been shown to have an effect on tolerance, even if the mechanism by which this happens is highly complex. The final section in this chapter considers research related specifically to the effect of faith schools on their students’ attitudes of tolerance. Despite widespread and sometimes intense debate in the media there has been little empirical work into the effect of faith schools on pupils' tolerance or levels of prejudice (Grace, 2003). The research which has been conducted is quite disparate and the findings paint a mixed picture which to some extent reflects the heterogeneity of the term ‘faith school’. The limited amount of research in this area has meant that it has been necessary to draw upon studies which look at concepts and attitudes associated with tolerance rather than considering tolerance alone. The disparate nature of the research also means that it is not easy to categorise the literature and thus the two approaches that I refer to here are only an aid to discussion, rather than strictly defined categories.

2.6.1 The Theoretical Approach

The first approach looks at the issue primarily from a theoretical perspective, with any empirical work evaluating interventions derived from the theory. Two main strands of argument can be detected, one relating to segregation, and the other to indoctrination and cultural coherence/primary culture. Both arguments relate closely to the literature on education and tolerance.

2.6.1.a The Segregation Argument

The segregation argument, as I term it, can be seen to have its origins in the Contact Hypothesis (Section 2.5.4). It also relates to a discourse wider than tolerance, constituting the main argument that underpins concerns about faith schools and their contribution to Community Cohesion (Barker and Anderson, 2005; Berkeley, 2008; Cantle, 2001). Faith schools are segregated on the grounds of faith and thus their pupils have little or no contact with those of other faiths. Non-contact means that the students could be ill-prepared to deconstruct stereotypes and thus, Short and Lenga (2002) argue, whilst not increasing prejudice these schools may sustain prejudice.
Evaluations of interventions which draw on the Contact Hypothesis have been the focus of a body of related research, mostly concerned with faith schools in Northern Ireland (Davies, 2008 (Chapter 5); Donnelly, 2004a; Donnelly, 2004b; Donnelly and Hughes, 2006; Lindsay and Lindsay, 2005; Richardson, 2006). Alan Smith’s (1991) evaluation of the ‘Education for Mutual Understanding Programme’ in Northern Ireland found that the programme produced mixed results. Although it gave the pupils an awareness of other communities, Smith was not certain to what extent it enabled the pupils to see issues from alternative points of view. The nature of the contact was crucial and concern was expressed that in some situations the contact in fact reinforced stereotypes.

Lindsay and Lindsay’s (2005) comparison of integrated and sectarian schools in Northern Ireland did find that the students in the integrated schools were more tolerant than their sectarian counterparts, although the students’ home backgrounds were not controlled for. As integrated schools were likely to be chosen by more liberal parents this home background, rather than the school, could account for the difference found. Moreover, Donnelly (2004a; 2004b) questions the effectiveness of integrated schools, suggesting that the issues of real disagreement were not discussed and resolved, just glossed over and that there was an over-reliance on the benefits of contact alone.

2.6.1.b Indoctrination or Cultural Coherence?

The second major argument about why faith schools might be bad for tolerance relates to the area of cognitive sophistication, but tends to focus on whether faith schools are indoctrinating or are educating for cultural coherence.

Faith schools are seen as promoting a particular set of beliefs, values and norms, which in many cases reflects those held by the students’ families, but which may be different from and ‘lack endorsement by the society in which they live’ (Merry, 2007, p. 78). In promoting only one set of beliefs, some would argue that the school is indoctrinating its students and that this has a detrimental effect on tolerance. The precise meaning of indoctrination can be contested, but the following definition given by Pring (2005) covers the main elements. Indoctrination is teaching ‘so as to close the mind, to curb or atrophy the individual’s growing
autonomy, or to teach as certain what [is] essentially controversial’ (ibid, p.58). The effect of closing the students’ minds is to encourage them to ‘identify in a sectarian fashion rather than with the larger collection of their fellow citizens’ (Brighouse, 2006, pp. 78-79) as well as reducing their cognitive skills, which amongst other things may reduce their ability to think beyond the obvious, thus reducing tolerance (Vogt, 1997)(see above). Concern is also frequently expressed over the extent to which faith schools restrict autonomy and the range of choices available to their students, both qualities closely associated with the development of cognitive skills and hence tolerance (for example see Brighouse, 2006; and Pring, 2005).

This view is contested by those who stress the importance to the child of having a stable primary culture and of cultural congruence between school and home (MacMullen, 2007; McLaughlin, 1984; Merry, 2007). Cultural congruence can be seen as improving self-esteem (Short and Lenga, 2002) and producing a strong sense of identity which in return can be ‘a wonderful resource for combating prejudice, stereotyping, and maltreatment’ (Merry, 2007, p. 97), although this positive effect of cultural congruence has been strongly contested (Callan, 1985; Gardner, 1998).

Even those who support the effectiveness of cultural congruence generally argue for limiting the extent to which a child should be restricted from engaging with alternatives. For example, McLaughlin argues that the sheltering effects should be weakened gradually in line with the development of cognitive processes, and critical thinking should be encouraged, particularly at the secondary level (McLaughlin, 1984; McLaughlin, 1985).

Merry (2007) warns that a strong identity, while beneficial in some respects, ‘could also be rooted in tribalism’ (ibid, p.97), and hence foster the formation of in-groups and out-groups which would tend to exacerbate intolerance. O’Keeffe (1992) also suggests that the firm social basis can lead to reproduction and not development. She comments how in some New Christian schools ‘no contrary vision of society is allowed to disturb or disrupt patterns of reproduction. In contrast, other schools are attempting to strike a balance between necessary stability and destructive openness’ (p.106).
2.6.2 The Exploratory Approach

The second approach is more exploratory and grounded than the theoretical approach. Research within this paradigm either focuses on the school, and makes inferences regarding student attitudes from school-based observations, or focuses on the students, relating findings implicitly back to the school. However, very little research actually demonstrates a direct link between aspects of the school and students' attitudes.

2.6.2.a The School

Ethnographic and school studies have been conducted on a variety of faith schools, both in the UK and other countries, for example: Rizvi (2007) on Muslim schools, Rose (1988) on Evangelical Christian schools and Harroff (2004) and Johnson-Weiner (2007) on Amish schools. But for those interested in the effect of faith schools on attitudes these studies are frustrating. They provide valuable insights into the schools, and highlight their considerable diversity, even with respect to just one faith or denomination, but rarely do they convincingly connect what is going on within the school to outcomes in terms of the attitudes of the students.

Research which has looked at aspects of the school includes Short and Lenga’s (2002) study into Jewish schools and their responses to diversity. A variety of attitudes were displayed by the heads who were interviewed, including ‘a minority [who] regarded the whole notion as an irrelevance and were reluctant to do much more than that demanded by the National Curriculum and the National Learning Strategy’ (ibid, p.53). Nevertheless, overall the research concluded that the notion that these schools were necessarily divisive could not be supported.

Other studies have examined the issue of tolerance more specifically. In 2009, following concerns about the way in which independent faith schools were preparing their students for life in Britain, which included concerns about the promotion of tolerance, the Secretary of State commissioned Ofsted to conduct a survey of independent faith schools looking at whether they fulfilled the statutory
requirements in this area (Ofsted, 2009). Apart from criticising a few schools for using teaching material which was biased or which ‘provided inaccurate information about other religions’ (ibid, p.5), independent faith schools were seen to be fulfilling the statutory requirements and Ofsted found no reason to suspect that faith schools were failing to promote tolerance.

Fifty-one independent faith schools were visited for the purpose of this research. However, the account of the report’s methodology does not give any indication of how the schools were chosen or to what extent they were free to refuse to participate, although the implication is that all the schools approached were willing. The lack of sampling information means that it is hard to gauge how representative this sample was of the wider faith school population. If the schools were able to decline to participate, this could result in a selection bias, as it is more likely that those schools who were unwilling to participate would be the ones who were failing to meet the statutory requirements.

Denis MacEoin’s (2009) Civitas report *Music, Chess and Other Sins* does not concur with the Ofsted report’s findings, a difference which may be related to how representative the schools in the Ofsted survey were. He concludes that certain types of Muslim schools found in England today are detrimental to tolerance. His report suggests that these schools, which he classifies as run by non-violent religious fundamentalists who subscribe to a literalist interpretation of the Qur’an, see education as ‘a process of inoculating children against infection by Western ideas’ (ibid, p.viii), and he sees the separatism these schools promote as undermining religious toleration. Although this is one of the few studies to have tolerance as its main focus it needs to be viewed with caution. No research was conducted in any Muslim school, instead the report was based on an internet survey of school websites and associated websites and thus did not necessarily reflect what actually occurred in the schools.

Far from being antipathetic to diversity and tolerance, in some instances the religious affiliation and religious teachings underpinning schools may conceivably enhance pupils’ tolerance of diversity, or at least be perceived by parents as doing so (Haegel, 1999). Walsh’s (2000) study into Jesuit education and the way that this changed from the 1970s, with new understanding and interpretations of Ignatian
spirituality⁹ (see also Elias, 2002) also makes this connection between religious belief, schools and positive values with respect to tolerance.

2.6.2.b The Students

Whilst not directly relating to tolerance, some research examining the students’ perspective suggests school effects on their attitudes. Ap Sion et al.’s (2007) ongoing longitudinal study following graduates from New Christian schools found that while many of the male students found their school experience positive, some commented on the expectation of ‘conformity rather than difference’ (ibid, p.10). Moreover they felt that their limited experience of the outside world made them unprepared to interact with non-Christians. This lack of experience in relating to members of diverse communities was also highlighted in Huerta and Flemmer’s (2005) study of pre-service teacher training in Utah. In this study, as in others, it is the congruence between home and school rather than the school alone which is seen to be problematic (see Peshkin, 1986; and Rose, 1988).

Research looking at the attitudes of faith school pupils has largely concentrated on single denomination studies, predominantly Roman Catholic, rather than being comparative across faith traditions or making comparisons with non-faith schools, and has tended to focus on a range of attitudes, not just tolerance. These studies have all found the impact of the school to be positive, producing well-rounded individuals (Flynn, 1993; Grace, 2002; Walsh, 2000).

In the limited number of studies where attitude comparisons have been attempted, the lack of difference in values is more striking than any disparity (Dronkers, 2004; Francis, 2005; Peshkin, 1986). Greer’s (1993) study comparing the openness towards the Religious Other of students attending Roman Catholic and Protestant schools in Northern Ireland did find differences between the students, with the Catholic school students significantly more open than their Protestant counterparts. Nevertheless, he also highlights that ‘despite the years of violence and bloodshed since 1969, pupils of secondary school age were inclined to be open rather than closed towards “the other side” of the Northern Ireland community’

⁹ The Jesuit religious life is based on the spiritual life and writings of St Ignatius Loyola.
(ibid, p.458). Reporting on research conducted in the Netherlands, Dronkers (2004) concludes that ‘on the whole one cannot find large differences among public and religious schools in the noncognitive domain’ (p.304) and also reports similar findings from a Belgian study by Elchardus and Kavadias. Francis (2005) found that, in comparison to other non-denominational schools, the boys in New Christian schools held more conservative attitudes to sexual morality, which he maintains ‘demonstrates that the boys attending Christian schools have been influenced significantly by this teaching’ (ibid, p.135), whereas in terms of being law-abiding, the attitudes of the two groups were not significantly different. Peshkin’s study (1986) found that students at a fundamentalist Christian school in the USA showed less racially prejudiced attitudes, but were less tolerant of civil rights compared with students in the local public school. A review of the research in this area thus does not indicate that faith schools necessarily have a negative impact on their students’ attitudes of tolerance. Again, in all the research mentioned here tolerance is one attitude amongst several under investigation, rather than the sole focus of the study.

Even fewer studies directly relate what occurs in the school to the attitudes of students. Peshkin’s ethnographic study (1986), God’s Choice, looking at the Bethany Baptist Academy (BBA), a fundamentalist Christian school in the USA, is probably the most extensive and detailed study of this type. Using interviews and questionnaires in order to ‘measure’ various attitudes, in combination with a detailed ethnographic study of the school, he was able to comment on the extent to which the school, primarily by the way that it promoted religious identity, impacted on its students’ attitudes. For his part, Walsh’s (2000) research focused on how the Jesuit character of the school he investigated was reflected in the curriculum and to what extent this was evident in the values espoused by students. Thus he again connected the school and the outcome in terms of student values.

From these attitude comparisons it is hard to conclude that faith schools, even those very fundamentalist schools such as BBA, are necessarily bad for tolerance, although the research does indicate that differences exist between faith and non-faith schools in this area.
2.7 Summary of theoretical approaches

Figures 2.1 and 2.2 below offer a good summary of the mechanisms through which education and faith schools have been found to influence tolerance. The literature suggests that education may impact on tolerance through three main pathways; through cognitive sophistication, through contact with others, and through socialisation (direct teaching and personality development). Differences between faith and non-faith schools in one or more of these areas could result in differences in the students’ attitudes of tolerance. A person’s attitude of tolerance in a given context is unlikely to originate from a single source, and may include components related to their individual characteristics and identity as well as their social identity (Section 2.3.7). One of the main aims of many faith schools is faith nurture, helping the students to learn about and identify with a given faith tradition; in essence promoting the formation of a student’s religious (social) identity. Whilst some would argue that non-faith schools are also involved in identity formation, whether that be civic or otherwise, in England at least this is certainly not the main stated aim of education. This aim of faith nurture and the formation and promotion of a particular social identity can be seen to be a major difference between faith and non-faith schools. Therefore, as well as the three education pathways, an additional pathway was highlighted in faith schools, that of the religious identity and the way that the school is involved in the formation and nurturing of that identity (see Figures 2.1. and 2.2).
2.8 This Study’s Methodology

2.8.1 Collecting data on tolerance and school influences

The two research questions that guide this study ask what differences there are in attitudes of tolerance between students in faith and non-faith schools, if any, and
secondly how the school might be involved in this. The focus of the first research question is therefore the students’ attitudes towards a range of objects of tolerance. The focus of the second research question is on the school, and in particular those aspects of the school highlighted in the previous section as possibly impacting on tolerance: cognitive sophistication, contact, socialisation and the formation of the religious identity.

How, and with which modes of data collection, can student attitudes of tolerance and school influences be measured? In view of the exploratory nature of this study, I decided that a mixed methods approach would be most effective in addressing this question. Thus, a combination of questionnaires among students, semi-structured interviews with students and staff, and classroom observations was used to collect relevant information.

Student attitudes were in the first instance captured by a questionnaire. Questions were devised to capture students’ levels of tolerance in relation to various minorities and outgroups (i.e. different objects of tolerance). These questions were intended to tap both a passive and an active mode of tolerance (see Sections A and B, respectively, of Appendix A). Both modes constitute a simplification of Walzer’s (1997) continuum of tolerance, discussed above. The passive mode refers to Walzer’s bottom three degrees of tolerance (i.e. resigned acceptance; benign indifference; moral stoicism), while the active mode represents the top two degrees of tolerance (i.e. openness to others; endorsement of difference). Lynn Davies (2011) also distinguishes between an active and passive variety in her typology of approaches to teaching about conflict (as discussed previously). The questionnaire further taps information about student backgrounds, contacts with others, the school and teaching practices (see Appendix A). Thus, based on data from the questionnaire alone, links can be made between aspects of the school and the teaching experienced on the one hand and tolerance outcomes on the other. The number of completed questionnaires ranges between 24 and 143 in the 6 schools participating in the research (see Table 2.1).

However, questionnaire data cannot detect subtle differences, nor can reasons behind choices be explored (Arksey and Knight, 1999). I perceived this as a possible weakness in tolerance research and therefore aimed to rectify this by
combining a questionnaire with face to face interviews in which moral dilemmas were posed and the students’ reasoning explored. Drawing on the work of Piaget and Kohlberg, this technique has been widely used in developmental psychology to understand children’s reasoning in the moral domain (Witenberg, 2007). It has also been adapted to explore attitudes of tolerance (Enright and Lapsley, 1981; Wainryb, Shaw and Maianu, 1998; Witenberg, 2007). The moral scenarios were based, as far as possible, on real situations of which the students were likely to be aware. Interviews were conducted with eight students in each school.

A variety of methods were used to gain information about aspects of the schools that might influence tolerance, partly because no single method provide details about every aspect of the school, but more importantly to enable a picture to be built up from different perspectives. The use of multiple sources of evidence which these methods produced allowed for triangulation of the data, which in turn improved the construct validity of the study, a recognised problem with qualitative research (Gomm, Hammersley and Foster, 2000; Yin, 1994).

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with key members of staff within each school. This mode of data collection enabled comparisons to be made, and intentions, views and understandings to be probed as appropriate (Flick, 1998; Robson, 2002). The interview schedules were tailored to the respondent and the school. Interviews with students and staff were anonymised. Pseudonyms were used to identify respondents.

Lesson observations were also used in the research; in all cases the researcher assumed a non-participant role. The observations were employed in two phases and in two ways. In the first term, pupil shadowing was used in an unstructured way in order to gain a general understanding of the school (Robson, 2002). In the second phase of the fieldwork, more structured observations focused on the areas where attitudes were most likely to be discussed and imparted, and where religious nurture was likely to be most in evidence, such as RE, Citizenship and PSHEE. Here the focus was on the extent to which discussion was allowed and the ways in which the students' own faith, and those of others, was presented. Detailed notes were made during the lesson observations or shortly afterwards.
More general field notes were also made throughout the time spent in the schools and included my own reflections.

Official school documents, such as policies, syllabuses, websites, inspection reports and prospectuses, were also consulted in order to give another perspective on the schools.

2.8.2 The Selection of Schools

The most problematic aspect of this research involved determining what part the schools played in producing the differences in tolerance seen between their students. A large quantitative study might have enabled the school effects to be more effectively isolated, but this approach was rejected because the formation of attitudes is complex, and it was likely that any explanation would involve a combination of factors. Thus an approach was required which could keep cases whole and would be able to pick up the interaction of different factors. Therefore, I decided to concentrate on a few schools and to employ a predominantly qualitative method in this part of the research. This approach allowed each school to be studied as a whole so that aspects of the institution could be understood in context (Golafshani, 2003). In addition, this method allowed for flexibility, seen as advantageous given the exploratory nature of this study, where a more fixed design might have meant that important events and people could otherwise have been missed (Robson, 2002).

The exploratory nature of this study meant that schools were chosen on the basis of particular criteria. As this was not a random sample of schools, the findings apply only to the schools involved in the research and cannot be statistically generalised to the whole population of faith schools, or to schools of any particular faith or denomination. However, it is possible to make analytical generalisations which allow the conclusions drawn to be tentatively applied to other contexts or situations, including other schools of a similar type (Ragin, 1987; Yin, 2003).

The criticisms of faith schools and their ability to promote tolerance tend to categorise all faith schools together, the exception being David Bell’s speech on Citizenship (Guardian, 2005c). However, the heterogeneity of faith schools, even
amongst schools run by the same faith group, is evident after even a brief acquaintance with faith schools (Halstead and McLaughlin, 2005; Rizvi, 2007). In order to capture and explore this variety it was decided to compare across different types of faith schools.

One of the main concerns over faith schools and tolerance is connected to the school’s role in nurturing a particular religious identity (Guardian, 2006b; Halstead and McLaughlin, 2005). Therefore, an important criterion in the selection was that the school’s primary aim was faith nurture. The consequence of this was that the largest group of English faith schools, Anglican schools, as well as some other faith schools such as Quaker schools, were excluded from this research, because these schools have always seen their role in education as encompassing more than an exclusive nurturing in the faith. Both of those types of faith schools also see themselves as servicing the wider community.

Although it would have been possible to have included Anglican schools in this study, their dual mission was considered likely to complicate an already complex and under-researched area.

Within the group of faith schools primarily concerned with faith nurture, the schools were chosen to reflect four other factors which can be seen to differentiate between faith schools and which also relate to tolerance.

The first factor was the faith tradition, including denominational differences, which is the most frequently used alternative classification of faith schools. Differences in belief are certainly widely assumed to lead to differences in tolerance (See Section 2.4).

Another difference, related to faith, was to consider not what is believed, but the nature of belief; the way that a person holds that belief. One way to capture the nature of belief was to compare schools run by faith groups which hold exclusivist beliefs with those that hold inclusivist or even pluralist beliefs. In Section 2.4, it was seen that much research has indicated that exclusivist theology may give rise to lower tolerance.

The next factor was whether the school was independent or state maintained, a distinction which David Bell (Guardian, 2005c) himself made. Independent schools have a wider degree of autonomy particularly regarding the
curriculum and admissions. Any detrimental school effect is therefore likely to be more acute in these schools as they are less regulated by the state. In addition, faith schools constitute a significant proportion (40%) of independent schools in the UK (DCSF, 2007a), with many others having a faith foundation and still retaining a residual link to that faith. In some cases, almost all the schools operated by a particular faith or denomination are independent.

The final factor to consider was whether the faith is in a minority position within the UK. As noted in the earlier discussion of Social Identity Theory, group status and the perception of threat are important factors to be considered in the case of tolerance, and perceived group threat in particular is more likely to be an issue in the case of minority faiths.

A number of different schools could have fulfilled these criteria, but practicalities meant that the number of faith schools was limited to four. In his speech David Bell (Guardian, 2005b) specifically mentioned Muslim and Evangelical Christian Schools, and as I had previously conducted research on such schools I decided that these would be suitable, fulfilling several of the criteria (Everett, 2006). These two school types could only be considered in the independent sector. In addition, I decided to include Roman Catholic schools. Partly this was because I had also previously conducted research in Catholic schools (Everett, 2008), but more importantly because they represent the second largest group of faith schools in England and span the independent and state sectors.

Although not considered a significant factor, Roman Catholic schools arguably also provide a contrast to the Evangelical Christian and Muslim schools. The Roman Catholic Church has had a long history of running schools in England and, although controversial, Roman Catholic schools were given state funding from the establishment of the dual system in 1902 (Murphy, 1971), whereas Evangelical Christian and Muslim schools only emerged in the 1960s and 1970s (Ansari, 2000; Baker and Freeman, 2005; Everett, 2006). Moreover similarities have been noted between the Roman Catholic Church’s struggle to gain state funding for its schools in the early part of the twentieth century and the situation for Muslim schools today (Hurst, 2000).
The first research question makes a comparison between the attitudes of tolerance displayed by students in faith and non-faith schools, and therefore it was necessary to include non-faith schools within the sample, in order that the comparison could be made and any faith effect determined. Only one of the factors used above to categorise faith schools was applicable to non-faith schools - whether the school was independent or state maintained - so it was decided to include two non-faith schools in the research, one independent and one maintained.

Rather than giving the schools fictional names which might get confusing, I decided to refer to them by a code. The code reflected the school faith (Roman Catholic (RC), Evangelical Christian (EC), Muslim (M) or non-faith (NF)), as well as whether it was state maintained (S) or independent (I). Table 2.1 shows the selected schools, their codes and the number of completed questionnaires obtained from each.

Table 2.1. The selected schools

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School</th>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Number of Student Questionnaires</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Roman Catholic Independent</td>
<td>RCI</td>
<td>101</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roman Catholic State</td>
<td>RCS</td>
<td>104</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evangelical Christian Independent</td>
<td>ECI</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Muslim Independent</td>
<td>MI</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Faith State</td>
<td>NFI</td>
<td>85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Faith Independent</td>
<td>NFS</td>
<td>143</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

I also took the decision to focus on secondary schools (11-16/18) in England\textsuperscript{10}, and within those predominantly on Year 10 students. These students will have mostly

\textsuperscript{10} Issues over access meant that one school was a 13-18 school (Year 9-13).
been within the school for a number of years as well as being of an age (14-15) at which many would likely be able to articulate their views in interview. This is also an age at which adolescents are beginning to form their own identity as opposed to merely reproducing the opinions of their parents or other significant adults (Bertram-Troost, de Roos and Miedema, 2007).
3.1 Introduction

This chapter commences the empirical analysis, making it pertinent once again to recapitulate the research questions: what differences in attitudes of tolerance are there between students in faith and non-faith schools; and what part does the school play in the formation of those attitudes? As indicated in the previous chapter, in order to comment on the role of the school, data relating to each school will be analysed, generating hypotheses which predict the attitudes of tolerance displayed by the students in the various schools. These hypotheses can then be tested against the findings from the analysis of the questions exploring the students’ attitudes of tolerance (see Chapter 6). Confirmation of a hypothesis will indicate that a particular aspect of the school is involved in the formation of the relevant attitude.

In order that these hypotheses can be generated, this and the following two chapters (4 and 5) will analyse the data about the schools, which was collected from a variety of sources. This chapter focuses on the schools themselves, drawing mainly upon interviews with staff, lesson observation and, to a lesser extent, school documentation. Chapters 4 and 5 concentrate on the students’ perceptions. The hypotheses generated in this chapter are only provisional, but in Chapters 4 and 5, once all the data have been analysed and incorporated, these hypotheses will be given in their final working form.

Most of those who express concerns about the ability of faith schools to promote tolerance categorise schools in a dichotomous manner, as either faith or non-faith. However, in this chapter and the following two, the inadequacy of this categorisation will become apparent. The schools will be seen to vary in many ways. Interestingly, I find little difference between the faith and non-faith schools when considering those aspects which the literature has suggested impact on the students’ attitudes of tolerance. But one school in particular, the Muslim Independent school, does emerge as different from the others in several respects; differences which are reflected in the hypotheses. A consequence of this, which is
particularly apparent in last chapter, is that the emphasis of the discussion in this study changes. While the earlier chapters employ the faith/non-faith categorisation, the focus later shifts to a comparison between the MI school and all the others (faith and non-faith).

This chapter begins by discussing the themes used in the analysis of the data here and in Chapters 4 and 5, before looking at each school in turn. Schools are complex places and thus it is important to understand each institution individually, taking account of its historical, social and cultural context. As the research focus is on faith schools, these are discussed first. Within each group, the schools are considered in chronological order of foundation.

3.2 School Themes

Although the schools need to be considered in context, it is also necessary to have a framework within which to consider those features that might affect their students’ attitudes of tolerance. In Chapter 2, education was seen potentially to relate to tolerance in three ways: through facilitating contact with the Other, through increasing students’ cognitive sophistication, and through socialisation into the beliefs, values and norms of society. But I have suggested that faith schools could also affect their students’ attitudes of tolerance through the nurture of a religious identity. Thus the mechanisms by which education is seen to impact on tolerance, and theories which relate social identity and tolerance, provide the basis on which the schools have been selected and analysed.

The data are considered in relation to four themes based on the three education pathways discussed above (Contact, Cognitive Sophistication, Socialisation), with the religious identity pathway (Religious Identity) forming the fourth. Owing to the complex nature of attitude formation, these four themes are not discrete, but inevitably overlap; nevertheless they help structure the analysis. After briefly outlining these four themes, the school as a whole is considered from both the institutional perspective (the current chapter) and that of the students (Chapters 4 and 5). Where some elements of a theme are more related to a particular perspective, this is indicated.
3.2.1 Contact

This theme involves considering the way in which the school impacts on students’ attitudes of tolerance through contact with the Other. The Contact Hypothesis (Allport, 1954; Vogt, 1997), the theory on which this mechanism is posited, maintains that certain forms of contact between groups are beneficial in correcting negative stereotypes and thus enhancing tolerance (Chapter 2.5.4). In order to be able to hypothesise about whether the school might be impacting on its students in this way it is necessary to explore:

- How much contact the students have with other groups, which groups they have contact with, and which groups they are segregated from.
- To what extent the school encourages contact (understood as also including knowledge about, as well as direct interaction with) other groups, and what form that contact takes.

3.2.2 Socialisation

The impact of a school on tolerance through socialisation relates to the message it gives to its students (Chapter 2.5.4 and 2.5.5); therefore it is necessary to understand the moral framework of the school. Socialisation into group beliefs, values and norms relates to personality development, and the focus here is on the whole school (Jackson, BOOSTROM and Hansen, 1973). In contrast, the mechanism of socialisation through the curriculum relates to direct and explicit teaching of particular beliefs, values and norms (Haegel, 1999; Peri, 1999). There is some overlap between this theme and the theme of Religious Identity, both of which are concerned with socialisation into a group’s beliefs, values and norms. The Socialisation theme focuses on socialisation into general societal beliefs, values and norms, whereas the Religious Identity theme is solely concerned with socialisation into the religious group. In order to form any hypothesis regarding whether the school might be affecting tolerance in this way it is necessary to consider:

- To what extent tolerance and diversity are explicitly and positively endorsed.
- The way in which Others are portrayed.
3.2.3 Cognitive Sophistication

The extent to which the school develops the students’ levels of cognitive sophistication is the focus of this theme. Higher levels of cognitive sophistication are seen to result in increased levels of tolerance (Chapter 2.5.2). Cognitive sophistication may be increased by encouraging debate, critical thinking and reasoning skills (Bobo and Licari, 1989; Zellman and Sears, 1971). In order to hypothesise whether the school might be detrimentally affecting its students’ attitudes by not developing these skills, the data are analysed by exploring:

- The extent to which the students are encouraged to debate, to critically examine beliefs and assumptions, and to challenge authority.
- The extent to which the students are helped to make choices and to develop and express their own ideas and views.

3.2.4 The Religious Identity

This theme is explored both in this and the next chapter. The primary focus here is faith and the formation of the Religious (social) Identity. The analysis draws heavily on Social Identity Theory (Chapter 2.3.7) which maintains that four criteria need to be met in order for inter-group discrimination and bias to occur; these form the basis of the categories according to which the data are analysed. Each criterion is briefly recapped below along with the relevant questions which need to be asked of the data.

**Criterion 1: Identification**

The student must identify with the group and this identity needs to be valued and important and to be frequently used before it can direct action (Herriot,
2007; Hogg, 2006). This is only explored from the students’ perspective (Chapter 4). The questions relating to this criterion are:

☐ To what extent do the students identify with their faith?
☐ When, where, and how often is the religious identity used?

**Criterion 2: The Salience of the Identity**

This criterion is explored in both Chapters 4 and 5. The student must perceive that a group is present and salient in a particular context (Herriot, 2007; Hogg, 2006). Salience is increased when the in-group is seen as distinct from the out-group (Tajfel and Turner, 1986). The greater the degree of distinction the more likely it is that intolerance will be shown towards a particular out-group. It is therefore necessary to ask:

☐ How distinct is the religious identity?
☐ What in-group and out-group characteristics can be detected?

**Criterion 3: Which Groups are Relevant**

Bias will only be directed towards those groups which are relevant. In addition to geographical considerations, relevance is linked to the degree of security and threat a group perceives in a certain situation. This criterion is explored from both the schools’ and the students’ perspectives (Chapters 4 and 5). The questions relating to this criterion are:

☐ Against which groups are comparisons made in a particular religious context?\(^{11}\) (Who are the out-groups?)
☐ To what extent, and in what way, does the faith group (the in-group) perceive itself to be threatened?

**Criterion 4: The Perceived Social Structure of Inter-Group Relations**

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\(^{11}\) This aspect overlaps with the Socialisation theme, but here the focus is on the Other in comparison to the religious group.
The extent to which the group members see the in-group as permeable is the final criterion, which is again explored from both perspectives. In-groups which are seen as impermeable leave their members with no other option than to employ social bias if the group is threatened (Herriot, 2007). The relevant question here then is:

☐ To what extent is the religious group seen as permeable?

Having discussed the ways in which the data in this and the subsequent two chapters will be analysed, I now proceed to a discussion of the schools which served as the fieldwork sites. More details about individual school characteristics and related statistics can be found in Appendix H.

3.3 The Roman Catholic Independent School

The oldest of the faith schools in this sample, the RCI school, is a co-educational 13-18 (Years 9-13) Roman Catholic boarding school run by a Benedictine community of monks. Originally a single-sex boys’ school, girls were formally admitted into the 6th Form in 1999 and now the school is fully co-educational with a male-female ratio of about 2:1. It is primarily a boarding school, with over 80% of the pupils boarding, and as such is different from the rest of the schools in this research, with its boarding character potentially offering more opportunity for the school to impact on its students’ attitude formation. The Benedictine nature of the school gives it a particular character and implies a distinctive approach to life and education. The key elements of its Benedictine character are seen by the school itself to be community, balance, prayer and faith in action.

The school is located in a rural part of England and is set in extensive grounds. There is little cultural, religious or ethnic diversity in the surrounding area and the nearest city, about 25 miles away, is very mono-cultural (Appendix J). The school and monastery are intimately connected, both physically and

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12 Admissions Director (RCI)
13 Head Teacher (RCI)
14 RCI website
metaphorically. At the time of the fieldwork, the Headmaster was a monk from the community, and the SMT, including the heads of the boarding houses, were all practising Roman Catholics. Other staff came from a variety of faith backgrounds including some with no faith. At the heart of the site is the imposing Abbey Church. The other buildings vary in age from Victorian to modern, and include boarding houses and a large sports complex. This arrangement of buildings with the Abbey at the centre reflects the essence of the school which has faith at its heart.

The facilities offered are impressive, with the school able to provide a broad curriculum and an extensive range of extra-curricular activities, from music and drama to CCF, sports and art. Although catering for students with a wide range of abilities and needs the school has regularly been ranked within the top 250 schools in the country, attaining significantly above the national average in GCSE results and on average sending around ten students to Oxbridge each year. All the students, including day pupils, are assigned to a boarding house. These are single sex and generally house between 60 and 70 students.

As will become evident with the other faith schools, the history of the school is intimately connected with the religious atmosphere of the time of its foundation. The school was originally founded in 1802, predominately by monks who had escaped from persecution in France during the Revolution, and later it took in boys from a German Benedictine school which had been suppressed by the Prussian Government. Although Roman Catholics in England at that time were denied places at university and were prevented from holding public office, the religious orders were nevertheless tolerated, in contrast to the situation in some other parts of Europe. The school’s primary aim at this time was to educate future members of the religious order, monks and priests. A ‘limited number’\textsuperscript{15} of boys from the local gentry, who were not destined for the monastic life, were also admitted.

The school in its present form emerged at the beginning of the twentieth century. The catalyst for this change was a serious decline in school numbers due,

\textsuperscript{15} School history p.18
in part, to fewer boys offering themselves for the monastic life, but the change was also intimately linked to Catholic Modernism (discussed below).  

The RCI school has historically attracted, and still does attract, the majority of its students from what is commonly referred to as the Roman Catholic aristocracy. This difference in intake is what primarily differentiates the two Roman Catholic schools in this study, but this has resonances beyond just social class factors. By the later nineteenth century, these English Roman Catholic families were no longer excluded from leadership roles in the country (Hastings, 1986). Parents now wanted their sons to be educated in a way that would prepare them for those roles, instilling in them qualities of leadership, independence, and a sense of responsibility. While this mode of education was typical of the English Public School, it was alien to traditional Roman Catholic education, which was about transmission of the faith and preparation for the religious life.

The same period saw the emergence of Catholic Modernism which looked to reinterpret religious teaching in the light of biblical criticism and modern, scientific thinking (Vidler, 1961). Many of the Roman Catholic aristocracy responded positively to this more liberal Catholicism, as did a number of the influential monks at the RCI school, and hence the newly emerging school reflected this (Hastings, 1986). Although the Benedictine tradition, barring a few episodes in its history, has been a community of mission and practical service rather than intellectual rigour, the community recognised the importance of educated staff for teaching the boys in this new-style school. Hence teaching brothers were educated to a high level and well-qualified lay staff were also employed.

Catholic Modernism was fairly short-lived, halted in 1908 with Pius X’s Ne Temere decree and replaced by Ultramontanism which restricted liberal interpretations of scripture and history. However, Hastings argues that in England the Roman Catholic aristocracy were spared the worst of the purge on account of their considerable social influence.

‘Cardinal Bourne [the English primate at the time] knew well enough that the laity would not endure too harsh a clerical rein: they shared

\[^{16} ibid\]
\[^{17} ibid\]
\[^{18} ibid\]
too deeply the liberal attitudes of their protestant neighbours’

This somewhat lenient approach towards the aristocracy might indicate why the school was able to maintain a liberal Catholic tradition which even today remains a distinctive aspect of this institution.

3.3.1 Contact

The school admissions policy did not indicate selection on any particular grounds. At the time of the research the school was popular but not oversubscribed, with supply just about meeting demand. The result was that selection was made neither on faith adherence nor on academic ability. The school would only reject a pupil on the latter grounds if it was felt that the student’s needs could not be adequately met. Nevertheless, in practice the school was segregated.

Segregation occurred on religious grounds despite the formal absence of a religious criterion for selection. About 80% of the pupils were Roman Catholic, with Anglicans the second largest group19. The uncompromising and explicit religious stance taken by the school20 resulted in a strong element of self-selection, and it was assumed that parents unsympathetic to the religious nature of the school would not send their children there.21 The same applied to staff appointments as well.22 In consequence, while a diversity of religious views and adherence existed within the school, this remained within moderately narrow limits.

The students had very little opportunity for contact with students of other faiths. Other faiths were discussed as part of the Christian Living course, but the KS3 and KS4 RE syllabus solely related to Roman Catholicism.

Although located in a mono-cultural area, on account of its boarding character, the school exhibited a higher degree of ethnic diversity than might initially have been assumed1. Over one third of students were from overseas, mainly Europe, South America and the Far East, and this market was growing 23

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19 Admissions Director (RCI)
20 Chaplain(RCI)
21 ibid
22 Head Teacher (RCI)
23 Admissions Director (RCI)
lack of diversity in the surrounding area and the isolated position of the school meant that, unlike the other students featured in this study, during term time the students’ main experience of diversity was that which existed within the school.

The most obvious area of segregation was in terms of the socio-economic status of the students and their families. Fees in the region of £17,000 p.a. for day pupils and £27,000 p.a. for boarding meant that the school was open only to a few in society (Good Schools Guide, 2010). The limited number of bursaries, sometimes in excess of 100% of the fees, has done little to redress the lack of diversity in this area. The school was trying to develop links with inner city schools to increase the amount of contact that its students had with people from a wider variety of socio-economic backgrounds.\textsuperscript{24} The students were very aware of this difference and were often reminded of their privileged status\textsuperscript{25}. It is possible that doing so actually might have reinforced this facet of their identity. An important point to make here is that this segregation on socio-economic grounds cannot be directly related to the religious aspect of the school.

\subsection*{3.3.2 Socialisation}

The school has a very explicit moral framework, the Magisterium of the Roman Catholic Church, and this framework is the authority on which decisions in the school are based. The Rule of St Benedict is also very influential, and was seemingly used in an authoritative way, but on closer inspection it was clear that its deployment was more in the nature of guidance than authority.

The school actively encouraged the students to engage in activities other than those associated with the faith, as can be seen by the wide range of extra-curricular activities on offer. Various discussion and debating groups provided space for a range of views to be aired and respected. Tolerance of other faiths was evidenced in that provision was made for the local Anglican priest to celebrate communion for the Anglican students and for them to be prepared for confirmation, although this arguably constituted a passive rather than active mode of tolerance. Firmly rooted in the Benedictine tradition, faith in action, service and

\textsuperscript{24} Chaplain (RCI)  
\textsuperscript{25} Chaplain, Head of CT (RCI)
responsibility towards others were strongly emphasised throughout the school. Many of the students take gap years, and there were many and varied opportunities throughout the year for the students to engage in voluntary and charity work.\(^\text{26}\) This emphasis on service indicated to the students what was considered as a suitable response to the Other, which indicates active tolerance.

### 3.3.3 Cognitive Sophistication

Although the school subscribed to an explicit moral framework there was no indication that the students were required to accept the Magisterium. Neither was this framework presented to students as a set of rules which had to be blindly followed. Instead, the emphasis was on this being a moral framework on which choices could be based. This I think is reflected in the official aim of the school to provide the students ‘with a spiritual compass for life’\(^\text{27}\) [RCI website]. This phrase emphasises the importance that the school attaches to having a moral framework, but the use of the term ‘spiritual compass’ leaves the way open for there to be moral frameworks other than one based on Roman Catholic teaching and belief.

The importance of choice, even with respect to matters of faith, could be seen within the school and was probably most evident in the Christian Living course. This course was the school’s version of PSHEE and Citizenship, to a large extent covering the topics found in National Curriculum guidance,\(^\text{28}\) but doing so from a standpoint reflecting the school’s moral framework. Its aim was seen as helping the students to link various aspects of their life, or to help the students to realise that ‘life is not compartmentalised’.\(^\text{29}\) The course did not refrain from expressing the Roman Catholic Church’s teaching on a particular topic and it was presented in an openly confessional manner. In a Year 10 lesson on Lent, the student worksheet, which was confidential to the student, asked them ‘What is my experience of confession?’\(^\text{30}\) However, other options were given; for example,
when teaching about contraception, the Head of Health Education explained that he was definite about giving the Roman Catholic line, but also discussed other options, seeing it as negligent not to do so. \(^{31}\)

The grounding in a moral framework based on Roman Catholic teaching did not mean that the students were required to make decisions from that basis. The course encouraged the students to consider issues they might face, such as drugs and alcohol, and to start thinking about how they would make those choices, and to develop a framework within which to make those choices. There was no prohibition on challenging this moral framework, and passive acceptance of it was discouraged. On the other hand, except for those taking AS/A2 Christian Theology, this was the only moral framework presented to the students. No alternative framework was intentionally discussed or actively considered, but it was clear that, in challenging the religious framework, alternatives were in fact encountered.

The school might have placed a strong emphasis on Roman Catholic teaching and be explicit about its moral framework, but this did not mean that it restricted debate or critical thinking and reasoning. This was most evident in the approach taken in Christian Theology, but was also seen in Christian Living. \(^{32}\) Throughout many of the Christian Theology lessons I observed that alternative views and ideas were encouraged; \(^{33}\) for example, in one Christian Theology lesson students discussed the weaknesses of Pope Pius XII’s position on the origin of the universe. Any views expressed, including those in line with Roman Catholic teaching, had to stand up to scrutiny and be argued with reference to reason. This emphasis on critical engagement was very much grounded in the liberal Catholic tradition of the school. The importance of encouraging this critical engagement was emphasised by the Head of CT who explained that whilst he felt that the concentration on teaching only one faith had many advantages, he also saw that the lack of religious diversity could be detrimental to the students in developing critical thinking skills, forcing him at times to play devil’s advocate. \(^{34}\)

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\(^{31}\) Head of Health Education (RCI)
\(^{32}\) Head of CT (RCI)
\(^{33}\) Lesson observations
\(^{34}\) Head of CT (RCI)
3.3.4 The Religious Identity

The explicitly faith-related aspects of this school were among the most extensive and comprehensive of all the schools in this research, partly due to its boarding nature. Other identities were also promoted through the wide range of non-faith based academic and extra-curricular activities in which the students were encouraged to participate.35.

During term-time, the school effectively became the primary venue and source of the students’ religious practice and formation. This intensive environment enabled a degree of continuity in faith formation which was not found in the other schools. However, the school authorities would not see themselves as operating alone, but in partnership with the parents, reinforcing the home beliefs and practices.36

In terms of religious practice, all students, irrespective of their faith, were required to attend Sunday morning Mass in the Abbey Church and the House Mass during the week, as well as being present at morning and evening House prayers. In addition, all the students participated in two retreats a year, one House-based and one Year-based.

Religious Studies, or Christian Theology (CT) as it is known in the school, was compulsory until Year 13. In Year 9, the course was internally devised, but for GCSE the students followed the AQA syllabus taking the modules which concentrated specifically on Roman Catholic teaching37. In Years 12 and 13 many students continued with Christian Theology at AS and A level. The course followed was that offered by AQA with the focus on Ethics and Philosophy of Religions. Year 12 students not taking AS were required to take the GCSE short course AQA Ethics and Philosophy of Religions. All students also took a non-examined, internally devised programme on Christian Living, and its associated course on Health Education.

35 RCI website, Head Teacher, Chaplain(RCI)
36 Head Teacher(RCI)
37 ‘The Christian Life and St Mark’s Gospel and ‘The Effects of the Roman Catholic Tradition upon aspects of Christian Lifestyle and Behaviour’
The school also provided non-formal opportunities for the students to explore their faith through Confirmation, student-led Lectio Divina (meditative Bible study) groups (over 200 students attended these), retreats, and religious visits and pilgrimages. These groups were more confessional than the compulsory religious activities as they were catering for those students who wanted to explore their faith further.

Within this school, faith was important and evident, but development of the religious identity involved little in the way of comparisons with other faiths or belief systems. In general, in-groups and out-groups were not directly or explicitly invoked. Except with respect to the Sacrament of communion, non-Catholics were never excluded, and many went to the Lectio Divina groups and chaplaincy.

During interviews with various staff, the only ‘group’ to which any comparison was made, and which could be seen in any way as a threat, was secularism, which was seen as reflecting a relativistic world view. Despite being referred to directly in interviews it was not portrayed to the students in such an explicit manner. This was most evident in the Christian Living course where the religious framework was foregrounded as an alternative to secularism. Secularism was not portrayed as wholly bad, but rather the course emphasised that there were other valid and worthwhile moral frameworks on the basis of which to make decisions, specifically Roman Catholicism. Roman Catholicism was portrayed as a positive and valid choice, and this could be seen in the way that alumni were celebrated for the positive contribution they had made to the wider society.

Despite focusing on Roman Catholicism, the GCSE and A level courses did not require the students to take a confessional stance. In the lessons I observed that some students and teachers did make reference to their own beliefs, but this was never required or expected from the students. Although attendance at services and prayer was mandatory, participation was not, being acknowledged as a matter of conscience. Many of the staff interviewees recognised that within the

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38 Head Teacher, Chaplain, Head of Health Education and Christian Living Teacher(RCI)
39 Head of CT, Head of Health Education(RCI)
40 For example a section of the website highlighting the lives of seven alumni
41 Lesson observations
school people were at different stages in developing their beliefs or along their spiritual journey and the school needed to respond to them wherever they were.⁴² That the students would question their faith was not only accepted, but encouraged and considered in a positive light. Faith was presented as a choice, as permeable, and the individual's decision to believe or not was respected by the staff and other students.

### 3.3.5 RCI School Summary

Faith was a key and prominent part of the RCI school’s ethos and being. There was no evidence that the school was failing to develop its students’ cognitive skills. Faith was presented as a matter of personal choice, and critical examination of the faith was actively encouraged. Neither was there any indication that the school was promoting negative stereotypes of other groups, and it could be seen to be actively encouraging a positive response towards others through an ethos of service.

Although the faith aspect of the school was strong, the way that this was presented meant that it was unlikely that social bias would be employed as a way of increasing the group’s self-esteem. The religious identity was formed without the use of comparisons and the creation of out-groups. The overall environment provided a constant faith presence rather than a direct and explicit reminder of group membership. Faith was presented as a choice, and thus the faith group was seen as permeable. The school did see a threat from secularism, but this was mild, being presented to students as an alternative moral framework rather than a threat. Neither was secularism presented in a form which indicated an out-group towards which bias could be directed.

The school did appear to limit contact towards two groups, those of other faiths, and those of lower socio-economic status. Although the school did not select on grounds of faith, nevertheless there was little religious diversity among the students, and only limited teaching about other faiths. Neither did it provide any opportunity for the students to interact with members of other faiths. This was

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⁴² Head Teacher, Chaplain, Head of Health Education and Head of CT(RCI)
linked to the faith aspect of the school, as the desire to give the students a good grounding in the Roman Catholic faith meant that other faiths were side-lined. The school was also segregated on socio-economic grounds and, again, there was little opportunity for the students to have any contact with other socio-economic groups. As already noted, this situation was a result of the fact that the school is an independent school attracting a certain section of society.

3.4 The Roman Catholic State School

This co-educational 11-16 Roman Catholic state comprehensive school is situated in inner London. It was not large for a comprehensive, having about 700 pupils. During the period of the research the school was operating on a restricted site as it was being rebuilt under the Building Schools for the Future initiative. The school had limited outdoor facilities, but generally it was operating normally. The school buildings included a small chapel which was connected to the dining room, allowing for expansion to enable a whole Year to attend a service.

The origins of this school offer a stark contrast to the RCI. It is one of a number of Roman Catholic schools that were set up to educate poor Roman Catholic children rather than the sons of the elite. The first wave of such schools was established at the turn of the twentieth century, but this school was founded in the 1960s by the Diocese, and operated with the assistance of a teaching order, to educate children of the increasing number of mainly poor Irish Catholic families who had settled in the area.43

The staff in the school were predominantly Roman Catholic, although not all were practising. The SMT and the Head of RE were required to be practising Roman Catholics. Non-Roman Catholics were not in theory excluded from teaching RE, but all of the RE department were Roman Catholics and this was the preferred situation.44 There were members of staff of other faiths and from a wide range of ethnic and cultural backgrounds.

The majority of the students came from the local neighbourhood, which was fairly deprived, although the school did attract students from quite a wide

43 RCS website
44 Head of RE(RCS)
geographical area. Much of the area around the school consists of social housing and a large proportion of the students came from backgrounds of low socio-economic status. The area which the school serves is predominantly white, but with a sizeable Black African/Caribbean minority of around 25% (Appendix J). The parents saw the school as ‘good’ and as maintaining firm discipline, and the students regularly gained GCSE results above the national average.

As will become evident, the school’s approach, whilst directed and motivated by faith, in many respects reflected the wider social context. A major problem which impinged on the school was the generally low expectations of both students and parents. Another was the gang culture and rivalry which was prevalent in the area. This was not a problem within the school itself, but posed a very real threat, engendering a feeling of insecurity. Finally, although the area was ethnically mixed, neighbouring areas could be quite segregated, with some evincing strong support for the BNP.

3.4.1 Contact

The school was very ethnically and culturally diverse, with over one third of its pupils from black African/Afro-Caribbean families, and the student population showed a fractionally greater degree of diversity than the surrounding area. Students were therefore regularly interacting with other children from a variety of ethnic groups. Staff did comment on a tendency for children in the playground to cluster on ethnic grounds, yet these were seen as weak groupings which did not extend into the classroom. Outside the school, there did seem to be more of an issue with segregation, with many students reluctant to enter certain neighbouring areas or mix with youth from those areas. This was linked to various gang-related threats.

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45 Deputy Head, Head of Year 10(RCS)
46 Head of Year 10(RCS)
47 British National Party
48 Deputy Head, Head of Year 10(RCS)
49 Deputy Head, Head of Year 10(RCS)
50 Head of Year 10(RCS)
The students within the school came from a range of socio-economic backgrounds, but many came from quite deprived families and the average socio-economic status of the students was the lowest of all the schools examined for this study. Nevertheless, no segregation was evident on the grounds of socio-economic status.

This school was popular and heavily oversubscribed, with the result that it was highly selective, with over 90% of its pupils coming from Roman Catholic families. The majority of the remaining places were allocated to children from other practising Christian families. The diversity of ethnic and cultural backgrounds of pupils within the school indicated a greater variation in belief and practice than might be initially assumed, although the range was probably still quite limited.

Within the school the students did not have opportunities to mix with students of other faiths, and formal teaching about other faiths was limited. The main teaching on other faiths occurred in Year 7 when they held a World Religions day at which the students had talks from people of various different faiths. Otherwise the teaching at KS3 focused on Roman Catholicism, but it did actively try to incorporate reference to other faiths when the topic was appropriate, for example briefly discussing Bar Mitzvah in the unit on confirmation.\(^{51}\) At KS4 the school had chosen to take the Christian rather than Roman Catholic module options. At times it was considered necessary to counteract the ignorance and misconceptions about other faiths held by the students. When such issues arose, the Head of RE said that he would try to stress the unity of all faiths around their belief in God, saying very firmly that ‘anything disrespectful we will tackle’.\(^{52}\) Space was given to other faith interpretations and no comparisons were made in this regard, but scope for the students to encounter other faiths was limited.

A new initiative within the school sought to address some of these interfaith contact issues. A link was in the process of being established with a slum school and a more elite school in Bangalore, India, with a student trip planned for

\(^{51}\) Head of RE(RCS)

\(^{52}\) ibid
the coming year. 53 This project was looking to extend and reflect the school’s emphasis on charity and the students’ responsibility for others which also formed part of the RE and Citizenship curricula. 54

3.4.2 Socialisation

As in the RCI school the Magisterium of the Roman Catholic Church provides the moral framework for this school. It motivates and directs the policies and approaches taken within the school. The role of the staff was seen to be essential in transmitting and reflecting this framework, often expressed as ‘Gospel Values’, to the students. This expectation was made explicit at interviews with candidates for staff positions, and reinforced and revisited throughout the school year. Staff were expected to support and conform to this unified approach within the school context. 55

Unlike the other faith schools examined in the context of this study, where the moral framework was presented as a valid and worthwhile alternative to secularism, in this school the task was perceived differently. Here the perceived need was to provide a moral framework in a situation where many of the students had chaotic home lives and unstable values. 56 This was not about reinforcing a pre-existing values base, but supplying one ab initio. The view was that for many of these students the school, and the absolute certainty of its moral framework, provided a stability that they otherwise lacked.

3.4.3 Cognitive Sophistication

Although conformity was expected of the staff within this school, the students were allowed to challenge authority, including religious authority. This was demonstrated in a lesson which I observed on Oscar Romero. 57 One of the main points of the lesson was the way in which Archbishop Oscar Romero stood up

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53 Deputy Head(RCS)
54 Lesson observation, Head of RE, Chaplain(RCS)
55 Deputy Head(RCS)
56 Deputy Head, Head of Year 10(RCS)
57 Lesson observation
to the higher authorities in the Roman Catholic Church. Whilst not restricting the views that the students could express, there was an insistence on being able to provide a reason for holding that view.\textsuperscript{58} The Head of Year 10, who also taught RE, said that one of the ways this was encouraged was by arranging debates within RE. The students volunteered to defend their position against a member of the RE staff who played devil’s advocate.\textsuperscript{59} Many of the lessons which I observed (RE and others) involved debate and open discussion with the teachers encouraging the students to develop critical thinking skills.\textsuperscript{60}

The influence of the social context can be seen with regard to choice, which was taken very seriously within the school. The school wanted to be seen to respect the students’ choices\textsuperscript{61} in all areas including religion. It saw itself as providing an alternative to a potentially destructive norm of violence and low expectations.\textsuperscript{62} The Deputy Head represented this as a positive and constructive identity associated with ‘inner strength’ and the ‘moral courage to stand up for what [we] believe in’.\textsuperscript{63} In practical terms, this was emphasised through encouraging the students to engage in sport, music, drama and a range of extra-curricular activities. However, there was no separate PSHEE course, with relevant content instead covered in RE and tutor time, possibly limiting the range of choices on everyday issues to which the students could be exposed. However, they did take a short course GCSE in Citizenship in Year 10.

3.4.4 Religious Identity

Faith and faith formation appeared to be less overt here than in some other faith schools. This could be related to two understandings within the school. The first was that the staff felt that that they could not instil faith into the students, but only reinforce religious instruction begun at home.\textsuperscript{64} The second was that the more

\textsuperscript{58} Head of Year 10(RCS)
\textsuperscript{59} ibid
\textsuperscript{60} Lesson observations
\textsuperscript{61} Deputy Head, Head of RE, Head of Year 10(RCS)
\textsuperscript{62} Deputy Head (RCS)
\textsuperscript{63} ibid
\textsuperscript{64} Head of RE(RCS)
pressing need was felt to be transforming the lives and enhancing the life chances of pupils, rather than making the students ‘good Catholics’. This need could also be seen to affect the way that threats were perceived. The staff did make comparisons with secularism and in a mild way this was perceived as a threat, but not one that was emphasised to the students. The more acute threat, and thus the one which was more keenly articulated, related to gang culture and low expectations, and was thus unrelated to the faith character of the school.

The religious nature of the school was also somewhat diminished, I felt, by the surroundings. Religious images and posters were evident around the school and in some classrooms. But the positioning of the chapel, tucked away at the side of the dining room, reduced the impact that its presence could have had on the spiritual nature of the institution.

RE was compulsory throughout the school. In Years 7 and 8 this was an internally devised course which introduced the students to Catholic teachings and practice, but with a strong emphasis on how these were to be applied. It was confessional in nature, but did not require the students to make a confessional response. Year 9 and 10 students took the AQA GCSE RE course, studying the modules on St Mark’s Gospel and Christianity and Ethics. In Year 11 a short course in OCR Philosophy and Ethics was available for some. RE attempted to fulfil two aims: to enable the students to learn some basic facts about religion and religious beliefs, and to get them to think about faith. Evangelisation was low on the list of priorities. In teaching the faith, no distinctions or negative comparisons were made with respect to other faiths.

Compulsory religious practice was limited within the school and was mainly arranged by the Lay Chaplain. Short prayers were said at the beginning of some lessons, but this depended on the teacher. Sometimes these were pupil-led and followed a set pattern. All the students were expected to stand for these, but although there was no compulsion for the students to participate, few declined. A

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65 Deputy Head, Head of Year 10(RCS)
66 ibid
67 Head of RE(RCS)
68 Lesson observations
69 Lesson observations
whole school Mass took place once a year, but otherwise compulsory religious attendance was limited to a Mass in Year 7 when the students joined the school, and a leavers’ Mass in Year 11. During Lent each year students participated in a service of reconciliation. This contemplative service ended with the students being given the opportunity to go and talk to a priest, or say a prayer with him. Again there was no compulsion for the students to participate in this way.\textsuperscript{70} Assemblies were held once a week per Year group and generally involved a Christian theme and a prayer, and possibly some music.\textsuperscript{71} 

Faith was always presented to the students as a choice, and therefore could not be seen as an impermeable category. For those who wanted to explore their faith further there were a variety of informal and non-compulsory religious activities. These included Mass in the chapel once a week, Year retreats,\textsuperscript{72} and religious-oriented trips to places such as Rome which enabled the students to engage with other Roman Catholic youth from all over the world, and gave the students a sense of transnational Catholic identity.\textsuperscript{73}

\subsection*{3.4.5 RCS School Summary}

The expression of faith within this school was less overt than it was in the RCI school, nevertheless it did provide a strong motivating and guiding element, underpinning many aspects of the school. The social needs of the students had changed the emphasis of the school to one in which providing them with a moral basis overrode the aim of faith nurture, although these two aims overlapped considerably.

In this school, faith was presented as permeable and no comparisons, invidious or otherwise, were made with other groups. As already noted, the main threat perceived by the school was not directly related to faith. Roman Catholicism was presented as a moral framework rather than an exclusive identity. The school tried to help its students to reject the destructive culture of low expectations and

\textsuperscript{70} Field notes: Year 7 Service of Reconciliation
\textsuperscript{71} Observation, Chaplain(RCS)
\textsuperscript{72} Chaplain(RCS)
\textsuperscript{73} Head of Year10(RCS)
violence by making them aware of other choices available to them; the
development of their cognitive skills was part of that process.

The admissions policy, which privileged students from Roman Catholic
families, resulted in this school being segregated on the grounds of faith.
Furthermore, the school provided few opportunities for the students to interact
with people of other faiths. These factors, combined with the concentration of RE
teaching on Christianity, meant that the students had little contact with Religious
Others.

3.5 The Evangelical Christian School

Situated in a medium-sized Home Counties commuter town, this
independent, co-educational day school caters for children from 4 to 16 (Reception
to Year 11) on one site. It was established by one particular church in the 1980s
and is part of a new breed of Christian schools which began emerging in the UK in
the 1960s (See Baker and Freeman, 2005; Everett, 2006). The school had about 300
students and usually had one class per year group.

At the time of the fieldwork, the school was housed in purpose built
accommodation, but during the year of my research it acquired new premises
adjacent to the original site, into which the senior school moved in September
2010. The original site was just large enough for the current school population, and
facilities included a science lab, ICT room, art room, music room and limited
outdoor space.

The size of the school and the availability of appropriate staff within the
congregation did place some restrictions on the curriculum. All staff were members
of the church community, with many working on a voluntary basis; some, but not
all, had a PGCE qualification. Nevertheless the school was able to provide a broad
and balanced curriculum. The students gained GCSE results above the national
average and, after leaving, the majority continued their studies at one of the local
6th form colleges, with many continuing on to university.

The key to understanding this school lies in two facets of its life; the
motivation behind the school’s establishment and its relationship with the church.
It is the degree of overlap and continuity between home, school and church which makes this school unique amongst the research schools.

This institution represents an ‘extreme’ example of Evangelical Christian schools in that all its students came from one church rather than from a number of different churches sharing similar religious understandings. The church itself has six different congregations, each with some autonomy, which are part of one overarching community church structure. The school served all the six congregations, and only students from families attending the church were eligible for admission. This was partly a logistical issue of space, but more importantly it reflected the motivation behind the school; helping the parents to fulfil their God-given role of educating their children in the faith.

The biblical injunction on parents to take responsibility for their children’s education is felt strongly, not only in this school, but throughout the Evangelical Christian school movement (Freeman, 2001; Pazmino, 2008). The school and its staff are seen by all as ‘delegated shepherds’ (Hollow, 2006), there to assist the parents in their God-given task, and therefore they should reflect the parents’ wishes in all matters. This particular understanding of the parental role also meant that the school could expect active involvement from the parents, such as the expectation that parents with children in the first few Years would help in the classroom for at least half a day a week. The environment this school aimed to create avoided the dichotomy in values which is perceived to exist between home and school when the child attends a non-faith school.

3.5.1 Contact

The locality of the school exhibited greater ethnic diversity than England as a whole (Appendix J), but was still predominantly white. Nevertheless, the proximity of the school to London meant that the students were likely to encounter ethnic diversity in their daily lives on a regular basis. The school was slightly less ethnically diverse than other schools in the area, but not significantly so, and its students came from a variety of ethnic backgrounds.

74 ECI website
75 Head Teacher(ECI)
Segregation on socio-economic grounds was minimal, as fees were kept deliberately low in order to allow any member of the congregation access to the school. Running costs were reduced by many of the staff volunteering their time. Additional funds were raised through donations from church members and, as the school was considered to be an integral part of the church structure, a portion of the church’s income was used to support it.

The school did not select on academic grounds, but on faith grounds was the most restrictively selective of any school examined for this study, being open only to the children of church members. The students had little exposure to other faiths within the school. In the formal curriculum, references to, and teaching about, other faiths were limited, although the students did study comparative religion in Year 9 Biblical Studies. At KS4 the course was solely related to Christianity. There were no opportunities for the students to meet with those of other faiths within the school, and even in the wider church context such contact was limited, as the church was involved in only a limited number of ecumenical and inter-faith projects. Although the Head stressed that members of the church held a surprising variety of religious views, the students were not exposed to a wide range of religious views or practice. This was reinforced by the fact that the school staff were all from the same church.

However, the school did encourage the students to encounter the Other, including the Religious Other. This was connected to what the Head saw as the main aim of the school, that of instilling a sense of service into the students. Service to others was considered to be an important expression of their faith. During their time in the school all the students were strongly encouraged to participate in some form of overseas service, through links which the church had to projects overseas. On these trips the students undertook practical activities, rather than evangelism, and were encouraged to interact with those of different faiths and a variety of backgrounds. Despite the limited contact and teaching, the students

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76 Head of RE(ECI)
77 ibid
78 Head Teacher(ECI)
thus did in fact have very practical experience of the Other, although I question to what extent this was then applied to other, more local, contexts.

### 3.5.2 Socialisation

The moral framework resulting from the Christian beliefs held by the church was clearly expressed within the school. The ultimate authority was seen to be scriptural revelation, but the church itself has its own statement of faith and values, which is the working document from which decisions are made. Around this statement of faith and values there was seen to be a wide variety of interpretations, and this diversity of views was considered creative and positive.\(^79\)

Faith was very evident within the school, but other identities were celebrated and encouraged, even if the school did not have the facilities to actively assist them within school. On one of my visits a school ski trip was about to depart, and drama productions and sports matches against local schools were regular fixtures. The way in which the school approached and understood the Other and endorsed a positive view of diversity, and the way that this was rooted in the community’s Christian faith, is illustrated by the following observations. The first, emphasised in the context of a regular lesson, is that service to others is important because we are all made in God’s image. The consequence of this is that all are worthy of our respect and are our responsibility.\(^80\) In another instance, the teacher leading the school assembly was talking about a paraplegic man and emphasised that this disability was not God’s mistake, or a punishment, but part of God’s plan. Difference and diversity here can therefore be seen as enriching, and, in showing God’s greatness and plan, are something that should be celebrated.

### 3.5.3 Cognitive Sophistication

The statement of values which formally underpins the school allows for new inspiration from the Holy Spirit\(^81\). Biblical criticism and Bible study, for the purpose

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\(^79\) Head Teacher(ECI)
\(^80\) Lesson observation
\(^81\) ECI website
of interpreting God’s message, were seen as important skills. Debate and discussion about biblical interpretation was an integral part of church life.

This approach was reflected within the school, where students were able to question and challenge the faith, as was frequently observed during my time there. The students were able to criticise, but the academic rigour with which this was approached was not as developed as it was in some of the schools. The purpose of encouraging the students to challenge their assumed beliefs was primarily to enable them to be able to stand up and defend their faith. Despite this being considered important for the students to learn, it was only formally encountered at GCSE RE, which was optional, and it was believed that the students would be able to gain these skills from other areas of church life, such as the youth provision. In RE at KS4, the students were encouraged to consider their faith and why they believed what they did. It was intended that the course should be taught in such a way as to allow the students the freedom to come to their own conclusions. The teacher explained that once they had come to a decision on a particular aspect she might challenge them from her own standpoint, but there was no sense of playing devil’s advocate here, to the extent that there was in some other schools.

Choice was considered very important throughout the school and this faith group’s interpretation of Christianity emphasises a person’s individual relationship with Jesus Christ. But here we seemingly find a tension within the school. The school was founded to counteract what the church and the parents saw (and continue to see) as the prevailing moral climate in state schools of secularism and humanism (Hollow, 2006). The mode of doing this was to instil a particular moral framework, a Christian world view, into the children, something which was very evident in the aim of the KS3 RE course. But at the same time they were saying that one’s faith is only truly valid if one has made a personal choice to accept Jesus as one’s personal Lord and Saviour.

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82 Lesson observation, Head Teacher, Head of RE(ECI)
83 Head of RE(ECI)
84 ibid
85 ibid
Aspects of choice were more evident within the Life Choices course, which broadly covered topics found in the non-statutory programme of study for PSHEE and the Citizenship guidance (QCA, 2008a; QCA, 2008b; QCDA, 2010). As well as providing the students with what was seen as the necessary information required for them to make choices in their everyday life, the course also aimed to help develop the skills required for making those choices. The Head of Life Choices talked about helping the students by showing them ‘the options in their choices’ so that they ‘don’t have to be stuck with what they think at the moment is their only choice’. During the lessons the students were encouraged to express their own views, whilst at the same time developing skills which enabled discussion and debate. On occasions the teacher did express her own view, but more often she tried to provide a variety of examples which presented opposing or alternative ones. In her interview, she was keen to emphasise the importance of not being judgemental, saying that she tried to ‘teach those who have chosen the Christian way that you can’t be judgemental of those who have not’. Although this course was rooted in a Christian moral framework this was not made explicit to the students during the lessons, and this allowed space for the students to use other moral frameworks from which to make decisions and choices. Nevertheless, no other moral frameworks were explicitly given or referred to.

### 3.5.4 Religious Identity

One striking aspect of this school was how minimal the formal, organised, development of faith was. Here the school was only one part of a broader faith community. Its main role was to fulfil the legal obligation of educating children from the church community, but within a Christian environment. The church laid on extensive youth activities which were seen as more effective and efficient in developing the children’s faith. But faith infused everyday conversations and understandings. This was particularly evident amongst the staff, who would

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86 Head of Life Choices(ECI)
87 Lesson observation
88 Lesson observations
89 Head of Life Choices(ECI)
90 Head of RE, Youth Worker(ECI)
regularly refer to scripture, prayer or their own belief in casual conversation and within the classroom. A time for prayer was not formally built into lessons, but on more than one occasion during my observations something came up in the class which the students were encouraged to pray about there and then.

At KS3 the formal religious input included a course in biblical studies. This was internally devised with the aim of establishing a Christian world view in the pupils. Although presented in a confessional way, it was hard to determine to what extent the students were required to make confessional responses. RE GCSE (AQA) was optional at KS4 with only four Year 10 students opting for this course. There was no other religious education at KS4.

Formal practical expressions of religion were limited. Assemblies were held two or three times a week. Once a week these were prepared by the students, but otherwise they were led by staff. They lasted about 20 minutes and included a Bible reading, prayer, hymns and a presentation. Informal worship and prayer might also occur at other times within the school; for example, in one class a covering teacher started the lesson by asking the children to pray for their regular teacher who had had a serious accident.

The concentration on Christianity to the exclusion of other faiths meant that the students’ religious identity was not forged by comparison with other faiths and groups, which were not explicitly portrayed as out-group.

The understanding that faith is a matter of choice has already been discussed, but this choice was also emphasised during the student’s time at the school. Before students’ entrance to the school, and at certain points thereafter (such as the transition to senior school or KS4), parents (in the case of the younger students) or the students themselves were interviewed and asked to reaffirm their commitment to the school statement of faith. This illustrates that the school saw faith as a choice and as permeable. The extent to which the students felt that they were in a position to decline to commit, given the implications for their education, is moot.

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91 Head of RE(ECI)
92 AQA RE St Marks Gospel and Christian Ethics modules
93 Lesson observation
Although this school in part saw itself as protecting pupils from malign secularist or humanist influences, such protection was neither equated with segregation, nor conceived as permanent. Many of the students took part in non-church related out-of-school activities such as football, and it was clear that the parents and staff wanted to prepare them to go out into the world and participate in society.

Salt and Light Ministries (Salt and Light, 2010), to which the church is affiliated, sees Christian education as a battle for the minds of children, and it frequently uses metaphors related to warfare which are quite triumphalist. The church sees itself as engaging in a mission against secularism and humanism, but one where it will assuredly ultimately triumph; the community does not portray itself as a beleaguered minority. Whilst I did not encounter this image of a ‘battle’ against secularism within the school, the church itself certainly highlights secularism and humanism as active threats.

3.5.5 ECI School Summary

The extremely close relationship between school and church in this case means that it is particularly difficult to separate their effects.

The school rarely explicitly promoted its religious identity, nor did it emphasise its distinctiveness through judgemental comparisons with other faiths, and no significant threats to the identity were identified within the school context. Faith was a constant presence, providing continuity with home and church. Individual choice was an essential part of this faith, which the school endorsed. But this emphasis on choice was in tension with the requirement on students to renew their acceptance of the statement of faith throughout their schooling. This was not explicitly forced, but the consequences of not signing would have involved leaving the school, which raises questions over to what extent the students could really see their faith as permeable.

The school did not discourage the students from questioning and challenging the norms of the group, or critically examining their faith. Whilst KS3 RE

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94 Head Teacher, Head of RE(ECI)
did not intentionally work to improve these skills they were encouraged in the Life Skills course. This course could also be seen as promoting choice and trying to give the students associated skills of independent judgement. The school could also be seen as positively endorsing diversity; a view directly connected to its beliefs.

The amount of contact with those of other faiths that the school provided for its students was quite limited. Here, as in the two Roman Catholic schools, there was a low degree of instruction about other faiths, and the school provided no opportunities for its students to interact with other faith groups. Although the Head did stress that there were variations in belief between church members, nevertheless this school showed the lowest degree of religious diversity of all the research schools. As all students came from one church, they were not encountering other faiths, even at a superficial level, within their daily school experience.

3.6 The Muslim School

The Muslim school is situated in inner London and is an 11-16 school educating both sexes, but strictly segregating them by gender. At the time of the fieldwork, the school had about 250 pupils with about one class of 25 pupils per year group per gender.

The motivation for the school's establishment came from the desire of various sectors of the local Muslim community for their children to be educated in an Islamic environment, as opposed to one dominated by secularism, which they perceived as having detrimental effects on the well-being and achievement of Muslim children. The school was started in 1993 as a primary school and later expanded to secondary level. In 2004, the primary section became Voluntary Aided and effectively separated from the secondary school, although strong links are still maintained between the schools with a number of pupils transferring to the secondary school each year.

All the students and staff (bar one) associated with the school were Sunni Muslim, but the school would not classify itself as 'Sunni'. The school and the

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95 MI school prospectus
associated mosque all subscribed to the Hanafi school of Islamic Law (madhhab), and this was the interpretation of Islam which was taught to, if not followed by, all students. The Hanafi school is considered the most liberal of the four schools of Sunni Islam (as opposed to Maliki, Shafi or Hanbali), allowing the use of informed opinion (ra’y), reasoning by analogy (qiyas) and preferential judgement (istihsan) (Adamec, 2007).

There was an institutional link between the school and the local mosque, with one of the imams teaching RE within the school, but students were not solely drawn from its membership. The school featured in a 2009 UK television documentary where questions were asked about its relationship with the mosque and implications for extremist teaching.

The school was housed in a converted cinema, which resulted in there being a complex arrangement of rooms over a number of floors, and no outside space. The main hall also served as the prayer hall of the mosque and was used as such by the local community. The girls inhabited the left-hand side of the building and the boys the right, using separate entrances. There were a few areas of the school which were used by both sexes, but never at the same time. To ensure minimal contact between male and female students, the school day and timetable were staggered, with the girls starting and finishing thirty minutes earlier than the boys.

The curriculum available in the school reflected the lack of resources, facilities and expertise within the school. It covered English, Maths, Science (but with no labs), Islamic Studies, Arabic, PSHE, Humanities, Art, PE (restricted due to space) and Urdu. The results gained by the students were above the national average and generally students moved on from the school to local colleges or school 6th forms. The school regularly took the students on museum, theatre and other educational trips during the school day, but after-school activities were limited.

The school is situated in an area of London which is predominantly white, with a population about 10% Asian and 10% Black (Appendix J), but its pupils are drawn from a wider geographical area. The ethnic mix was very diverse, with the largest group having links to South Asia, but including many from Somalia and North Africa, and a few from the Middle East (though not Saudi Arabia or the Gulf).
As with the RCS school, there was a high incidence of gangs, and related knife and gun crime, in the local area.

The day-to-day running of the school was directed by the Head, but the founder and governing body had a significant role and this relationship was a cause of friction. Apart from one teacher, the staff were all Muslims, from a wide variety of ethnic backgrounds. All the Muslim female staff were expected to wear full length Islamic dress. Some staff had recognised English teaching qualifications, with others having qualifications from their country of origin, but some had none. Most staff taught in both the girls’ and the boys’ sections.

3.6.1 Contact

The school was not selective on academic grounds and catered for a wide range of abilities. It was ethnically diverse, not catering for one particular ethnic group, as some Muslim schools do. The ethnic group most obviously absent from the school was white British. Nevertheless, the students did have contact and interacted with students from other ethnic groups in their everyday life.

Although this was an independent school, the intention was that fees should be affordable for the majority of local Muslim families. In addition to fee income the running costs of the school were met from donations from various sources. Segregation was not evident on socio-economic grounds, with the students coming from a diverse range of backgrounds in terms of income, occupation and parental educational levels.

Gender was a further point of segregation, and this was very evident. This lack of contact was not independently created by the school, but reflected the rules governing gender segregation within some interpretations of Islam (Muslim Council of Britain, 2007). Although some see this segregation as having a negative impact on the education of Muslim girls (Sarah, Scott and Spender, 1988), others argue that it is beneficial as it provides a more ‘girl centred education’ (Haw, 1994, p. 46) and provides an environment in which the girls are not subjected to sexual

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96 Head Teacher(MI)
97 ibid
harassment from boys in the class (Halstead, 1991). Although contact was restricted, the curriculum did feature discussion of gender issues.98

The school clearly segregated on grounds of faith. All the students were Muslim, and although applications would have been considered from non-Muslims, no provision would be made to accommodate them. A few Shi’a students had attended in the past,99 and the school authorities professed themselves happy to have students from this sect and from any of the schools of Islamic law (Madhhab).

Islam was privileged within the school and little reference was made to other faiths. The religious component of the KS3 curriculum consisted of Islamic Studies. In Years 10 and 11 the Islamic Studies course was continued, but in addition GCSE RE was taken and this course again focused solely on Islam. Posters made by the students indicated that other religions had been studied on the girls’ side at some point, but this was not part of the RE curriculum,100 and was not referred to in any interviews. The RE teacher was dismissive of the idea of teaching about other religions.101 Others within the school felt that it was appropriate, and it transpired that the girls had recently been given a talk by a Jewish lady, although this was organised through the PSHE/Tutor time curriculum rather than through RE.102

The school provided almost no opportunities for the students to interact with those of other faiths, although some staff hoped that this would form part of the new PSHE curriculum.103 Students did not engage in competitive sports with local schools, and links through the debating society tended to be with other Muslim schools. Interaction with others outside school was more problematic for the girls due to the strict gender segregation insisted upon by some families. The school did support various charities and was setting up links with elderly members

98 Lesson observations
99 IS Teacher(MI)
100 Field Notes
101 Imam
102 PSHEE Coordinator(MI)
103 ibid
of the local community to establish a sewing project. But the majority, if not all, of organised contact with groups outside the school was with other Muslims.

Opportunities for students in this school to have any contact with other faiths, either through direct interaction or classroom instruction, were very restricted. The issue of engagement with other faiths appeared to be part of a much wider tension within the school to which I return later in this section.

3.6.2 Socialisation

The Muslim school authorities saw their moral framework as emanating from the Qur’an, considered by most Muslims as revealed truth and even as coterminous with God (Ruthven, 2007). The Hadith and the Sunnah are also considered sources of authority, but are subordinate to the Qur’an. The use of this moral framework within the school was evident. Rules were constructed in accordance with Islam, informing areas such as dress, segregation and prohibition of certain subjects such as music. But beyond these rules it was less evident how Islam informed the education provided. The Head himself referred to this when he spoke of staff not understanding what it was to be an Islamic teacher.

One area in which the school might be seen as creating an Other was in the area of ethnicity. The majority of staff and students in the school had close family ties to other countries, and there were indications that Britain and 'Britishness' were effectively being 'Othered'. During observed lessons, the phrase ‘at home’ was sometimes used to refer to places other than the UK, and in one lesson it was pointedly noted that something was the law in the UK. It should be stressed that this pattern was not universal throughout the school, but such references were linked with Muslim identity, they could be seen as subtly reinforcing the separation between the UK and Islam, rather than promoting a British Muslim identity. In a school with students and staff from a wide range of ethnic backgrounds, use by a

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104 ibid
105 Head Teacher (MI)
106 Lesson observation
107 Lesson observation
member of staff of the phrase ‘at home’ to refer to a non-UK context could also be interpreted as normalising certain countries of origin as the in-group within the school.

The approach of the school towards diversity was complex. References to other faiths and groups in society never gave any indication that they should not be respected or tolerated. Some staff in the school were keen to give the students a wide range of experiences. However, the view that Islam was the only true religion meant that discussion about other faiths could be seen as pointless. In addition, some within the school saw segregation from wider society as necessary. Therefore, although the school avoided giving explicitly negative messages about diversity, implicitly it could be viewed as giving confused and mixed messages.

3.6.3 Cognitive Sophistication

The authority of Islam seemed to be presented within the school in a rule-based manner. Challenges to the authorised moral framework or to Islamic teachings were not countenanced and were seen as dangerous for the students’ spiritual life.\(^{108}\) The Islamic Studies teacher praised students who passively accepted Islamic teaching, saying that ‘they don’t dispute, they take everything nicely.’. Disagreement and questioning were equated with confusion and lack of understanding which needed to be remedied with more explicit instruction\(^{109}\). The Islamic Studies teacher explained that in Islamic Studies ‘you are supposed to say “Miss I don’t understand this”, you don’t say “I don’t agree, I don’t believe”’.\(^{110}\) Within the school discussion of religion was therefore seen as problematic. Islamic Studies lessons permitted questions for clarification\(^{111}\) but there was no opportunity for critical engagement with the material. Teaching was didactic, with knowledge seen as fixed and there to be transmitted\(^{112}\). Many teachers saw their

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\(^{108}\) PSHEE Coordinator(MI)
\(^{109}\) ibid
\(^{110}\) ibid
\(^{111}\) Lesson observation
\(^{112}\) Lesson observation
task as involving correction, particularly of locally derived, heterodox interpretations of Islam (*bidah*).

A limited amount of discussion regarding the practical application of the faith could be entertained.\(^{113}\) Discussion and debate about doctrinal matters could not be countenanced, and there was no discussion of different textual interpretations, or (before the final year) of variations in practice. It was feared that questioning on this level might lead a student to say something indicating rejection of an aspect of the faith. The Islamic Studies teacher saw a fine line between saying you don’t agree or believe, and getting to a position where a person was taken ‘out of Islam because you are denying Allah’.\(^{114}\)

Within other school subjects, debate, discussion and reasoning were used;\(^ {115}\) for example, in a Year 10 English Literature lesson the students were encouraged to discuss and debate why a character had acted in the way he had. However, in RE (as opposed to Islamic Studies) the approach was inconsistent. Sometimes the teacher presumed to state what the students believed as Muslims, for example saying that ‘as Muslims we believe life is sacred to Allah’.\(^ {116}\) Later, however, he asked students to give their own opinion about euthanasia for someone in a vegetative state, something which related to the sanctity of life. This inconsistency in style and approach may have been due in part to problems with staffing. The school employed a number of teachers whose educational and teaching backgrounds involved experience outside the UK. Differences in pedagogy and cultural understandings relating to child-raising meant that some of these teachers were less familiar with child-centred educational methods,\(^ {117}\) instead relying on didactic modes of teaching which reduced critical engagement. The school was aware of this issue and was working to address it.

The extent to which individual choice could or should be promoted seemed to be contested within the school. The Head said that religion was not a matter of

\(^{113}\) IS Teacher(MI)  
\(^{114}\) ibid  
\(^{115}\) Lesson observation  
\(^{116}\) RS Teacher(MI)  
\(^{117}\) Head Teacher(MI)
Here he did not mean that religion should be forcibly imposed, but that there was only one true religion, Islam. This in theory could render discussion of any other belief system or moral framework futile. Thus the school did not expose students to other moral frameworks, a situation exacerbated by the notional homogeneity of students in terms of belief, and the insistence on conformity. But the Head, along with a number of other staff, took the view that the education they were providing should enable the students to make independent choices about their lives. On the other hand, the desire to maintain the students within the faith, where the line between being a believer and being an apostate was seen by some as fine, dictated the imposition of certain limits.

The range of choices the students could be allowed to make was effectively defined by the local Muslim community. Maintaining a positive image of the community overrode any personal autonomy. This image related primarily to how the community might be perceived by other Muslims, rather than by the wider local community. The focus was on Islamic purity and conformity, and seemed to relate predominantly to the area of personal behaviour, especially with respect to gender segregation and the need to maintain girls’ purity. But it also impacted subtly in other areas such as the choice of curriculum subjects and extra-curricular activities.

### 3.6.4 The Religious Identity

The importance placed on the religious identity and its formation in this school was the strongest and most extensive of all the schools under investigation. The school aimed to produce ‘good Muslims’, with this faith-related emphasis more intense here than in any of the other schools. What constituted a good Muslim, the possibility of achieving this aim, and the manner in which it

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118 Head Teacher(MI)
119 Head Teacher, PSHEE Coordinator(MI)
120 Head Teacher(MI)
121 ibid
122 PSHEE Coordinator(MI)
123 Head Teacher(MI)
should be achieved, were all contested within the school. Common to all understandings of a ‘good Muslim’ were elements of strong faith and practice. Those directly involved with the students saw the task as complex, with this complexity stemming from many different factors, such as inter-generational issues, and issues around Islam and modernity. In contrast, many on the governing body were perceived to be working from an idealised, decontextualised version of Islam, seeing the Muslim child as quiet and hard-working, rather than facing the reality that these students were ‘normal inner London kids’. Their belief was that ‘Islam’ could be imposed onto the students and resistance should be met with stronger imposition.

Reflecting the cultural origins of the founder and mosque leaders, the girls did not attend the mosque, even for Friday prayers (jum’a), but instead prayed in the classroom. The boys were required to collectively perform any of the five daily prayers (salah) which fell within the school day, and to attend Friday prayers. At times this necessitated changing lesson times, and school holidays were also adjusted to incorporate Muslim festivals.

All students studied Islamic Studies. In Years 7-9 this contained a number of different components including doctrine (Tahweed), Qur’anic recitation and memorisation (Hifz), Islamic history (Tarikhi), jurisprudence (Fiqh), moral values (Akhilaq), prayers (du’a) and etiquette. Elements of each of these were studied in each Year and about 20% of curriculum time was devoted to this subject at KS3. Islamic Studies at KS4 constituted about one hour a week, following the same pattern as the KS3 course; in addition students took GCSE RE, studying only the modules on Islam.

Islam was taught with no reference or comparison to any other faith. Distinction and difference were discussed only with reference to differences within

124 ibid
125 ibid
126 ibid
127 ibid
128 Field notes
129 MI school prospectus, IS Teacher(MI)
130 Imam
Islam. As has been explained, the school followed the Hanafi school of Islamic law. Only one interpretation of this was allowed, and conformity was insisted upon within the school.\footnote{IS Teacher(MI)} This insistence on conformity emphasised the distinction between this group (Hanafi) and other Muslims through correct practice, thus 'Othering' different Muslim sects. For example, one member of staff was not allowed to lead prayers because of the way he performed the ritual washing before the daily prayers (\textit{wudhu}).\footnote{Ritual washing before prayers}

All aspects of faith within the school were approached in a confessional manner. The GCSE course did require the students to incorporate other positions and opinions into their answers, but the course was still taught from a strictly confessional position.\footnote{Lesson observation} The assumption within the school was that all the students were believers, no other position was countenanced, and there was little opportunity for the exercise of conscience. Girls were given the opportunity to withdraw from \textit{salah} in accordance with requirements of purity relating to menstruation.

This school was in many ways defined, and defined itself, by its otherness, in terms of religion and ethnicity. The Head, himself a British Muslim convert, observed that it is ‘very very difficult for people to be Muslim if surrounded by non-Muslims’\footnote{Head Teacher(MI)} since this would involve the risk of secularisation. Being a Muslim within a non-Muslim society was considered problematic, and was presented as such to the students.\footnote{Lesson observation} Religion in Britain was seen to have been consigned to the private sphere, a position viewed as antagonistic and threatening to Islamic practice\footnote{Head Teacher(MI)}.

Staff saw Islam in juxtaposition not just to the secular world, but also to notions of ‘the West’.\footnote{MI school prospectus, Head Teacher(MI)} The prospectus itself referred explicitly to ‘an education
The relationship between Islam and the wider society, in particular the preservation of Islamic beliefs and practice, formed the basis of a tension within the school, resulting not from a different conception of the problem, but different views of how best to tackle it. Although not advocating separation and segregation himself, the Head saw that there were those within the school who would advocate complete separation. Referring principally to the management, he suggested that ‘some people think the solution is to live in a world where complete segregation is a good idea, a duty’. 139

The Head, along with a number of other staff, wanted to help the students integrate and find a way to hold their multiple identities in plurality, and encourage and respect those other identities. For the students there was the additional problem of a significant inter-generational gap between them and their parents, which as well as relating to religion also involved cultural differences. 140 The new PSHE curriculum, which was still in the design stage, attempted to reflect this by helping students to see that many of the issues and values that they had were not unique to them, but were shared by many in wider society. 141 For a number of the students, the school provided an opportunity to explore their various identities and it became an important link between wider society and their Islamic identity.

The alternative view, held by others associated with this school, was that anything outside Islam was suspect and should be restricted. The safest way to achieve this to segregate the community, and specifically its children, from wider society. Various aspects of the school curriculum could be seen as intrinsically segregationist; for example, the focus of the Modern Foreign Language curriculum on Urdu and Arabic to the exclusion of European languages.

The school was therefore seen by some as educating the students to take their place in British society whilst retaining their religious practice and beliefs, in

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138 MI school prospectus p.3
139 Head Teacher(MI)
140 ibid
141 PSHEE Coordinator(MI)
much the same way as the other schools in the research. What set this school apart was that some - though not all - of its staff went much further, seeing its role effectively as to quarantine a distinct community from the broader society.

3.6.5 MI School Summary

The MI school was overtly religious, and as in the RCI school the daily routine of prayer was an important part of school life. It differed from the other schools in the research in that almost all the students had at least one parent born outside the UK. The school was ethnically diverse, but not as religiously diverse as the other faith schools. There was little teaching about or opportunity for interaction with other faiths, and thus the potential for the students to challenge stereotypes or really understand faith as a lived reality was limited.

This school was not alone in detecting elements of ethnic tension among its students and was trying to address this. But there were indications that the school might have been unintentionally exacerbating the problem through the creation of out-groups and in-groups related to the ethnic origin of its leadership.

The aim of nurturing a Muslim (religious) identity featured very strongly within the school. This was the only school in which perceived threats to the faith group were explicitly communicated to the students, threats portrayed as emanating from ‘the West’ and secularism. The element of choice that the school saw the students exercising over their faith was unclear and uncertain. However, some of those who were specifically involved in religious instruction held the view that faith was not a matter of personal choice. Although some in the school encouraged the students in interests and identities other than those related to Islam, this was not universal and was restricted. The emphasis on right religious practice and behaviour, which was tied to maintaining a positive image of the group within the local Muslim community, indicated a prototype and highlighted the students’ distinctiveness.

Finally, the extent to which the students could challenge and critically examine their faith was also restricted, suggesting that the school might be less effective than the other schools in developing its students’ cognitive skills.
3.7 The Non-Faith Independent School

This school, in common with the RCI school, has an old foundation and originally educated boys; over the last decade it has become fully co-educational. Situated in inner London, it was a popular, high-achieving, 11-18 selective day school. At the time of the fieldwork, it had around 1250 students (1:2 ratio of girls to boys) with most students continuing into the 6th form. It regularly achieved well above the national average for GCSE and A level with a number of students gaining places at Oxbridge each year.

The pupils displayed a wide mix of ethnic backgrounds, to some extent reflecting the area of London in which it is situated (Appendix J). Around 49% of the students professed some religious belief, and all the major faith groups were represented within the school.

Unsurprisingly for a school in inner London it is situated on a restricted site. The school has a core of Victorian and older buildings, but has been engaged in a rolling programme of improvements which in the past few years have included the addition of a theatre, 6th form centre and new science facilities. The students could avail themselves of a vast array of extra-curricular activities and at the weekends the 6th formers helped with extension classes for local children.

The school traces its inception to the seventeenth century, when a wealthy local gentleman set up a foundation to fund eight poor boys from the area to attend local schools. The school in its present form was founded in the latter part of the nineteenth century and retained that original desire to make academic excellence available to any boy, regardless of his social class. After the 1944 Education Act the school became a direct grant school, and later pupils were funded by the Assisted Places Scheme. Since the demise of those schemes the school has set up a fund to continue to make places available to students from a wide range of backgrounds. At the time of the research about 7% of the school population received a fully funded place.\(^{142}\)

\(^{142}\) Deputy Head(NFI)
From its seventeenth-century origins the school has been strongly associated with liberalism\textsuperscript{143} and, unusually for a school of this date, has only ever had the most cursory of links to religion.

### 3.7.1 Contact

This school was the most highly selective on academic ability of all the schools in this research, and this academic excellence is important to the school. The Deputy Head said that one of the overall school aims was ‘wanting to be the school of first choice for bright children’\textsuperscript{144} in that area. Segregation on the grounds of ability was both intentional and part of the identity of the school. But within individual subjects the students displayed, and the school catered for, a wide ability range.\textsuperscript{145} Thus the students regularly came into contact with others of a range of academic abilities.

There was a degree of social exclusivity associated with this school. But the significant numbers of scholarships and means-tested bursaries available meant that the students came from a wide range of socio-economic backgrounds.\textsuperscript{146} The students also came into contact with people from a wide range of backgrounds through community activities which the school encouraged; community service was compulsory in Year 12.

The ethnic diversity seen in the school’s locality was somewhat reflected in the school’s intake, and certainly there was no apparent ethnic segregation. The students had various opportunities inside and outside school to mix with students from a variety of ethnic backgrounds.

The identity of this school is closely tied to four interconnected elements. It sees itself as valuing academic excellence; aiming to offer high quality education to students regardless of their social and economic position; being secular, and promoting liberal values.\textsuperscript{147} The links to secularism and liberalism, and to a lesser

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\textsuperscript{143} NFI website, Deputy Head(NFI)
\textsuperscript{144} Deputy Head(NFI)
\textsuperscript{145} Lesson observations
\textsuperscript{146} NFI website, Deputy Head(NFI)
\textsuperscript{147} Deputy Head(NFI)
extent diversity of income, are actually seen by the school as markers of its distinctiveness.

A wide variety of faith backgrounds were represented here, while about 50% of the students professed to have no faith. Interaction with people of different faiths was part of the everyday school experience.

The RE syllabus included modules on all major world religions, and responsible staff expressed the hope that the course would enable the students to have a comprehensive understanding of the major religions practised in the UK. At KS3 the students followed an internally devised course in Religious Studies. In Years 7 and 8 this covered the major world religions, considering them as discrete entities rather than taking a thematic approach. In Year 9 the focus was on philosophical and ethical questions, and it was here that students were initially introduced to the idea of religion as embodied. At KS4 students had the option to take IGCSE RE which concentrated on Christianity and Islam, although other faiths were also discussed and compared. As might be expected, a non-confessional approach was taken to the teaching of RE. Although the students had some knowledge about the religions, many lacked any concept of the meaning of religious belief in people’s lived experience -something that the school was keen to address. It was considered necessary to introduce students to the concept of the religious community and the religious person, with the Head of RE commenting that until some of the Year 10 had gone on a visit to the local church recently, many of them had never interacted with anyone as a religious person. The Head of RE’s concern reflects the stress of the modified Contact Hypothesis on the form of contact and its meaningfulness.

3.7.2 Socialisation

The moral framework of both the non-faith schools is much harder to define than for the faith schools. This independent school would describe itself as liberal

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148 Head of RE(NFI)
149 ibid
150 ibid
and its approach as secular, although the Deputy Head was keen to stress that this did not mean that the spiritual was not valued. He explained, ‘Our approach is secular. That is not to say we don’t value spirituality. We do, in terms of valuing others and appreciation of the world around them.’\textsuperscript{151} The values underpinning the school were seen to incorporate both those values which had been important from the school’s foundation, and those reflecting the contemporary community in which it was situated. These values included tolerance and an appreciation of difference, but also autonomy and an appreciation of the individual. The way that these values could be seen to mould and directly affect school policies, or subjects such as PSHEE, was unclear. During the year of the research the pupils had one PSHEE tutorial period a week with their form tutors, and they also had a rolling programme of citizenship topics for one period per week. This was to change in subsequent years.\textsuperscript{152}

The school provided many opportunities for the students to engage in extracurricular activities (for example sports and music) which gave opportunities for the celebration of diverse identities.

### 3.7.3 Cognitive Sophistication

Within RE the students were exposed to other moral frameworks by considering how religious and non-religious people expressed meaning and purpose in their lives, and through this it was hoped that they would develop their own ideas.\textsuperscript{153} What the RE department tried to guard against was the notion that liberalism just meant that everyone was entitled to their own opinion, something considered a lazy response calculated to avoid debate. Within RE there was an emphasis on critiquing and evaluating claims and beliefs.\textsuperscript{154} Debate and critical reasoning skills were encouraged throughout the school. There was an extensive PSHEE programme which involved wide-ranging debate and discussion\textsuperscript{155} and AS Critical Thinking was offered as a Year 12 enrichment activity.

\textsuperscript{151} Deputy Head(NFI)  
\textsuperscript{152} Head of RE(NFI)  
\textsuperscript{153} ibid  
\textsuperscript{154} ibid  
\textsuperscript{155} Lesson observations
Slight underlying tensions could be detected between the school’s endorsement of liberal-secularism, and the expression of religious belief. Fundamental to the school’s notion of liberalism was the belief in autonomy. In matters of religion, amongst other things, all lifestyles, beliefs and views were considered acceptable, but a tension arose over the extent to which religious beliefs should be kept in the private sphere. Religion was not rejected in the school, but little space was provided for its expression outside the context of RE. As might be expected of a non-faith school, compulsory religious practice was almost non-existent, although a Founder’s Day service and carol service were held in the local parish church once a year, and the school maintained ongoing links with this church. Assemblies were held at least once a week for each Year group, and the one I attended included a presentation and notices rather than any worship or mention of faith and belief¹⁵⁶. The school had a small chapel and a voluntary weekly service was held, attended by a small number of pupils. Chapel and other informal religious societies operated on the same basis as other extra-curricular activities, and as such could be seen to emphasise the private nature of faith.

A second related tension arguably involved giving the students information and freedom to choose their own moral framework, while presenting liberalism as an unchallenged normative framework. The explicit moral frameworks found within the faith schools were more visible and thus potentially more susceptible to being challenged. In the NFI school, the institutional ethos was more implicit, if nonetheless pervasive, and thus presented a more slippery target.

A combination of these two tensions meant that debate and discussion relating to matters of faith were sometimes restricted. This was particularly noticeable in RE where students with strong views, which were significantly different from the mainstream, sometimes felt uncomfortable expressing them.¹⁵⁷ This was not a factor of conscious school policy, but was a reflection of the liberal-secular nature of the school.¹⁵⁸

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¹⁵⁶ Field notes
¹⁵⁷ Head of RE(NFI)
¹⁵⁸ ibid
3.7.4 NFI School Summary

As might be expected of a non-faith school, expressions of faith and religion were much less evident than they were in the faith schools.

The NFI school emphasised the development of critical reasoning skills, and debate and discussion were prominent elements of the students’ school experience. It was also evident that the school encouraged students to respect others, and no groups were negatively stereotyped. The students were also able to interact on a daily basis with students from a wide variety of backgrounds. The school was religiously diverse, meaning that students had the opportunity to interact with Religious Others on a daily basis. However, questions arose regarding the extent to which the students interacted in a way that could be considered meaningful. This in turn was related to questions about how, and to what extent, faith was expressed within the school, and how it was implicitly portrayed as belonging to the private sphere. This was not a negative image of religion, but one that removed it from everyday experience.

3.8 The Non-Faith State School

This school is a medium-sized (900 pupils), co-educational comprehensive school with a maths and computing specialism, situated in the London suburbs with a catchment area overlapping with the NFI school. Founded in the late 1990s, until recently the school was 11-16, but a 6th form was in the process of being established. The school is situated on a fairly generous site bordering communal playing fields to which it has direct access. The accommodation is a mixture of predominantly low-rise buildings with a recently built administrative block and music centre.

The students came from a wide variety of backgrounds, social, cultural, ethnic and religious. Although the immediate vicinity of the school could be described as a middle-class white suburb, it is situated between two ethnically distinct areas, and also has a large amount of social housing in its catchment area. The intake reflected this demographic (Appendix J), and perhaps surprisingly included high numbers of students on free school meals, or for whom English was an additional language. In recent years the school has had to respond to influxes of
particular immigrant groups which have in some instances required focused interventions.\textsuperscript{159} The school was popular and attracted high-achieving students, but catered a wide range of abilities. The Deputy Head referred to the school as having a ‘long tail’ of abilities.\textsuperscript{160} It was regularly oversubscribed and achieved GCSE results above the national average.

The school had a wide variety of extra-curricular activities and clubs which the students could attend, and regularly arranged after-school visits to theatrical or musical productions, as well as putting on productions and performances itself.

\textbf{3.8.1 Contact}

This school prides itself on being inclusive, with one of its main aims being to help the students to ‘appreciate and celebrate other cultures and beliefs’.\textsuperscript{161} Festivals of the various faiths and other groups represented in the school were publicly celebrated. This school did not appear to engage in any form of segregation. Its intake was ethnically, religiously and culturally diverse, and although a high proportion of the students were from middle-class families there were a significant number from backgrounds of lower socio-economic status.\textsuperscript{162} Students therefore had opportunities to interact with those from a range of different backgrounds within the school.

The school’s policy of inclusion appeared to allow for difference to be acknowledged and accepted, and students seemed free to express their various identities. This openness was not unproblematic, and intermittently what the Deputy Head described as ‘little threads’ of social and ethnic groupings occurred in the playground.\textsuperscript{163} The school’s approach to this highlighted its inclusive intention. Such groupings were noted, and if they were perceived to be unduly divisive in their impact, the school would intervene. The manner of the intervention was tailored to the specific circumstances.

\textsuperscript{159} Head of Year10(NFS)
\textsuperscript{160} Deputy Head(NFS)
\textsuperscript{161} ibid
\textsuperscript{162} Deputy Head, Head of Year10(NFS)
\textsuperscript{163} Deputy Head(NFS)
A range of different faiths were studied as part of the KS3 Beliefs and Values course (as RE was known), which followed the Local Authority Agreed Syllabus. At KS4 students took the short course Edexcel GCSE RS. The modules chosen focused on Christianity and Islam, again giving the students exposure to other faiths, particularly those most represented in the school. The students therefore were able to gain knowledge about the main faiths in the UK. The RE teaching within school was supplemented by visits to places of worship and external speakers. The Head of RE talked about two challenges she faced. The first was that despite the school wanting the students to accept and celebrate diversity, potential for doing this was somewhat limited, as organising trips to places of worship could cause tensions. The second was the difficulty of teaching RE to students who had no faith background or notion of the spiritual. Both these challenges indicate problems with the extent to which contact with the Religious Other within the school could be considered meaningful, in the sense of enabling the students to understand faith as a lived reality. However, the way that the school allowed students the freedom to express their religious identity, and the way that faith was included in assemblies, could be seen as assisting the students to see faith in that way.

Although, as in the NFI school, there was no compulsory religious observance and assemblies were seen as secular, faith was not excluded and speakers from various faith groups, such as the Three Faiths Forum, were sometimes invited in. The assemblies closely reflected the school values which in turn drew on various faith traditions. Although not requiring the students to pray in the traditional sense, assemblies did include a spiritual aspect by giving students a period of reflection time.

3.8.2 Socialisation,

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164 Head of RE(NFS)
165 ibid
166 ibid
167 ibid
168 Deputy Head(NFS)
169 Head of RE(NFS)
Unlike the NFI school this school did not have a historical tradition to draw upon, and when the school was founded in the late 1990s its ethical framework had to be consciously formulated.\textsuperscript{170} The task in the NFS school can be contrasted with the faith schools where the task was to operationalise a pre-existing moral framework.

In formulating its ethos, the school's founders identified a number of core values and beliefs.\textsuperscript{171} These included showing respect to others, being caring, and valuing and celebrating diversity. These were taken as universal values and were portrayed as components of the vast majority of belief systems, religious or otherwise.\textsuperscript{172} Thus faith traditions were consciously included within the framework rather than removed to the realm of the personal. The values were expressed within the school as expectations, and were seen to apply both there and in the wider community.\textsuperscript{173}

The SMT was keen to make these values explicit, although the extent to which this message was effectively delivered to staff was questioned by the Deputy Head and others.\textsuperscript{174} The school mission statement and prospectus highlighted\textsuperscript{175} the values, and policies were designed to reflect and incorporate them. Tutor time, assemblies and some PSHEE themes were all consciously employed to reinforce these values and expectations. Staff were seen as important modellers of the values, with a recent inset session devoted to this.\textsuperscript{176} The school was not afraid to challenge parents if they saw the difference between home and school values as problematic.\textsuperscript{177}

One of the main aims of the school was to help the students appreciate and celebrate diversity. In addition to expressing various identities, students were encouraged to participate in a wide range of activities outside the formal curriculum. No evidence of stereotyping was observed. Moreover, the school

\textsuperscript{170} Deputy Head(NFS)  
\textsuperscript{171} ibid  
\textsuperscript{172} ibid  
\textsuperscript{173} ibid  
\textsuperscript{174} Deputy Head, PSHEE Coordinator(NFS)  
\textsuperscript{175} NFS website  
\textsuperscript{176} Deputy Head(NFS)  
\textsuperscript{177} Deputy Head, Head of Year10(NFS)
authorities were not afraid to intervene to challenge the assumptions or behaviours of particular groups, and outside speakers were regularly engaged to help in this regard. 178

3.8.3 Cognitive Sophistication

Students were exposed to different moral frameworks, both formally and consciously through the RE syllabus, as well as informally through debates in RE lessons. 179 The Head of RE articulated several aims for RE in the school. She saw academic study and engagement with RE as important for developing the skills of presenting a reasoned argument, understanding the points made by others and evaluating various viewpoints rather than just expressing an opinion. She aimed to encourage debate between students of different faith positions and those with none, considering the dialogue which emerged as effective in challenging stereotypes. 180

In lessons such as PSHEE, the extent to which views based on other moral frameworks were considered was less clear. 181 In part I feel this was exacerbated by the subject being taught by form tutors, implying a wide variation in competence and willingness to engage with or accept other stances. 182 Challenges to the framework of values were allowed and the school encouraged debate. The Deputy Head said that he would prefer to have intolerant students who ‘were able to express their opinions than those who held them quietly and [felt] stamped down and ignored’ 183.

In discussions with members of staff regarding values their main focus was on developing cognitive skills, which in turn was connected to helping the students to make informed choices. The PSHEE curriculum was one avenue through which this agenda was pursued. As well as covering the officially mandated topics, the programme was adapted by the PSHEE coordinator to respond to local and

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178 Lesson observations, Head of Year10, Head of RE, PSHEE Coordinator(NFS)
179 Lesson observations, Head of RE(NFS)
180 ibid
181 PHHEE Coordinator(NFS)
182 Lesson observation, PSHEE Coordinator(NFS)
183 Deputy Head(NFS)
contemporary issues, and the school saw it as important that students were exposed to a wide variety of situations and experiences. Ultimately the school authorities claimed to be committed to nurturing open-minded students who were aware both of choices available to them, and of the consequences of those choices.

3.8.4 NFS School Summary

In the NFS school helping the students to appreciate diversity was a prominent aim. The diversity of the school population enabled the students to interact with those from a wide array of different backgrounds, including different faiths, on a daily basis. The school fostered inclusion not through emphasising commonality, but by acknowledging and celebrating the students’ multiple identities, including their religious identities. This meant that the contact between the students was likely to be meaningful. Rather than just refraining from promoting negative stereotypes the school worked hard to monitor their occurrence and to challenge any negative assumptions about other groups.

The school promoted choice, providing students with a range of options, including, to a limited extent, in the sphere of ethics. It actively sought to develop students’ critical reasoning and related skills, thereby increasing their cognitive sophistication.

3.9 Provisional Hypotheses

This chapter has looked at each research school individually, and has analysed some data gained from observation and interviews with key members of staff. This was done using the four themes (contact, socialisation, cognitive sophistication and the religious identity) which correspond to the ways that the schools might influence their students’ attitudes of tolerance. After some general remarks I will proceed to generate provisional hypotheses relating to the effects that the schools might be having in this regard.

184 ibid
185 PSHEE Coordinator(NFS)
What became apparent during my fieldwork was that all the schools were very different from each other. There was no easily identifiable model of ‘faith school’, and each institution reflected local contextual factors. This was perhaps most evident in the RCS school. Faith was very apparent within this school, and clearly provided a source of strength and direction to the staff, as well as influencing the way that the school was run. Nevertheless, the particular and pressing needs of the local area and the students meant that the aim of faith nurture took second place to addressing those other needs. However, in terms of those features likely to affect tolerance, the schools showed remarkable similarity. The outlier was the MI school. The two main areas of difference between this school and the others were related to faith: the restriction on critical examination of the faith, and the way in which the religious identity was nurtured and portrayed. In the discussion below, the schools are compared across each of the four aspects in turn, and provisional hypotheses generated.

**Contact**

It was found that all four faith schools (RCI, RCS, ECI and MI) limited the amount of contact that their students had with those of other faiths. The faith schools’ primary aim of faith nurture decreased the amount of time available for teaching about other faiths. In addition, unfamiliarity was exacerbated by segregation on faith grounds, and the lack of any provision for extended interaction with those of other faiths through discussion groups or joint projects. This is likely to mean that the stereotypes and fears that students hold about other faiths are unlikely to be challenged, leading them to display lower tolerance towards these groups.

Due to the religiously diverse nature of the NFI and NFS schools the students there encountered a variety of members of different faiths (and of no faith) on a daily basis. But in the NFI school the nature of the contact, in particular the opportunities for the students to appreciate faith as a lived reality, was potentially problematic. This was related to the school’s promotion of liberal-secularism, and the way that this placed faith in the private sphere.
This analysis indicates that the RCI, RCS, ECI, MI and NFI schools might be expected to impact negatively on their students’ attitudes of tolerance towards those of other faiths due to the lack of opportunity for contact across faith boundaries. The way that the contact is limited differs between the four faith schools and the NFI school and this might indicate a possible difference in the tolerance displayed. It is difficult to comment on what the effect might be, and therefore at this stage no such differentiation posited. The first provisional hypothesis in respect of contact is:

- **Hypothesis A**: The students in the RCI, RCS, ECI, MI and NFI schools will show lower attitudes of tolerance towards those of other faiths than towards other groups due to the lack of contact with other faiths that the school provides. The tolerance shown will be similar across the RCI, RCS, ECI, MI and NFI schools, but will be lower than that shown in the NFS school.

  The way that the RCI school students were segregated in terms of socio-economic background, and the limited opportunity that the students had to interact with students from a range of social backgrounds within school, suggested that students in this school might be expected to show lower tolerance towards other socio-economic groups. While this is related to an aspect of the school, it is not related to a faith aspect. Interaction with those of another socio-economic group was not limited in the other schools (RCS, ECI, MI, NFI and NFS), and therefore it could be predicted that these schools would show similar levels of tolerance towards these groups.

- **Hypothesis B**: The students in the RCS, ECI, MI, NFI and NFS schools will show similar attitudes of tolerance towards those of a different socio-economic group and the students in the RCI school will show lower tolerance towards those of lower socio-economic status due to the lack of contact with this group within the RCI school.

**Socialisation**

The analysis indicated that the MI school might have been exacerbating the formation of ethnic in-groups and out-groups, resulting in lower tolerance towards
those of other ethnic groups. The relationship of the in-group to the ethnic origin of the school founder and many in leadership positions in the school, means that this has a complex and probably tangential relation to faith. In the RCI, RCS, ECI, NFI and NFS schools no out-groups were identified and therefore these schools would be unlikely to exhibit differences in tolerance based on the schools’ promotion of such differentiation. The following hypothesis can therefore be generated:

- **Hypothesis C**: The students in the RCI, RCS, ECI, NFI and NFS schools will show similar attitudes of tolerance towards those of a different ethnic group, and the students in the MI school will show lower tolerance towards other ethnic groups due to the way in which the MI school forms an in-group/out-group identity along ethnic lines.

**Cognitive Sophistication**

The RCI, RCS, ECI, NFI and NFS schools all ostensibly encourage their students to develop critical thinking skills and achieve greater cognitive sophistication, suggesting that these students might display similar levels of tolerance. The MI school apparently attached less importance to promoting cognitive sophistication in its students, instead restricting the extent to which they could critically examine their faith or challenge authority. This suggests that the students in this school might show lower levels of tolerance. The object of tolerance here cannot be confidently predicted, but as the restriction is specifically related to the critical examination of the faith, at this stage those of other faiths would seem to be the most likely group towards which lower tolerance would be shown. Therefore the provisional hypothesis is:

- **Hypothesis D**: The students in the RCI, RCS, ECI, NFI and NFS schools will show similar attitudes of tolerance, and the students in the MI school will show lower tolerance towards those of other faiths, due to the failure of the MI school to develop a higher level of cognitive sophistication in its students

It will be noted in the case of some schools (MI and NFS) that this hypothesis contradicts Hypothesis A.
The Religious Identity

The way in which the MI school undertook the formation of its students’ religious identity, in particular the portrayal of the faith as impermeable, and the highlighting of certain threats to the faith, indicated that inter-group discrimination was likely to be employed in order to maintain the group’s positive self-esteem. As in Hypothesis D above the object of tolerance is unclear, although the threat was seen to emanate from ‘the West’ and was connected to secularism. However, this does suggest that the students in this school will show lower tolerance than their counterparts in the RCI, RCS and ECI schools. The NFI and NFS schools cannot be included in this discussion as these schools were not involved in the same way in religious identity formation. The RCI and RCS schools were very similar in that they portrayed the faith as permeable and as a personal choice, and therefore similar levels of tolerance might be predicted in these schools. In the ECI school some questions were raised about the extent to which students might see their faith as permeable or as a matter of choice, suggesting that slightly lower tolerance might be seen in this school compared with the two Roman Catholic schools. Although I propose a provisional hypothesis here, there are several elements of particular uncertainty. The first is the object of tolerance, and the second is whether the ECI students do see their faith as permeable. The following two chapters (5 and 6), in which the students’ perspective is considered, will help to resolve these issues. Therefore this last provisional hypothesis states:

- **Hypothesis E:** The students in the RCI and RCS schools will show similar attitudes of tolerance, which will be higher than those found in the ECI school. The MI school students will show the lowest attitudes of tolerance, due to their religious (social) identity.

Having considered the school data, in the next two chapters I will analyse the data relating to students’ perceptions of their schools. This will be analysed with reference to the same four themes, and the provisional hypotheses adumbrated above will be duly modified and elaborated.
Chapter 4: The Students’ Religious Identity

4.1 Introduction

The previous chapter set out to ascertain how the consciously constructed institutional features and agendas of schools might impact on students’ attitudes of tolerance. Five provisional hypotheses relating students’ attitudes to features of their schools were generated. However, the transmission of values from school to student will inevitably be moderated by, or interact with, other influences (Dreeben, 1968; Stringer et al., 2010). Examining how and why students absorb or respond to socialising messages from their schooling is crucial to understanding the significance of the school for promoting tolerance or other values. Therefore, this chapter and the following one consider the schools from the students’ perspective, using the themes introduced in Chapter 3. In the present chapter, the focus is on one of those themes: the students’ religious identity, and the contribution of the school to the formation of that identity.

It will be recalled that Social Identity Theory (Chapter 2.3.7) identifies four criteria which need to be met before the strategy of inter-group bias will be used as a means of achieving positive group self-esteem (Turner, 1999, p. 20). These criteria are:

1. **Identification**: a person must identify with the in-group
2. **Salience**: a person must see that a group is present in a given context.
3. **Relevance**: an out-group must be seen to pose a threat to the in-group.
4. **Social Structure**: whether the in-group is seen as permeable.

The student interview and questionnaire responses were analysed using these criteria and the analysis is presented in this chapter.

As will become apparent at several points below, separating the school impact from background influences is problematic. Because the data analysed in this chapter are not the sole source of our understanding of the students’ religious identity, when combined with data from other sources they yield important information about these schools. Provisional hypotheses will again be generated at
the end of this chapter. In the previous chapter it was beneficial for understanding
the schools to look at each one holistically - and thus each school was discussed in
turn. In this and chapter and the one that follows a more thematic approach is
adopted in order to enable differences and similarities across the student
population to be highlighted more clearly.

4.2 Identification: Identifying with the Faith

This section compares the extent to which the students identify with their faith and how they use their social identity.

1. Degree of identification

The data explored here are drawn from two questionnaire items (B2.5 and
2.6) in which the students were asked how much they agreed with the statements

☐ My faith is important to me
☐ My faith is the most important part about me.

These particular questionnaire items were only asked to those students who
professed a faith.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School</th>
<th>Disagree or Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Neither</th>
<th>Agree or Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Average Likert Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>RCI N=89</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>12.4</td>
<td>83.1</td>
<td>4.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RCS N=88</td>
<td>11.4</td>
<td>17.0</td>
<td>71.6</td>
<td>3.82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ECI N=23</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>17.4</td>
<td>78.3</td>
<td>3.96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MI N=44</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>4.86**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NFI N=47</td>
<td>8.5</td>
<td>27.7</td>
<td>63.8</td>
<td>3.79</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
** significant at 1% level; Reference school: NFS

Table 5.1: QB2.5 student identification with their faith.

Apart from the MI school, there is perhaps surprisingly little variation in the degree to which faith and non-faith school students identify with their faith, with the majority indicating that their faith was important to them (table 5.1). If the average Likert score is considered, then the only school whose score differs significantly is the MI school\(^\text{186}\). Nevertheless the proportion is higher in the faith schools than the non-faith schools. Table 5.2 shows the degree of student and parental attendance at religious worship, here used as an indication of religious commitment. With the exception of the RCI parents, it can be seen that the faith schools have a higher proportion of religiously committed families than the non-faith schools. It is therefore likely that the higher identification with the faith among faith school students is reflecting the family’s level of religious commitment, and equally it could be expected that more religiously committed families would be more likely to opt for faith schools for their children.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School</th>
<th>% of students whose parents attend</th>
<th>% students attending weekly or fortnightly</th>
<th>% students only attending major festivals</th>
<th>% students who never attend</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>RCI</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RCS</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ECI</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>99</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MI</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^{186}\) Linear regression.
Table 5.2: Religious commitment.

<p>| | | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NFI</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NFS</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A more complex picture emerges when the extent to which the faith identity acts as the principal identity is considered (Table 5.3).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School</th>
<th>Disagree or Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Neither</th>
<th>Agree or Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Average Likert Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>RCI N=89</td>
<td>34.4</td>
<td>36.7</td>
<td>28.9</td>
<td>2.92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RCS N=88</td>
<td>32.2</td>
<td>31.0</td>
<td>36.8</td>
<td>3.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ECI N=23</td>
<td>26.1</td>
<td>30.4</td>
<td>43.5</td>
<td>3.26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MI N=44</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>4.86**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NFI N=47</td>
<td>59.6</td>
<td>23.4</td>
<td>17.0</td>
<td>2.55**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NFS N=83</td>
<td>27.7</td>
<td>26.7</td>
<td>45.8</td>
<td>3.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>31.0</td>
<td>26.7</td>
<td>42.2</td>
<td>3.25</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

** significant at 1% level; Reference school: NFS

Table 5.3: Faith as principal identity.
The two schools which showed significant variation from the NFS reference school were the NFI and the MI schools. The lowest use of the religious identity as a principal identity was found in the NFI school. This finding is unsurprising given that it is a non-faith school and its students showed the lowest level of regular religious attendance (table 5.2).

For all the students in the MI school their religious identity was their principal identity, but in the remaining faith schools there was a much lower use of the religious identity as such. Comparison of data relating to religious commitment of both parents and students (table 5.2) suggests that this difference cannot be solely explained by the immediate family faith background. The ECI and MI schools had similarly high levels of attendance, but the ECI students were much less likely than the MI students to use their religious identity as their principal identity.

The NFS school was interesting as here 45% of the pupils of faith considered their faith identity as their principal identity, which was higher than in all but one of the faith schools. If the data are broken down by faith within each school, then the use of the religious identity as the principal identity was higher among both Evangelical Christian and Roman Catholic students in the NFS school than in their ‘own faith’ schools (RCI, RCS and ECI schools). Only in the MI school was the identification greater in the faith school (table 5.4). The sample might be small in the Evangelical case, but this was also seen within the Roman Catholic schools suggesting that this cannot be dismissed as an anomaly.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School</th>
<th>Roman Catholic students in</th>
<th>Evangelical Christian students in</th>
<th>Muslim students in</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NFS</td>
<td>50% 8/16 pupils</td>
<td>66.6% 2/3 pupils</td>
<td>88.9% 16/18 pupils</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NFI</td>
<td>0% 8 pupils</td>
<td>0% 2 pupils</td>
<td>50% 1/2 pupils</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

My faith is the most important part of me % of students by faith group.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Faith</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Pupils</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>RCI</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>22/71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RCS</td>
<td>35.7%</td>
<td>20/56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ECI</td>
<td>38.1%</td>
<td>8/21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MI</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5.4: Faith as principal identity by faith group.

The degree of identification with the faith was also explored in the student interviews, where participants were asked what were the three most important things that they would want someone meeting them to know about them. The interview data supported the high identification with the faith shown by the MI school students, with four of the eight interview candidates in this school referring to their faith as an important identity for them\(^{187}\). Just two of the thirty-three remaining interview candidates did so; one, a Muslim in the NFS school, and the other a Pentecostal Christian girl in the RCS school\(^{188}\).

This analysis indicated that the degree of family religious commitment is not the only factor impacting on the student’s decision to use their religious identity as their principal identity. A high level of parental and student religious commitment was seen in both the ECI and MI school, but markedly different degrees of identification. Neither did attendance at a faith school necessarily indicate that there would be a higher level of identification with the faith, rather this relationship was shown to be complex.

There was some evidence that attendance at a faith school might account for some of the difference in the MI school. Muslim identification with the faith was clearly strong generally, as indicated by the responses from Muslim students in the

\(^{187}\) Yasmin, Hussain, Noor, Zainab (MI)
\(^{188}\) Hassan (NFS); Grace (RCS)
NFS school (89% in NFS cf 100% in MI), but identification was higher in the MI school suggesting a significant influence from the school environment in this instance.

The situation was less straightforward in the cases of the other faith schools - RCI, RCS and ECI - where identification with the faith was lower than that shown by the respective students in the NFS school. The immediate family religious background could not account for the differences seen in this situation either, which suggests that there may be some school effect, but it is difficult to determine whether attendance at one of these three faith schools was lowering the faith identification, or whether some aspect of the NFS school was increasing faith identification. The complexity of the relationship between school composition and student identities, which this research has highlighted, was also found by Agirdag et al. (2011). Their research, which looked at school ethnic composition and national identity, highlighted the importance of contextual factors in determining the strength of students’ consciousness of national identity as well as indicating how inter-ethnic friendships could mediate (or moderate) this relationship.

4.2.2 Use of the Identity

In the interviews, when asked to describe themselves, most students’ answers were given from what could be seen as the inter-personal end of the inter-personal/inter-group identity continuum. The responses could be broadly classified into those relating either to hobbies and interests on the one hand, or to personality and character on the other, with many students referring to both. Rhys’s character and Hugh’s hobby responses are typical:

‘I would want them to know I’m a funny person... um.. easy to get along with. That I’m fun to be around like... not really loud but quite laid back’ [Rhys RCS]

[I would want them to know] ‘That I like space a lot. I do a lot of rowing in school and a lot of sport in general’ [Hugh NFI]
Responses referring to character, such as being ‘good’ or ‘nice’, usually related to the student’s personal identity, but in the MI school respondents’ answers character was frequently related to religious identity, connected through behaviour and/or practice\textsuperscript{189}.

‘Just that they know the type of person I am as in Muslims praying five times a day, they’re [sic] quite strong with the religion.’ [Yasmin MI]

‘Well I like to do my prayers on time, not late or anything. I try my hardest to do them on time and everything and get everything perfect’ [Hussain MI]

Only one other example of this kind of strong, conscious connection between character and religious identity was seen, from a RCS student\textsuperscript{190}.

Other differences could be detected between the schools in the students’ use of their religious identity, and this broadly followed the same pattern seen in the levels of identification discussed above. In the RCI school, the students made reference both to their Roman Catholic and, to a lesser degree, to their Christian identity, but only in situations where the preceding discussion referred explicitly to religion. Therefore this can be seen as a situational rather than chronic association between identity and religion (Hogg, 2006)\textsuperscript{191} (see Chapter 2.3.7). Being a Christian was a salient identity for the students in the ECI school, with many of the students invoking it in a variety of contexts, not only when the question made reference to religion.\textsuperscript{192} In the MI school, identity as a Muslim was frequently invoked, often in discursive contexts ostensibly unrelated to religion, indicating that it was a salient identity for many students irrespective of situation or context.\textsuperscript{193}

Students in all the schools regularly highlighted aspects of their identities that were personal rather than explicitly related to any social or group affiliation. A

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\textsuperscript{189}Yasmin, Ibrahim, Hussain, Noor (MI)
\textsuperscript{190}Grace (RCS)
\textsuperscript{191}Christina, Jon, Gregory (RCI)
\textsuperscript{192}Nick, Anna, Esther (ECI)
\textsuperscript{193}Noor, Ibrahim, Suliman, Yasmin, Saira (MI)
slightly higher rate of allusion to the religious social identity was seen among the ECI school students, with the highest levels again exhibited by the MI school students. The religious identity was used in more contexts, and was thus more salient, in the MI and ECI schools than in the Roman Catholic schools.

4.3 Salience: How Distinctive is the Group?

The students’ image of their own in-group is considered in this section. It focuses on perceptions of the in-group’s degree of distinctiveness from others (most notably mainstream society) as well as exploring whether the students identify with and can define a prototype and, to a lesser extent, a stereotype of their own group. The data used here come from the student interviews, but also from questionnaire items B2.1 and 2.3.

The data on this issue further reinforced the sense of a divide between the MI and the other schools in the sample. The students in the MI school saw themselves as distinctive and different, with the root of this difference being their faith. One indicator of this divide can be seen in the extent to which the students would consider marrying outside their own faith (table 5.5) where 82% of the MI school students agreed with the statement ‘I would only marry someone from my own faith’, twice the magnitude of any of the responses in the other schools.

These sentiments were also evident in the interviews. The interviews indicated that the decision not to marry outside the faith was related to a given religious prohibition, with several of the respondents referring to the different regulations regarding men and women. Even where such a ruling was seen to allow for marrying outside the faith under specific conditions, (e.g. if the prospective partner was willing to convert) this was not universally countenanced, as Saira illustrates below:

> ‘if they had the intention of converting them to Islam and showing them the way to Islam then it’s permissible for them to marry, but my

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194 The precise nature of the prohibition varies between different Islamic interpretations see (Friedman et al., 2003).
195 Saira, Yousef, Hussain (MI)
sister - I wouldn’t let her marry a person who wasn’t Muslim’ [Saira MI]

Whereas Saira does not elaborate on the reason for her view about her sister, Hussain qualifies his own similar response. He connects the decision of his female cousin not to marry a non-Muslim with correct behaviour and, by extension, family honour (izzat).

‘OK first of all she’s a girl. Obviously Muslim girls are different to the boys, ‘cause first of all they cover themselves and they stay away from the boys. So that situation would... be very unlikely to occur. So knowing how she’s a religious person it’s ok. I know she wouldn’t do something like that.’ [Hussain MI]

In the ECI, RCS and RCI schools no similar prohibition was attached to choice of marriage partner, with the choice always being seen as a personal one. In the one instance in these other schools where the wisdom of marrying outside the faith was questioned, this was related to the need for both parties to share similar values which were more likely to be found in another person of the same faith (in this case, Christian).

‘I think they have to share the same like faith as you otherwise you kind of disagree on some things. Yeah um... it’s not too bad disagreeing on some things but if it’s that major in your life then you really need to agree.’ [Esther ECI]

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196 Esther(ECI);Rhianna(RCS)
197 Esther(ECI)
% of students who agree or strongly agree

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School</th>
<th>Only marry within their own faith</th>
<th>There is no one absolute true religion</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>RCI</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RCS</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ECI</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MI</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NFI</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NFS</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5.5: Indicators of in-group distinctiveness.

Certain theological understandings, such as those relating to salvation (Chapter 2.4), can also be seen as potentially encouraging the view of distinctiveness. Question B2.3 (table 5.5) asked the students how much they agreed with the statement ‘There are many different religions, but no one absolute true religion’.

Only 5% of the MI and ECI school students agreed with this statement. If the numbers who disagreed (i.e. those who believe that there is only one true religion) are also considered (91% MI and 77% ECI), this clearly indicates that the majority of the students in these two schools held exclusivist theological views. This is consistent with the theological views of the ECI church community and of most devout Muslim communities. The questionnaire findings were consistent with the interview data in that the majority of the interview responses in the ECI and MI schools could be categorised as exclusivist. In the MI school the remaining interview responses were conservatively inclusivist, in that there was sense that God would ultimately decide the fate of non-Muslims. This interpretation of

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198 Suliman, Hussain, Zainab, Ibrahim (MI); Luke, Anna, Ben, Esther, Rebecca (ECI)
199 Noor, Yasmin (MI)
Islamic theology can be seen as creating a situation where a clear distinction is made between ‘them’ and ‘us’; ‘we’ are ‘saved’, ‘they’ are not. Whereas this may also be the case in the ECI school, the impact may be more diluted, as more variation was seen and there were few students who actively subscribed to an exclusivist view.

In the Roman Catholic schools, the students interviewed indicated that they held inclusivist and sometimes even pluralist views on salvation, which again was reflected in the questionnaire data where 32% of the RCI and 30% of the RCS students agreed with the statement that there is no one true religion. As has been discussed (Chapter 2.4), the official Roman Catholic interpretation would be clearly within the inclusivist understanding (Cardinale, 1966).

A striking difference between the MI school students and those in the other schools was the extent to which the MI school students perceived themselves as different from their peers in wider society, and what constituted that difference. The MI school students saw little similarity between themselves and their peers, with the defining axis of difference being their religion.

‘I think my lifestyle would be quite different to someone who wasn’t a Muslim. Because my lifestyle revolves around religion so maybe if it was like a Christian person instead of praying five times a day they probably go to Church every Sunday or something like that so it would be quite different.’ [Noor MI]

The interview question was intentionally open, asking how the respondent saw themselves in relation to a person of their age in the ‘average’ state school. But in two of the seven Muslim responses, an unprompted initial comparison was made specifically with Muslims in state schools. No similar comparison was ever made by respondents in the other faith schools. Students in the RCI, RCS and ECI

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200 Emily, Harriet, Jon, Christina (RCI)  
201 Gregory, Matt, Mark (RCI)  
202 Yasmin, Saira, Yousef, Hussain, Noor, Zainab (MI)  
203 Yasmin, Noor (MI)
did not see all state school students as non-religious and recognised that state school students may be of the same faith as them. In the MI school this initial comparison with Muslims in state schools seems to imply a sense of distance between the MI school students and wider society, in that the society to which they made reference was still initially a Muslim society.

In the case of the MI school students a prototype could be seen emerging which related to religious practice and belief. Religious practice was particularly well defined and, amongst other things, included the prescribed daily prayers, dress, behaviour, and understandings around prohibition and restriction.

For example, Yasmin explained:

‘Muslims are reserved and are not allowed out much’ [Yasmin MI]

Saira also spoke of others not having prohibitions:

‘but the Muslim has certain things to follow, certain things she has to do’ [Saira MI].

The way that the MI students’ lives revolved around religion was often referred to, and was seen as suggesting that they were more concerned, or thought more than others, about the consequences of their actions. A weak stereotype was also detected which considered the Other as having greater choice and freedom, also related to faith practice.

In the other schools, the students perceived significant overlap between themselves and their peers in wider society. Instances of differences being articulated were rare. In the NFI school, difference was occasionally expressed in terms of class and intellectual level, whereas the faith school pupils principally categorised others on the grounds of faith, with minor differences being observed in moral beliefs.

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204 Yasmin, Noor (MI)
205 Zainab (MI)
206 Yasmin, Saira, Noor, Zainab (MI)
207 Yasmin, Saira (MI)
208 Zainab, Yasmin, Saira, Hussain, Noor (MI)
209 Georgina, Hugh (NFI)
‘I think Christians’ views are .. like they’re almost the same, there’s just a few different things so like it makes it hard if you are going out and getting drunk and stuff because we don’t believe in getting drunk.’ [Nick ECI]

‘Yeah like we [RCS students] definitely have the same lifestyle [as students in other schools] we’ve been brought up in the same environment’ [Jade RCS]

Rather than seeing distinctly defined groups, as the students in the MI school tended to do, differences were seen to be a matter of degree, as demonstrated here by Grace:

‘Well I would say it [her lifestyle] is different because - no, it’s slightly different - because we’re all teenagers so we all like to do the same things but it’s just like some things, you know, ah yes this person’s a Christian because [of] the things she will say, the things that she will do, how she will dress, how she will present herself is different from a non-Christian because she will follow fashion, wear the short skirt, put so much makeup on and stuff like that, whereas a Christian would put makeup on to make themselves look good, but not to the extreme ‘ [Grace RCS]

Christian behaviour was occasionally referred to, but there was no consistency or consensus around notions of what this amounted to. A well-defined prototype could not be determined, as it could in the MI school, although students in the RCI and ECI schools nevertheless commented on the homogeneity of beliefs which they saw within their schools. In the RCI and ECI schools, while students occasionally mentioned Christian behaviour, there was no clear agreement on what it entailed. A well-defined prototype could not be determined, as it could in the MI school, although students in the RCI and ECI schools commented on the homogeneity of beliefs which they saw within their schools.

‘when you are here like everyone sort of believes the same thing so it’s not like oh you’re catholic or whatever... it’s like everyone’s got the same views so you can also express what you feel more’ [Emily RCI]

This could indicate that some idea of a group prototype was present in the minds of these students, even if it was not clearly formulated, but it should be stressed that consistency or consensus around notions of what this amounted to. A well-defined prototype could not be determined, as it could in the MI school, although students in the RCI and ECI schools nevertheless commented on the homogeneity of beliefs which they saw within their schools.

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210 Matt, Emily (RCI); Luke (ECI)
that this was very weak and that in most of the schools the similarities across
groups were generally perceived as being far greater than any distinctions.

By contrast, the students in the MI school did appear to see a relatively clear
distinction between themselves, as members of their faith group, and Others in
wider society. The sense of difference related both to religious belief and practice,
and to general behaviour.

The influence of the MI school as an institution on this phenomenon is
unclear. Much of the difference was strongly related to the students’ belief. Whilst
the school may be involved in forming that belief, it is not the sole influence,
arguably reinforcing beliefs rather than creating them in the first place. Perhaps the
most significant school-level effect occurs through the segregation that the MI
school promotes and symbolises, which seems to be connected to the formation of
prototypes, rather than the creation of an out-group. Segregation encourages the
students to regard themselves as a homogeneous group defined by faith. However,
reflecting the very strength of the homogenising faith-based prototype in this case,
a weak comparison group was seen to emerge in the form of Muslim students in
non-Muslim schools.

4.4 Relevance: The Relevant Out-Group

An out-group only becomes relevant if it is perceived as posing some sort of
threat to the in-group, and thus this section considers who students see as the
relevant out-group, and whether they perceive this as posing any threat to their
group identity.

The influence of the social context emerged as an important factor in
determining what comparisons were made. In the NFS school, some comparisons
were made relating to social class, with the out-group being those of a lower social
class. This divide could be seen to originate in the local area, where the
neighbourhoods reflected a class divide. The school itself was not involved in
creating the divide; in fact, school authorities were aware of it and were trying to
mitigate it.

211 Edward, Louisa (NFS)
The influence of the social context could also be detected in the NFI school,\textsuperscript{212} where the identities used and comparisons made related to holding liberal values and being more educated.

‘I kind of created an image in my head of a state school pupil not being as clever and not having as intellectual a background. They probably don’t go home to a very big house with clever parents who have office jobs’ [Hugh NFI]

These values or identities (liberal and educated - if not arrogant and snobbish) were promoted within the school, and thus the school could be considered as potentially influencing the comparison, possibly through reinforcement rather than creation.

Few comparisons were made in either Roman Catholic school. In the RCI school, even in context-specific situations when the students employed their religious identity, no clear out-group emerged. Rarely in the RCS school did any comparisons explicitly involve the students’ Roman Catholic identity. However, the social context did emerge as influential, though unrelated to the school, with two respondents making comparisons between local areas,\textsuperscript{213} which reflected the distrust arising from gang violence and the segregated nature of the locality.

The responses in the ECI school indicated that being Christian was a salient identity for the students, with the comparison sometimes being made to non-Christians,\textsuperscript{214} a group which was not clearly defined. There was little to suggest that this out-group was being created by the school, but the segregated nature of the school was possibly reinforcing it. It did nevertheless suggest an out-group towards which discrimination and lower tolerance could be directed.

In the MI school, the frequency with which Muslim identity was invoked in various contexts has already been noted, although it was possible that my presence, as a non-Muslim, was significant in making this identity more salient.

\textsuperscript{212}Pippa,Hugh,Georgina,Anthony(NFI)
\textsuperscript{213}Rhys,Jennifer(RCS)
\textsuperscript{214}Rebecca,Esther,Laurence(ECI)
number of relevant out-groups could be detected, the first of which I will refer to as ‘non-proper’ Muslims. The term is complex and covers both non-practising Muslims and who do not follow what is believed to be correct practice, such as the teacher who could not lead prayers (Chapter 4.6.4).\textsuperscript{215} A fairly clear boundary between the in-group and the out-group, relating to observable religious practice, appeared to exist for many of the MI students. The school could be seen as at least reinforcing, and possibly in some cases creating, this distinction through the emphasis on correct practice in Islamic Studies.

Although ‘non-proper’ Muslims emerged as an important out-group, a second was also detected, that of non-Muslims,\textsuperscript{216} and this was employed in a variety of situations. There was also evidence of a tendency to equate non-Muslims with Christians, as can be seen here in a discussion with Ibrahim. In an earlier part of the interview, Ibrahim had first referred to having non-Muslim friends and had subsequently referred to them as Christian:

\begin{quote}
\textit{HE} .....you’ve got lots of friends you said who are not Muslim, so if you were out with them and one of them had a drink how would you feel?
\textit{Ibrahim} Umm.... I’d try to well what I would do is try to make him [not drink], because he’s Christian’ [Ibrahim MI]
\end{quote}

There was no evidence that the school was involved in the formation of this conflation of the two categories.

In the interviews, the references to the non-Muslim group suggested that they were less relevant to these students’ consciousness of their own identity than the category of ‘non-proper’ Muslims. I think these groups should not be considered as totally distinct units, but more as concentric circles, where the boundary between Muslims (in-group) and ‘non-proper’ Muslims (out-group) is fairly well-defined and relates to practice, but where the boundary between ‘non-proper’ Muslims and non-Muslims is much less distinct. The relationship between the religious facet of identity and having a clearly defined out-group was strongest

\begin{footnotesize}
\textsuperscript{215} Yasmin, Noor, Zainab (MI)
\textsuperscript{216} Suliman, Yasmin, Saira, Hussain, Noor (MI)
\end{footnotesize}
amongst students in this school, indicating a high likelihood that the school itself was playing a significant role in reinforcing such distinctions.

A final categorisation could be seen amongst a number of the students across the schools, that of a ‘strong religious person’, although the use of this categorisation differed. Those from a more liberal religious background, such as the Roman Catholic, Anglican and Jewish students (but also some from the ECI school), used the category in a derogatory manner. By contrast, those from a more conservative background (the MI, some ECI and the Pentecostal students in the NFS and RCS schools) viewed this as a positive attribute. Thus the category of ‘strong religious person’ could function either as an in-group or an out-group signifier depending on one’s theological understanding.

It was only in the case of the MI school that there were any consistently perceived threats to students’ religious identity. The students were asked how they thought their faith was viewed by the majority of people in the UK today. All the MI school students questioned on the issue saw Islam and Muslims as portrayed negatively by the media, and felt that many in society were influenced by this portrayal. These two responses were typical:

‘Muslims are bad, Muslims are basically if nowadays if you see a person with a topi\(^\text{220}\) on and a beard they just say terrorist straight up and they don’t even know the person.’ [Yousef MI]

‘many people - because of the media and how they describe us to be - many people don’t see us as very nice or very good’ [Zainab MI]

This sense of insecurity and threat has been well documented by research into Muslims, and is seen to have increased since 9/11 and the London 7/7

\(^{217}\) A number of synonyms were used; extreme, Christian Christian

\(^{218}\) Christina, Annabel [RCI]; Anna [ECI]; Georgina, Pippa, Anthony [NFI]

\(^{219}\) Chantelle [NFS]; Rebecca, Esther, Luke [ECI]; Grace [RCS]

\(^{220}\) Hindi/Urdu word for hat, but also used specifically for the small brimless hat worn by males in the Mosque.
bombings (Commission on British Muslims and Islamophobia, 2001; Commission on British Muslims and Islamophobia et al., 2004; Driel, 2004).

Two other threats were discussed. The first, referred to by a Jewish student in the NFI 221 school, was prompted by a particular incident in which a Jewish home in her neighbourhood had been attacked. The second was in the ECI school, and had not emerged when the student was asked directly about threats, but only arose in a subsequent discussion centred around the position of a nearby Mosque. In this connection, Bill explained:

‘At the moment it doesn’t really bother me. You know it’s kind of like rivals so..’ [Bill ECI]

Here we can see a situation where there is no explicit threat at present, and yet Bill’s perception of the local Muslims as ‘rivals’ suggests that he is conscious of a low-level ongoing threat. There was no evidence that this view was widely held within the school.

A variety of out-groups were detected within the schools, some of which could be seen as relating to a wider social context in which religious differences were a relatively minor feature, while in other cases - especially that of the MI school - the schools themselves did appear to be playing some role in fostering a consciousness of faith-based distinctions, if perhaps through reinforcement of existing beliefs. A sense that students’ religious identity was under threat was only detected in the case of the MI school.

4.5 Social Structure: Permeability

The likelihood of using inter-group bias is seen to increase if leaving the group is not considered a viable option (it is impermeable). Although conversion into the faith can be regarded as a dimension of permeability, here it was the ability of the faith member to leave which was of most significance, as that was the

221 Pippa(NFI)
position of our respondents. Within this research the issue of whether a person felt that they could change their religion was not asked directly, but information was gathered indirectly through issues of choice (see also Chapter 6.3.1). The point under consideration here is not so much the extent to which the students’ upbringing has actually afforded them sufficient freedom to enable them to leave the faith, but rather the subtly different issue of whether they believe that leaving is an option for them (see for example Callan, 1985; MacMullen, 2007; McLaughlin, 1984; Merry, 2007).

As will be discussed in detail in Chapter 6.3, the RCI, ECI and RCS schools’ students generally felt that they were making their own choices about their faith, but more importantly in this section they considered the possibility of not following the faith, or any faith. In an informal discussion with 6th formers at the RCI school, several comments were made about the number of people who had become atheists after studying A level Christian Theology. In the MI school, only one student countenanced the possibility that she could ever not be a Muslim. For her, choice was about the degree of adherence rather than complete rejection of the faith, suggesting that faith was seen as impermeable.

It would appear therefore, that this is an important difference between the MI students and the students in the other faith schools. The MI students seemed not to consider their faith group as permeable, whereas the majority of students in the other schools did.

4.6 Influences on Student Beliefs

In the above analysis of the way the students’ group identity might affect the extent or nature of their tolerance of others, links to the potential involvement of the school have also been made. In some instances the potential impact of the school as an institution is relatively clear, but while all the faith schools see one of

222 It was felt that this issue might be sensitive particularly in the MI school, in light of the fact that apostasy in some Muslim interpretations is punishable by death.
223 Matt, Harriet, Jon, Mark (RCI); Luke, Anna, Laurence, Esther, Nick (ECI); Danny, Joseph, Hannah, Grace (RCS)
224 Informal discussion with 6th form students (RCI)
225 Zainab (MI)
their aims as religious nurture or formation, they are not the sole, of even necessarily the most important, influence on this aspect of their students’ lives. It has already become apparent in this chapter that the school’s influence on the degree of identification with the faith is not straightforward. Before concluding this section it seems appropriate therefore to consider the students’ perception of the role that the faith schools play in nurturing their faith. Is the school perceived as having any impact, and if so what aspects of the school are seen as most influential?

Overwhelmingly, across all the schools, the people whom the students considered to have had most influence on their moral and religious beliefs were family, and most particularly either or both parents\(^{226}\). This finding is consistent with that of the research conducted in Dutch secondary schools by Bertram-Troost et al. (2009). Other influences were seen, which included school, friends and occasionally other family members. Parents were seen as instrumental in influencing the prospects of a child following a particular religious belief, primarily though introducing the child to religious practice, which in due course became normalised, something which would indicate that the parents were educating for cultural coherence (Merry, 2007) (Chapter 2.6.2).

Although parents and family were considered to have a large influence on beliefs, before considering the students’ perceptions further, it is important to remember that religious teaching also occurs in activities associated with the place of worship (table 5.6). Considerable differences could be seen between groups in terms of students’ participation in such activities, with 100% of ECI students and 80% of MI students attending activities outside school at their place of worship. The high participation of Muslim students in supplementary education is a well-documented phenomenon (Mogra, 2007; Parker-Jenkins, 1995; Raza, 1991).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School</th>
<th>% students attending activities at the place of worship outside school</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

\(^{226}\) Interview question: who do you think has had the most influence on your religious and/or moral beliefs?
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School</th>
<th>Attendance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>RCI</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RCS</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ECI</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MI</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NFI</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NFS</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5.6: Students’ attendance at non-school related activities at their place of worship.

Rarely did any of the students mention, without prompting, the school as playing a part in shaping their religious beliefs. Nevertheless, when specifically questioned on their school’s role, the students did acknowledge its influence. Responses were generally positive and although variation was seen amongst students, more interesting were the between schools. The responses can broadly be categorised into three groups; teaching about the faith, religious practice, and the school environment.

Many of the students found that the school was influential through teaching them about their faith and beliefs. Yasmin’s response was typical:

‘before I didn’t know much about Islam, but I did practice’ [Yasmin MI]

This influence through increased knowledge appeared most important in the MI and the RCS schools. In the latter this was often tied to the notion of discussing and opening up the student’s own beliefs. In the MI school, this knowledge was seen to infuse the curriculum, as Zainab explained:

‘every lesson you have some input of Islam and that way you get taught’ [Zainab MI].

Here again, as in the RCS, there is a connection between knowledge and faith.
In the MI school knowledge can potentially be seen to fill a gap in the student’s home background. Many Muslim students saw their parents as encouraging religious practice, including the reading of the Qu’ran, but suggested that they felt less able to teach about the faith. This lack of confidence in imparting the faith was also noted by Raza (1991). Although the staff in the RCS school also commented on the lack of parental confidence in this area, none of the students did so.

In the RCI school only one respondent made a passing reference to the influence of teaching on their faith. Christian Theology was seen as an academic subject rather than connected to faith development, and the Christian Living programme, designed to synthesise the spiritual and the academic, was not mentioned by the students.

In the two non-faith schools knowledge also played a small part in faith development, but in one case the RE teaching confused the student, requiring her to separate her beliefs from what she was taught. The problems caused by this dichotomy in home/school values are frequently cited by faith groups, particularly Evangelical Christian and Muslim groups, when justifying and arguing for separate schools (Everett, 2006; Freeman, 2001; Islamic Academy, 1990).

The school also was seen to increase religious practice, a response which was almost universal amongst those in the RCI school. In this school it was the daily routine of prayers and weekly House Mass and Sunday Mass which encouraged the students, something which was facilitated by the boarding nature of the school.

‘Matthew I think that because we go to mass on Sunday and we have house mass in the house I think that your faith becomes a lot stronger while you’re here [...] and prayers every morning
HE Is it the routine?
Matthew Yeah I think it’s the routine but also the atmosphere as well. You feel like... I don’t know .. more faith around here. ’[Matthew RCI]

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227 Yousef(MI). All of the students had attended supplementary religious schools.
228 Deputy Head and Head of Year 10 (RCS)
229 Mark(MI)
230 Christian Living Teacher, Head of Christian Living (RCI)
Religious practice was also an important element throughout the MI school, but the school’s influence was perceived as lower in this case, probably because it was seen to be merely reinforcing what had already been established, more effectively, at home.

‘Well they [parents] teach me manners, how to like pray at home, how to clean yourself before you pray and stuff like you can’t do in school. Like in school they can show you how to like clean yourself before you pray but you can’t do it physically. But at home your dad can take you to the bathroom and show you how to do it’ [Ibrahim MI]

The third category was the school environment, which was seen as important in both the MI and RCI schools, but also by a few respondents in the ECI school. It could also be detected implicitly in the responses in the RCS school. The school was seen to provide a space where the students felt comfortable speaking about their faith and which allowed the religious aspect of their identity to be exposed.

‘it’s like everyone’s got the same views so you can also express what you feel more because you feel comfortable about talking about your faith in front of your friends’ [Emily RCI]

Some students were more aware of this as a result of experiences in non-faith schools where they had felt more restricted in this regard,\textsuperscript{231} a finding echoed in Moulin’s (2011) study exploring the experiences of religious students in non-faith schools. Peer influence and the creation of a sense of community due to being around like-minded people were also deemed important.

‘And when I came to this school and was surrounded by an Islamic environment everything around me just Islamic and then the school

\textsuperscript{231} Luke(ECI); Emily(RCI)
grew more Islamic ‘[Suliman MI]

‘Well being around another 200 or mostly Christians it’s just like a sense of community really’ [Luke ECI].

Unlike the other three faith schools where the school’s influence was generally seen to strengthen the faith, this was not the case in the ECI school. This was partly because the provision in the school was being compared to that available elsewhere in the church, specifically the youth groups, which were seen as more effective at faith development. It might also have been related to the high level of congruence between home, school and church, which meant that the school was merely reinforcing what was there, so this aspect of school would not have registered in the minds of the students. The students saw any positive impact on faith by the school as happening either through increasing knowledge, or provision of an environment conducive to expressions of faith. However, the majority of the respondents saw the school as having no real impact on their faith, and even in one case, as having a detrimental effect. Sarah described how she felt that the religious aspect infusing the curriculum was ‘too much’:

‘Too much is when they bring it in to lessons, just totally unrelated, like they somehow bring it into history or our English lesson’ [Sarah ECI]

Parents were seen by students to be the most significant influence on their faith. Faith schools had an influence on the students’ faith and religious identity, but the way that the students saw this happening varied between schools. Three ways in which the school affected the students’ faith were detected: through the creation of an environment where faith could be discussed and which allowed space for this aspect of their identity, though encouraging practice, and through giving the students knowledge about their faith.

4.7 Discussion

232 Sarah(ECI)
This chapter has considered, from the student’s perspective, whether the schools (including the non-faith schools) might affect attitudes of tolerance through the formation of a religious (social) identity, as well as the extent to which the school is involved in the creation of students’ social identity. The school’s role in the formation of the religious identity was shown to be complex, with student responses indicating that attendance at a faith school does not necessarily increase identification with the faith in question.

Faith school students did consider that their school had influenced their faith formation, usually in a positive way, but parents were seen as the major influence in this respect. This supports the view expressed by some of the school authorities (see Chapter 3) that they were reinforcing an identity established at home rather than creating it. The three main areas of school influence identified by students were: teaching, practice and producing an environment where students felt open about expressing their faith. Differences between the schools emerged around which of these areas were most influential in each school. Often the areas which the students commented on reflected the emphasis observed in the school. For example, in the RCS school there was little emphasis on religious practice, but more on the teaching of religious content - an emphasis reflected in the student responses. But sometimes the students did not perceive influence in areas which their school regarded as being strong. For example, in the MI school, practice, which was considered important by the school, was not mentioned by the students. One possible explanation might be that the students do not register the school’s influence when it is reinforcing what is normal in the home.

With regard to predicting the nature and extent of students’ tolerance of others, the schools were compared in relation to four criteria which, if satisfied, would indicate (according to Social Identity Theory) that the students might use the strategy of social competition to achieve a positive group identity. The schools were also compared regarding the extent to which the students invoked their personal or their social identities. The analysis for each school is summarised in the table below (table 5.7).

This suggests that none of the schools were necessarily liable to condition their students to discriminate against ‘out-groups’ on account of their social group
membership. The RCI and RCS schools were seen to be very similar to each other and to the NFS and NFI schools, which indicates that the students would show similar attitudes of tolerance. In Chapter 3, questions were raised over whether the ECI students were being taught to construe their faith as impermeable, but the ECI student responses gave no indication that this was the case. Their responses discussed in this chapter reinforce and support a sense of the similarity between the ECI school and the Roman Catholic schools with respect to religious identity formation, thus suggesting that the attitudes of tolerance of the students in the ECI school would be similar to those in the Roman Catholic and non-faith schools.

However, the analysis of the data highlighted a number of differences between the MI school and the others. When compared to those in the other schools, the students in the MI school were by far the most likely to invoke their group identity. This was often, if not always, invoked in non context-specific situations, indicating that they were further towards the inter-group end of Tajfel’s inter-personal/inter-group continuum than any of the other school students (Tajfel and Turner, 1986).

The students in the MI school appeared to be forming an identity different in character from those in the other schools. Strong identification with their faith appeared universal amongst students of the MI school, at a level not found in any other school. In addition, the MI school students saw themselves as distinct from their peers in mainstream society, with little recognition of any overlap in lifestyles. The picture which emerged was one of a distinctive identity, with tight boundaries defined by a sense of right belief and religious practice, indicating elements of a prototype. An obvious out-group was less clearly defined, but two arguably overlapping groups could be detected; ‘non-proper’ Muslims and non-Muslims. This out-group was particularly connected to behaviour seen to contravene Islamic teachings. There was little indication that the students understood there to be any choice regarding their faith, and thus the group, for most of the students, was seen as impermeable. Therefore, in the MI school the criteria which indicate the adoption of the social competition strategy were all fulfilled to some extent.

In the case of the MI school students, the perception of a threat to their religious identity was evident. The link between Islam and terrorism was raised by
the majority of the students, and they saw themselves as being under suspicion, as Muslims. Whether this factor was strong enough to invoke social competition is unclear and cannot be determined theoretically. But it does suggest that the MI school students might show discrimination on account of their group membership, and that if this were so the most likely object of that discrimination would be either non-Muslims or ‘non-proper’ Muslims, where this latter group relates to Muslims who do not subscribe to the same practice as the in-group.

Compared to the students in the other schools, these differences taken together indicate that there is a higher likelihood that the MI students would employ the strategy of social competition to achieve a positive group identity, and thus they would be more likely to show intolerance towards the relevant out-group. In this case the out-group was broad and ill-defined, encompassing ‘non-proper’ Muslims and non-Muslims. There was no indication that the strategy of social bias would be employed by the students in the other schools on account of their religious identity. However, the school’s role in the formation of religious identity could not be clearly established in all cases.

In Chapter 3, a hypothesis was generated which related the religious identity (in particular the way it is portrayed and understood within a school) to the students’ attitudes of tolerance. It is now possible to modify that hypothesis and resolve the two outstanding issues. First, an object of tolerance has been identified: ‘non-proper’ Muslim and non-Muslim. Second, the way that the religious identity was portrayed by the ECI school and the way that it was formed have been shown to be similar to those in the RCI, RCS, NFI and NFS schools. Thus one would predict there to be very little difference between the attitudes of tolerance shown by the students in these schools. It is also possible to incorporate the non-faith schools within the hypothesis. Therefore, the final hypothesis in respect of the effect of the schools on their students’ attitudes of tolerance through the religious identity aspect of the school is:

- **Hypothesis E**: The students in the RCI, RCS, ECI, NFI and NFS schools will show similar attitudes of tolerance, while the MI school students will show lower attitudes of tolerance towards non-Muslims and ‘non-proper’ Muslims due to their religious (social) identity
The next chapter will further consider how the students perceive their educational experience.
### Comparison of Schools on Social Identity Theory Indicators

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School</th>
<th>Use of personal or group identity</th>
<th>Identification with religious group</th>
<th>Degree of distinction compared with peers in wider society</th>
<th>Group permeability</th>
<th>Perceived out-group and group threats</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>RCI</td>
<td>Predominantly personal identity used Context-specific use of religious identity GROUP USE LOW</td>
<td>High general identification LOW PRIMARY IDENTIFICATION 5/6</td>
<td>NO SIGNIFICANT DISTINCTION (Inclusivist/pluralist theology) No prototype able to be determined</td>
<td>PERMEABLE</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RCS</td>
<td>Predominantly personal identity used GROUP USE LOW</td>
<td>Moderate general identification LOW PRIMARY IDENTIFICATION 4/6</td>
<td>NO SIGNIFICANT DISTINCTION (Inclusivist/pluralist theology) No prototype able to be determined</td>
<td>PERMEABLE</td>
<td>Area- weak and contextual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ECI</td>
<td>Personal identity predominantly used, but some wider, non-context specific use of religious identity GROUP USE LOW/MEDIUM</td>
<td>High general identification MODERATE PRIMARY IDENTIFICATION 3/6</td>
<td>NO SIGNIFICANT DISTINCTION (exclusivist theology) No prototype able to be determined</td>
<td>PERMEABLE</td>
<td>Non Christian, ill-defined and weak</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MI</td>
<td>Predominantly personal identity used</td>
<td>Moderate general identification</td>
<td>LITTLE OVERLAP SEEN. SIGNIFICANT DISTINCTION (Exclusivist theology) Prototype able to be determined</td>
<td>IM-PERMEABLE</td>
<td>Non-proper or non-practising Muslims. Non-Muslims, related to behaviour and belief considered non-Islamic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------</td>
<td>---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>--------------</td>
<td>---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NFI</td>
<td>Predominantly personal identity used GROUP USE LOW</td>
<td>Moderate general identification 6/6 LOW PRIMARY IDENTIFICATION 6/6</td>
<td>NO SIGNIFICANT DISTINCTION No prototype able to be determined</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>Lower education - weak and contextual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NFS</td>
<td>Predominantly personal identity used GROUP USE LOW</td>
<td>Moderate general identification MODERATE PRIMARY IDENTIFICATION 2/6</td>
<td>NO SIGNIFICANT DISTINCTION No prototype able to be determined</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>Social class-weak and contextual</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5.7
Chapter 5: The Students’ Experience of School

5.1 Introduction

This is the final chapter in which the analysis of the school data is presented. In this chapter, as in Chapter 4, the interview and questionnaire data relating to students’ perceptions of their school form the basis of the analysis, although the focus here is on how tolerance seems to be affected by educational activities within the school (i.e. lessons, as distinct from broader institutional or contextual factors). As in the previous two chapters, the analysis of the data will lead to the generation of hypotheses. Unlike the previous chapter, in which separating the school’s influence from that of strong external factors was problematic at times, in this chapter the data allow links to be made more directly to the school.

The analysis of the data uses the three themes relating to ways in which education may affect tolerance, as detailed in Chapter 3. In the first section, Contact, the degree to which the students report themselves as having contact with and learning about the Other is considered. The section on Cognitive Sophistication focuses on the extent to which the students see that their school allows or encourages them to make their own choices, as well as their perception of the classroom and school environment. This includes the extent to which they feel that they are encouraged to debate issues and express their own views and opinions. It also further explores what choices the students feel able to make about their faith. This includes considering students’ perceptions of authority in relation to matters of faith. In the final section, Socialisation, the extent to which the schools are seen as promoting diversity is examined. This chapter ends by incorporating into the provisional hypotheses generated in Chapter 3 the insights gained from the analysis here of students’ perception of their educational experience, and its implications for tolerance.

5.2 Contact

It was noted in Chapter 3 that all the faith schools reported some direct teaching about, or contact with, people of other faiths. But the extent to which the students themselves registered this, or felt that this was sufficient preparation for
the society in which they live, was not discussed. The fact that the students may have limited opportunity to mix with other faiths within school does not exclude the possibility of contact occurring in a variety of external school contexts. Thus it is pertinent first of all to gauge the level of contact in all areas of their lives.

In the questionnaire (Section C: Appendix A) the students were asked to indicate if they had friends from ethnic and religious groups other than their own.

<p>| % of students reporting that they have friends from | Ethnic groups other than their own | Religious groups other than their own |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>RCI</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RCS</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ECI</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MI</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NFI</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NFS</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>95</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5.1: Student inter-group friendships.

As discussed in Chapter 3, with the exception of the ECI school, all the schools in the research had ethnically diverse populations. The lower level of ethnic diversity in the ECI school was seen to reflect the lower degree of ethnic diversity in the local area, rather than being the result of any school policy (Appendix J). The data (table 5.1) indicate that the students have a high incidence of contact with students from other ethnic groups, apart from the ECI school. It was noted that all the schools, with the exception of the RCI, reflected the ethnic diversity of the local area, and therefore the students’ inter-ethnic friendships could be from school or outside school. Although the RCI school itself is situated in a mono-cultural area, this does not reflect the students’ home backgrounds, with many of the RCI students living in more multi-ethnic areas.
Inter-religious friendships were lower among faith school students compared with those in the non-faith schools. As already discussed (Chapter 3), selection policies in all the faith schools favoured their respective faith groups. In the MI and ECI schools, no other religious groups were present, and in the RCI and RCS schools there were few students who were not from a Christian tradition. Most inter-religious friendships of faith school students therefore would have originated outside the school. Despite attending a school segregated on the grounds of faith, over two-fifths of the students, and about 50% of those based in London, said that they interacted with people of other faiths.233 So although inter-religious friendship might have been restricted within schools, in many cases this appeared to be compensated for outside school. Proponents of Muslim schools, such as the Muslim Council of Britain, highlight this point, maintaining that those who oppose faith schools fail to take account of contact and friendships occurring outside the school context (Rizvi, 2007).

As with inter-ethnic friendship, the potential for inter-religious friendship also depended on the geographical context. The ECI school indicated a low level of inter-religious friendships, but the school area statistics (Appendix J) for this school showed a very low percentage of faiths other than Christianity, and therefore students in other schools in the area may have also shown low levels of inter-religious friendships. However, although the area statistics for the RCS and MI schools showed similar levels of other faiths, the schools exhibited very different percentages of inter-religious friendships, thus it is hard to explain this difference by recourse to area differences alone.

A point of caution needs to be raised with respect to this data. Some variation in the data may have been due to differences in the way that the students interpreted the notion of ‘religious group’. For example, the ECI students may have counted Anglicans and Roman Catholics in the Other category, whereas the Roman Catholic students may only have counted non-Christian friends. This may explain the higher proportion of ‘other religious friends’ compared with ‘other ethnic group

233 These results included all pupils regardless of whether they held a religious belief. If only religious students were considered little variation was seen between the two sets of results.
friends’ in the ECI school. It may also explain some of the difference seen between the inter-religious friendships of the RCS and MI students, in that the MI students considered any non-Muslim contact as being contact with another faith, whereas the RCS students only considered contact in these terms if it was with someone clearly recognisable to them as a member of another faith. Even with these interpretive problems the data were still informative and helpful in building up a picture of the degree of contact with an Other that the students saw themselves as having.

With one exception, in all the interviews the students of all the schools were positive about learning about other faiths, seeing value in it (discussed further in Chapter 6.4.2.a). Pupils in all the faith schools commented on learning about other faiths at some point during their schooling, although the emphasis was clearly on learning about their own faith. In the RCI, RCS and ECI schools specific modules in which teaching about other faiths occurred were mentioned, with Islam and Judaism being the most commonly studied faiths in these Christian schools. In the MI school the students commented that other faiths were occasionally mentioned. When this happened they were either referred to in comparison with Islam, or as an occasional lesson, rather than being discussed as a separate topic. Yasmin, discussing the lessons, says:

‘like in RE you’d know about other religions yeah’ ...... ‘We don’t really study it as a whole, but we like take one lesson or something. ’[Yasmin MI]
Some students in the RCI, RCS and MI schools felt that their school should provide more teaching on other faiths, principally relating this to living in a multicultural society and needing to understand those around them.

‘I think we should learn more about Judaism or Islam ‘cause it like prepares you better for going out into the world. You have to meet new people, you have to get on with them. If you don’t understand the way they live you won’t understand them.’ [Gregory RCI]

This concern is reflected in the questionnaire data (table 5.2 below), where these three schools have the lowest percentage of students agreeing that school has helped them understand those with different beliefs.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School</th>
<th>% of students agreeing or strongly agreeing with the statement ‘In school I have learnt to understand people who have different beliefs’</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>RCI</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RCS</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ECI</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MI</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NFI</td>
<td>91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NFS</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5.2: Student perceptions of learning about other beliefs.

In the MI school, one pupil commented that he and some other students had tried to have the amount of teaching about other faiths increased, but that the school had not sanctioned it, although the school did say that other religions were not viewed with disapproval.

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239 Gregory, Matt (RCI); Yousef, Hussain (MI)
'Yousef This school has taught about other religions we done it in RS and we do learn a bit, a few things but we are trying to influence the teachers to teach us more
HE Are you? Right.. you feel that you’d like to learn a bit more?
Yousef Yeah
HE And how far are you getting with that?
Yousef Not that far’ [Yousef MI]

The highest proportion of students feeling that they were learning about other faiths was found in the non-faith schools, a finding corroborated by the questionnaire data. But even here one student raised concern that the concentration at GCSE on Islam and Christianity meant some other faiths were overlooked, as reflected in this extract:

‘I said can’t we learn about all faiths because I do RS GCSE and um.. and we just learn about Christianity and Islam,[.........] my mum asked why don’t we learn about Judaism and Buddhism and all of that. I know we learnt about that in year 7 but barely, so I barely know anything about other religions and a lot of my friends don’t know anything about Judaism. They barely teach it at this school and so I think that’s quite bad and I think that we should learn a bit more about everything, but my teacher told me that it’s better to learn a couple of things in depth than a lot. But I’m not very .. I think that we should learn more.’ [Pippa NFI]

In the faith schools the provision for meeting members of other faiths was very limited. Students in both RCS and MI schools mentioned members of other faiths coming into school and talking to them about their respective faiths. This was seen as a worthwhile and instructive experience. Talking about a visit from a Christian lady and a Jewish lady, Yasmin’s response shows the benefits of such a link:

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240 Louisa,Katie(NFS);Pippa,Georgina,Laura,Alicia,Anthony (NFI)
241 Pippa (NFI)
242 Yasmin ,(MI),Hannah (RCS)
'Yeah it was really interesting to see what type of religion they have and how it’s quite similar to Islam in some ways’

and she went on to say that she had learnt

‘lots of things that I didn’t know’ [Yasmin MI]

No provision was seen to exist in any of the faith schools for students to meet students of other faiths, as already also noted in Chapter 3.

In the non-faith schools no student mentioned the school making any provision for inter-religious contact or dialogue outside RE. Nevertheless the diversity inherent in the school seemed to enable the students to interact and, contrary to what the Head of RE felt, in the NFI school the students did feel that in RE they interacted with their peers on the basis of faith, although this appeared to be restricted to RE lessons.243

‘in RS ‘cause there’s a lot of debating going on and everyone is always discussing saying what they believe personally’ [Laura NFI]

‘The only time it would like come up in school is when we’d be discussing in religious studies and I’d like say well I believe this blah blah blah and I go church and do this.’ [Georgina NFI]

Whether these interactions reached the level of understanding others’ faith as a lived reality is still questionable, but the students perceived that they were learning about faith in this way. In these non-faith schools the students saw themselves both learning about religions formally from school, but also school being a place where they encountered the Other in their daily life. The feasibility of such encounters depended on these schools being in an ethnically, religiously and

243 Hugh, Georgina, Laura (NFI)
culturally diverse locality. This is not the case for many schools, whether faith or non-faith, in England today.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>% students agreeing or strongly agreeing</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>School</td>
<td>In school I have learned to understand people who have different ideas</td>
<td>In school I have learned to be concerned about what happens in other countries</td>
<td>I feel this school is preparing me well for a multicultural society</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------------------------------</td>
<td>----------</td>
<td>----------</td>
<td>----------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RCI</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RCS</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ECI</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MI</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NFI</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NFS</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5.3: Students’ perceptions of learning about others.

Learning about the Other can also be achieved through aspects of schooling other than specific teaching. In the questionnaire the students were asked about how well they saw their school preparing them to interact in a wider context than the school environment. These questions can be seen as encompassing interactions with religious Others, although religion was not specified in this instance. The data in table 5.3 show a fairly mixed pattern, although the non-faith schools tended to show the highest responses, and there appears to be little consistency across the three questions. This situation was also seen across the country responses in the case of the IEA data, although no explanation was suggested for this lack of consistency (Torney-Purta, 2001).

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244 These questions were taken from the IEA Civic Education Study 1999 (Torney-Purta, 2001). Direct comparison of scores cannot be made as a different Likert scales were employed.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School</th>
<th>In school I have learned to understand people who have different ideas</th>
<th>In school I have learned to be concerned about what happens in other countries</th>
<th>I feel this school is preparing me well for a multicultural society</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>RCI</td>
<td>3.7**</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>3.1**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RCS</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>3.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ECI</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>3.9</td>
<td>3.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MI</td>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>4.2**</td>
<td>3.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NFI</td>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>3.9</td>
<td>3.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NFS</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>3.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

** significance at 1% level; Reference school: NFS

Table 5.4: Average Likert Scores for the students’ perceptions of learning about others.

The average Likert scores (table 5.4) indicate that there were few significant differences between the schools. Therefore a great deal of similarity can be seen between students in their perceptions of the extent to which their schools prepared them for life in the wider world and, by extension, helped them interact with an Other. There were two exceptions to this. A particularly high percentage of students in the MI school considered that their school was good at teaching them to be concerned about what happens in other countries. On the other hand a particularly low proportion of the students in the RCI school believed that their school was preparing them well to live in a multicultural society, and to understand people with different ideas.

However, in the MI school ‘other countries’ is likely to have been interpreted as referring largely to Islamic countries or countries with majority Muslim populations, with which many of the students have family connections. To the extent that this was the case, the greater attention to ‘other countries’ in
teaching and learning with the MI school is unlikely to have been associated with promotion of a more cosmopolitan outlook.

By contrast, the students in the RCI school come from quite cosmopolitan backgrounds, many having family in the forces, government or diplomatic service which might imply regular exposure to debate and discussion of other cultures at home. Consequently, many may not have perceived the school as increasing their experience in this area. Looking at the effectiveness of Citizenship programmes, Janmaat (2008b) found that the extent to which students were conscious of learning about particular issues at school seemed to depend largely on their level of background exposure to the issues in question. The crucial factor here appears to have been the degree of difference between their home and school experience. On the other hand, in this case the student responses may simply indicate that the RCI school gave the students relatively limited opportunities to learn about ‘Others’, a situation exacerbated by the isolated location of the school. Indeed, in Chapter 3.3 the socio-economically segregated nature of this school was highlighted as a feature likely to impact negatively on the students’ attitudes of tolerance. These data could be seen as supporting the provisional hypothesis that was suggested there.

Analysis of the questionnaire data and interviews indicated three key points. The first was that students in the faith schools were likely to be less informed about, and have had fewer opportunities to interact with, those of other faiths than their non-faith school peers. The second was that attendance at a faith school did not mean that the students did not have inter-religious friendships, although these were likely to have originated outside school. Finally (the RCI school being the exception) the numbers of students in the faith schools who did not feel that their school prepared them well to interact with others was not significantly different from the situation in the non-faith schools.

5.3 Cognitive Sophistication

The questionnaire included a section consisting of items based on those used in the IEA study (Nelson, Wade and Kerr, 2010; Torney-Purta, 2001), but which included some additional questions specifically relating to the way in which
religious issues were discussed. This addition means that no direct comparison can be made to the IEA study.

The responses from each of the eight questions in section D part 2 (Classroom Climate) of the questionnaire were added together and calculated for each student, and subsequently a mean score per school was obtained (maximum total = 40.). A higher score indicated a more open classroom climate. This score was then subjected to linear regression, with NFS as the reference school. (Technical details are given in Appendix K).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School</th>
<th>Classroom Climate (Mean score)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NFS</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RCI</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RCS</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ECI</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MI</td>
<td>30 *</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NFI</td>
<td>30 **</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

** significance at 1% level; * at 5% level; Reference school: NFS

Table 5.5: Students’ perception of their school’s classroom climate.

No significant difference can be seen between the NFS school and the RCI, RCS and ECI schools, indicating that students at these schools all saw their schools as having similar classroom climates (table 5.5). Compared with the NFS school a significantly more open classroom climate was perceived by the students in the MI and NFI schools.

The interview data did however show some contradictions in this area. In the non-faith schools the students generally saw themselves as being able to express their own opinions freely.\textsuperscript{245} Louisa’s response is quite typical.

\textsuperscript{245} Charlotte, Hassan, Louisa, Chantelle, Michael (NFS); Laura, Georgina, Pippa, Anthony, Hugh (NFI)
'I think, I think that we’re quite free to sort of discuss different things. Like um... we were discussing Christianity with a boy who’s very religious and there were a couple of us who weren’t religious at all and we were quite open about it and... and there wasn’t really anything stopping us.’ [Louisa NFS]

Staff were not seen to restrict debate, although some references were made to peer pressure and a degree of reluctance to voice opinions. Sometimes this was due to lack of confidence in the clarity of the argument a student was trying to make,246 or to fear of looking a fool.247 Only in one response was reference made to staff silencing dissent.248 The students in the non-faith schools who professed a faith saw that this choice was very much their own.249

In the faith schools some variation was seen, and the difference was particularly noticeable again between the MI and the other faith schools. In the RCI, RCS and ECI schools the students felt able to express their views openly, considering that there were few restrictions on views, and seeing debate as part of school life. In the RCI school the academic nature of Christian Theology was considered to be beneficial in the way that it did not require a confessional response250:

‘I think it’s a good system because we go to church every Sunday and pray and that is kept very separate. If we went to Christian Theology and we were told “Jesus does exist. You will, you must pray five times a day.. you must read the Bible” I think that would be a bad system.’ [Mark RCI]

‘I’ve never been asked a question which demands an answer from a Christian... which demands an answer from a believing, a believing um.. religious, deeply religious view. ‘ [Jon RCI]

246 Michael(NFS)
247 Matt(RCI),Sarah(ECI)
248 Charlotte(NFS)
249 Laura,Pippa,Georgina,Hugh (NFI); Chantelle,Hassan(NFS)
250 Jon,Mark(RCI)
Within the RCI, RCS and ECI schools the choice to follow the faith or not was seen by the students to rest with them. Conscience was seen to be allowed for in acts of worship. In the ECI school non-participation was not only allowed, and - no doubt as a result - for some seemed to become an act of resistance against the religious environment:

‘sometimes in assemblies if there’s worship going on not many people join in and think it cool to not act like a Christian’ [Anna ECI]

The peer pressure not to participate was also noted by the staff in the ECI school, who expressed concern that it was having a detrimental effect on the students’ faith, with some who wanted to join in being dissuaded from doing so by the actions of the older ‘cool’ students. A few students in the RCS and ECI schools commented on feeling a pressure to conform, either to the faith group’s views or to being a Christian more generally. In all these cases the students did also acknowledge that the school allowed them to make their own choices, as Luke’s comment below illustrates.

‘It’s more like they prefer us to be Christians but they [the school] leave the choice up to us’ [Luke ECI]

In a number of the interviews the students’ perception of the choices open to them often seemed to be related to individual teachers, rather to a whole-school approach. That the teachers would teach from a position of religious belief was not questioned, but whether that view was, or was seen to be, their personal or the ‘official’ faith view varied. Challenging the teacher’s views was usually permitted, as this extract from Hannah’s interview suggests:

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251 Harriet, Mark (RCI); Joseph (RCS)
252 Laurence (ECI)
253 Sarah, Luke (ECI); Joseph (RCS)
'Hannah  She [the teacher] does actually say it is my own view
HE  OK but you feel able to challenge that?
Hannah  Yeah! A lot of my friends do and they’re not... I have similar
views to [teacher name] so it’s not a deal to me and then we’ll just
have debates across the class’ [Hannah RCS]

Only one interview indicated teachers restricting choice. In the interview Sarah sees
certain teachers as allowing choice whilst others require conformity:

‘It’s maybe teachers partially because they’re quite strong in what they
believe and I guess some of the teachers are quite understanding when
you say what you think and others are just like... they’re just like “no
that’s wrong”... it’s not necessarily wrong because it’s our opinion’
[Sarah ECI]

The restriction of choice was not always considered in a negative way by the
students. In the RCI school the daily routine of prayers was seen to be beneficial
and helpful to students’ faith rather than constricting.254 This resonates with a
comment made by a student in the NFI school who expressed unease at being left
to make her own decisions, as she saw it, without guidance from either her parents
or teachers, as in this response:

’...if my RS teacher told me this thing is right and this is wrong then she
would probably ... get fired or something because I say to her "but
Miss which is right?" and she says "I can't tell you because everyone
has different views" and she has to be really really PC about that kind
of thing which I'm not really sure that that's a good thing that's
happened. That you don't know so I can learn something and not know
what's right’ [Pippa NFI]

In the MI school interviews few references were made to the use of debate
in lessons, although one student did comment that she felt able to express views
which were different from the majority of views in the class.255 Instead, students

254 Gregory,Harriet(RCI)
255 Saira(MI)
referred to being taught, as Ibrahim’s response below suggests. But the extract also shows an interesting contrast between the RCS and the MI school. Whereas in the RCS school Danny spoke of the school allowing more opportunities to express opinions and form views than was the case in his primary school, in the MI school Ibrahim saw the teaching as being stricter at this level.

‘I think primary was more lenient. They was [sic] more lenient in their teaching. It was like slowly slowly step by step but when you get to secondary over here you get taught more and more and more and you begin and your brain begins to switch and start tending you like how doing this could be bad and doing this could be bad as well.’ [Ibrahim MI]

‘Yeah I think I in primary school like ‘cause I went to a Catholic primary school like you are to believe that God and Jesus they were like real and I’ve taken that on from like secondary school, but in secondary school like it’s different. If you like take your own opinions that’s when you like gain you really understanding about what’s going on and like your own opinions’ [Danny RCS]

The perception of the MI students that their school operated an open classroom climate (appearing more open than the RCI, RCS, ECI and NFS schools) was not borne out in the interview data. Instead, the MI interviews indicated that the students had the least opportunity for discussion and debate. Here, as was seen in the case of the RCI school (Section 5.2), a possible explanation for the contradiction relates to the degree of comparison between home and school. The RCI school’s use of debate was only extending what was seen as normal by the students in their home environment. In the MI school, it is possible that, for many students, the classroom climate was more open than that at home, and hence the judgements made were relative. A comparison of the average Rokeach score, which measures the degree of authoritarianism, lends some support to this interpretation, as do some of the comments by the Head of the MI school.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School</th>
<th>Average Rokeach score</th>
<th>Standard deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>RCI n=92</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>15.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RCS n=81</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>17.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ECI n=23</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>15.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MI n=42</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>16.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NFI n=79</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>13.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NFS n=106</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>16.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5.6: Average Rokeach score.

The MI and RCS school students displayed the highest average Rokeach scores (table 5.6),\textsuperscript{256} suggesting that their backgrounds were among the most authoritarian. Thus debate and the challenging of views and opinions were less likely to be experienced in the backgrounds of these students. A further difference, which distinguished the RCS from the MI school, was related to the fact that many of the MI students’ parents were not born in the UK. The Head saw this as leading to large cultural gaps between the MI students and their parents, so large in some cases that the students could barely relate to their parents.\textsuperscript{257} This suggests a situation in which the MI school operated more towards the students’ world, whilst still retaining some connection with the parental culture, and thus could be seen to act as a bridge between these worlds. Bryk et al. (1993) make a similar point in their discussion of the role of Roman Catholic schools in the USA in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. In this context, the school could be seen

\textsuperscript{256} These scores measure the authoritarian personality and can be used as a proxy for authoritarian background. The higher the score the more authoritarian the student (see Chapter 3 and Appendix C).

\textsuperscript{257} Head Teacher(MI)
as less constricting than the home, leading students to perceive their classrooms as having a relatively open climate.

5.3.1 Faith, Choice and Authority

Chapter 4.5 briefly discussed choice with respect to whether the students saw their faith as permeable or potentially subject to rejection. In this section, the degree of choice that the students felt that they had in matters of faith is further discussed as an aspect of their cognitive development. This section does not focus on the school’s role, but rather on whether there were any differences across schools in the way that their students perceived choice. Sources of authority are also discussed, as these relate to the choices that the students saw as being available to them.

In the RCI, RCS and ECI schools the students either saw that they themselves had made the choice to follow a particular faith, or that the choice had been made by their parents. None of the students in these schools saw faith as a prescribed set of rules, as Danny and Luke indicate:

‘when you’re a kid you feel like you have to make your Holy Communion [.......] you think you have to pray and do all that stuff but you don’t really’ [Danny RCS]

‘Luke There are several like crazy, well not crazy, strange laws in the Bible like not eating pigs [........] all the un-cleanliness...

HE But you don’t follow those?


Weekly attendance at Mass, other than compulsory school attendance, was the only element of faith that was referred to in any sort of obligatory manner, and this was more frequently discussed in the RCI than the RCS school. The ECI students made no comments about being obliged to go to church. The compulsion to attend

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258 Emily, Harriet, Jon (RCI); Anna, Luke, Laurence (ECI); Joseph, Hannah, Grace, Danny (RCS)
259 Rhianna (RCS); Christina (RCI)
Mass was seen to come from parents, not from any official religious authority or teaching, and was located in the past, as in Danny’s response above. The current situation was presented as one where students themselves were active, autonomous participants.\textsuperscript{260}

‘I would go through the motions. Go to church on a Sunday and while I would take communion it wouldn’t really mean anything to me. If anything it was just to keep my mum happy... But now here you take a much more active role in the service every Sunday [........] It means a lot more to me now, rather than a thing that just had to be done.’ [Mark RCI]

In the MI school only one student spoke about following Islam being her choice.\textsuperscript{261} But more distinctive was the way that all the students referred to particular modes of behaviour and rules which were set down by Islam.

‘If you do your prayer late everyday there’s no point of doing that you might as well not do any at all if you’re going to do them late and not be focused’ [Hussain MI]

‘...it’s compulsory to wear hijab once you’re the age when you know the difference between right and wrong ’ [Zainab MI]

Difference could also be detected between the students in the way in which discussion and debate around religious issues were a part of their experience more generally. These differences became apparent when comparing responses to the interview question discussing what they thought happened to people not of their own faith when they died. The matter of interest here is not the views themselves, which have already been discussed (Chapter 4.3), but how students came to hold them, and the way they reported their beliefs.

\textsuperscript{260} Jon,Mark,Gregory,Matt (RCI); Danny(RCS)
\textsuperscript{261} Zainab(MI)
In the RCS and RCI schools, most of the responses indicated, sometimes explicitly, 262 that they had not considered the issue. This may, to some extent, account for the unformulated nature of their responses. Yet, with a few exceptions, 263 the students were willing to give an opinion, and gave no impression that they were trying to reproduce an official church teaching. It appeared that they felt able to give their own view, and were not bound by any authority. The uncertainty is clearly evident in Hannah’s response where, although a practising Roman Catholic, she does not refer to this as a source of authority.

‘I suppose different people would believe depending on their religious beliefs, personal beliefs are so I don't know….’ [Hannah RCS]

In the MI school the students’ responses were clearly formulated, and their views were framed with reference to an authority, in this case Islam, rather than any suggestion that this might be the product of their own reasoning. 264 Views were often expressed in terms of the group identity, for example:

‘we [emphasis my own] believe that Allah rewards you through this life.’ [Zainab MI].

Suliman’s response below, which was similar to those given by other students in the school, was that this was a belief that existed and was to be learnt, with no indication that there was any room for discussion or debate

‘Islam has taught that Islam is shown to everybody.’ [......]. ‘In my religion it says that all Muslims will go to heaven’ [Suliman MI]

The responses in the ECI school showed some similarity to those from the MI school, with the ECI students talking about being ‘taught’ the view, and referring

262 Emily, Harriet (RCI)
263 Rhys (RCS)
264 Suliman, Zainab, Ibrahim, Noor (MI)
to scripture as the source of this authority. But whilst the teaching appeared to have been internalised at one level, voicing these beliefs raised questions in their minds. This suggests to me that questioning scripture and religious teaching was not anathema to them. Esther’s response indicates this, in that she initially gives a fairly well formulated view, but then considers the possibility that this can and might change, and that this change would be her choice.

‘Esther [pause] I think that unless you’re a Christian there’s probably not a lot else after death yeah so.
HE So people of other faiths?
Esther Well, well .... I suppose it’s hell but I think that’s.... I don’t know.... it’s something I’m thinking about myself so... it’s quite extreme, hell seems quite extreme a place for people to go that just haven’t believed in Christianity but I suppose that could be true’ [Esther ECI]

What some of these responses do possibly suggest is that in the case of the MI and ECI school students some beliefs were being passively accepted. But in the ECI school Esther’s response indicates that questioning was allowed and that the choice was seen as hers, and hers alone, to make, something which was not evident in the MI school responses.

5.3.2 Sources of Authority

Related to choice is the notion of authority. Therefore consideration also needs to be given to who or what is seen to be a source of authority by the students, and how directive it is seen to be. Religion was a source of authority, or at least guidance, for the vast majority of students with a religious background in all the schools. But differences could be seen, with the most interesting comparison being between the MI and ECI students. The variety of views on authority found in

265 Rebecca,Luke,Anna,Sarah,Ben(ECI)
266 Laura,Georgina(NFI); Hassan,Chantelle(NFS); Christina,Annabel,Jon(RCI);
Anna,Sarah,Esther,Rebecca,Ben,Luke,Nick(ECI); Danny,Grace,Hannah(RCS);
Suliman,Yousef,Hussain,Yasmin,Saira,Zainab,Noor(MI)
the two Roman Catholic\textsuperscript{267} and the non-faith schools were all to be encountered within the ECI school responses.

In the ECI school, all the students saw their religion as a source of authority, with this authority often seen as emanating from the Bible.\textsuperscript{268} The Bible was seen as a source, but not the only or complete source of moral authority or truth.\textsuperscript{269} Science was an alternative source of evidence to which some explicitly referred.\textsuperscript{270} The teachings in the Bible were seen by many as providing indications and guidance regarding right and wrong, rather than prescribed rules; a ‘moral compass’ as Hannah (RCS) described it, echoing the RCI mission statement. Bill’s comment is similar to several responses:

‘Well.. when I kind of think of it, it’s [the Bible] not really there’s standard rules it’s not like that’s right, that’s right, that’s right, that’s wrong.’ [Bill ECI].

The Bible and religious teachings were seen to act as a basis for some rules and laws found in wider British society.\textsuperscript{271} There was no indication that the Bible was beyond challenge, with Roman Catholic students from both schools discussing issues around biblical truth.\textsuperscript{272} The issue of biblical truth did not come up in any of the ECI interviews.

For the MI students their religion was the ultimate source of moral authority, and was contained in the Qur’an, along with the Hadith and the Sunnah.\textsuperscript{273} As Suliman explained, although he might use other sources, such as experience, ultimately Islam told him everything:

\textsuperscript{267} Christina,Annabel,Jon,Mark(RCI);Danny,Joseph,Grace,Hannah(RCS); Laura,Georgina(NFI);Hassan,Chantelle(NFS)
\textsuperscript{268} Esther,Nick,Luke,Rebecca(ECI)
\textsuperscript{269} Ben,Esther,Nick(ECI);Annabel,Jon(RCI);Hannah(RCS)
\textsuperscript{270} Joseph(RCS);Sarah(ECI)
\textsuperscript{271} Mark(RCI);Luke(ECI)
\textsuperscript{272} Jon(RCI);Laura(NFI);Danny(RCS)
\textsuperscript{273} Yasmin(MI)
‘in my religion [Islam] everything has been told to us in life, what’s right, what’s wrong has been told to us. Any time I have a doubt is this right is this wrong then I contemplate. If I can’t find the answer like common knowledge like I refer to my religion and see what I can find out from my religion’ [Suliman MI]

A similar sentiment was expressed by Yousef:

‘As long as I’ve got Islam with me then I’m fine. It’s all I need’ [Yousef MI].

One interviewee, Noor, referred to sources of moral authority as existing outside Islam.274 This suggested not that she considered other beliefs immoral, but rather that Islamic teaching encompassed all moral teaching. In the following extract Noor, while talking about her own moral and religious beliefs, explains that:

‘Like someone [....] could not have the same religion as me but have the same moral values’ [Noor MI]

The students saw the authority of Islam expressed as explicit rules to be followed,275 rather than (as was the case with most of the Christian students) as merely supplying guidance or a ‘moral compass’ (Hannah RCS). No challenge to the Qur’an, the principal source of authority, could be permitted.276

The students in the RCS, RCI and ECI schools saw themselves as exercising choice in respect of their faith. Neither was their religion – the religious teachings or religious authority – seen as their only source of authority but rather as a source of guidance. While this section does not make reference to the school’s role, nevertheless the students’ responses were consistent with the data in Chapter 3 (sections 3.3-5) which saw these three schools as promoting choice and encouraging critical examination of the faith.

274 Noor(MI)
275 Yasmin,Zainab,Ibrahim(MI)
276 Yasmin(MI)
The majority of the MI school students viewed their faith as a set of rules or obligations and as the sole source of moral authority and, as such, choice was restricted. The precise role of the school in the formation of this view is hard to pin down, although this is again consistent with the data discussed in Chapter 3.6.

5.4 Socialisation

The last aspect to be discussed here is the socialisation effect of the school. Did the students perceive the school to be promoting positive relations with other faiths and groups? Here there is some overlap with the religious identity aspect of the school, in that both are concerned with faith, but in this section the focus is on direct teaching about how the students should relate to others, rather than any inculcation of belief. In Section 5.2 (tables 5.2, 5.3 and 5.4), the extent to which the school was seen to have taught the students about ‘Others’ was discussed. The same data can also be used as an indicator of whether the students perceived the school as taking a positive line on diversity, in the sense of actively supporting learning about ‘Others’. An aggregate score of the four questions (D1.1, 1.2, 1.4, 1.5) was produced, as principal component analysis indicated that this was appropriate in this case (Appendix K). The maximum score was 20 and thus a socialisation score of greater than 10 indicated that the students saw their school as promoting positive relations with other groups.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School</th>
<th>Mean aggregated Socialisation score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>RCI N=98</td>
<td>14.0**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RCS N=85</td>
<td>14.5**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ECI N=24</td>
<td>14.2**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MI N=43</td>
<td>15.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NFI N=125</td>
<td>16.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
** Significant at the 1% level; Reference school: NFS

Table 5.7: Mean school socialisation score

When the mean aggregated socialisation scores were regressed, using the NFS as the reference school, the ECI, RCS and RCI schools were found to be perceived by their students as less effectively promoting diversity when compared with the students’ perceptions in the other three schools (table 5.7). Although significant differences existed between the schools, all the schools had an aggregate score greater than 12, indicating that even in the RCI, RCS and ECI schools the majority of the students perceived their schools as promoting diversity, with none of the student interviews indicating that a negative image was being given. Therefore, despite significant differences between schools, the data did not suggest that the schools were negatively impacting the students in this area. Once again, however, the relatively high socialisation score reported by the MI school may reflect a particularly stark contrast, in that case, between the school climate and home environments that were often highly conservative, rather than the adoption by the school of an approach that was more liberal and tolerant than those of other schools.

5.5 Discussion

This chapter has looked at how the students perceive the three educational aspects of the school which might impact on tolerance (cognitive sophistication, socialisation and contact). The analysis of the student data suggests that the students’ perspective on the school is often formed through comparison with their experience in other familiar contexts, such as their home environment. In several instances, the interview responses showed little variation between the schools, but significant differences were apparent in the qualitative data, a contradiction which can be related, in part, to differences students’ perspectives conditioned by their experiences outside school.
Overall, the students’ perceptions of their educational experience showed a high degree of similarity. The school which showed the greatest degree of distinctiveness was again the MI school. But in this school there was a contradiction between the MI student interview data and the questionnaire data. Whereas the interview data indicated that aspects of the school might be negatively impacting on tolerance, the questionnaire data indicated that the MI students saw the school as increasing their experiences and knowledge about ‘Others’ and the outside world, often to a greater extent than students in some of the other schools. The questionnaire data on its own might therefore lead us to conclude that the school was having a positive impact on tolerance. However, this contradiction is probably due to the comparison effect referred to above, in which the MI school was perceived by some students to be providing a more open climate than they experienced at home or elsewhere.

Each of the three aspects of the school which could impact on tolerance will now be discussed, and the hypotheses generated in Chapter 3 modified as necessary in the light of the analysis presented in here.

Contact

There was no indication that students in the faith schools were developing fewer inter-ethnic or inter-religious friendships than their peers. Therefore what the analysis in this chapter indicated was that the segregated nature of the schooling was not detrimentally affecting the ability of these students to make inter-religious friendships in contexts outside school.

However, the analysis did support the suggestion that the faith schools were not providing opportunities for students to interact with those of other faiths, although most of the students felt that they had been taught about, and been given knowledge of, other faiths. In the NFI school, in contrast with the view of the Head of RE, the students did see themselves interacting with people of other faiths at an emotional level within the school. This calls into question the similarity in tolerance between the NFI and the faith schools. However, apart from during RE, the NFI student responses did indicate that in this school faith was generally placed within the private sphere, and thus the extent of any emotional interaction is
questionable. Both the questionnaire and interview responses of the students in the NFS school supported the view given in Chapter 4 that this school promoted contact in all its forms, including emotional interactions, between its students and those of other faiths (or no faith). Therefore, although with some reservations in the NFI school case, this provisional hypothesis (Hypothesis A) can be broadly confirmed as ‘Proposition 1’:

- **Proposition I: The students in the RCI, RCS, ECI, MI and NFI schools will show lower attitudes of tolerance towards those of other faiths than towards other groups due to the lack of contact with other faiths that the school provides. The tolerance shown will be similar across the RCI, RCS, ECI, MI and NFI schools, but will be lower than that shown in the NFS school.**

The students in the RCI school made no reference in interviews to the school not helping them to mix with those of lower socio-economic status, although the students were aware of their privileged lifestyle. Therefore although the hypothesis generated in Chapter 3 that the RCI students would show lower tolerance towards those of lower socio-economic status is not supported, neither is it contradicted. Furthermore, compared with the other schools, fewer students in the RCI school felt that the school was preparing them well for life in a diverse society, which lends support to the hypothesis specifically directed at one identity marker, those of lower socio-economic status. Thus this hypothesis (Hypothesis B) is confirmed and becomes the second proposition.

- **Proposition II: The students in the RCS, ECI, MI, NFI and NFS will show similar attitudes of tolerance towards those of a different socio-economic group, and the students in the RCI school will show lower tolerance towards those of lower socio-economic status, due to the lack of contact with this group within the RCI school.**

**Socialisation**

All the schools were perceived to be positively endorsing diversity, even if
some, such as the RCI, were not seen as so effective by their students in this respect. There was certainly no indication that any particular groups, or that diversity in a general sense, were being portrayed in an openly negative or hostile manner. With the exception of the MI school, the student perceptions coincided with those of the school itself. Hypothesis C predicted that the students in the MI school would show lower tolerance towards other ethnic groups, due to the way in which the MI school forms an in-group/out-group based on ethnic lines, something which was related to understandings of ‘home’ (Chapter 4.6). None of the MI students saw their school as portraying particular ethnic groups in a negative way, or as promoting certain ethnicities over others. Therefore there is no clear evidence that the school was significantly influencing the students in this way, so that this hypothesis is not supported.

**Cognitive Sophistication**

In the RCI, RCS and ECI schools, and the two non-faith schools, the student questionnaire and interview responses all indicated that students felt able to express their views and opinions, with debate and discussion being part of the classroom experience. Some students did feel that the school limited their choice in respect of faith, but in all cases this was seen to be related to individual teachers rather than the school ethos. The students in the ECI, RCI and RCS schools did feel that they were able to make choices related to their faith, and used their faith as a source of guidance rather than seeing it as their sole moral authority. The responses of the students in the RCI, RCS, ECI, NFI and NFS schools did not appear to indicate that the schools were failing to develop their students’ level of cognitive sophistication, with a high degree of similarity being observed between these schools.

The situation in the MI school was more complex. The MI students did not appear to see themselves as having a choice in respect of their religion, seeing it as their sole source of authority. The fact that the students made no reference to their school in their choice of faith was significant. If there was no choice to begin with,
then the role of the school in this choice becomes irrelevant. The questionnaire data indicated that the MI school was seen by its students to have a more open classroom climate than was reported by students in the other schools. However, the interview data conflicted with this finding, indicating that students saw many aspects of their religion as imposing obligations. Debate was rarely mentioned, and the students referred to ‘being taught’. The implication from this analysis was that the MI school was not helping the students to develop critical thinking skills, and thus might not be increasing the students’ level of cognitive sophistication.

The analysis of the student responses relating to cognitive sophistication supported the analysis of the school perspective in Chapter 3, which suggested that the MI school students would show lower tolerance, and the RCI, RCS, ECI, NFI and NFS school students would show similar attitudes of tolerance. However, in its provisional form, the object of tolerance was unclear, having been presumed to refer to those of other faiths. The MI student interview data on the development of cognitive sophistication provided a greater insight into who, or what, the object of tolerance might be. There was little justification for seeing other faith groups as constituting the primary object of tolerance, as at no point were those of other faiths promoted as an out-group. Cognitive sophistication is about being able to cope with other views, and processing conflicting information, and thus the object of tolerance is more likely to be related to diversity of ideas, opinions and behaviours than to specific groups. The student interview responses supported the idea that it is other views and behaviour, rather than particular groups, which are problematic.

Faith in the MI school was understood by the students as incorporating a sense of obligation and specific rules that believers should adhere to. By contrast, faith in the other schools was understood more as providing guidance. The greater emphasis on rules seen in the MI school supports the idea that problems were most likely to arise when the MI students’ religious views were challenged or contravened. Although such challenges could come from other religious groups this may not always be the case since, for example, many Christians and Muslims would agree in rejecting abortion on religious grounds. Challenges may also come from those Muslims who subscribe to a different interpretation of Islam, or from wider
society in general. In this case, the object of tolerance is therefore constituted by 
those whose behaviour or views contravene a received notion of Islamic religious 
teaching, rather than a particular non-Muslim group or groups. This closely reflects 
the definition proposed in the discussion in Chapter 3 of religious identity, which 
defined the object of tolerance as both non-Muslims and Muslims regarded as 
‘improper’ or unorthodox in their conduct or beliefs. Therefore a modified version 
of this Hypothesis D (see Chapter 3) becomes the third proposition:

- **Proposition III:** The students in the RCI, RCS, ECI, NFI and NFS schools will 
  show similar attitudes of tolerance, and the students in the MI school will 
  show lower tolerance towards those who contravene (Islamic) religious 
  teaching, due to the failure of the MI school to develop a higher level of 
  cognitive sophistication in its students.

5.6 Concluding Remarks to Chapters 3, 4 and 5

In this and the previous two chapters (3 and 4) data from various 
perspectives relating to the six research schools have been analysed, and four 
propositions generated (on the basis of more tentative hypotheses proposed 
earlier), relating aspects of the schools to their students’ predicted attitudes of 
tolerance. Three of these are given above. The final one, Hypothesis E, which was 
outlined in the previous chapter, becomes the fourth proposition and is reiterated 
below:

- **Proposition IV:** The students in the RCI, RCS, ECI, NFI and NFS schools will 
  show similar attitudes of tolerance, and the MI school students will show 
  lower attitudes of tolerance towards non-Muslims and ‘improper’ 
  Muslims, due to their religious (social) identity.

What has gradually emerged from the analysis is that although the schools 
themselves may be quite different in many ways, nevertheless most show a high 
degree of similarity in respect of the four aspects of the school which might impact 
on the students’ attitudes of tolerance. This suggests that although there may be 
variations in student tolerance responses within the schools there will be little
inter-school variation. However, one school, the MI school, was shown to be significantly different from the others in a number of respects relevant to the fostering of tolerance. This difference thus changes the balance of this study from its original trajectory, in which the comparison was between faith and non-faith schools, to one in which the comparison is between the MI school and the others.

The following chapter proceeds to analyse the student tolerance responses in order to test the propositions (i.e. the revised hypotheses) outlined above.
Chapter 6: Is There any Difference in Tolerance?

6.1 Introduction

The previous three chapters have focused on the schools themselves, and propositions have been developed that predict the likely impact of the schools on their students’ attitudes of tolerance. Although the data indicated that there was little variation between the schools with respect to the four institutional characteristics identified in previous research as likely to influence students’ attitudes of tolerance, some differences were noted. Rather than reflecting the faith/non-faith categorisation often employed when discussing the ability of faith schools to promote tolerance, in general it was found that the most significant divide was between the MI school and all the rest (faith and non-faith).

At the beginning of this thesis two research questions were posed. The first asked whether there were any differences in attitudes of tolerance between students in faith schools and those in non-faith schools, and where those differences could be found. The second looked at what involvement the schools might be seen to have in this. This chapter, and the next, will return to and attempt to answer these two questions. The focus of this chapter is mainly on the first research question, in that it highlights the differences and similarities in the students’ attitudes of tolerance within and between the schools.

This chapter presents the analysis of the questionnaire and interview responses relating to the students’ attitudes of tolerance, and the resultant findings. No simple faith/non-faith school differences emerge. Generally, the student responses are similar across both categories of school, appearing to show that the vast majority are tolerant, with greater variation found within schools rather than between them. But the analysis does indicate a difference between the MI school student responses and those given by the students in the other schools in one particular instance. Another area of difference relates not to inter-school comparisons, but to the extent to which students in all the schools appear tolerant of other religious groups as distinct from ‘Others’ of a non-religious (e.g. ethnic or cultural) nature.
The discussion here will form the basis for testing the propositions outlined earlier - a task undertaken in the subsequent, final chapter (Chapter 7). But in considering what follows, the reader should bear in mind that, while this research has examined a range of schools differentiated by type (independent or state) and religious affiliation, the findings remain indicative rather than definitive; the sample is simply not large enough to allow for confident generalisation.

6.2 How do we detect tolerance?

This study has argued that common to any definition of tolerance is an element of disapproval of some other belief, lifestyle or action and the acceptance that this might nonetheless continue to exist (and indeed have the right to do so) despite one’s disapproval of it. Reference was made in Chapter 2 to Walzer’s conceptualisation of tolerance, treating it as a continuum, but for the purposes of this discussion I impose upon this continuum the categories of passive and active tolerance (in addition to which, of course, there exists the category of intolerance).

**Passive Tolerance:** This is characterised by inaction and indifference, and is associated with the granting of rights. Whether or not a relevant human right is awarded to a group, and the degree of unwillingness to involve oneself with another group, are both used as indicators of this mode of tolerance.

**Active Tolerance:** This involves actively engaging with groups whose beliefs or characteristics one does not share, recognising and endorsing the Other and the significance for them that given beliefs and behaviour hold. Responses in this mode may be characterised by interest in and willingness to interact and make an emotional connection with another group.

**Intolerance:** This means holding the view that the belief, behaviour or person should not exist. Although seeking to inflict harm on those who exhibit such qualities is one indicator of this mode, this of course applies only in extreme cases. Milder and more common expressions of intolerance involve actively separating or distancing oneself from particular people or groups.

A final point to be made before discussing the findings relates to the assumption that some level of disapproval is inherent to perceptions of inter-group difference. This assumption underpins much tolerance research, but is rarely made
explicit (Bobo and Licari, 1989). Within this analysis it is only possible to be certain that we are dealing with ‘true’ tolerance at particular points. Whilst noting that this might have affected their findings, Bobo and Licari (1989) found that the acknowledgement of this element of disapproval only made minor differences to measurable levels of tolerance.

The subsequent analysis will consider the data in two stages. Initially, the student responses to the passive tolerance questions will be considered, followed by an exploration of the active tolerance questions.

6.3 Passive Tolerance

6.3.1 The Questionnaire Responses

The analysis of the data begins by considering the questionnaire responses to the passive tolerance questions (Questionnaire Section A: Appendix A). In these questions the students were asked to consider the granting of various basic human rights to groups bearing the identity markers highlighted in the Citizenship curriculum (QCA, 2008a; QCA, 2008b). Unlike in the analysis of the interview data, this analysis does allow the identification of a school effect, but does not indicate which aspects of the school may be responsible for it.

Consideration was given to whether it was appropriate to aggregate the thirteen items in this section to give an overall tolerance score. Principal Component Analysis (PCA) (Field, 2009) indicated that three items should be removed, the two relating to gender (A1 and A8) and A4 which considered the right of faith groups to protest. PCA on the remaining questions indicated that they could be considered as two groups. The first contained items relating to a variety of markers of identity (Socio-economic status (SES), Ethnicity, Disability and Religion) and was therefore considered as a marker of General Tolerance (General Tolerance). The second contained the two items which referred to homosexuality and thus was seen to be an indicator of the students’ tolerance of this one group (Homosexual Tolerance). A General Tolerance score and a Homosexual Tolerance score were generated, and these were generally the dependent variables used in
the analysis (for technical details see Appendix K).\textsuperscript{277} In addition, an Average Tolerance score was calculated for both General and Homosexual Tolerance, which was an average of the item scores in each case ranging from 1-5 (see Appendix K). On this scale a score of less than 3 indicates intolerance, and one of 3 and above indicates a tolerant response. Presenting the results in this form shows whether the students in the schools are tolerant or intolerant, as well as allowing for comparison between the schools.

\subsection*{6.3.1.a Faith School/Non-Faith School Differences}

In the first stage of the analysis the schools were considered on the basis of whether they were faith or non-faith institutions. Independent t-tests were carried out on the General and Homosexual Tolerance scores.

Table 6.1: Independent t-tests of the General and Homosexual Tolerance Scores.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Faith School</th>
<th>Non-Faith School</th>
<th>Significance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>General Tolerance</td>
<td>-0.051 261</td>
<td>0.062 217</td>
<td>Not significant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Homosexual Tolerance</td>
<td>5.11 271</td>
<td>6.63 225</td>
<td>Not significant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

No significant difference was found to exist between faith and non-faith school students either in respect of General Tolerance or Homosexual Tolerance.

\subsection*{6.3.1.b The Individual School Effect}

\textsuperscript{277} These were the component factor scores in each case.
Going beyond the initial dichotomous categorisation of faith and non-faith schools, the Average Tolerance score for individual schools yields the following results.

Graph 6a: Error bar graph of Average General Tolerance showing each research school.

In the above graph (6a), if the mid-points of the results for each school are considered it can be seen that all show an Average General Tolerance score of greater than 3, indicating that in general all students appear passively tolerant towards a wide range of groups. However, the lack of overlap between the bar representing the MI school responses and those from the other schools suggests that the MI students were significantly more passive in their tolerance. The overlap between the results for the remaining schools reflects the lack of any significant difference amongst them in terms of General Tolerance.
Graph 6b: Error bar graph of Average Homosexual Tolerance scores showing each research school.

As in the case of General Tolerance, an Average Homosexual Tolerance score ranging from 1-5 was calculated. In all schools this average score was lower than the Average General Tolerance score. This is consistent with research which suggests that homosexuality is a problematic marker of identity for many groups in society (Hunt and Jensen, 2007). If passive tolerance of homosexuals is considered, a possible faith/non-faith school divide emerges. From the graph (6b) it can be seen that the students in the two non-faith schools were significantly more tolerant of homosexuals than the students in the faith schools. The average Homosexual Tolerance scores of the students in the MI and ECI schools were less than 3, indicating slight intolerance. The ECI students were the least tolerant of homosexuals, although the results were not significantly different from those from the other faith schools. This ECI school finding was in line with research conducted by Francis (2005), Sharpe (2002) and Peskin (1986) who all noted a more conservative attitude towards homosexuality among Evangelical Christian students when compared with students from other Christian denominations, although Francis’ research only considered responses from males (2005). Furthermore, the ECI school sample was heavily skewed, in that over 70% of the students in that year
were male. Research has indicated that boys are less tolerant of homosexuality than girls, and, as gender is not controlled for here, this factor may have contributed to the results seen here (Sharpe, 2002).

The students participating in this research were widely varied in terms of their background characteristics, something for which the foregoing analysis has not accounted - making it hard to identify with any certainty the extent of any school effects on this attitude of General Tolerance. Here, therefore, an attempt will be made to control for several key background characteristics in order to clarify the likely impact of schooling.

In order to assess the impact of faith school attendance while controlling for background characteristics, a multiple linear regression was run with dummy variables used for the schools. As already noted, the purposeful sampling method employed in the selection of schools severely limits the generalisability of the findings to the whole population of faith schools, but the results may nonetheless serve as a useful marker or benchmark for future research (Appendix K).

Variables controlled for in the analysis are itemised in Appendix C. The majority of these were individual level variables: gender; an indication of the student’s ethnicity, which due to the complexity of the background of the students was crudely considered dichotomously as either white or other (STUETH); whether the student, or at least one of their parents, was born outside the UK (STUBIRTH and PARBIRTH); number of books in the home as a proxy for socio-economic status (books) (Janmaat, 2010); and a measure of authoritarian personality traits rated by the Rokeach scale. Dummy variables were created in order to control for the student’s religious belief ((Reference: No belief), Roman Catholic, Church of England, Other Christian, Muslim, Other non-Christian). Dummy variables were also created for frequency of attendance at worship, which was seen as an indicator of religious commitment ((Reference: Never attend), Attending Major Festivals only, Attend more than once a month).

The only school level variable used was the school itself (NFI, NFS, RCI, RCS, ECI or MI). Dummy variables were created for each school with the reference

278 The other school years were much more even.
school being the NFS school. This school was chosen as it proved to be the median school in relation to a wide variety of school characteristics.

The General and Homosexual Tolerance scores were subjected to a regression analysis using all of these variables, yielding the results displayed in Table 6.2.

Table 6.2: The multiple linear regression determinants of General, Homosexual, and SES tolerance.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>VARIABLE</th>
<th>General Tolerance</th>
<th>Homosexual Tolerance</th>
<th>Those having different Socio-economic Status (SES)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>β</td>
<td>β</td>
<td>β</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roman Catholic independent</td>
<td>-0.169</td>
<td>0.166</td>
<td>-0.128</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roman Catholic state</td>
<td>-0.0404</td>
<td>0.052</td>
<td>-0.098</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evangelical Christian independent</td>
<td>-0.144</td>
<td>-0.163</td>
<td>-0.035</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Muslim independent</td>
<td>0.103</td>
<td>-0.119</td>
<td>0.112</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-faith independent</td>
<td>0.058</td>
<td>0.158*</td>
<td>0.058</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-faith state</td>
<td>REFERENCE</td>
<td>REFERENCE</td>
<td>REFERENCE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rokeach</td>
<td>-0.211**</td>
<td>-0.173**</td>
<td>-0.180**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GENDER (Boy=1)</td>
<td>-0.075</td>
<td>-0.287**</td>
<td>-0.090</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BOOKS</td>
<td>0.162**</td>
<td>0.047</td>
<td>0.093</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STUETH (White=1)</td>
<td>-0.256**</td>
<td>0.026</td>
<td>-0.144</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
** ** significant at 1% level; * significant at 5% level

The adjusted $R^2$ scores indicate that the variables in the above analysis explain 24.7% of the difference seen in the students’ General Tolerance scores and 20.9% of the difference in their tolerance of homosexuals. This represents a fairly high degree of significance, since typical scores for attitudinal questionnaires in this area can be as low as 5% (for example see Janmaat, 2008a)

The data in Table 6.2 indicate that three background characteristics were highly significant (at the 1% level) in determining General Tolerance. The more authoritarian a student was, the lower their level of General Tolerance - a finding which is consistent with Rokeach’s research (1960) (Chapter 2.3.4). The t-statistic (Appendix L) indicated that this was the most important explanatory variable of all. In addition, white students showed less General Tolerance than non-white students, and increased levels of SES were also positively correlated with General Tolerance, meaning that the higher the SES background of the student the more generally tolerant they were. The analysis did not indicate that any of the schools
impacted on this attitude, and certainly no general faith/non-faith divide was apparent.

Regarding tolerance of homosexuals, once again the more authoritarian a student was, the less tolerant they were of this group. This was highly significant (at the 1% level), which is again consistent with the findings of Rokeach (1960). However, the t-statistic (Appendix L) indicated that gender was the most important explanatory variable in this case, with boys being less tolerant of homosexuals than girls, a finding consistent with research conducted by Francis (2001) and Sharpe (2002) into teenage attitudes. The NFI school appeared to have a positive impact on its students’ attitudes towards homosexuals (significant at the 5% level). However, as no significant differences were otherwise seen between the faith schools and the NFS school no general faith/non-faith school divide was apparent. Once background characteristics were controlled for there was no clear evidence that faith schools were negatively influencing their students’ tolerance of homosexuals.

Analysis of the questions relating solely to socio-economic status (SES) was also conducted, as Proposition II specifically referred to this group. Whether this proposition can be confirmed will be discussed at greater length in Chapter 8, but in this case no significant differences between schools emerged. Again, those who showed higher levels of authoritarianism also showed lower levels of tolerance towards those with a different SES. Those born in the UK indicated more tolerance of those with a different SES than those who were born outside the UK.

The Rokeach score has been shown to be a significant variable in the case of all three dependent variables (all significant at the 1% level). In all cases the more authoritarian a person was, the less tolerant they were. If the t-statistics are considered for each of the significant explanatory variables then the Rokeach score is the most important explanatory variable in the case of General and SES Tolerance (Appendix L). Apart from highlighting what an important predictor of tolerance this explanatory variable is, this also raises the question of whether an indirect effect was at work here, with the authoritarian personality as an intermediate variable (serving as a proxy for some other factor or set of factors). For example, certain aspects of schooling could have encouraged students to acquire a more authoritarian outlook, in turn rendering them less tolerant of a particular group.
However, further analysis indicated that this was not the case. When a regression analysis was conducted with the Rokeach score used as the dependent variable, the identity of the school attended did not seem to be significant. Furthermore, when regression analyses were conducted on General and Homosexual Tolerance, this time omitting the Rokeach score as an independent variable, once again the school variable did not seem significant. More details are provided in Appendix L.

Therefore, on the basis of analysis of the questionnaire data alone, there appears to be little evidence to support the view that students in the faith schools under investigation were less tolerant than their non-faith school counterparts. However, the analysis now turns to the interview data.

6.3.2 Interview Responses

Within the interviews two sets of questions were designed to explore passive tolerance. The first related to allowing other groups freedom to act, where the justification for this was grounded in acknowledgement of human rights. The other set focused on tolerance of diversity and dissent, exploring the students’ reactions to those of other religions (or none), or towards members of their own faith, who contravened prohibitions seen as stipulated by their religion.

6.3.2.a The Sikh Play and the BNP

Both questions employed in this section were based on relatively recent real events and as such were less abstract than the questionnaire items. The first question considered the British National Party (BNP). This entity was not linked to any one of the specified identity markers around which this research was structured, but it functions as a distinct group in the same way. The other question was about a play written by a Sikh, and set in the Sikh community, and thus related to the faith identity marker. One or occasionally both of these questions were asked of all the respondents, except in a few instances where there were time constraints.

279 The British National Party is an extreme right-wing group who are strongly opposed to immigration and the presence of ethnic minorities in the UK, and who promote a very exclusive, white notion of ‘Britishness’.
A: The BNP

The first question asked whether Nick Griffin, the leader of the BNP and elected member of the European Parliament, should have been allowed to appear on the BBC1 Question Time programme.\(^ {280}\) This drew on a real event which had had a considerable amount of media exposure (BBC News, 2009) and thus was a relevant item to discuss with students. This question was particularly good at exploring tolerance as, unlike any other question, the majority of respondents explicitly disassociated themselves from Nick Griffin’s views, usually at an early stage in the discussion.\(^ {281}\) The responses to this question could be split into three categories relating to whether or not students felt that Nick Griffin should appear, and the reasoning or justification that they provided for their view.

One line of reasoning, which accounted for the largest response group, drew upon a human rights discourse of freedom of speech or, less commonly, of freedom of opinion.\(^ {282}\) The following responses were typical of this type

‘...of course the BNP is a political party so it’s just like the Labour or the Tories. They obviously have their right to do it [appear on Question Time]’ [James NFS]

‘Well, right, everybody else has the opportunity to voice their opinions and don’t see why he shouldn’t...’ [Anna ECI]

The use of freedom of speech reasoning generally resulted in agreement with the BBC ‘s decision to allow Nick Griffin on to air his views. These students can be considered as displaying passive tolerance, in that they disapproved of Nick Griffin’s views, but still afforded him basic human rights. No agreement with the BBC decision was expressed on any other grounds.

\(^ {280}\) The broadcast was made on 22\(^ {nd} \) October 2009

\(^ {281}\) Noor,Suliman,Ibrahim(MI);Annabel,Christina,Jon(RCI);James,Charlotte,Michael(NFS); Ben(ECI);Laura(NFI); Hannah,Sean,Jennifer(RCS)

\(^ {282}\) Laura,Hugh(NFI);Hannah,Jennifer(RCS);Jon,MarkGregory,Matt,Christina(RCI); James,Charlotte,Michael(NFS); Anna,Ben,(ECI),Noor (MI)
Those who disagreed with Nick Griffin being allowed onto the programme either justified this decision in terms of outcomes, such as the belief that it would instigate violence,\textsuperscript{283} or in terms of the offence which was likely to be given to non-white groups, which sometimes included the respondent.\textsuperscript{284} Reasoning based on avoiding violence can be considered a pragmatic approach, and therefore cannot be analysed in terms of tolerance.

With one exception,\textsuperscript{285} those responses which referred to offence also acknowledged that the BNP had the right to freedom of speech, but ultimately felt that the offence that would be caused to another outweighed the BNP’s right to freedom of speech. As this exceptional response involved denying Nick Griffin a human right, this cannot be considered a tolerant response towards the BNP. The action can be interpreted as being based on emotion and a personal view of what he said, rather than what Vogt would term ‘second sober thoughts’ (1997, p. 135). This is illustrated in the extract below where Noor acknowledges that human rights could be applied, but justifies her view by recourse to her own sense of offence, which is in turn connected to her group identity as a member of an ethnic minority.

‘To be honest, as a person of an ethnic minority I find him quite insulting because I believe that everybody has a right to be in this country and he does say some very racist things and they did.. the BBC did allow him on to air his views which everyone is.. has freedom of speech, but sometimes it’s very offensive’ [Noor MI]

This can be compared to the previous responses above, where despite finding what Nick Griffin said abhorrent, the students still felt he should be granted the right of free speech. This emotional reasoning will be considered again in relation to responses to the Sikh play.

\textsuperscript{283} Ibrahim,Suliman(MI);Ben(ECI)
\textsuperscript{284} Annabel(RCI);Noor(MI);Nick(ECI)
\textsuperscript{285} Nick(ECI)
No overall patterns could be seen within the schools, apart from the almost universal reference to free speech. None of the MI school students supported the BBC’s decision to allow Nick Griffin to appear, whereas in the other schools at least two-thirds of the respondents agreed with him being allowed to appear. But the MI school students’ lack of support obscures the variation in justification in each case. In only one case was tolerance, as defined by the granting of human rights, explicitly denied.\textsuperscript{286} In the others,\textsuperscript{287} the justification was based on pragmatism, and hence does not allow any inference about whether tolerance was being shown.

B: The Sikh Play

The alternative question in this section asked about the performance of a play in Birmingham, again based on a real event, which occurred in 2004 (Guardian, 2004). The scenario posed to the students was:

\begin{quote}
A few years ago a play was going to be performed in Birmingham. This fictional play was about murder and rape in a Gurdwara by a member of the Sikh community. It was written by a Sikh. The play was not performed because of violent protests from a number of Sikhs in the city who found it offensive. Do you think the group was right to act as they did?
\end{quote}

The first question about whether the group was right to act as they did was sometimes followed up with a discussion about whether the theatre was right to take the play off. Almost all the responses to this part of the question were pragmatic,\textsuperscript{288} with the violent nature of the protests being an important factor. As a pragmatic response does not indicate whether tolerance is being shown, this aspect of the question is not discussed in detail, but occasional references are made to the non-pragmatic responses.

\textsuperscript{286} Noor(MI)
\textsuperscript{287} Suliman,Ibrahim(MI)
\textsuperscript{288} Gregory,Matt(RCI);Esther,Laurence,Sarah,Luke(ECI);Joseph,Rhys,Danny(RCS); Pippa,Georgina,Alicia[NFI]
The main focus of the question was tolerance of another faith, and whether the students felt basic human rights should be granted - primarily the right of protest - to another religious group, or in the case of the non-faith pupils towards religious groups in general. In contrast to the case involving the BNP, there was no evidence of the students’ disapproval of the Sikh group as such.

In all but two of the responses, the opinion was that the group had a right to protest, or that its members were justified in protesting. Tolerance was clearly associated with allusions to ‘rights’ in the responses. Those acknowledging the justice of the group’s decision to protest also plainly indicated tolerance.

Although all students appeared tolerant of this different faith group, inter-school differences were apparent in the reasons given for tolerating the protest. Two distinct approaches could be discerned, which I suggest can be related to the two models of tolerance proposed by Vogt (1997, p. 146). These build on his conception of tolerance as some form of brake on the impulse to act upon a negative emotion that might be felt towards a certain group or situation. The first, the Emotional Model, sees an emotional connection with an Other as providing this check

Negative Emotion → Emotional Override → Action Checked.

In the second model, the Cognitive Model, the override is related to cognitive skills such as critical reasoning.

Negative Emotion → Cognitive Override → Action Checked

Returning to the research responses, the Sikh group was seen by some as right to protest because they were offended. This is an example of an Emotional Model response in that the sense of offence is an emotional response, and it was this which was seen to justify the protest. This approach required the respondent

289 Katie(NFS);Grace(RCS)
290 Joseph,Danny,Rhys,Rhianna(RCS);Alicia,Pippa,Georgina(NFI);Rebecca,Esther,Sarah,Luke(ECI);
Hassan(NFS); Gregory,Matt,Emily,Hariet(RCI);Yasmin,Saira,Hussain,Yousef,Noor,Zainab(MI)
291 Yasmin,Saira,Hussain,Zainab(MI);Rhys(RCS);Sarah(ECI)
to be able to empathise with the Sikh group, as Hussain can be seen to do here when he links the institutions of temple and mosque,

‘Yeah I completely agree with them [the Sikh protesting group], but obviously ‘cause in the Sikh, is it in a Sikh Temple?[....] Then it’s a holy place. Like for me Mosque is a holy place, Christianity the Church. Obviously then if they are going to do stuff like that it’s not ok for them like it’s just indecent.’ [Hussain MI]

The second approach still acknowledged the Sikhs’ notion of offence as the justification for the protest, but the act of protest was itself legitimated by reference to the notion of ‘rights’. The invoking of human rights can be seen as a cognitive process, and thus these students were using a Cognitive Model response. This approach does not require the respondent to empathise with the Sikhs. Below, although Matt disagrees with the view that the play was offensive, this does not stop him believing the Sikhs should be afforded the right to protest.

‘if it offends them people have a right to protest, but um.. if it’s for a fictional play, like you said it...... it shouldn’t like have much of an effect on them if it’s just a play written it’s not ... it’s not affecting them directly’ [Matt RCI]

A possible implication of this is that human rights discourse is particularly effective in encouraging a tolerant response in situations where there may be animosity towards, or at least lack of sympathy for, a particular group.

A marked difference between the MI school and the other schools could be detected, based on the form of reasoning used. Slight variations could be seen between the responses in the RCI, RCS, ECI, NFS, NFI schools, but the majority of the responses were of the Cognitive Model form, in that the identity of the group and the cause of the offence they experienced seemed of low importance, with the focus simply being on their right to protest.

292 Noor,Yousef(MI);Emily,Harriet,Matt,Gregory(RCI);Hassan(NFS);Luke,Esther,Rebecca(ECI); Georgina,Pippa,Alicia(NFI); Joseph,Danny,Rhianna(RCS)
In the MI school, by contrast, even in the two responses where rights were invoked, the emphasis was on the emotive aspect of the situation, with some students finding it hard to conceive that such a play could be written at all, as Yasmin’s response shows. Although in this extract she refers to Islam, later in her interview the sentiments were extended to the Sikh case.

‘…because things like that wouldn’t happen in a Mosque and that’s like going against religion completely so it’s almost offensive to the religion [.......] because I mean the Mosque is a place of worship and things like that don’t happen in places such as a Mosque so saying that it would goes against it and yeah it’s just wrong.’ [Yasmin MI]

The responses either referred to the negative image of the religion which would be promulgated by such a play293, and/or, as in Yasmin’s response, to a general offence towards religion as such.294 Empathy relating to the sense of damage to one’s religious group identity was strong amongst many of the students in the MI school:

‘It will just portray a negative image of you and your religion, not only you because you are an ambassador for your religion so it will give a bad image of your religion too.’ [Saira MI]

The religious context rather than more abstract or generalised notions of ‘rights’ appeared most significant to these students. This is particularly evident in Saira’s response below, but could also be detected in the other MI school responses.

‘…if it offends the religion I think it should be taken off. Because religion is not a joke and people live by something, people follow by something people think about with their every breath it’s something serious. [.....] If the play doesn’t have anything that offends the religion

293 Saira,Hussain,Noor(MI)
294 Yasmin,Saira,Yousef,Zainab(MI)

211
in its content then I don’t think it should be taken away.’ [Saira MI]

The religious context was also seen to be relevant by some students in the other schools. As in Saira’s response above, this was sometimes related to a perception of faith as something which is deeply held

‘because they have like faith in their faith if that makes sense? ‘ [Rhys RCS]

But even when respondents from the other schools highlighted the importance of religion in this case, it rarely formed the sole basis for asserting the justice of the Sikh protests. In this respect, responses from the MI school were exceptional.

If the two scenarios are considered together, several points emerge. The first is that with a few exceptions, in line with the quantitative data, the students were tolerant of those of other faiths. In the RCI, RCS, ECI, NFS and NFI schools the majority of student responses to both the BNP and the Sikh play questions drew upon and employed notions of human rights, which enabled them to be tolerant even when they clearly disagreed with the group in question (which in itself is really true tolerance). In the MI school, however, while human rights were not completely absent from the discussion, the overriding factor was an emotional connection with the group in question. These Muslim students’ tolerance of the Sikh group was thus justified overwhelmingly on the basis of ability to empathise with them. The emotional model did not seem to elicit a tolerant response in cases where little or no connection could be made. This difference between the MI students and those in the other schools with respect to the significance accorded to conceptions of human rights reflects differences noted by Verkuyten and Slooter (2008) in their research looking at adolescents’ reasoning about freedom of speech. They too suggest that human rights are not rejected by Muslim students, but highlight the context as being important in determining the way that students balance notions of rights with other considerations.

6.3.2.b Religious Prohibition
The final set of questions relating to passive tolerance focused on the students’ responses to people who contravened a named religious prohibition. The students were asked about how they would react if their friend, who was not of their own faith, did the prohibited thing. The question was then repeated, but this time focusing on a friend of the same faith. In order to avoid artificiality or lack of authenticity in selecting an appropriate case, the students themselves were asked to name an example of such a prohibition or - alternatively - obligation. In a second version of the question, the students’ reactions to inter-faith marriage were considered. Although a number of students were asked this question, only amongst Muslim students did any indicate that they felt that there was a bar to inter-faith marriage, so only those responses are considered.

This question tackles two objects of tolerance. The question relating to the non-faith friend considers tolerance of diversity, in that the person does not share the same view as the respondent. The second is tolerance of dissent, which is tolerance towards those of one’s own group who break group norms. This section begins by considering tolerance of diversity before looking at dissent, and concludes with an examination of the action taken by the students.

A: Tolerance of Diversity — My Non-faith Friends

Variations were seen in the students’ responses to this first question, but the differences between the schools were small. The exception, once again, was the MI school, where a number of responses exhibited particularly low tolerance.

The majority of students did not seek to impose their religious views on their non-faith friends, although some indicated that they would offer guidance or were concerned about possible welfare or health implications for the friend in question. Hannah’s response is quite typical. She clearly indicates that she opposes the action, but she is willing to accept, and respect, her friend’s alternative value system and her autonomy:

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295 Saira, Hussain, Yousef (MI)
296 Yasmin, Zainab, Ibrahim (MI); Hassan (NFS); Esther, Rebecca (ECI); Pippa (NFI); Hannah (RCS)
297 Pippa (NFI); Hannah (RCS)
298 Hassan (NFS); Ibrahim (MI)
‘...it would depend on what their religion taught because I’d want to support them in whatever their decision was so... I do... it is kind of wrong to have an abortion and I do understand that but... I do believe that... but if their belief is something different then I can’t just go up and say don’t do it because it’s not what they believe in’ [Hannah RCS]

With one exception,299 the imposition of views was only seen in the MI school, and then only in a few responses. Here, while the respondents would not aim to stop their friends from acting in all circumstances - not, for example, requiring a friend always to abstain from alcohol - nevertheless, most would expect them to desist when in their presence, as can be seen here in Noor’s response:

‘I’d just tell them that my religion says I’m not allowed to drink and stuff so could you either put this away or would you mind putting this away’ [Noor MI]

This type of response, whereby the respondent wishes to distance themselves from behaviour which contravenes what is considered acceptable within their own religion, was particular to the MI school and will be discussed in more detail shortly. It clearly indicates a low level of passive tolerance and, as I argue below, demonstrates a form of intolerance. The view expressed by the non-MI school exception, Grace, differed from the MI school responses in that there was no indication of her wishing to distance herself from a friend who did not comply, thus this can be seen as an instance of low passive tolerance rather than outright intolerance.

Although a fair degree of similarity was evident in the attitudes of all the respondents, the MI school thus exhibited the highest proportion of students who could be classed as showing low passive tolerance or even intolerance towards diversity.

**B: Tolerance of Dissent — My Religious Friends**

299 Grace(RCS)
Most of the responses referring to the non-faith friend indicated that the respondent would not broach the matter of the prohibition with their friend. For example, if the respondent herself abstained alcohol, she would not tell her friend that they should not drink. But when discussing their same-faith friends, all the respondents indicated that they would in some way seek to remind them that they were breaching a prohibition.

Again, a difference between the MI school responses and those from the other schools was evident, but in this situation the difference was even more clearly delineated. Interestingly, Grace was again the sole non-MI school exception, with her response alone in evincing any similarity to those of the MI students. All but one of the students in the MI school were explicit in their condemnation of dissent. Their responses were corrective and devoid of any acknowledgement of choice on the part of the same-faith friend. Adherence to religious teachings was interpreted as an unambiguous and binary matter, as can be seen in the two quotes below:

‘Because her religion, our religion tells us not to drink I would tell her not to drink and I would give her warnings and maybe like preach to her and tell her all the things that could happen to her or take it away and throw it in the bin or something.’ [Saira MI]

‘I’d tell her you’re a Christian.. you know... you know what is said and what is not said and you ..you know... you can’t abort a child because you know that’s just wrong’ [Grace RCS]

This authoritative, absolute approach to religious teachings could also be seen in responses to the idea of marrying outside the faith. In Saira’s response below she is discussing her reaction to her brother possibly marrying a non-Muslim, which is grounded in what she believes is permissible in Islam.

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300 Grace(RCS)
301 Suliman,Yasmin,Saira,Noor,Ibrahim(MI) the exception being Zainab
302 Saira,Hussain,Yousef(MI)
‘No because at the end of the day he’s allowed to get married to a Christian or a Jew or whatever you call it so I wouldn’t have any problems with that because it’s allowed in Islam.’ [Saira MI]

Restrictions over who a Muslim may marry vary between interpretations, and some interpretations do restrict Muslims, in particular females, from marrying someone who is not Muslim (Friedmann, 2003). For other Muslim respondents in the research, the prohibition on females marrying outside the faith was so strong that they struggled to even engage with the question. These students were showing either a low degree of passive tolerance, or outright intolerance, as they were not willing to accept that the person in question could act in the suggested way at all.

The responses from the students in the other schools showed greater variation, but certain patterns emerged. The respondents here were again likely to approach their friend, but this time there was a recognition that there might be more factors to consider than simply whether or not the behaviour was permitted. Students were aware, and prepared to accept, that the friend’s degree of religious commitment might be different from their own, as can be seen in the responses below

‘Then that naturally I’d feel the responsibility to tell him that ... this is against the teachings of your faith. Well then I’d ask them first of all I’d ... I’d look at them and ask them and see how much they were a Muslim themselves. If they were praying alongside us and reading the Qur’an then I’d know .... like him partying or drinking etc. etc. then I’d tell them well why are you doing this?’ [Hassan NFS]

‘I probably would talk to them because they’re not being true to their own faith or if they declared that they’re a Christian I wouldn’t be that really patronising judgemental but just say to them you know you said one thing and I mean their views might have changed on the whole faith thing’ [Esther ECI]

303 Hussain, Yousef (MI)
304 Hassan (NFS); Pippa (NFI); Rebecca, Esther (ECI); Grace, Hannah (RCS)
305 Pippa (NFI); Zainab (MI); Hannah (RCS); Esther (ECI); Hassan (NFS)
The second factor was the acceptance and recognition that the same-faith friend was an individual who could exercise choice.\textsuperscript{306} This concept of choice also led to the respondents talking more about helping the friend to reach their own decision and supporting the person, rather than correcting them. This element of choice can be seen in Hannah’s response:

‘it’s not my place to try and change what they want to be. If they want to have an abortion I’d probably say think about it first .. think about it make sure you have everything in your head that you say it’s the best idea not to have it and adopt it or have it and keep it or whatever.’ [Hannah RCS]

Similarly, in this extract from the interview with Zainab (the atypical MI student), the same-faith friend’s choice is acknowledged, and she envisages offering advice rather than an order or ultimatum:

‘I would ask her like what made you change from being this to this, as in like how come you’ve taken off your scarf? I’d be upset, but I wouldn’t tell her I’d be upset because it’s her own choice, it’s her decision. She’s taking off her scarf, I can’t do anything about it. Maybe I could influence her or advise her, but I wouldn’t force her like ‘Oh my God! Why are you taking off your scarf? Put it back on!’ I wouldn’t say that. I’d just be like, ‘How come you’ve taken off your scarf?’ And her reasons, maybe I’d look at her reasons ... say ok’ [Zainab MI]

Willingness of the respondent to acknowledge choice and to support the person despite disagreeing with their choice indicated at least a degree of passive tolerance, and many of the responses in fact displayed tolerance in the active mode. This was very different from the majority of the MI school responses, which were characterised by low passive tolerance or intolerance.

**C: The Effect on the Friendship**

\textsuperscript{306}Zainab(MI);Hannah(RCS);Rebecca,Esther(ECI);Hassan(NFS)
In the above analysis, the MI school students thus generally evinced low
tolerance (bordering on intolerance) of dissent - in marked contrast to the other
five schools. We have also seen how this difference was less marked, but still
evident, when tolerance of diversity was considered. Moving on to consider the
informant’s reaction towards his or her (hypothetically deviant) friend, we also find
a similar divide between the MI school students’ responses and those from their
counterparts in the other schools.

In the RCS, NFI, NFS and ECI schools if the hypothetical friend, whether of
the same faith or not, failed to heed the advice proffered or to follow the perceived
‘right’ course, respondents envisaged the friendship remaining intact. Typical in this
respect was the response from Esther, who said

‘I’d still treat them as the same person.’ [Esther ECI]

and then discussed the responsibility she would feel towards her same-faith friend.
She insisted that her intervention would be justified, but there was no indication
that she would renounce the friendship if it failed

‘because they’re my friend I don’t want them to get hurt it’s not so
much that I’m judging them because they’re having sex outside
marriage. It’s yeah they’re my friends and if anything happened to
them I’d feel partly responsible if I didn’t, you know, say what I
thought. ’ [Esther ECI]

In the MI school, non-compliance with religious teaching was more often
envisaged as involving the renunciation of friendship and shunning the company of
the offending (ex-)friend. This applied to both same-faith307 and non-faith
friends, 308 but was more common, almost universal, with respect to the former.
Yasmin, for example, differentiated between her likely treatment of a non-Muslim
friend, in the first quotation, and a Muslim friend, in the second:

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307 Saira,Hussain,Yousef,Suliman,Yasmin,Noor(MI)
308 Suliman,Saira,Noor(MI)
'It would not affect me as such because it’s them [the non-Muslim friend] doing it and not me [...] it [eating pork] wouldn’t be the right thing to do and I would have that in my mind, but I wouldn’t say anything, I wouldn’t do anything about it’ [Yasmin MI]

’[It’s] not that I would say anything to them [the Muslim friend], but I wouldn’t be friends with them for any longer’ [Yasmin MI]

Whereas Suliman makes no difference between his friends

’I wouldn’t even deal with a person that drinks. I’d try to stay away from someone that drinks.’[Suliman MI]

Saira’s reaction to a sibling marrying a non-Muslim illustrates the strength of her feeling regarding non-compliance:

’I’d probably disown them’ [Saira MI]

Reactions around accepting or tolerating deviant modes of behaviour seemed to be closely related to self-image, both individual and collective (see Chapter 4.6.4). For a number of MI students, their identity was seen as intimately bound up with that of their associates, so that mixing with people whose behaviour contravenes Islamic teaching would compromise their own Islamic identity. This was most clearly expressed by Saira:

’I wouldn’t hang out with people who drink in the first place because your friends show who you are.’ [Saira MI]
A few students offered more broadly framed responses related to, but distinct from, the disavowal or shunning of a friend. These involved the desire, or even expectation, that those around them should refrain from the prohibited behaviour. This is illustrated in the two quotes below which can be contrasted with Yasmin’s response above, where she accepted that her friend was not bound by the same rules as her and that therefore she could eat pork.

‘I’d just tell them that my religion says I’m not allowed to drink and stuff so could you either put this away or would you mind putting this away or.. I’d have to go.’ (Noor MI)

‘like somebody who comes on a bus with a bottle of wine and he’s about to open it and I say to him wait don’t open it. I can have that view that I don’t want him to drink in front of me .. I don’t want him to get intoxicated in front of me... ‘ [Suliman MI]

I see this type of response as being linked to two previous observations. The first is the importance of the religious aspect of the prohibition which, as was suggested in the Sikh play question, seemed to be privileged amongst the MI school students, for whom it became the influential consideration. The is the precedence accorded to religious teaching over recognition of universal human rights - as seen in responses (discussed above) to the BNP question.

The closest response to the above found in any of the other schools was that of Hassan (a Muslim student in the NFS school). Disavowal of friendship was an option for him, but in extreme circumstances only (arguably only incidentally related to contravention of the religious prohibition). In addition, unlike the responses in the MI school, adherence to religious teaching was not seen in a binary way and he was willing to consider degrees of behaviour.

‘I would still be friends with them, but there’s a certain extent if they... I dunno... started completely going against the things, the teachings of

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309 Suliman, Noor (MI)
Islam [...] obviously being excessively violent or being very vulgar in the use of their language. I think that’s naturally where my morals and ethics you know I wouldn’t seek friendship with this. However if they were within a certain degree for example they drank alcohol’ [Hassan NFS]

The MI students’ responses, involving renunciation or shunning of those exhibiting the deviant behaviour, indicate actual intolerance rather than low passive tolerance, in that they involve an active desire to deny, conceal or prevent the action in question (and the actors involved). This is in marked contrast to the responses from the students in the RCS, NFS, NFI and ECI schools where, with few exceptions, the responses showed the students to be tolerant of both diversity and dissent.

6.3.3 Passive Tolerance Summary

The analysis of the passive tolerance questions has shown that there was no general difference between the attitudes of passive tolerance shown by the students in the faith schools compared with those in the non-faith schools. However, inter-school differences were evident. The NFI students were found to be more tolerant of homosexuals, and the MI school students showed less tolerance towards those people whose behaviour went against Islamic beliefs and teachings. Differences in the reasoning behind attitudes were also seen, with human rights discourse invoked less often in the MI school. What was noticeable in many responses from the latter was an unwillingness or failure to consider the complexities of a given situation. In the other schools, the responses showed a greater tendency to consider some alternative factors. Finally, in the MI school in situations in which there were competing rights, religious factors took precedence over non-religious ones. Active tolerance will now be considered.

6.4 Active Tolerance
This mode of tolerance was also explored in the student questionnaires and interviews. The main object of tolerance was the Religious Other, but other groups were also included and these will be seen to provide an interesting comparison.

6.4.1 The Questionnaire Responses — Tolerance of Religious Groups

This section dealt solely with different religious groups and religious tolerance. Principal Component Analysis conducted on the nine items indicated that two of the questions, B1.3 and B1.6, were problematic, and therefore these were removed from the analysis. The remaining seven items were then seen to indicate general Religious Tolerance, and an Average Religious Tolerance score was generated (for technical details see Appendix K).

Table 7.3: Independent t-tests Religious Tolerance score.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Faith School</th>
<th>Non-Faith School</th>
<th>Significance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Religious Tolerance N</td>
<td>0.0023</td>
<td>-0.0029</td>
<td>Not significant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>258</td>
<td>206</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Independent t-tests conducted on the Religious Tolerance score indicated that when active tolerance was considered no difference between the faith and non-faith schools in their tolerance of other religious groups was shown.

Average Religious Tolerance scores were calculated on a scale of 1-5, as they were for Average General Tolerance (Section 7.3.1). The mid-points (average scores) in all the schools were above 3 indicating a high level of tolerance (graph 7c). But a comparison of the individual schools indicates that students in the MI school were significantly more religiously tolerant than in any of the other schools. Differences could be seen between the other schools, with the students

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310 Removed questions were B1.3: Pupils should not be allowed time off school to attend their religious festivals and B1.6: In mainly non-Christian areas it is offensive to display Christmas decorations.

311 This is indicated by the fact that the confidence interval bars around the mean point do not overlap with any of the other schools.
in the RCS school appearing as the least tolerant, but none of these were significant.

Graph 6c: Error bar graph of Average Religious Tolerance scores showing each research school.

The Religious Tolerance score was then regressed against schools, with various explanatory variables (Section 6.3.1) being controlled for.

Table 6.4: The multiple linear regression determinants of Religious Tolerance.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>VARIABLE</th>
<th>Religious Tolerance (Standardized β Coefficients)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Roman Catholic independent</td>
<td>-0.024</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roman Catholic state</td>
<td>-0.038</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Category</td>
<td>Coefficient</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evangelical Christian independent</td>
<td>0.011</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Muslim independent</td>
<td>-0.035</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-faith independent</td>
<td>0.110</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-faith state</td>
<td>Reference</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rokeach</td>
<td>-0.050</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GENDER (Boy=1)</td>
<td>-0.175**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BOOKS</td>
<td>-0.040</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STUETH (White=1)</td>
<td>-0.238**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STUBIRTH (UK born=1)</td>
<td>0.048</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PARBIRTH (Both UK=1)</td>
<td>0.031</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attend major festivals only</td>
<td>-0.086</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attend place of worship regularly (at least once a month)</td>
<td>0.215*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roman Catholic</td>
<td>0.072</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Christian (including Evangelical)</td>
<td>-0.045</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Church of England</td>
<td>-0.028</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Muslim</td>
<td>0.192</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other non-Christian</td>
<td>-0.054</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adjusted $R^2$</td>
<td>20.6%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
** significant at 1% level; * significant at 5% level;

Once the explanatory variables were controlled for, the differences between schools became non-significant (table 6.4). This indicates that even when active tolerance was considered there was no significant difference in tolerance between the faith and non-faith school students. The adjusted $R^2$ score indicated that about one-fifth of the differences in Religious Tolerance have been explained by the variables above. Again a good amount of the variance can be seen to have been explained. The analysis did show that boys were less religiously tolerant than girls, and that white students were less tolerant than those of other ethnicities, with both of these differences being highly significant at the 1% level.

Those who worshipped regularly, an indicator of religious commitment, were also found to show higher levels of religious tolerance than those who never attended (significant at the 5% level). Although not significant, those who attended worship occasionally showed lower tolerance than those who never attended. This pattern is consistent with findings from research conducted by Allport (1967) amongst others. The relationship between the regularity of attendance at worship and tolerance of a variety of objects of tolerance is described as curvilinear, with those who infrequently attend being less tolerant than both those who regularly attend and those who never attend. Briefly, the difference is seen to relate to whether the belief is held intrinsically (regular attenders) or extrinsically (irregular attenders). Regular attenders are seen to internalise their belief and live more in accordance with the teachings of the faith, such as being tolerant and showing respect to others, whereas the irregular attenders are more utilitarian about their belief, and thus the belief guides their actions to a lesser extent (ibid).

6.4.2 The interviews

6.4.2.a Teaching About Other Faiths

The first question which explored active tolerance asked the students about whether their school should teach about other faiths (Appendix B). This explored the extent to which the students expressed an interest in the Religious Other or
saw a value in another faith. Apart from one response all the students felt that their school should teach about other faiths. This finding contradicts research conducted by the Commission on Integration and Cohesion which found that the majority of white students ‘saw little reason to study or respect other (non Christian) faiths’ (Billings and Holden, 2010, p. 9). This study by Billings and Holden had also considered Year 10 students, and thus the difference cannot be explained in terms of a difference in maturity. The difference may reflect contextual differences as the Commission’s study focused on multicultural towns in the north of England, where there had been a recent history of inter-ethnic violence and ongoing issues over employment, a situation noticeably different from the London-based focus of this study.

The one student who rejected the teaching of other faiths was not against it himself, but was concerned about the anticipated reaction of some of his class and how his teacher would cope, as he explains

‘If this school started teaching all faiths then some people might start mocking other faiths and I think that’d be very dangerous like other people saying bad views about other faiths ‘cause people might be like ‘oh Islam is the only religion’ Islam is the only right religion and some students might be like getting carried away, and then if the teacher was to teach another religion, and then they mocked it then the teacher wouldn’t know how to deal with it, and then that’s why I think it’s good to teach one faith ’ [Suliman MI]

A number of the students saw a value in having a firm grounding in their own faith, but this did not signify a lack of interest in learning about others. The importance and support for learning about other faiths was justified in a number of ways. Knowing about another religion was seen to foster respect for that religion

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312 Suliman(MI)
313 Suliman(MI)
314 Hussain(MI); Jon(RCI); Esther(ECI); Rhianna(RCS)
315 Yasmin, Saira, Hussain, Zainab(MI); Pippa(NFS); Ben, Rebecca(ECI)
'You should probably know about all of them so that when you meet people of other faiths you can like respect their religion.. not do anything they wouldn’t be happy with’ [Ben ECI]

Respect was a particularly important motivation in the MI school 316 where it was linked to a religious obligation

‘Islam teaches us to respect other religions [.....] so we greatly respect other religions’ [Zainab MI]

Importance was also placed on a wider knowledge and understanding about faiths more generally, and Luke’s response is typical of the sentiments expressed.

‘I think it’s good to learn about other faiths [....] It just gives you a broader understanding of the world’ [Luke ECI]

Sometimes, as Katie’s interview suggests, increased knowledge was seen as prudential, given the multicultural nature of society.

‘I think we should learn about all of them. Only because we live in a multicultural society. You know if we know about other people’s faiths then I think it’s kind of respecting them in a way. Because if it’s kind of hidden we’re not knowing about the people we mix with in everyday life so if I’m sitting next to someone and I don’t know, I know their religion, but I don’t know not their practices but their general knowledge then I can’t kind of like not I don’t have to talk to them but it helps to talk to them about it and it’s just kind of like knowing who you’re mixing with at school on an everyday basis, daily basis.’ [Katie NFS]

Supporting the teaching about other faiths was not always connected to a positive tolerance outcome. Two students in the ECI school supported the teaching of other beliefs, but one saw knowing about other faiths as a protection from

316 Yasmin,Saira,Hussain,Zainab(MI)
erroneous beliefs,317

‘So that we understand where they’re coming from and when they bring out information about their religion we already know it so we’re not overwhelmed with them and get convinced to their side’ [Sarah ECI]

and the other saw it as preparing her better to evangelise318:

‘I think you should be taught about all faiths, because if we didn’t get taught about them in this school I don’t think I would be able to go out and like speak about Christianity to somebody with another religion, because I don’t know enough about their religion to say I think you’re wrong about this.’ [Anna ECI]

Most of the support for teaching about other faiths was justified by a pragmatic response. Very few responses made reference to finding value in other faiths or being interested in the faiths themselves,319 a response which would be associated with active tolerance. Whereas passive tolerance towards other faiths was almost universal, the incidence of active tolerance being shown towards this group was much lower. No school pattern could be detected in the responses.

The findings in respect of active tolerance towards other faiths, which were gained from considering the student responses to teaching about other faiths, are consistent with the questionnaire findings, in that there appears to be no difference between faith and non-faith school students. The findings also indicated that active tolerance towards other faiths was less prevalent than passive tolerance within all the schools.

6.4.2.b Faith Groups

317 Sarah(ECI)
318 Anna(ECI)
319 Harriet(RCI);Laura(NFI);Yasmin,Hussain(MI)
Active tolerance towards other faiths was also explored through two other questions. The first asked about celebrating the festivals of other faiths. Students were asked to comment upon two approaches taken by different cities in the UK. These were the’ Winterval’ approach taken by Birmingham City Council in 1997 and 1998 (BBC News, 1998), in which individual faiths’ festivals were viewed by some to have been subsumed into one festival, ‘Winterval’\(^{320}\), and the approach advocated by the Mayor of London in which various faith and ethnic groups have a publicly sponsored celebration marking their festival in Trafalgar Square on a weekend close to the official celebration (Appendix B). Occasionally, when interview time was limited, a shorter version of this question was used. This asked whether the students thought it offensive for other faiths’ festivals to be celebrated\(^{321}\) (Appendix B).

The alternative question considered the students’ response to the building, or the closure, of another faith group’s place of worship\(^{322}\). The question defined a faith group, different from the respondent’s own, and often related to local circumstances. In style this question was very similar to the question on immigrants and those on the margins of society, discussed in the next section. This allowed, in some instances, for direct comparison of responses as, where time permitted, the question on faith was followed by the question relating to the non-religious identity marker.

Unlike the responses to the passive tolerance questions where this mode of tolerance was shown in the majority of cases, the demonstration of active tolerance was much less prevalent within all the schools, a finding consistent with those on teaching about other faiths in the previous section. The data showed considerable variation within all the schools,\(^{323}\) although there was only one

\(^{320}\) This is similar to the American use of ‘Holiday’ to include Christmas, Hanukah etc.
\(^{321}\) Suliman, Saira, Ibrahim (MI)
\(^{322}\) The question asked, ‘In your local area the local [name faith group] community wish to build a new [place of worship] (or indicated that the place of worship would have to close). How would you respond to that proposal?’
\(^{323}\) NFS did not provide any responses to this question. This was partly a result of problems with time, but also the one respondent (Michael) who did answer these questions provided answers which could not be evaluated in terms of tolerance.
response which could be considered intolerant.\textsuperscript{324} Whilst some differences could be detected between schools in respect of the proportion of students giving an actively tolerant response,\textsuperscript{325} the responses themselves were similar. Table 7.5 below gives the percentage of active tolerance interview responses for each school. The small sample size means that a comparison of the absolute percentages is inappropriate. However, what these results do indicate is that two groups can be distinguished; the first containing the RCI, RCS and NFI schools, and the second containing the ECI and MI schools.

Table 6.5: Percentage of active tolerance interview responses towards those of another faith.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School</th>
<th>% Active tolerance responses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>RCI</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RCS</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ECI</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MI</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NFI</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A minority\textsuperscript{326-327} of the active tolerance responses made reference to being interested and seeing value in another faith. In her response below, Harriet describes her own experience of attending her friend’s Bat Mitzvah\textsuperscript{328} and the interest that this generated. It also shows how this contact began to help her see a

\footnotesize{\textsuperscript{324} Rebecca(ECI)  
\textsuperscript{325} Emily, Harriet(RCI); Noor, Zainab(MI); Esther, Nick(ECI); Anthony, Georgina(NFI); Joseph, Grace, Hannah(RCS)  
\textsuperscript{326} Joseph(RCS); Harriet, Emily(RCI)  
\textsuperscript{327} Although both the RCI responses used this reasoning, these two students were in the same paired interview, and therefore a note of caution must be raised before drawing the conclusion that this school somehow encouraged this response.  
\textsuperscript{328} Female equivalent of the Bar Mitzvah, the Jewish rite of passage to adulthood.}
significance in the practice of a Religious Other through comparison with her own religious practice.

‘I found it really interesting to see... stuff differently. [...] so I just found it really interesting. Because actually the way... the service went [was] not similar, but it was like they did their equivalent of the Bible, the Torah, ... they hold it up and walk around with it like we do and I just found it really interesting to see the difference.’ [Harriet RCI]

The importance of contact for initiating an appreciation of the value of other faiths was also seen in Yasmin’s (MI) and Laura’s (NFI) interviews. Responses were more likely to involve a degree of emotional connection with the Other, but connection alone did not appear to be sufficient to initiate the action necessary (thereby warranting categorization as an active tolerance response). This can be seen in Esther’s response, where she goes beyond human rights, making some connection, but is not motivated to act.

‘I think everyone has their right to show their religion. Go to somewhere where they can worship... I probably wouldn’t do anything about it’ [Esther ECI]

Instead, what seemed to be necessary to stimulate active tolerance was some understanding or appreciation of the significance that the practice or belief had to the faith group in question. The students who referred to any significance often did so without any reference to their own group. The appreciation of significance as a motivation for action can be seen in both Zainab’s and particularly Anthony’s responses.

‘...if they did go on a protest I’d join them because it’s their holy place and no one has a right to do that sort of thing.’ [Zainab MI]

‘I would be probably more against [closing the temple] than the

329 Noor,Zainab(MI);Esther,Nick(ECI);Anthony,Georgina(NFI);Jospeh,Grace,Hannah(RCS)
330 Joseph(RCS);Zainab(MI);Nick,Esther(ECI);Anthony(NFI)
closing of the immigration [centre] in a way because ... I know that the church or any religious temple as such for any religion means a lot to them, ... as in more important than probably their house or something in a way ... I’m not Hindu, but I think, I know the effect that that would have on some people. So I’d object very strongly to that.’ [Anthony NFI]

Although this section was designed to focus on active tolerance responses it also indicated differences in passive tolerance. Two elements dominated the passive responses. The first was recourse to either fairness or rights which was again a frequently used form of reasoning, for example:331

‘everyone one should have the right to celebrate their own religious thing’ [Sarah ECI]

‘Then they [the religious community] have a right to protest and get people involved’ [Sean RCS]

But none of the respondents who referred to human rights discourse subsequently went on to deliver an active tolerance response. In these cases, it seemed that the invoking of human rights was felt to be a sufficient and adequate response in itself.

The second element seen within the responses was a degree of disengagement and separateness, as can be seen in Saira’s response:

‘It doesn’t really bother me because it’s their religion, their faith they get to do what they want and they have to do it’ [Saira MI]

This was most noticeable in the ‘place of worship’ question in which the reason for this disengagement becomes clearer. The students appeared to be seeing the other faith group as a separate, distinct, bounded community. The result of this conceptualisation was distance, sometimes resulting in a denial and dismissal of any responsibility towards this group, as can be seen in the responses of Hugh and Luke.

331 Suliman,Saira,Yousef(MI);Joseph,Rhianna(RCS);Emily(RCI);Luke,Sarah(ECI)
‘Well I don’t think I’d sign it because I think if that’s their business you shouldn’t…. I’m sure if a Christian …they probably wouldn’t support a Christian church because they’re not Christian, it’s not really their place, I’m not a Hindu it’s not my place to be… I’m not any part of their community. I shouldn’t be supporting something I’m not part of.’ [Hugh NFI]

‘I would be fairly indifferent really […] They don’t bother me and I’ve never bothered them’ [Luke ECI]

In some responses, this distance, indicated by a reluctance to engage, was partially related to unfamiliarity. In the following extract, I had just asked Sean about whether he would involve himself with the group’s campaign to keep their building. Sean’s reluctance is related not to outright disengagement with the group, but to unfamiliarity with it.

‘I don’t really know that many Muslims […]. If you know something you’re more willing to get involved with it. If you’ve got no clue about the people and the community … then I’d be [reluctant]’ [Sean RCS]

This type of response was seen in all the schools, but in the ECI and MI schools there was a higher prevalence of students seeing their communities as being separate, and of students lacking any sense of an obligation to interact, as indicated by a reluctance to even sign a petition.

‘I wouldn’t react ‘cause it’s …I don’t know …but it’s got nothing what[ever] to do with me. I wouldn’t get myself involved’ [Ibrahim MI]

Ben too says he would do nothing, in this case to help the local Muslim community, adding

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332 Sean(RCS)
333 Yasmin,Yousef,Ibrahim(MI);Luke,Ben,Laurence,Anna(ECI)
'it wouldn’t have anything to do with me. It’s their [business]. I don’t really care.’ [Ben ECI]

Although not indicative of all the responses, in both these schools several students made direct comparisons to their own religious group, in one case referring to others as ‘rivals’. Such language did not emerge in the other schools.

‘Laurence  At the moment it doesn’t really bother me. You know it’s kind of like rivals so..

HE  At the moment you said it doesn’t bother you, bother you in what sort of way?

Laurence  If they were moved I wouldn’t really like think that that was unjust’ [Laurence ECI]’

‘I wouldn’t go against it but I wouldn’t go for it because obviously in Islam Muslims think that it’s the right religion so Sikhs can do what they want for themselves’ [Yasmin MI]

What can be seen here, in both the MI and ECI schools, is a greater use by students of religion in preference to other markers of individual identity. Invoking the religious dimension of identity appeared to be negatively correlated with students’ ability or willingness to interact with other religious groups. This contrasted with the situation in other schools, where the invocation of a religious group identity was not seen, and where there was a higher prevalence of active tolerance responses.

The analysis has indicated that in all the schools active tolerance towards those of other faiths was rarer than passive tolerance. This was particularly the case in the MI and ECI schools. The following section will consider attitudes towards non-religious groups. This will make it possible to reach tentative conclusions regarding the significance of religious differences, as compared with other factors,

334 Laurence,Rebecca(ECI);Yasmin(MI)
6.4.2.c Immigrants and Those on the Margins of Society

In addition to asking the students about their response to other faith groups, they were also asked about their attitudes towards immigrants or those on the margins of society (including recovering drug addicts, youth ex-offenders and gypsy or traveller children). Again, the intention was to ask about groups exhibiting difference from the respondents, and therefore questions naming ‘immigrants’ as a group were not asked to the MI students, all of whom were first or second generation immigrants. The ‘immigrants’ question was similar to the ‘place of worship’ question in that it asked the students to say how they would respond to either the closing or opening of an immigrant support and advice centre. Similarly, the alternative question, focusing on those on the margins of society, related to the opening of an outward bound centre which would specifically cater for this group and which would be situated close to the respondent’s home (Appendix B).

Some further explanation is necessary regarding the latter group. It was not assumed that in the case of recovering drug addicts and young ex-offenders that their former behaviour would or should be approved or tolerated. Rather, the focus was on students’ willingness to actively engage with a group that included those whose behaviour, or former behaviour, merited disapproval. The equivalence of this group and the category of ‘immigrants’ as objects of tolerance is therefore questionable, but both are similarly subject to marginalization, and drug addiction or crime amongst youth are, like immigration, often (though not always) associated with deprivation.

As with the responses to faith groups in the last section, so also with respect to active tolerance of immigrants and marginal groups, two clusters of schools emerged (table 7.6). The first, containing the majority of active tolerance interview responses, included the RCS, NFI and NFS schools. The second contained the ECI

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335 Gypsy and traveller children have been included here as they are a group who experience considerable prejudice on account of perceptions about their lifestyle.
and MI schools. Once again, the MI and the ECI schools showed the lowest prevalence of active tolerance among the schools in the research.

Table 6.6: Percentage of active tolerance interview responses concerning immigrants and those on the margins of society.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School</th>
<th>% Active Tolerance Responses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>RCS</td>
<td>86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ECI</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MI</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NFI</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NFS</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Those students evincing ‘active’ responses showed little interest in the tolerated group, with only one student mentioning learning about another culture.\(^{336}\) Instead, in the majority of responses,\(^{337}\) the willingness to act was related to an emotional connection with the relevant group. This often involved an understanding of the benefit that these centres could provide to the groups and individuals concerned. Here, in contrast to responses relating to tolerance of other faiths, an emotional connection alone was sufficient to motivate action.

‘Because there are lots of immigrants who come to this country who need to find people who like want to be in a community and find people like them maybe. And I think it would be just a good thing.’ [Pippa NFI (immigrants)]

‘I’d think that that ... could probably work in a productive way. ...It should be open to all people ... [as] it’s a way for them to interact with people and make new friends... It’s a good thing, and say if... someone

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\(^{336}\) Rhys(RCS)

\(^{337}\) Yasmin,Noor(MI);Danny,Jennifer,Hannah,Joseph,Rhianna(RCS);Esther,Nick(ECI);
James,Katie,Michael(NFS);Laura,Anthony,Pippa(NFI)
who has just come out of prison... had... that sort of team building, ... that could ... help him ... to rebuild [his life] and ... get on the right track again.’ [Danny RCS (margins)]

The RCS school showed a very high proportion of active tolerance responses, which generally demonstrated a clear understanding of the situation of the Other. This school is situated in an area with high crime rates, and it might be assumed that living in such an area would make students more wary and less tolerant, particularly of those with criminal backgrounds. Instead, it seemed to give them a better understanding, which in turn motivated them to want to assist rather than condemn and reject. As the extract below demonstrates, this desire to help is motivated by understanding the Other.

‘I’d love to take part in that and go out and try to give leaflets to the um... kind of kids on the streets ... and invite them ... and talk to them in a way that they would be like, ‘Oh yeah, this place is my kind of place!’ and stuff... Just relate to them and make them feel welcome and that they can come here every time yeah’ [Grace RCS (margins)]

In this, as in the faith group questions, inaction (a passive tolerance response) was sometimes associated with reticence, due to unfamiliarity with a group, or because of lack of appropriate skills or time. A number of responses vaguely referred to helping as being a positive thing to do, but the respondents did not elaborate further and gave no indication of any willingness to interact. In consequence, this type of response was still classed as passive.

In common with the responses regarding other faith groups, passive tolerance was sometimes expressed in terms of disengagement or separation from the Other, as can be seen in these responses:

338 Nick, Esther (ECI); Michael (NFS); Suliman (MI)
339 Georgina (NFI); Anna (ECI); Yousef (MI); Sean (RCS)
340 Sarah, Rebecca, Laurence, Ben (ECI); Hugh (NFI)
'Because I don’t think that’s my place really. I’m not an immigrant. I’ve never had any experience of immigration.’ [Hugh NFI (immigrant)]

‘It wouldn’t really have anything to do with me so I wouldn’t really care.’ [Ben ECI (immigrants)]

This kind of response was much less commonly encountered than when other faith groups were considered. This possibly suggests a difference in the way that the students viewed ‘others’ according to whether they were defined in religious or non-religious terms. In the case of the ECI school, passive tolerance was a particularly common response with respect to both categories of ‘other’ – but with a significant difference. With respect to attitudes towards other faith groups, several of the responses from ECI students involved a comparison with their own need for or expectation of tolerance as members of a religious group. However, in the non-religious case, all the ECI school responses operated at the personal level, as can be seen in Ben’s response above.

The other consideration which informed several passive tolerance responses was the effect on ‘the community’.341 This response, with one exception (cited below),342 was only found in the MI school, where reference to the community featured in the majority of passive tolerance responses (tipping over into intolerance).

‘First of all there’s a community there, and if you are going to put that kind of people [here] it’s just going to cut up the community more... so it’s not actually beneficial for the community. It could increase crime and everything’ [Hussain MI (margins)]

‘That’s a difficult one... I would welcome... the traveller children and it’s just... oh... ex-offenders. They can do it again [HE: ‘Right...’] and it’s in my local area. And also, it depends on what they did in the first place. If it was really horrific, then obviously I don’t want ... I couldn’t stand to be near whoever did that...’ [Louisa NFS (margins)]

341 Suliman, Saira, Hussain, Ibrahim (MI); Louisa (NFS)
342 Louisa (NFS)
The three negative responses to the outward bound centre all made reference to the community. Whilst Louisa’s response (above) shows her weighing and considering relative effects, in the two MI school responses the effect on the community was the sole consideration. In the extract below, Saira feels strongly about the effect on the community and its image, so strongly that later in the interview she says that if it were built she would move house.

‘I wouldn’t allow it. ... Personally, I wouldn’t want ex-criminals and people who aren’t ... I’m not saying they’re not good people, but [I don’t want] people who have made mistakes to be near me because they could influence the community into being violent. Maybe ruin the whole image of the community, the whole collectiveness.’ [Saira MI (margins)]

It is interesting with respect to this question, which has a non-religious focus, the MI students still made reference to a group identity, rather than answering from a personal perspective. The ‘community’ they invoked was ill-defined: it was not clear whether they meant their own religious community or the wider local community.

As already noted, responses evincing attitudes of active tolerance towards immigrants and those on the margins of society were lowest in the MI and ECI schools, just as was the case with respect to attitudes towards other faith groups. Whether this difference was related essentially to non-school factors or also involved an identifiable impact from their schooling will be discussed in the next chapter.

Differences could be detected between the students’ attitudes of tolerance towards the two groups, with a greater proportion of the students showing active tolerance towards immigrants and those on the margins of society (52%) than towards other faith groups (28%). This situation was consistent across the schools, not just in the faith schools, which suggests that differences of faith tend to be less tolerated, not only by students in faith schools, but by all students.
6.4.3 Active Tolerance Summary

The analysis of the questions specifically relating to passive tolerance indicated that this mode of tolerance was displayed by almost all the students towards all groups. A much lower proportion of students displayed active tolerance, which in turn was more likely to be applied to immigrants or marginalized groups than to those of other religions. Apart from underlining the need for precision in defining ‘tolerance’, this highlights that a significant difference exists between the deployment of these two modes of tolerance, a point to which I return in the next chapter.

6.5 Some further thoughts

An important finding was the remarkable uniformity in the MI school student interview responses and the pronounced difference between these and responses gathered from the other schools. This raises the question of whether there was any selection bias in the choice of interview candidates at the MI school. With the exception of the ECI school, the interview respondents were chosen by the schools themselves, and thus the method of selection was in theory consistent across all the schools. It is possible that the MI school chose a particular type of student, although background information collected on each respondent, which included degree of religious commitment and ethnicity, indicated that the students came from a range of backgrounds. The greatest degree of uniformity was shown in the interview responses relating to faith, with a wider range of views being shown in the non-faith questions. This was consistent with the questionnaire responses from the MI school, which showed all the students identifying strongly with their faith, in contrast to all the other schools (faith and non-faith).

Two factors may have had a disproportionate effect on the MI school student responses – both to the questionnaire and the interviews. The first is the perceived threat to Islam in the UK and the second is my status as researcher (white British and non-Muslim). Both of these factors made the situation in this school different from the others, and may have helped make the MI school students
keener than their peers to present a ‘common front’ to a researcher perceived as an outsider.

Whilst not rejecting the possibility that there may have been bias in the selection of the interview respondents, the consistency between the questionnaire and interview responses suggests little likelihood of this.

Before moving on to the discussion of the findings and testing of the hypotheses, it is relevant to note two further points that emerged in relation to strategies used to teach tolerance. These suggest that different approaches may be needed to encourage active and passive tolerance. The findings seem to indicate that human rights discourse may be very beneficial in situations where there is considerable animosity, but that it may not be sufficient to support the development of active tolerance. Active tolerance may require more empathetic skills, involving not just sympathy for the situation of the Other, but a capacity to identify with them to some extent.
Chapter 7: Discussion

7.1 Introduction

In this penultimate chapter, I attempt to provide an answer to the question that has guided this study: ‘What effect do faith schools have on their students’ attitudes of tolerance?’ As discussed in the introductory chapter, this can be disaggregated into these two related questions:

A: What differences are there in the attitudes of tolerance between students in faith schools compared with students in non-faith schools in England, and where do any differences lie?

and

B: What effect does the school have on the differences in the students’ attitudes of tolerance?

This chapter is arranged in two parts corresponding to each of these questions. Part A considers whether there is a faith/non-faith divide, and discusses such differences as exist between students in the schools where the research was conducted. As the previous chapter indicated, no significant differences emerged from the analysis of the questionnaire data, but a number appeared in the students’ interview responses.

The task of determining whether these differences are related to some aspect of the school or whether they are the result of some similarity in background characteristics, such as religious belief, is undertaken in Part B, where the hypotheses generated in Chapters 4, 5 and 6 are tested against the findings from Chapter 7. The school impact is then discussed in more detail and tentative conclusions are drawn.

The findings discussed here are tentative and indicative in nature, rather than representative and generalizable. Due to limitations of sample size and sampling methods, it is not possible, on the basis of these findings, to make statements about the situation across the entire population of English schools. Rather than drawing such generalisable conclusions, this chapter therefore aims to
narrow the focus of the overarching research question, highlighting areas where this study indicates a need for more focused research.

As has become increasingly apparent in the course of the preceding chapters, when comparing students’ attitudes of tolerance, the key cleavage was not between the faith and non-faith schools. Instead, one school, the MI school, stood apart from the other schools (RCI, RCS, ECI, NFI and NFS). The discussion in this chapter therefore focuses particularly on the MI school.

Within this chapter I suggest that one possible explanation for the difference between the MI school students and those in the other schools, as revealed especially in their low tolerance towards those who contravene (Islamic) religious teaching, is related to the way that the school nurtures the students’ Muslim identity. This itself is connected to perceived threats to the group’s self-esteem emanating both from within and outside the British Muslim community. A second possible explanation is related to particular Islamic understandings around the critical examination of their faith. It has been argued that a tendency within Islam to emphasise or insist upon unity in religious practice and interpretation, and to downplay diversity, can make understanding differences problematic (King, 1997). At the same time, within Islam (as within Christianity) as practiced in the UK there exists a plurality of understandings and interpretations, reflecting the varied origins and cultures of the Muslim population. One discourse should therefore not be seen as necessarily reflecting the views of all Muslims in the UK.

Trying to categorise the various Islamic understandings using the idea of denominations, the categorisation often employed in the case of mainstream (Western) Christianity, is problematic. The denominational mode of categorisation is seen by many Muslims as inadequately reflecting the reality of Islam and is thus resisted, instead references are made to different ‘schools of thought’. Gilliat-Ray explains

‘because there is a core belief and practice that broadly unites Muslims across time and space. Many Muslims reject the divisiveness that is conveyed by the term ‘sectarian’ and prefer instead to talk about different ‘schools’ or ‘trends’ of thought (maslak)’ (Gilliat-Ray, 2010, p. 55).
Various distinctive schools of thought can be identified within Islam in the UK, but the ‘boundaries of membership or identification are often overlapping and fluid’ (ibid, p.55), and this fluidity complicates the development of frameworks for categorisation (Gilliat-Ray, 2010; MacEoin, 2009). Because of these complexities, within this section the discussion does not attempt to associate the possible discourses referred to with any particular school of thought. For the purposes of the discussion in Part A, the important point is that this discourse and understanding does exist within contemporary British Islam; identifying it with a particular school of thought is a task beyond the scope of this study.

Nevertheless, I believe it is helpful to locate the discourses examined here within some basic typological framework. Therefore, I employ the terms ‘conservative’ and ‘liberal’, seeing these as ends of a continuum rather than as discrete categories. I recognise that these labels are likely to be contested, but they are widely used in discussions of religions including Islam, and are more helpful than many alternatives. The discourses I identify as especially prevalent in the MI school, and significant in helping to explain students’ attitudes, can be seen as tending towards the conservative end of the spectrum – though I have tried to consider alternative interpretations where possible and as space permits. It should also be noted that these discourses are located in a particular context and time and should not be regarded as fixed or immutable.

7.2 Part A: Differences in Attitudes of Tolerance across Schools

This section begins by considering whether there are any differences between students’ attitudes of tolerance in faith and non-faith schools. It will then discuss the three differences found.

7.2.1 Are there any Faith/Non-Faith School Differences?

The thrust of this whole research project was to investigate whether there was any evidence to suggest that faith schools produced less tolerant pupils than non-faith schools. Concerns in the existing literature regarding the ability of faith
schools to promote tolerance were typically based on unsubstantiated assumptions, and little empirical evidence existed to support these concerns, or conversely the claims of those involved in faith education who maintained that there was no case to answer (Grace, 2003)(Chapter 2.6). Inconsistency and imprecision around the meaning and object of tolerance in the criticisms meant that in order to answer this question satisfactorily, a variety of modes and objects of tolerance were considered. Even when all these different factors were considered, no differences were found in the attitudes of tolerance between the faith and non-faith school students if categorized in this dichotomous fashion. Moreover, very little difference emerged amongst most of the schools, suggesting that, in general, the impact of any of the schools on their students’ attitudes of tolerance was limited (see below). The findings indicated the importance of various background characteristics, such as gender and the extent to which the student had an authoritarian personality. A range of responses was found within each school, some of which could be termed intolerant, but generally students showed themselves to be tolerant of a range of identity markers and in a range of situations.

The findings from this research therefore do not support those who maintain that faith schools per se have a detrimental effect on their students’ attitudes of tolerance. Certainly, not all faith schools have a negative effect on their students in this respect, and no generic attitude of intolerance was found in any school. There is no general ‘faith school effect’. But, as will be argued in Part B, certain faith schools, through some faith aspects of the school, do appear to be having a detrimental effect on their students’ attitudes of tolerance. This research demonstrates that the situation is more complex than is often suggested by those who express blanket scepticism regarding faith schools’ ability to promote tolerance.

When discussing attitudes of tolerance, this research suggests that the dichotomous categorisation of schools into faith and non-faith is unhelpful. The findings in respect of the three Christian schools, RCI, RCS and ECI, indicate no situation in which they all show lower tolerance – at least when this is defined in ‘passive’ terms. This indicates that there is no effect which can be seen to arise
from some aspect of Christianity which is common to the interpretations of the faith propounded in these schools.

The outlier with respect to tolerance was the MI school. The students showed lower tolerance, and sometimes intolerance, towards those who contravened Islamic teaching. Since this was the only Muslim school in the sample, it is impossible to say whether this effect is solely associated with students in this particular school. If such attitudes were associated with mainstream interpretations of Islamic beliefs, these findings may be of broader relevance, but, as discussed in Chapter 3, the present sample of schools permits no firm conclusion to be drawn in that respect. The issue of this particular school’s impact on students’ tolerance is considered further below.

A second possible sub-grouping involves the ECI and the MI schools, as in both these schools the students showed lower active tolerance than students in the other schools towards all the identity markers considered (religious faith, immigrants and those on the margins of society). As discussed below, these two schools display certain similarities with respect to their conceptualization of religious faith, but the extent to which this can adequately explain similarities in their students’ responses is questionable.

In the following sections the three differences in tolerance will be discussed. The first finding is that students in all the schools showed lower active tolerance towards religious groups than towards immigrants and those on the margins of society. Although this finding does not solely relate to faith schools, nevertheless it can be seen to connect to a wider discussion around the place of religion and faith in education, within which this research is located.

The second finding, also concerned with active tolerance, is that the students in the MI and ECI schools showed lower active tolerance vis-à-vis all the identity markers than their counterparts in the other schools.

The final finding is that the students in the MI school showed lower tolerance towards those whose behaviour contravened Islamic teachings.

**7.2.2 Differences in Active Tolerance: Responses to the Religious Other**
In all the schools, lower active tolerance was shown towards the Religious Other than towards the other markers of identity (immigrants and those on the margins of society). This discussion draws on the analysis of the interview responses to questions regarding the active level of tolerance (Chapter 6.4.2).

In all the schools, a lower proportion of students displayed active as compared with passive tolerance. This finding is not unexpected, and an element of maturity is almost certainly associated with this. Many of the students at this point in their lives are likely to be insufficiently mature to operate at the level of abstraction associated with this form of tolerance, but it cannot be assumed that they will not reach that stage in later years (Jones, 1980a). But although differences in cognitive sophistication can explain differences between the actively and passively tolerant responses, they cannot adequately explain the differences noted between specific groups.

It was notable that the students seemed to see religious groups as bounded or separate autonomous communities, which meant that they mostly felt less inclined, or able, to interact with them. Overlapping with this was a weak understanding of the significance that a place of worship might have for another person or community, or any sense of connection with these ‘others’. With respect to attitudes towards immigrants or marginalized groups, this separation was rarely seen, with the students more likely to feel able to interact with and assist these groups, and display some sense of responsibility towards them. Why this lower level of active tolerance towards Religious Others compared with Others defined in non-religious terms should have emerged across all the sampled schools is difficult to comprehend with any clarity or certainty.

Were the difference to be found only in the faith schools, then Social Identity Theory (SIT) might suggest that the students, from the perspective of their own religious social identity, saw Religious Others especially as rivals or relevant out-groups (Herriot, 2007). While I am not discounting this as a possible explanation in the case of some faith school students, it seems unlikely that this would hold in the same way and to the same extent across the non-faith schools as well. Moreover, it is hard to envisage a clear group identity that could apply in the
non-faith context, predisposing students in those schools to see Religious Others as less deserving of tolerance.

In the discussion that follows, two discourses – multiculturalism and secularism – are suggested as possibly influencing the students’ responses towards Religious Others, which could account for the differences noted. The literature around both concepts is immense, and so the following discussion only engages with the essential arguments, which themselves are presented here in the briefest form. None of the explanations suggested in this section are mutually exclusive; rather, the students’ attitudes are, I feel, likely to reflect a combination of influences. Certainly, the data do not indicate that the students in any school favour a particular discourse, but more focused research is needed before any of these explanations can be proposed with any certainty.

I think that in this research the student responses towards the Religious Other indicate the influence of a particular form of multicultural discourse, one which described by Amartya Sen as ‘plural monoculturalism’ (Sen, 2006, p. 156), a multiculturalism in which different cultures ‘might pass each other like ships in the night’ (ibid, p. 156).

Sen (2006) proposes that there are two distinguishable approaches to multiculturalism. In the first, diversity is celebrated for the freedoms it enables an individual person to enjoy. A society in which there are diverse cultures allows a person to choose which associations and identities are important to them, with the presence of many different cultures and identities opening up the range of possibilities from which they can choose. In the other approach, diversity becomes a value in itself, unrelated to what benefits it can or cannot provide for individuals. This second type of multiculturalism often involves an essentialising of cultural communities, in particular religious communities. Here cultural practices are imposed in ‘the name of the “culture of the community”’ (Sen, 2006, p. 152). Although such essentialising is not a necessary element of multiculturalism (Modood, 2007), it is nevertheless seen by some as an important and persistent element of UK political discourse on multiculturalism (Baumann, 1996; Sen, 2006).

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343 See for example (Race, 2011) for a discussion of multiculturalism.
Sen maintains that British policy does not encourage people from different communities to interact with civil society as individuals, but instead leads to their interactions being mediated through their own ‘community’, one which is increasingly related to ethnic and religious divisions (Phillips, 2005).

It is this second form of multiculturalism discourse which appears to be influencing the students’ reactions to Religious Others, as this form emphasises the kinds of separateness and difference noted by a number of the students in their responses. The students’ lower active tolerance, associated especially with a reluctance to engage with Religious Others, appears to be related to an understanding of multiculturalism which promotes diversity for its own sake, and which presents ‘other’ groups as separate, essentialised communities.

The possible negative effects in terms of tolerance that have been suggested by this research, and their relationship to the plural monocultural form of multiculturalism, are not novel (see for example Alibhai-Brown, 2000). Two high-profile comments in this area have been made by Trevor Phillips and David Cameron. In 2005, Phillips linked the 7/7 bombings in London to multiculturalism policies in the UK, which he saw as having produced a situation in which ‘we are becoming strangers to each other, and we are leaving communities to be marooned outside the mainstream’ (Phillips, 2005, p. 5). More recently, David Cameron (2011) went further, suggesting that this form of multiculturalism had in fact failed, and had created increased tension between communities and groups, again linking the policy to terrorism.

If the students are understanding diversity as a value in itself, defined in terms of separate and essentialised communities, this may be enough to produce some of the differences observed in their active tolerance. But as multiculturalism focuses on ethnic as well as religious groupings, it does not provide an adequate explanation as to why religious groups especially should be viewed differently by the students. In this respect, other possible influences on the students’ attitudes relates to two strands of discourse on religion encompassed by the broader notion of secularization (Casanova, 1994). But two points should be borne in mind here: firstly, confusion can arise when discussing this subject due to the inconsistent use of secularisation and related terms (ibid); and secondly, the focus here is on the
simple fact that the discourse is commonly encountered in contemporary British society, not on the debates surrounding it.

Secularisation is widely seen as an historical process characteristic of (western) modernity (Casanova, 1994), ‘the process whereby religious thinking, practice and institutions lose social significance’ (Wilson, 1969, p. 14) (see also Modood, 2007; Norman, 2002; Taylor, 1998; and Trigg, 2007). But Casanova (1994) sees this broad process as multidimensional, and as incorporating three strands of secularisation discourse which are linked, but which do not necessarily follow on from each other. The first strand relates to a decline in formal religious belief and practice, the second refers to the differentiation of the secular sphere from religious institutions and norms (the separation of Church and State), and the third to the ‘marginalisation of religion to a privatised world’ (James, 2011). It is the first and third of these which, I suggest, are potentially the most influential with respect to the students’ toleration of the Religious Other.

Although its roots can be traced to Durkheim and Weber (Casanova, 1994; Smith, 2008), secularisation as a sociological theory emerged in the 1960s (Smith, 2008; Wilson, 1969), positing that the decline then apparent in church attendance meant that religion would gradually wither from public life, and might eventually vanish altogether (Casanova, 1994; Smith, 2008). Subsequent events have not borne out these predictions of religion’s demise, or assertions of the inevitability or universality of this phenomenon (Casanova, 1994; James, 2011; Smith, 2008; Trigg, 2007). As has been widely noted, the decline in religious attendance has only been witnessed in Western Europe, with most other parts of the world, including the USA, evincing an increase in active participation in public worship (Casanova, 1994; Smith, 2008). But even in Western Europe, this decline in formal religious practice has not been accompanied by a similar decline in belief in God, or an adoption of atheism (Smith, 2008). This has led some people to contend that what is being witnessed is not a decline, but a ‘transformation in the understanding of religion’ (Norman, 2002, p. viii), or as Professor Grace Davie terms it, ‘believing without belonging’ (Davie 2000 cited in Smith, 2008). Nevertheless, despite these doubters, secularisation theory persists in many quarters, including religious ones, being taken as ‘fact’ (Casanova, 1994; James, 2011; Smith, 2008).
The decline in formal religious belief and practice in Europe, which is supported by empirical studies – although even here caution needs to be applied (Smith, 2008) – could be seen as a possible influence on the students’ attitudes towards the Religious Other. The decline of formal religious belief and practice could create a situation where there is a lack of religious literacy among the students, with students in non-faith schools only irregularly encountering expressions of formal religious practice and belief. Whereas this may be the case for some students in the non-faith schools it is hard to see that this can be the case in any of the faith schools, where faith is a major constituent of daily life at school, even if not within their home life.

The second related but distinct strand of discourse which may be influencing the students involves secularism, which Smith defines as a ‘way of thinking about the world and life which makes no reference to supernatural beliefs’ (Smith, 2008, p. 22). This discourse sees religion marginalised from society and public life, and placed in the private sphere, and is seen to have its origins in the Renaissance and the Enlightenment (Casanova, 1994; Smith, 2008; Trigg, 2007).

The justification for the marginalisation of religion from the public to the private sphere revolves around issues concerning the rational verification of truth claims (Trigg, 2007), in which the truth claims made by religion are seen as being closed to external verification. In contrast, science is seen to be based on reason, and to have recognised methods of verification (Smith, 2008; Trigg, 2007). The public sphere is viewed by some, such as Charles Taylor, as something which publically engages everyone, and where people can come to a common mind about important matters (Trigg, 2007). Others, however, consider the public sphere as necessarily governed by rationality, so that only things which can be rationally verified belong in that sphere; principally this means science and ‘facts’ based on scientific reason (Bader, 1999; Smith, 2008; Trigg, 2007). Religion is not such a matter. Moreover, in a pluralist society disputes between religions are not susceptible to final settlement, and thus the only way to avoid conflict is to keep these beliefs in the private sphere (Trigg, 2007). In consequence, religious belief is considered by many as ‘a menace to the establishment of a shared rationality’ (Trigg, 2007, p. 191).
Such arguments are hotly contested. Taylor says that ‘what the unbelieving “secularist” sees as a necessary policing of the boundary of a common independent public sphere, will often be perceived by the religious as a gratuitous extrusion of religion in the name of a rival metaphysical belief’ (Taylor, 1998, p. 36). Certainly, some of those who do not support the privatisation of religions would consider that the privileging of scientific reasoning is itself arbitrary (Parekh 1996 cited in Bader, 1999). Others would go further, claiming that secularists who ‘deny temporary legitimacy of religions in human life and society’ (Madan, 1998, p. 313) are themselves operating a form of ‘fundamentalist secularism’ (Bader, 1999, p. 609), and as such are no better than the religious zealots they criticise.

Different expressions of secularism and secularisation exist in different countries. England may be, constitutionally, a Christian country, where Church and State are intimately linked, but the privatisation of religious discourse is perhaps especially strong here, at least within intellectual and government circles (Smith, 2008; Trigg, 2007). This can be illustrated by the incident in 2003 when Alastair Campbell, one of Tony Blair’s senior advisors, stopped Blair answering a question on his religious beliefs by saying ‘We don’t do God’ (Telegraph, 2003), a remark which can be seen to indicate the removal of religion from the public sphere at the highest level of government.

But what effect might this discourse have on students’ attitudes of tolerance towards Religious Others? Firstly, it places religion in the private sphere and largely denies its relevance to public life, perhaps adding to its unfamiliarity in the eyes of many students. This also makes religious belief appear less socially valuable; it becomes merely a matter of personal choice. Moreover, relegating religion to the private sphere makes it exactly that, a private matter, and as such something that is not anyone else’s business. These impressions may increase the sense of distance and separateness that multicultural discourse emphasises through its essentialising of religion. Unlike the discourse around the decline of formal religion, which might be expected to be less influential in the faith than the non-faith schools, this ‘privatisation and marginalisation discourse’ can apply to the religious and non-religious alike. Although this second discourse may be rejected within the school, nevertheless it is part of the students’ wider experience.
7.2.3 The MI and ECI Schools and Lower Active Tolerance

The second finding to be discussed is that the ECI and MI students showed less active tolerance than students in the other schools towards all the identity markers, and not just towards other faith groups. The ECI and MI schools are similar to each other, and differ from the other schools investigated here in that they are both small, have limited facilities, and a proportion of their staff have no professional UK teaching qualification. The most marked difference between these two schools and the others is that both are connected to faith groups which subscribe to what could be termed an exclusive view of salvation, and certainly a number of the students in these schools reflected that belief (Chapter 2.4.1). Exclusivist beliefs relate to the view that salvation is only open to those who are members of the faith (Strange, 2008). Thus it would be pointless, not to say damaging, to the Other concerned, to encourage them to persist in an errant belief which will ultimately lead to their damnation. But although this in itself offers a convincing explanation for the lower active tolerance shown by the students in the MI and ECI schools towards Religious Others, it is hard to see why this should extend to immigrants or those on the margins of society.

That this finding applied to all the specified groups in the case of the MI and ECI schools may indicate that students in these schools were displaying lower levels of cognitive sophistication (Vogt, 1997). As I did not seek primarily to measure cognitive sophistication, this can only be suggested here as an alternative hypothesis. Nevertheless, as I discuss in Part B below, it is possible that practices within the MI school may be restricting the development of skills related to cognitive sophistication. Furthermore, whilst I gathered no evidence to suggest that critical reasoning was being limited by teaching in the ECI school, nevertheless, at some points in the analysis that touch on the issue of cognitive sophistication, similarities were seen between the ECI and MI student responses. This similarity in responses lends support to the suggestion that differences between the levels of active tolerance shown by the MI and ECI students, and those in the other schools, may be due to differences in the students’ cognitive reasoning abilities, but this is
still very speculative. It may, of course, be that there is no common explanation which covers both schools.

The lack of any definitive explanation for differences in relation to this particular finding means that no firm conclusion can be drawn on whether the MI and ECI schools form a faith school sub-group when considering the effect of faith schools on tolerance.

7.2.4 The MI School and Behaviour which Contravenes Islamic Teachings

Compared with the students in the other five schools, those in the MI school showed lower tolerance towards people whose behaviour contravened their own (Islamic) religious teaching (Chapter 7.3.2.b). Two main characteristics can be seen to differentiate the students in the Muslim school from those in the other schools. The first is their religion itself – Islam – and the second that all the students were from immigrant backgrounds. For many within the UK, Islam is seen as a minority religion which alien to this country, associated not only with immigrants, but also with terrorism, and propounding ideas antithetical to Western values and ways of life (Abbas, 2005). All of these factors arguably contribute to lowering the perceived status of this faith in the UK context, as well as increasing a perception amongst the faithful that it is (and they are) under threat from the wider society. In a later subsection I discuss the impact of this perception of threat on tolerance, but here I focus on differences in belief.

One possible explanation for the differences in responses between the MI students and those in the other schools involves particular discourses within Islam relating to the concepts of law and authority. These interpretations, as I stressed in the introduction, are by no means necessarily subscribed to by all Muslims, or even all students in the MI school. Within any religion, the reasons why certain interpretations and discourses are adopted are complex and dependent on a range of factors, including perceptions of external threat, status and dislocation from one’s own culture. As these factors change, so too can the adoption of a particular interpretation, or at least the way it is manifested in the wider community. Throughout this discussion, comparisons will be made to Christianity and, unless otherwise stated, this implies mainstream Christian discourses found in the UK.
today, which include Roman Catholic and Evangelical understandings found within the faith groups associated with the schools in this research.

In order to understand the discourses that might help explain the views of the Muslim students, we need to begin by considering what is fundamental to Muslim belief, and most crucially, the importance of the law within that. For a Muslim, the Qur’an is the revealed word of God, but for many it is even more than that: a revealed totality. Its completeness means that as well as containing all knowledge and ‘The Truth’, it is also a revealed way of life, with the force of legal sanction. As Ruthven writes, ‘In Islam, God has not revealed Himself and His nature, but rather His law’ (2000, p. 73). Sniderman and Hagendoorn’s explanation describes this link well when they observe that ‘religion is integral to Muslims’ concept of governance. A “Muslim Society” is not primarily a society of Muslims. It is a society where God-given law makes people Muslims’ (Sniderman and Hagendoorn, 2009, p. 129). This understanding of Islam is therefore about obeying and carrying out God’s laws.

Helpful to this discussion are the notions of orthodoxy (right belief) and orthopraxy (right action). Esposito (1998), amongst others, sees Islam as a religion in which an emphasis is placed on orthopraxy, with the emphasis on correct performance of salah (five daily prayers) illustrating this. He sees this emphasis on orthopraxy as greater in Islam that in most interpretations of Christianity.

But another difference, important in understanding the student responses, also emerges from a particular understanding of the law. In Christianity, the separation of religious authority from temporal jurisdiction has always been a valid concept, having its justification in the Gospels. At times, political power has been intimately connected to the Church (an institution which has no direct equivalent in Islam), for example in the Byzantine Empire (Ware, 1993). Nevertheless, at its core Christianity subscribes to the belief that separation of Church and State is not only possible, but desirable (Hamburger, 2002). In Islam, a consequence of the totality of the Qur’an is the understanding that there is no concept of law outside the religious

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344 Matt 22.21 where Jesus is reported as saying in response to a question on the payment of taxes ‘render unto Caesar what is Caesar’s and unto God what is God’s’.
law; there is no human legislative power (Lewis, 2003). This also relates to a conception of the State as existing not in its own right, but as ‘an instrument of Islam’ (Lewis, 2003, p. 101).

The lack of recognition of any law other than the religious means that problems may arise when Muslims are living in a non-Muslim state. However, the concept of *darura* or ‘necessity’ enables Muslims to engage with wider society by allowing for the accommodation of practices which would not be permitted within a predominantly Islamic society (Ansari, 2000; Ramadan, 1999). Within Britain, many Muslims employ this concept, considering that although some contradictions exist between Islamic and British law, non-compliance with statute law is not appropriate, although they may work to change or modify the law to render it more compliant with Islamic understandings (Ramadan, 1999). A few do not subscribe to the notion of *darura*, and in this situation the response tends to be separation and withdrawal of the community from the mainstream (Ansari, 2000).

Following on from the Islamic conceptualisation of the law is a particular notion of personal autonomy. It is too simplistic to say that personal autonomy does not exist within Islam, although Arkoun would argue that the lack of a critical theological tradition makes it difficult for contemporary notions of the person and the optimum development of that person to emerge within conservative Islam. He strongly asserts that ‘struggles for respect for the rights of man, woman and child are joined in every country and every regime in which Islam, Islamic Tradition and *shari’ā* remain points of reference that are impossible to bypass.’ (Arkoun, 2006, p. 296).

Differences certainly emerge in the way that personal autonomy is conceptualised in some influential conservative interpretations of Islam when compared to the Western liberal tradition, in which it is broadly related to ‘the capacity to freely form and pursue a conception of the good’ (Merry, 2007, p. 9). An Islamic notion of personal autonomy can be seen as originating again in an idea of the divinely-ordained law which contains all truth. Faith and belief, in some interpretations, is not to be worked out through individual study, as it has already been given; rather, the task is to understand that received knowledge (Halstead, 2004). Choice comes in either rejection or acceptance of this total system of beliefs.
As Halstead explains, ‘the task of individuals is to come to understand this knowledge and exercise their free will to choose which path to follow’ (Halstead, 2004, p. 524). In addition, a strong element of communitarianism can be detected within Islam, which can also be seen to be linked to a low recognition of personal autonomy (Sen, 2006), and the restriction of individual freedoms (Jafari, 1993).

Here, then, we can perhaps begin to understand why contraventions of Islamic beliefs were not easily tolerated by many students in the Muslim school. First of all, for some Muslims, actions carry a significance which is greater than the significance many Christians would associate with an action, even one seen as prohibited. To act in contravention of divine law is to go against God Himself, almost to deny God, and as such cannot and should not be tolerated.

In some of the student responses, a distinction was made between Muslim and the non-Muslim friends, whereas others made no distinction. One possible explanation for this difference could relate to differences within the UK Muslim communities over the application of darura in relation to the law. Those who distinguished between their friends on grounds of faith arguably reflected the understanding that Islamic law, in non-Islamic societies, does not apply universally. In contrast, those who saw Islamic rules as applying universally implicitly rejected the notion of darura. Another difference between some MI students’ responses and those from the students in the other schools may also be related to the rejection of darura. A desire to separate themselves from the person or action was seen in some MI student responses (although not all). Boys in Duncan’s (2006) study into homophobia and school bullying also talked about casting out friends if they were discovered to be homosexual, and thus this response may be common when the degree of disapproval is strong, rather related specifically to a religious cause. However, the discourses discussed did highlight that where tensions exist between Islamic and secular law, and Islamic law was considered to apply universally, separation was a likely response. Thus the students’ response of separation in this particular case may reflect a more widely condoned response in situations where differences relate to religious beliefs.

The second difference noted between the MI school and other responses was a lack of recognition of personal autonomy. This too could involve a religious
element, related to differences noted above between some influential Islamic discourses and liberal Western approaches to the conceptualisation of personal autonomy. The exercise of free will in some understandings of Islam primarily relates to the choice to be a Muslim. Once this decision has been made, one’s life is governed by a given set of rules, restricting the legitimate exercise of further choice. Consequently, the decision of a hypothetical Muslim friend as to whether or not to drink alcohol was not considered by some MI school respondents to be a matter of personal choice, as it was amongst Christians. Instead, by accepting the Muslim faith the friend was widely seen as having already made the choice to abstain from alcohol – a choice, moreover, that his fellow-Muslims were under a religious obligation to enforce with intolerance.

The MI school students’ responses towards those whose behaviour contravened religious teaching may therefore be rooted in particular Islamic understandings, helping account for the differences in tolerance responses as compared with those of students from other schools. However, the role of the school in this remains to be determined (see below). Moreover, the extent to which these interpretations of Islam are found within other school populations cannot be commented on without further research. But the linking of this attitude to particular religious discourses does raise the possibility that it might also be encountered within other Muslim schools in which the students subscribe to similar interpretations. This is clearly an area where there is need for further investigation.

7.2.5 Part A: A Brief Summary

Before moving on to discuss the impact of the school, the major points raised so far will be briefly summarised. There is no evidence that, compared to non-faith schools, faith schools per se detrimentally affect their students’ attitudes of tolerance, however this term is understood. The Religious Other emerges as a problematic identity marker, but only with respect to active tolerance and within all schools, not just faith schools. Two discourses within society, multiculturalism and secularism/secularisation, were suggested as possible influences on the students’ responses towards Religious Others.
The students in two of the faith schools did evince differences in terms of tolerance as compared with their counterparts in the other schools (faith and non-faith). In the MI school, the students appeared less tolerant, and sometimes intolerant, of those whose behaviour contravened the teachings of Islam. This may reflect Islamic discourses relating to the law and authority, raising the possibility that this response might be seen amongst other Muslim students in other Muslim schools. Meanwhile, the students in both the MI and the ECI schools showed lower levels of active tolerance in relation all the identity markers featured in the questionnaire. The reasons for this were unclear, although one possible explanation is that the students in these schools possessed lower levels of cognitive sophistication – something that might be attributable in part to school effects.

7.3 Part B: The Impact of the School on Students’ Attitudes of Tolerance

I now move on to my second research question, which considers the impact that the schools themselves may be having on their students’ attitudes of tolerance. The analysis of the questionnaire data allowed for conclusions to be drawn regarding whether a school had an impact in respect of certain identity markers and their importance to students. However, as discussed in the previous chapter, the questionnaire data on its own showed no clear school effects on attitudes of tolerance. The questionnaire did not, and was never intended to, cover all understandings of tolerance, but it proved less effective than the interviews in supporting an exploration of active tolerance.

It was therefore the interview data which elicited significant differences in tolerance, but, as was discussed in Chapter 3, trying to ascertain which aspect of the school might have impacted on that attitude is problematic when using this type of approach. The analysis of the schools in Chapters 4, 5 and 6 allowed hypotheses to be generated, which were related to aspects of the schools which were potentially problematic for the promotion of tolerance. In this section, those four hypotheses will be tested against the findings generated from the analysis of the students’ responses to the tolerance questions posed in the interviews, and the possible role of the school will be discussed.
7.3.1 Hypothesis I: Tolerance of the Religious Other.

Hypothesis I: The students in the RCI, RCS, ECI, MI and NFI schools will show lower attitudes of tolerance towards those of other faiths than towards other groups, due to the lack of contact with other faiths that the school provides. The tolerance shown will be similar across the RCI, RCS, ECI, MI and NFI schools, but will be lower than that shown in the NFS school.

When active tolerance is considered, Hypothesis I is to some extent satisfied. Although the situation is complex, nevertheless it can be tentatively suggested that all the schools, with the exception of the NFS school, in some way impact negatively on their students’ responses to the Religious Other.

The questionnaire responses to active tolerance of the Religious Other (Chapter 7.4.1) found that there were no significant differences between the schools. All the average tolerance scores were well above 3.0, which indicates that the majority of students are actively tolerant towards this group. This finding was supported by the students’ interview responses to teaching about other faiths, seen in a positive light by students in all the schools. Although similarities were found between the RCI, RCS, ECI, MI, and NFI schools, as predicted, tolerance levels were not significantly lower there than in the NFS school.

When active tolerance towards the Religious Other was compared with that shown towards other groups – specifically immigrants and those on the margins of society (Chapter 7.4.2) – then more significant differences emerged. In the RCI, RCS, ECI, MI and NFI schools, lower active tolerance was shown towards the Religious Other than towards other groups, and therefore this part of the hypothesis is supported. As was discussed earlier in this chapter (Section 8.4), the students in the MI and ECI schools showed lower active tolerance towards both the Religious Other and the non-religious groups than the students in the RCI, RCS and NFI schools, and therefore the schools do not show similar levels of tolerance as predicted by the hypothesis.

Unfortunately only one of the NFS school interview responses relating to the Religious Other could be analysed in terms of tolerance, and so the following discussion and conclusions do not include this school.
The analysis of the schools suggested that in the faith schools the aspect of the school responsible for the difference in tolerance was that the students did not have any form of contact with Religious Others. Here contact encompasses both knowledge and understanding about, as well as direct contact with, Religious Others in the students’ daily school life. In the NFI school, the important aspect was interaction on the basis of religion, which referred to some form of emotional contact, in particular an understanding of the significance of religion in a person’s life and seeing religion as a lived reality. One suggestion which arises from this finding is that different skills are required for the development of active and passive tolerance. It would seem to indicate that knowledge, understanding and emotional contact are not required for the development of passive tolerance, or are only required at a quite minimal level, but are important for developing active tolerance.

The evidence that students in all the faith schools showed less active tolerance towards other faiths than towards other groups defined on a non-faith basis is in line with what the Contact Hypothesis (Vogt, 1997) (Chapter 2.5.4) would predict. Direct contact with those of other faiths was found to be absent from all the faith schools in this research, and teaching about other faiths was also minimal. Thus the schools provided little opportunity for their students to gain any knowledge or understanding of Religious Others. Based on the school data it was felt that the students in the faith schools would be able to appreciate the importance of religion in the life of Religious Others and make an emotional connection by extrapolation from their own experience, by virtue either of their own faith or of witnessing religious life lived out through the school. But the lack of opportunities for contact with Religious Others may have contributed to undermining students’ willingness or ability to make the leap from passive to active tolerance.

In the NFI school, by contrast, the students were taught about other faiths and interacted on a daily basis with people from a variety of faith backgrounds, and yet also showed lower active tolerance towards the Religious Other than towards immigrants and those on the margins of society, with the proportion of students displaying active tolerance being similar to figures from the RCI and RCS schools. At first glance these findings appear to contradict the Contact Hypothesis, in that here
there was contact through teaching and through the school’s religiously diverse population. But as has been discussed, the Contact Hypothesis does not consider that mixing, on its own, is enough to increase tolerance, and more exacting criteria need to be satisfied for the contact to have a positive effect on tolerance (Dixon, Durrheim and Tredoux, 2005). Included amongst these more exacting criteria (section 2.5.4) is the need for this to be a deep form of contact which enables the development of an emotional connection. It is precisely this emotional connection with the Religious Other, in particular the students’ understanding of the significance of religion in a person’s life, that the NFI school seems to be developing less effectively in its students, and thus it can be seen that this finding too is in line with the Contact Hypothesis.

What this finding highlights is that having a mixed pupil intake, and even an RE syllabus which includes studying a variety of faiths, is not sufficient for generating active tolerance. Thus compelling faith schools to adopt more open admission policies and offer teaching about other faiths may not, on their own, make their students more actively tolerant towards other faith groups, as some critics of faith schools have suggested (Guardian, 2001b; National Secular Society, 2006). Instead, it appears to be the quality of contact which is most important for the transformation of attitudes. As discussed in Chapter 2.5.4 the type of contact which is advocated is one in which underlying tensions are tackled, rather than one in which difference is explored superficially (Donnelly and Hughes, 2006). It also needs to enable students to emotionally engage with each other (Rutter, 2005; Yablon, 2011). Although this aspect of the school is not solely the preserve of Religious Education, that is certainly the most likely place for students to encounter other faiths. Whilst the next part of the discussion will look at RE, it is necessary also to consider the portrayal of religion in schools and education in a wider context.

The English education system is considered by many to be underpinned by a secular humanist foundation (Copley, 2005; Copley, 2010; Gokulsing, 2006; Grimmitt, 2010b; Thompson, 2010) in which religion is seen as a ‘lifestyle option’ (Thompson, 2010, p. 145), located firmly in the private sphere. Some involved in faith education, such as Brenda Almond (2010), detect anti-religious currents from
secular humanism within this discourse, driven in part by the ‘New Atheists’ (Grimmitt, 2010b). Others highlight situations in which the secular humanist discourse is so ingrained in society that its assumptions are rarely challenged (Thompson, 2010). The education system itself has been seen as increasingly emphasising secular values as outcomes (Gokulsing, 2006), or as Copley (2010) describes it, education has become a machine ‘which with adjustments as required can be programmed to deliver “goods” i.e. things which are deemed to be socially good’ (ibid, p.45). The consequence of this for students is that education, outside RE, can easily and legitimately become devoid of any religious encounter. Ipgrave (2011) highlights the way schools embrace what she terms ‘identity based inclusion’, which relates to inclusion of diversity in terms of things such as dress, food and prayer facilities. But she maintains that, within the curriculum, inclusion of any other world view, such as a religious world view, ‘epistemological inclusion’ as she terms it, is frequently lacking. Apart from again failing to provide a place where students can engage with religion as a lived reality, this can also be seen to place religious beliefs in the personal sphere. Potentially, therefore, the whole school environment in non-faith schools, rather than challenging the secularist discourse prevalent in wider society, can be seen to reinforce the otherness of the religious person, as well as to devalue the religious aspect of life.

The ineffectiveness of RE in providing opportunities for students to encounter religion as a lived reality, and as something which has the potential to change and influence a person’s life, is related to a wider debate over RE (Copley, 2010; Grimmitt, 2010b). This encompasses concerns about the RE syllabus and the way that it is seen to be increasingly influenced by a secular humanist world view (Thompson, 2010). A consistent feature of the Non-Statutory National Framework for Religious Education (DCSF, 2010) has been the two attainment targets; learning about religion, and learning from religion. Grimmit (2010b) suggests that these can provide opportunities for students to reflect on the significance of faith, but that these opportunities are rarely used effectively, with the ‘learning from’ element often being tagged on to the end of the lesson as an afterthought, rather than being integral, thus reducing its impact. Other concerns are expressed about the various approaches taken, in particular when these are thematic or comparative.
These approaches can objectify religion, leaving little space for understanding religious belief as a significant aspect of a person’s life (Copley, 2005). Others see some contemporary approaches to RE, such as the phenomenological approach, as capable of relating the significance of belief to religious objects, rituals or customs (Jackson, 2004, p. 29). Ipgrave (1999) however, highlights the conflicts which can occur in the classroom when ‘official significance’ (what the teacher has understood a ritual or practice to signify) differs from the significance that students themselves may attach to it. These conflicts, if mishandled, could lead to a lowering of the impact of learning about the significance of religion in a person’s life.

Collective worship is another place where religion can be encountered. But too often fears about how to manage diversity of beliefs within schools mean that this becomes more about giving a moral message (Copley, 2005), developing a ‘willingness to think’, which Cheetham (2000) sees as a secular attribute, rather than related to any commitment to belief. The emphasis on the moral message results in religion being marginalised, with faith being presented as subjective, private and a personal choice (ibid).

Although the RE syllabus in particular appears to have the potential to help students to engage emotionally with Religious Others, the secularist underpinnings of the education system thus seem to mitigate against this. Instead, we have a system which reinforces the notion of religion as a private matter, and thus something with which we have no right to interfere – while also, by the same token, portraying it as a lifestyle choice undeserving of our assistance or support.

Before moving on from this discussion of RE, I would like to raise a final issue. RE is considered an important vehicle for delivering the Community Cohesion agenda (Thompson, 2010), and this research supplies no basis for rejecting the Government’s position that RE can be beneficial for one highly relevant virtue: tolerance. But this research has also highlighted the importance to the development of active tolerance of schools, and in particular RE, engaging with religion and faith as elements of a lived reality. The implicit focus of this discussion has been on religion as a lived reality for an individual, but there is almost certainly a need to broaden the focus to a consideration of the implications of religion as a lived reality for the wider society (Grimmitt, 2010a). In order to do this, it is
necessary to focus on the content of religious beliefs, rather than representing religions as ‘socially harmless’ (Copley, 2010, p. 46) and consequently emptying them of any meaning. Some working in the RE field maintain that the latter is the notion which underpins the current educational policy, and is what occurs in many English schools (Copley, 2005).

This chapter has highlighted the importance of RE for developing active tolerance and, as has been discussed, education policy reflects this view. It is therefore worrying that two recent policy changes should now be putting the existence of RE in the curriculum in doubt. The introduction of the English Baccalaureate (EBacc) is of great concern to those involved in faith education and to RE teachers (CES, 2011; Church Times, 2011). The EBacc has replaced the previously used measure of a secondary school’s performance, which was calculated on the number of students achieving five A*-C grades at GCSE (including English and Maths) (DfE, 2011a). The EBacc is based on a limited selection of GCSE subjects, not including RE. Unsurprisingly, the expectation is that schools will now focus heavily on subjects which will count towards the EBacc, meaning that the others, including RE, will be neglected (BBC News, 2011).345

The second policy change is the reduction in the number of initial teacher training places available for RE, which has meant the closure and amalgamation of PGCE RE courses (TES, 2011). The concern which arises from this is that RE will increasingly be taught by non-specialists, and consequently the standard of teaching and learning will be diminished.346

Both of these changes are only just coming into force as I write, and therefore it is only possible to speculate on the likely consequences of their implementation. Nevertheless, they have prompted concerns in my mind about possible effects on students’ tolerance. The implementation of the EBacc is liable to reduce the amount of time allocated for RE and consequently the amount of time available to help the students develop an emotional connection with Religious

346 Ibid
Others. The effectiveness of RE in developing active tolerance largely rests on the extent to which it brings students to engage with and discuss sensitive topics. Non-specialists, who are likely to be less confident with the subject matter, may be more reluctant to engage with some of the more controversial topics. Therefore, the reduction in the number of PGCE places for RE, and the subsequent reliance on non-specialist staff may mean that schools become less effective in helping their students develop active tolerance towards Religious Others.

7.3.2 Hypothesis II: Those of a Different Socio-Economic Status

Hypothesis II: The students in the RCS, ECI, MI, NFI and NFS schools will show similar attitudes of tolerance towards those of a different socio-economic status, and the students in the RCI school will show lower tolerance towards those of lower socio-economic status, due to the lack of contact with this group within the RCI school.

This hypothesis was not confirmed. After controlling for background characteristics, the questionnaire data showed no significant differences in tolerance towards those of different socio-economic status between any of the schools. The RCI students did show the lowest tolerance of all the schools towards this group (as indicated by the standardised β coefficient), but the average tolerance score of 4.2 indicated that the students in the RCI school were still very tolerant of the group. In addition, the qualitative data gave no indication that the RCI students were significantly less tolerant towards those of a lower socio-economic status.

7.3.3 Hypotheses III and IV: tolerance of those who contravene religious teachings

Hypothesis III: The students in the RCI, RCS, ECI, NFI and NFS schools will show similar attitudes of tolerance, and the students in the MI school will show lower tolerance, towards those who contravene (Islamic) religious teaching, due to the failure of the MI school to develop a higher level of cognitive sophistication in its students.

Hypothesis IV: The students in the RCI, RCS, ECI, NFI and NFS schools will show similar attitudes of tolerance, and the MI school students
will show lower attitudes of tolerance, towards non-Muslims and ‘non-proper’ Muslims, due to their religious (social) identity.

The first of the final two hypotheses predicted that the MI school students would show low tolerance (compared with those from the other schools) towards those whose behaviour contravened (Islamic) religious teachings, and that the school contributed to this through its less effective development of cognitive skills. The second one, perhaps somewhat ill-defined, predicted that the MI students would show comparatively lower tolerance towards Religious Others or heterodox co-religionists, with the school contributing to the construction of a religious identity that legitimated such attitudes. Although they are initially considered separately, it can be seen that both hypotheses relate to situations involving the contravention of religious teachings. I will argue that both hypotheses are supported, but as both predict the same outcome there is a possibility that only one of the school aspects is influencing the students’ attitudes. This discussion will therefore go on to consider whether these two aspects of the school – the formation of the religious identity and the development of cognitive sophistication – are sufficient individually (or separately) to produce the outcome observed, or whether there might be an interaction effect and how this might be investigated further.

7.3.3.a Hypothesis III: school effects on levels of tolerance for those who contravene religious teachings

The first of the two hypotheses, Hypothesis III, is supported. In the RCI, RCS, ECI, NFI and NFS schools, no difference was found between students’ attitudes of tolerance towards those whose behaviour contravened their religious teachings. The student interviewees in all these schools saw their same-faith and non-faith friends as having autonomy and being free to make their own decisions. Compared to the other schools, the MI school students demonstrated lower tolerance towards people whose behaviour could be construed as contravening religious teaching. This lower tolerance was not directed at a specific named group, for example homosexuals or Christians, but instead related to specific instances where the
behaviour of a person or group contravened Islamic teaching. In this section, the discussion is not concerned, as it was earlier, with possible theological explanations for this, but instead with how the school influences the formation of this position. This involves testing the hypothesis that the students’ attitudes were connected to their lack of cognitive sophistication and related cognitive skills, such as critical reasoning, which the MI school appeared to be developing less effectively in its students.

As was discussed in greater detail in Chapter 2.5.2, cognitive sophistication is seen to help students process the complex and large amounts of information available to them in today’s world, enabling them, amongst other things, to evaluate competing truth claims (Vogt, 1997). Without this ability, it is much harder for students to appreciate and consider alternative points of view (de Witte, 1999). This was noticeable in the MI student responses, in that these students rarely referred to an alternative position or considered the situation from another’s point of view. For example, in the interview where Noor said that she would ask her friend to stop drinking alcohol in her presence (Chapter 7.3.2), there was no appreciation of the other person’s rights, or the possibility that he or she might legitimately hold a different view of the situation.

I would like to tentatively suggest that one possible explanation for the difference in the cognitive skills found in the MI school might be the extent to which, and the way in which, some Muslims see that the Qur’an can be interpreted and examined critically. Although somewhat contested, as will be discussed in more detail below, both interpretation and critical examination of the Qur’an is seen to be more limited within the more conservative interpretations of Islam practised by some UK Muslims than is the case with respect to the Bible within mainstream UK Christianity today (Esack, 2005). Evidence from the MI school indicated that it subscribed to an interpretation of Islam where scope for critical examination of the faith was limited.

What needs to be understood here is how a Muslim’s understanding of the Qur’an relates to the extent to which it can be studied critically. It also, to a lesser extent, needs to be considered how this coincides with, or diverges from, the mainstream contemporary UK Christian position, most importantly as held within
the schools researched here. Therefore, what is given here is a brief overview of the main positions.

In Part A of the present chapter, the significance of the Qur’an for Muslims was discussed; here I want to draw out another important aspect of that significance, that of it being considered a totality. For the Muslim the Qur’an is the revealed word of God (Denffer, 1994) and, as such, many Muslims believe that it contains all things necessary, ‘all requirements of the faith are revealed’ (Bennett, 2005, p. 45). Some commentators argue that the closest equivalent to the Qur’an in Christianity is not the Bible, but the person of Jesus Christ himself (Ruthven, 2000). The Qur’an is therefore of immense importance for Muslims, being more than just a book, the consequence of which is that in the view of some Muslims it cannot be discussed, analysed and critiqued in the same way as other texts (Esack, 2005).

The point at which possible critical engagement with the Qur’an was curtailed occurred in the ninth century AD (The Mu’tazilite Controversy) (Esack, 2005; Ruthven, 2000). Before this time, debate was permissible, but the re-emergence of orthodoxy, which insisted upon the unquestioning acceptance of dogma and the notion of *bila kayfa*, meaning ‘without further enquiry’, closed down debate (Esack, 2005). This position has continued to be the dominant one in many Islamic societies, and among many Muslims, up to the present day, although some Muslim scholars, such as Esack and Akhtar, have challenged this orthodoxy.

Qur’anic interpretation, the discussion around the meaning of specific verses of the Qur’an (as opposed to examination of the truth claims of the faith), is also contested. Esack (2005) maintains that for most orthodox Muslims interpretation is not a personal engagement with the text, but is rather a matter of transmission of given interpretations. Understanding the ‘exact intent’ (Brown, 1996, p. 43) of the Qur’an, as illuminated by the Sunna,则 involves instruction from ‘traditional keepers of meaning’ (Brown, 1996, p. 48) who themselves have been instructed by others before them. The Sunna’s link to the prophetic word means that questioning the Sunna could call into question the revelation of the Qur’an and

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347 For further debate around the relationship of the Sunna to the Qur’an in terms of revelation see Esack (2005) and Brown (1996).
as such is considered dangerous (Esack, 2005). Some, however, consider that the Sunna is not so necessary, and the completeness of the Qur’an means that this, rather than the Sunna, becomes the key source of guidance (Bennett, 2005). This in turn allows for individual interpretation, and thus multiple and contextual interpretations. More recently there has been an increasing emphasis on reinterpretting the Qur’an among many Muslim groups (particularly by young Muslims and those in the West), an indication that this is becoming an increasingly acceptable view.

Within mainstream contemporary UK Christianity critical examination of all aspects of the faith is permissible, as can be seen in the case of the theologian Don Cupitt, who remains an Anglican priest whilst holding extreme and controversial positions on the person of Jesus Christ. Whilst acknowledging that this has not always been the case within the mainstream UK denominations, and also that instances can still be found where debate has been closed down, nevertheless generally debate and critical examination is supported.

The view that the Bible cannot be interpreted, and has a fixed meaning, is not found within mainstream Christian theology in Britain today, where Bible study is a part of the life of many churches and personal interpretation is encouraged. At what could be regarded as a more intellectual or academic level, Biblical Criticism, which involves critical study of the sacred text, both for understanding, but also for authenticity, is a long-developed tradition in theological colleges, seminaries and theology faculties.

As discussed in Chapters 4, 5 and 6, critical engagement with the Qur’an is limited within the MI school, and this can be related to a particular understanding of Islam. It will be recalled (Chapter 4.6.4) that the Islamic studies teacher in the MI school spoke about the way in which religious matters could not be discussed if there was any chance that the students might say something which questioned the

\[348\] See, for example Taking Leave of God (Cupitt, 1980) and http://www.doncupitt.com/doncupitt.html

\[349\] Biblical criticism was formally restricted in the RC church after Pius X’s ‘Ne Temere’ decree in 1908 (Hastings, 1986), but was formally encouraged again in 1965 in the Vatican II constitution ‘Dei Verbum’ (Flannery, 1975).
faith. The limited extent of Qur’anic interpretation was reiterated in a conversation I had with the MI school Head in which he said that the Christian idea of biblical interpretation was not possible with respect to the Qur’an within Islam.\(^{350}\) This makes the environment around critical discourse in the MI school significantly different from that of the other schools in the research, including the Christian schools, in which this critical engagement is permitted and where students are able to openly challenge all aspects of faith and belief. Thus, in areas related to religious belief, critical engagement was not only being less effectively, but was actively discouraged in the MI school. One consequence of this appeared to be a reduction in the development of critical thinking skills and lower levels of cognitive sophistication amongst the students.

The negative effect on cognitive sophistication appears as an unintended consequence of the restriction of critical engagement with the faith. In subjects which were not directly related to religion, such as English, critical reasoning and other skills associated with increasing cognitive sophistication were being encouraged by many of the teachers.\(^{351}\) However, the findings from the research suggest that the use of critical thinking in these areas did not sufficiently compensate for the restrictions relating to critical consideration of religious beliefs.

A second difference between the MI and the RCI, RCS, NFI, and NFS schools also needs to be discussed, as this could possibly supply an additional explanation for the less effective development of cognitive skills in the MI school. In an interview, the Head of the MI school made reference to problems with respect to educational methods which arose from cultural differences. The founder of this school, the governing body and a number of staff came from countries, primarily in South Asia, in which the standard of pedagogy was very different from that encouraged in the English system. Education in these countries is often seen as being less child-centred and more didactic than contemporary English pedagogy, with its emphasis on reasoning and criticality (Hewitt, 1996; Saqeb, 1996). This situation arose partly through the desire to employ Muslim teachers, but also due

\(^{350}\) Informal conversation with Head of MI school
\(^{351}\) Lesson observation (MI)
to financial constraints, and was a source of concern to the Head, who was trying to improve this aspect of the school through staff development. The problem of recruiting ‘good’, preferably Muslim, staff who are familiar with the English school system, within the limits imposed by the school’s finances, is an issue facing many Muslim independent schools in the UK (Ansari, 2000; Rizvi, 2007).

I do not see the staffing issue (and related issues of funding or resources) as the sole reason for the difference between the MI school and the other schools regarding the development of cognitive sophistication. The ECI school also had a high proportion of professionally unqualified staff, although they were more familiar with English pedagogy, and yet no difference in attitudes of tolerance towards those whose behaviour contravenes religious teaching was seen between ECI students and those in the RCI, RCS, NFI and NFS schools. This suggests that the presence of untrained staff is not the only factor operating here. However, it may certainly have exacerbated the pedagogical challenges facing the MI school, highlighting the need for more Muslim staff who are professionally trained and familiar with English pedagogy and teaching methods, something which has been noted by others working in the field of Muslim schools (Butt, 2002; Hewer, 2001).

In the MI school, curtailment of the critical examination of the faith means that this cannot act as a route to increase the students’ level of cognitive sophistication, as it can in the other schools in the research. The question this raises is how the MI school can effectively increase its students’ levels of cognitive sophistication in other areas of the curriculum whilst still maintaining restrictions on the exercise of their critical faculties in this crucial area.

The connection that I have suggested between the MI school students’ lower tolerance towards beliefs which contravene religious teaching, and the school’s lower effectiveness in fostering cognitive sophistication (due to restrictions around critical examination of the Qur’an) raises the question of whether this phenomenon is likely to be found within other Muslim schools. As highlighted in Chapter 2.6.3, even faith schools associated with one faith or denomination can differ considerably, including in the way that the faith is portrayed to their students (for example see (Rizvi, 2007)). Therefore, the extent to which this curtailment of the critical examination of the Qur’an may be found within other Muslim schools
needs to be determined through further research. The discussion below suggests that this issue may not be solely related to the single Muslim school included in this study, but neither will it necessarily be found within all Muslim schools.

Some involved in Islamic education in the UK would consider a restriction on the critical examination of the faith to be an essential part of an Islamic education. Professor Syed Ali Ashraf (1988) highlights this absence of critical engagement as a fundamental aspect of Islamic education, suggesting that teaching about other religions is permissible and valuable (see also Muslim Council of Britain, 2007), but that ‘the idea of critical openness which demands an “evaluation” even of values and assumptions of a religion is repugnant to Islam and the Muslims in so far as “religious education” classes are concerned’ (Ashraf, 1988, p. 77). For him, an education system, such as the English system, which produces scepticism in its students is seen as destructive. He goes on to say that ‘knowledge must increase the range and depth of faith and not destroy it. That which destroys faith is not really knowledge, but a form of ignorance (jehl)’ (Ashraf, 1988, p. 74). This comment indicates a difference between the RCI school and some involved in Muslim education in the UK, including, I suspect, the MI school in this research. In the RCI school, it was acknowledged that through encouraging the students to critically examine and engage with all aspects of the faith the students could lose or reject their faith. 352 However, this was a calculated risk, with the benefits for their faith which could ensue from this critical study seen as outweighing the possibility of rejection. This response can also be seen to a lesser degree within the ECI and RCS schools.

As already discussed, the interpretation of Islam which sees the restriction of debate and critical examination of the faith as necessary within Muslim schools is not the only voice which exists, and this is at least becoming a contested area. Some Muslim scholars are beginning to challenge the effect that this curtailment of critical examination of the Qur’an has on Islam’s ability to cope with the challenges of the post-modern world (Esack, 2005), and some in the education field would subscribe to that position. This was brought home to me at a recent conference on

352 Interview with Head of CT(RCI)
Muslim Education. One delegate did raise the possibility of including some degree of critical examination of some aspects of shari’ah within the curriculum, at which point a heated debate ensued around whether this was desirable or even possible. This demonstrates that whilst the restriction of debate (leading to the less effective development of cognitive sophistication and thus lower tolerance of those who contravene Islamic religious teaching) is undoubtedly found in other Muslim schools, this is not necessarily the case in all such schools.

The issue here concerns not so much the Qur’an itself, but rather its critical examination, and this prohibition on critical examination of religious texts and doctrines is not confined to Islam. Mainstream Christianity in the contemporary UK may endorse or even encourage critical examination of the faith, but this has certainly not always been the case, and there are Christian denominations, some found within the UK, where such criticism remains restricted. The majority of these denominations, such as Old Order Amish and Mennonites, some Pentecostalists, and Plymouth and Exclusive Brethren, subscribe to what can be termed a fundamentalist interpretation of Christianity, characterised by beliefs about the inerrancy of the Bible (Johnson-Weiner, 2007; Ruthven, 2004; Ruthven, 2007). The way that the critical examination of beliefs can be limited by such fundamentalist groups is clearly demonstrated in Heidi Ewing and Rachel Grady’s documentary film about a fundamentalist Evangelical youth summer camp in the USA, ‘Jesus Camp’.353 Old Order Amish and Mennonite education too can be seen to emphasise obedience to the Ordnung354 and limit any form of questioning which goes beyond clarification (Harroff, 2004; Johnson-Weiner, 2007). But as is illustrated by the ECI school, where the faith group associated with the school does subscribe to a certain element of scriptural inerrancy, this need not necessarily imply a curtailment of the critical examination of the faith.

A few denominations, such as the Exclusive Brethren, where this restriction on critical engagement with the faith does apply, are currently involved in providing formal education in the UK (MacEoin, 2009). However, immigration, particularly

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353 ‘Jesus Camp’ Heidi Ewing and Rachel Grady, 2007, ICA Films, UK
354 The community code of conduct which reflects the beliefs of the community and controls most aspects of Old Order life (Johnson-Weiner, 2007)
from Africa, is changing the landscape of UK Christianity. Rather than migrants joining an existing congregation which is part of one of the established mainstream UK denominations, an increasing number of churches are emerging which serve specific immigrant groups. Many of these new churches have a Pentecostalist background which restricts debate and critical examination of the faith (Gifford, 2007). At present, very few of these groups have begun to establish schools, but this may change in the future and thus the same issue over the development of cognitive skills and the resulting tolerance outcome may also occur in Christian schools. And while the focus of this research has been on Christianity and Islam, similar restrictions on scriptural critique to those in place in the MI school can also be found in some Orthodox Jewish communities (Ruthven, 2004). The potential for a school to ineffectively develop the students’ cognitive sophistication can therefore be seen to exist in schools operated by denominations of other faiths where a restriction on critical examination of the faith is insisted upon.

7.3.3.b Hypothesis IV: school effects on Muslim students’ attitudes towards other religions and ‘heterodox’ Muslims

I now turn to the final hypothesis, Hypothesis IV. This is also confirmed, but again the ill-defined object of tolerance needs to be modified. The only time that specific reference was made to non-Muslims and ‘non-proper’ Muslims was when lower tolerance was directed towards those who contravened (Islamic) religious teachings, and thus this is the only situation in which this can be seen to apply. The similarity of the RCI, RCS, ECI, NFI and NFS responses towards this group has already been discussed in relation to Hypothesis III.

The implication of this finding is that the formation of the religious identity in the MI school is in some way different from the formation of the religious identity in the other faith schools. Although the formation of religious identity could be understood in various ways, within this hypothesis it refers to the extent to which alternative expressions of the faith were allowed, or multiple identities and autonomy encouraged. This understanding was derived through Social Identity Theory, and it is to this that we will return to offer a possible explanation for the impact of the school.
The MI school differs from the other schools in this research in its perception of its status and position within wider British society. Clear status differences can be identified between Islam and Christianity in the UK, the former being a minority faith, the latter being established and the faith with which the majority of the population identify (ONS, 2004). The secular discourses evident within British society have led some practising Christians, including the former Archbishop of Canterbury, Lord Carey, to perceive themselves as members of a persecuted minority (Not Ashamed, 2010). But this view is not prevalent amongst UK Christians, and representatives of the main Christian denominations are still prominent within British public life. Thus a clear difference in status between Christianity and Islam can be seen. But Social Identity Theory would posit that a more important factor to consider in respect of tolerance is the difference in the perception of threat to the religious identity and status held by the various schools, in particular by the leadership of these schools (Herriot, 2007; Tajfel and Turner, 1986).355

As was discussed in Chapters 4, 5 and 6, the perception of threat within the Muslim school was far greater than in the other schools. Within the RCI, RCS and ECI schools, threats to faith, insofar as they were discussed, were fairly abstract, relating broadly to secularism, and rarely indicating a well-defined out-group. In these schools, the sense of any such threat was also generally only articulated by the school Head, with only one student referring to any threat.356 This contrasted with the MI school, where both staff and students made reference to threats, which related to the influence of majority culture, secularism and, more importantly in the student responses, to Islamophobia. All the threats mentioned are consistent with wider discourses around the place and nature of Islam in the UK (Commission on British Muslims and Islamophobia et al., 2004; Driel, 2004) and are thus likely to be seen within other Muslim schools. These threats could be loosely termed external, in that they are seen as originating from outside Islam.

355 The use of the terms ‘perception’ and ‘perceived threat’ does not imply any judgement on whether these threats are real; the important aspect of this discussion is whether the group themselves felt that this was the case — not whether it was the ‘true’ situation.
356 Nick(ECI)
An internal threat could also be detected within the school. This threat related to differences within Islam which encompassed theological differences, but were also related to cultural differences. Such threats were less explicitly referred to — almost solely recounted by the Head, rather than the students — and related to the position and image of the school and, by implication, the standing of the founder and others associated with the school in the local Muslim community. It was particularly important that the school was seen as producing ‘good Muslims’ as demonstrated by their conduct, expressed through the students’ manners, dress, and strict gender segregation. Certain aspects of this notion of ‘the good Muslim’ were seen by the Head to be influenced by particular cultural understandings reflecting the founder’s and the Mosque’s cultural background. The strength of a notion of the school as a reflection of the founder’s vision is noted as a common feature of Muslim educational tradition (Lawson, 2005), which suggests that the influence of internal threats is also likely to apply in the case of other Muslim schools.

Internal disputes and positioning are to be found in any organisation, and organized religions are no exception. Therefore these internal threats can be seen as reflecting wider debates within and amongst UK Muslim communities about the leadership and nature of Islam in Britain (McLoughlin, 2006). In the early years of Muslim immigration to Britain, the small numbers of Muslims and the limited availability of mosques meant that sectarian differences were ignored. This changed as the number of Muslims increased, and now in some areas there are a multiplicity of mosques, each catering for a different ethnic community or interpretation of Islam (Gilliat-Ray, 2010; Lewis, 2002; Raza, 1991). McLoughlin (2006) notes the way that, in Britain, Muslim community leaders have drawn upon their cultural capital, which is often associated with some form of cultural lineage, to establish their authority within their local community. Although he sees that this is beginning to change as the number of British-born Muslims increases, nevertheless he sees that this traditional leadership has used the ‘‘resources’’ of Islamic tradition’ selectively to ‘maintain ethnic boundaries, legitimate the authority of South Asian cultural “norms” and reinforce conservative adaption
strategies’ (ibid, p. 59), a point which is reflected in the MI school Head’s comments above.

Returning to the reaction to the threat, Social Identity Theory (Chapter 2.3.7) posits that groups who perceive a threat to their identity and status react to improve or maintain that status (Herriot, 2007; Tajfel and Turner, 1986). One typical response to such a threat is for the in-group to accentuate a sense of its distinction and difference in relation to the relevant out-group (Herriot, 2007). Uniform behaviour and more consistent applications of the rules are required of group members. The school’s way of achieving this is to increase the emphasis on its Islamic identity, as this is what makes it distinctive and different from the wider society. The Head in his interview spoke about the governing body wanting to increase the Islamic content of the school day.\(^{357}\) Other identities are downplayed and certainly the MI school, in comparison with the others in my sample, placed the least emphasis on extra-curricular activities.

Whilst the school’s emphasis on Islam can distinguish it from wider British society, it does not distinguish it from other groups within Islam which are perceived as posing a threat. In order to differentiate itself from these other, Islamic, out-groups the school focused on emphasising a particular interpretation of Islam, one which is considered to be the ‘True Islam’ (Herriot, 2007). Issues such as the honour of the community emerged as important in this regard. Dress and behaviour too can be seen to be reflections of this difference, as has been discussed.

Thus within the MI school not only is the emphasis on the formation of religious identity increased, but also the nature of that identity becomes more narrowly defined and strongly bounded. In-group bonding increases and those who do not comply with the rules, particularly those who are members of the faith but who dissent from aspects of orthodox doctrine, are subject to particular disapproval. Reactions to these ‘heterodox’ Muslims can be particularly hostile. In addition, the importance placed on the honour of the community, which is part of

\(^{357}\) Head Teacher(MI)
its identity, means that even associating with someone who is engaging in prohibited behaviour is potentially damaging to the collective self-image.

No indication was given by any of the other faith schools in this research, the RCI, RCS and ECI schools, that they felt their faith group was being threatened in any significant way. Although clearly there are threats associated with these schools, both external and internal, nevertheless their sense of threat is very low in comparison with that felt in the MI school. The lower sense of threat means that the boundaries around what constitutes the faith, and by extension the formation of the faith, do not have to be so closely controlled. The in-group bonding is lower and wider, and more varied expressions of faith can therefore be accommodated, as well as other non-religious identities encouraged.

The extent and manner in which the MI school acts to reinforce a specifically Muslim identity can be seen as to some extent dependent upon the level of threat that the school authorities perceive to their interpretation of Islam. A change this perception might well therefore prompt a shift in how Islamic identity is promoted within the school. This means that this aspect of the school is therefore likely to change. A particular incident either at the local, UK or global level which affects the Muslim community could increase the perceived threat to the faith community and thus change the intensity of identity formation, which in turn would have repercussions for tolerance. The contextual nature of the perception of threat also means that it is difficult to speculate on how this might translate to other Muslim schools, but, it could mean that lower levels of tolerance might be found in liberal, as well as more conservative, Muslim schools.

The influence of a perceived external threat on tolerance in the MI school implicates external policies and the wider societal context in this particular tolerance outcome. As discussed, the external threat was seen to arise from negative attitudes towards Islam which relate to Islamophobic discourses within society, particularly in the media, but also from government strategies, such as the ‘Prevent’ strategy (Home Office, 2008b), which explicitly target the ‘Muslim community’ and thus exacerbate the perception of threat throughout Muslim communities in the UK. This therefore is not solely a ‘Muslim issue’, but one in which British society as a whole is to some extent involved.
7.3.4 An Historical Parallel?

Hypotheses III and IV suggest that the MI school impacts on the students’ attitudes of tolerance towards those who contravene Islamic teachings in two ways: the first through less efficient development of cognitive sophistication, related to curtailment of any critical examination of the faith, and the second through the formation of a religious identity, which is partially dependent on the perceived threat to the group identity.

In the above discussion, I have suggested that both of these school aspects can be seen to be related to Islam, but I think that it would be inappropriate, and unwise, to label this a ‘Muslim problem’. Earlier in this chapter I made the point that the curtailment of any critical examination of the faith was not restricted to Islam. I think that a potentially important, and enlightening, historical parallel to make is to compare the status of Islam and Muslim schools today with that of the Roman Catholic Church and education in England in the mid-nineteenth to early twentieth centuries. Hurst (2000) has already made a historical comparison between these two faith groups, in the area of student needs and the funding of their schools, but there is still scope for more research.

Clearly no comparable tolerance data exists, but both the school aspects which are seen to impact on tolerance in the MI school in this research can be seen historically to have existed in Roman Catholic schools. Firstly, a deep distrust of the Roman Catholic Church and their educational aims existed in many sectors of British society. Although the majority of restrictions placed on Roman Catholics in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries had been removed by the 1829 Catholic Emancipation Act (Tenbus, 2010), nevertheless a sense of threat and persecution remained, which was felt by Roman Catholics well into the twentieth century (Hastings, 1986). Furthermore, as discussed in the introduction to the RCI school in Chapter 4.3, Pope Pius X’s ‘Ne Temere’ decree in 1908 formalised restrictions regarding critical examination of the faith. However, it should be noted that this decree only formalised what was normal practice for most Catholics, in the light of challenges which were being made to that practice (ibid). Thus, although only briefly outlined here, some clear parallels emerge between the historical situation...
of the Roman Catholic Church and that of Islam and Muslims today. I feel that this parallel serves to underline my point that this is a complex area, and that the findings in this research cannot simply be associated with Islam.

7.3.5 Two Models of how the Muslim Independent School could be Impacting on its Students’ Attitudes of Tolerance

I have suggested two aspects of the MI school impacted on students’ attitudes of tolerance towards those whose behaviour contravened Islamic teaching. These findings relate only to the MI school and cannot with any confidence be generalised beyond that. Nevertheless, as both school aspects are associated with the same outcome, the question arises as to whether either of them is sufficient on its own to instigate it, or whether we are witnessing a combination or interaction effect. This issue of concomitant variation, in which more than one feature gives rise to the same outcome variable, is an acknowledged problem with comparative studies with a small sample size (Lijphart, 1971; Ragin and Zaret, 1983). Without further research, it is not possible to confirm with any certainty which of the possibilities is more likely, as the sample does not include schools which encompass a variety of combinations of differing levels of group identity formation and levels of cognitive skills. But it is possible to consider the two models which emerge, and might form a starting point for further research.

In Model 1, the Separate Pathways Model, the two paths act independently, with either being sufficient to produce the difference in tolerance outcome noted in the findings. The first path is the restriction on critical examination of the Qur’an. This restriction means that the school does not effectively develop critical thinking skills and cognitive sophistication in its students. This leads to the students being less able to assess and cope with alternative views, which can result in lower tolerance. In the second path, the perceived internal and external threats to the faith group’s identity and status result in an increase in, and narrowing of, the teaching about the faith. This results in an increase in the students’ identification with the faith, and in particular heightens the students’ sense of difference and distinctiveness from the out-group, which SIT sees as leading to a lowering of tolerance.
Model 1: The Separate Pathways Model

In Model 1, The Separate Pathways Model, there is an interaction between the religious identity path and the cognitive sophistication path. As in Model 1, the linear effect of increased threat on the religious identity is maintained, so an increase in perceived threat increases the emphasis that the school puts on religious identity formation, resulting in lower levels of tolerance. But in addition, the perceived threat to the religious identity increases the felt need to subscribe to the orthodox position regarding the restriction of the critical examination of the Qur’an, meaning that this is more strictly applied. The consequence of this is that the development of cognitive sophistication is impaired, again leading to lower tolerance. Finally, a dynamic is established between restriction of critical examination of the Qur’an and collective religious identity. As well as the religious identity reinforcing allegiance to the orthodox position, that identity itself is enhanced by the increased sense of distinctiveness bestowed by the emphasis on orthodoxy (with all its restrictions on the exercise of criticism in matters of faith). In other words, orthodoxy, rigid and
defensive collective identities and a lack of cognitive sophistication develop into a mutually-reinforcing spiral.

Model 2: The Interaction Model

At this stage these two models are only hypotheses generated from the research, and more research into the effect of Muslim schools on cognitive sophistication is required before any of these conclusions or suggestions can be addressed with any certainty. But before moving on to the final conclusion it is possible to speculate on which type of schools would show what outcomes in the case of each of these models. The following brief discussion includes schools of faiths other than Islam, but only applies in the first instance to the English context due to the particular circumstances around Islam in the UK.

Based on the separate pathways model, if the cognitive sophistication pathway was sufficient to lower tolerance then it would be expected that students in faith schools (not just Muslim schools) in which critical examination of the faith was restricted would show lower levels of cognitive sophistication and lower tolerance towards those whose behaviour contravened religious teaching than
students in schools where the critical examination of the faith was not restricted. Furthermore, if the religious identity pathway was sufficient to lower tolerance then it would be expected that lower tolerance would be seen in a range of Muslim schools, not just those in which critical examination of the faith was restricted. The factor which would differentiate one Muslim school from another would be the degree of threat to the religious identity that those involved with the schools perceived. In theory, this could occur in the case of any Muslim school, as it is not related to the interpretation of Islam to which they subscribe. It would not be expected that lower tolerance would be found in Christian faith schools in England, although this might occur if a perceived threat to a particular denomination emerged.

However, if the lower tolerance was a result of an interaction effect (as in the second model), then it would be expected that lower tolerance would only occur in schools which combined a restriction on the critical examination of the faith with a perception of threat to their religious identity. In the English context, therefore, this would most likely only occur in Muslim, not Christian, schools.

7.4 Limitations

As has been stated at various points in this thesis, this is an exploratory study. The sampling mode employed has meant that the findings and any conclusions drawn from this research only apply to the particular schools which participated in the research, and thus cannot be generalised with any confidence to the whole range of faith schools (Maxwell, 2002). Nevertheless, tentative suggestions have been made regarding the ways in which these findings may be applicable in other similar situations, and these form the basis of the questions and embryonic hypotheses which need to be explored further in future research.

By using a mixed methods approach and collecting data from a variety of sources, this research has tried to build up a detailed picture of each school, in order that the aspects of the school which might impact on tolerance could be isolated. Moreover, triangulating the data in this way, and making limited use of ‘member checking’ (Robson, 2002), whereby the data and the analysis of that data are returned to the respondents for their comments, did mean that it was possible
to gain some sense of how far what was being observed was representative of the school in question (Maxwell, 2002). Nevertheless, this research can only present a snapshot in time, and it must also be recognised that schools can, and do, change.

Within this research, the main unit of comparison has been the school and, as such, responses have been aggregated to produce a school response. It must, however, be acknowledged that within all the schools there were a variety of responses and understandings. In my analysis, I have tried to show variations in the responses within a school where they occurred.

Having considered the limitations of this research, I now turn to its impact and then highlight the areas where further research is needed.

7.5 The Significance of this Study

This book has provided some much-needed empirical evidence that will enable the debate about faith schools and intercommunity relations to be taken further. This debate has become increasingly vociferous and pertinent since the late 1990s, and particularly since the events of 2001 and the introduction of the Community Cohesion agenda in 2007 (DCSF, 2007b). Against this backdrop, the present study constitutes a significant contribution to furthering our understanding the effect of faith schools on their students’ attitudes of tolerance.

As was mentioned in the introduction to this chapter, despite frequent and extensive public debate about faith schools and their impact on their students’ attitudes of tolerance, empirical evidence in this area has been lacking (Grace, 2003). Furthermore, the necessity for such research is increasing as the religious landscape of the UK changes, and as religion re-emerges as an important aspect of global politics. In investigating the effect of faith schools on their students’ attitudes of tolerance, this study has not focused solely on one understanding of tolerance, or one object of tolerance, or one faith group, but has incorporated a variety of these in search of a broad understanding of this issue in the selected schools. It has also highlighted aspects of the schools which impact on their students’ attitudes of tolerance. The insights gained from this research can both be developed by the schools themselves and incorporated into a wider policy directed at improving the promotion of tolerance within schools (Everett, 2011).
In addition to the general way that this research can be used to inform practice within schools, it can be considered to have also advanced scholarship and contributed to the body of literature in three particular areas.

This study has indicated that, in many respects, the impact of many faith schools on their students’ attitudes of tolerance is no different from that of non-faith schools. But more importantly, it has assessed which aspects of the faith schools investigated appeared to be having a negative impact on their students’ attitudes. In doing so it highlighted three aspects of certain faith schools which are potentially problematic for tolerance: the development of higher levels of cognitive sophistication in their students, the formation of the religious identity, and contact with members of out-groups. The research has also indicated which objects of tolerance appear most problematic: those people whose behaviour contravenes religious teachings and, in the case of active tolerance, Religious Others. Although the findings cannot be generalised to the wider population of faith schools with any level of confidence, through highlighting aspects of the school and objects of tolerance which were problematic in the research schools, the findings have indicated where further research in this area needs to be focused.

This research has also contributed to the body of literature around the effect of inter-group contact within schools on student attitudes. In this case the group in question was the Religious Other. This could be understood as a religious group other than the student’s own or, in the case of students who were not religious, those who subscribed to any religious faith. It was found that the students in both the faith and non-faith schools examined in this study were less tolerant towards the Religious Other than they were towards other groups such as immigrants and those on the margins of society. This difference appeared to be related to the lower quality of contact within the school across inter-faith boundaries compared with that occurring across other dimensions of identity. This study therefore adds to the growing body of research that questions the notion that mixing, on its own, is sufficient to generate positive attitudes towards other groups in society (Janmaat, 2010). Like other studies in this area (for example Donnelly and Hughes, 2006; Yablon, 2011), this research underlines the
importance of the nature or quality of the contact which takes place with other groups.

The final contribution that this research makes is methodological. The approach taken here differs from that taken by previous studies of tolerance, and in particular those investigating faith schools and religious groups, and in doing so it has raised some important methodological points.

It was found here that significant differences between schools in their students’ attitudes of tolerance emerged from the qualitative rather than the quantitative data. Once background characteristics had been controlled for, the questionnaire data showed no significant differences between the schools. But valuable insights about tolerance were gained from the qualitative data, and these insights have the potential to inform the development of new quantitative indicators for measuring tolerance. The two main methodological insights are now discussed.

The first such insight relates to the categorisation of different modes of tolerance, active and passive. The research illustrated that different skills were needed for engagement in active as distinct from passive tolerance. Little variation in attitude was found when tolerance was considered in the passive mode. This mode was connected to respect for basic human rights, a principle which was almost universally endorsed by the students. The significant differences emerged with respect to active tolerance, which required students actually to engage with the Other. This mode of tolerance, as discussed in Chapter 2, is closer to the understanding of tolerance within the Community Cohesion agenda. Therefore, this study suggests that if researchers are setting out to investigate tolerance as an aspect of Community Cohesion then the most relevant questions are those which explore active rather than passive tolerance. This is not to suggest that an understanding of human rights is irrelevant to tolerance, but merely that this passive mode of tolerance is less pertinent to the pursuit of Community Cohesion than active tolerance.

The second methodological insight is concerned with the object of tolerance, where the students or research subjects are categorised according to their faith (or lack of it). In much tolerance research which uses quantitative
techniques, such as cross-national studies of civic attitudes, the objects of tolerance have been defined as specified groups, for example immigrants in the 1999 IEA Civic Education Study (Torney-Purta, 2001). The findings of the present study showed no significant variation in tolerance of various specified groups. Instead, the most significant differences emerged in relation to tolerance of opinions, views and behaviours which differed from those of the students in question. Questions that incorporate this understanding of diversity might therefore represent a valuable tool in quantitative studies of tolerance, particularly if faith is a factor of interest. Framing questionnaire items which can explore circumstances in which the object of tolerance is not fixed or universal, and is specific to the subject or their faith group, is more problematic than devising questions which focus on a pre-defined out-group. Some tolerance research has introduced a self-reporting element in which respondents are asked to nominate a group that they are uncomfortable with, or dislike, and then answer tolerance questions relate to that specific group (see for example Malone, 1997). Whether this could be used effectively in a school situation would require more consideration and rigorous testing. However, this might be an important avenue to pursue, as understandings thus gained are likely to lead to the development of more effective strategies for improving inter-faith relations.

7.6 Further Research

Having highlighted three important implications of this study for future research into tolerance and tolerance education, in this final section I identify unanswered questions relevant to the interaction of religion and education in British society today. Here two particular issues stand out.

The first relates to the need for a greater understanding of active tolerance of Religious Others, and the role of the school in promoting this – or undermining it. In this respect, the overarching question that arises from this study is:

How are schools involved in the formation of their students’ attitudes of tolerance towards the Religious Other?

Unpacking that question further yields the following sub-questions:

- How do schools approach (discuss or teach about) the Religious Other?
How does the pedagogical treatment of the Religious Other differ from that of other groups in society (defined on secular grounds)?

Can these pedagogical approaches be classified in any way? Is there any consistency regarding the reasons why schools adopt certain approaches? And what is the effect of particular approaches on students’ tolerance?

The second area focuses specifically on Muslim schools. The findings of this study indicated that the MI school students were less tolerant of those whose behaviour contravened Islamic religious teachings and that this was related to the formation of their religious identity and to the less effective development of cognitive sophistication. Two models of how these two aspects of the school may operate were also suggested: one which saw each acting separately, and another positing an interaction effect (Chapter 8.3.5). The discussion around the two models included speculation regarding what school outcomes would be expected in each case. Therefore, one possibly fruitful area of research would involve testing these two models.

However, the research additionally highlighted the need for a more detailed study into the school’s role in fostering cognitive sophistication and religious identity, suggesting two broader sets of research questions that could be explored.

The first of these would involve a more detailed study into differences in levels of cognitive sophistication amongst students, particularly in faith schools, and any links to tolerance. The models proposed here, and the findings on which they were based, were derived solely from one school. Other studies into faith schools, including ones looking at Muslim schools, have shown them to encompass a variety of ethical visions and operate in a variety of ways, suggesting that an investigation of a wider range of Muslim schools is needed. The questions that arise here include:

Does the level of cognitive sophistication of students in Muslim schools differ from that found in other faith schools and non-faith schools in England? If so, in what ways does it differ?

Are any such differences in cognitive sophistication sufficient to account for any observed differences in tolerance towards those whose behaviour
contravenes religious beliefs? And if not, what other factors should be considered? (i.e. is there an interaction effect?)

What aspects of the schools contribute (negatively or positively) to development of their students’ cognitive skills? (Here research might usefully explore the extent to which any effect is based on a faith aspect of the school or whether it is more related to the quality of teaching and differences in pedagogy.)

The second aspect, relating to the fostering of religious identity, involves fostering a greater understanding of the possible link that the research highlighted between some interpretations of Islam and the ability of the school to develop its students’ levels of cognitive sophistication. In the case studied (of the MI school), this apparently led to the students showing lower tolerance towards those whose behaviour contravened Islamic teachings.

As I have already suggested, more research is needed to determine whether, or to what extent, this effect is related to Islam, or at least particular interpretations of Islam, or to other aspects of the school.

Following on from this is the question of whether what is involved here are interpretations of Islam in particular, or rather a particular approach to religious faith that cuts across confessional boundaries – revealing itself, for example, in schools run by Christian sects that similarly forbid or restrict the critical examination of received dogma (e.g. Old Order Amish, Exclusive Brethren). The research questions suggested here with respect to Muslim schools could – and arguably should – therefore be modified to encompass a range of faith schools.
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Appendices
Appendix A: The Student Questionnaire

Faith Schools and Diversity
MPhil/PhD research conducted by Helen Everett

September 2009

Dear Student

For my PhD I am conducting research into the views of students at different types of faith schools. As part of that research I would really like to hear what you think and believe about various things. In the questions that follow I would really like your honest personal opinion- whatever that is.

The replies that you make will be treated strictly confidentially. No attempt will be made to identify individual students. So, please do not sign your name anywhere. I will not be showing your replies to any of your teachers- or indeed to anyone else.

I am most grateful for your co-operation and thank you for participating in this questionnaire.

Yours Sincerely

Helen Everett
heverett@ioe.ac.uk

University of London, Institute of Education, 20 Bedford Way, London WC1 0AL
Section A: General Views

In this section we want to know your views on many different issues. *For each question in this section indicate how much you agree or disagree with the statement by ticking the appropriate box.*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Neither Disagree or Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A1 Women should run for public office and take part in the government just as men do.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>A2 Any religious groups should be allowed to set up a place of worship.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>A3 People who are homosexual (gay or lesbian) should not be allowed to hold office in local or national government</td>
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<tr>
<td>A4 Religious/faith groups should be able to say what they believe and think even if it is offensive to or may upset other groups in society.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>A5 Firms and businesses should be made to make arrangements for physically disabled people such as providing disabled toilets and access.</td>
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<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>A6 Members of all ethnic/racial groups should be encouraged to run in elections for political office</td>
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<tr>
<td>A7 A student, whether they are from a well off or poor household, should have an equal chance to go to university or into higher education.</td>
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<tr>
<td>A8 When jobs are scarce men should have more right to a job than women.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
### A9 Homosexual (gay and lesbian) rights
groups should be allowed to hold
public non violent marches and rallies
to promote their homosexual rights.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Neither Disagree or Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A9</td>
<td></td>
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</table>

### A10 All ethnic/racial groups should have equal chances to get a good education in this country

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A10</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

### A11 Only rich/wealthy people should be able to hold office in local or national government.

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A11</td>
<td></td>
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</table>

### A12 A physically disabled person should be able to run for public office and take part in the government just as able bodied people do

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<tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A12</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

### A13 All ethnic/racial groups should have equal chances to get good jobs in this country.

<p>| | | | | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A13</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

### A14 The questions above asked about 6 different groups of people.
Look at the list below and circle the group you like the least or feel most uncomfortable with.

- ☐ People with disabilities
- ☐ People of a different ethnic/racial group
- ☐ People of a different religious group
- ☐ People of a different gender
- ☐ People with a different sexual orientation (eg people who are gay, lesbian or transsexual)
- ☐ People from a different social class (eg people who are much richer or poorer than you)
Section B: Views on Religion

In this section we want to know your views on various aspects of religion.

Part 1:
For each question below indicate how much you agree or disagree with the statement by tick the appropriate box.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Neither Disagree or Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>B1.1 One good thing about the UK is that there are many different churches and religious traditions/faiths.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B1.2 It is important for all religious believers to try to learn more about the other faiths in the UK today.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B1.3 Pupils should not be allowed time off school to attend their religious festivals (eg Eid, Divali.)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>B1.4 It is good when different religious opinions and issues are debated and discussed openly.</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>B1.5 People of all faiths should be allowed to keep their own customs and lifestyles including dress.</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
B1.6 In a mainly non-Christian area it is offensive to display Christmas decorations

B1.7 The government should encourage people of all faiths to practice their own religion

B1.8 Faith Schools should teach about all faiths, not just their own.

B1.9 If someone I knew invited me to their place of worship to see a special ceremony or celebration I would have no hesitation about going.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Would you say you had a religious belief?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>If Yes – please answer the following questions (Part 2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If No - please go straight to Section C on the next page</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Part 2:**

*For each question below indicate how much you agree or disagree with the statement by ticking the appropriate box.*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>B2.1 I would only consider marrying someone from my own faith</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Neither Disagree or Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>B2.2</td>
<td>Only people who believe in God can be good.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>B2.3</td>
<td>There are many different religions but no one absolute true religion.</td>
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<tr>
<td>B2.4</td>
<td>I would like the religious group to which I belong to hold joint services with other religions.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B2.5</td>
<td>My faith is important to me</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>B2.6</td>
<td>My faith is the most important part of me</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Section C: Your Friends and the People Around You

C1 Do you have boys or girls from a different ethnic or racial group among your best friends? *(Tick one box only)*

- No [ ]
- Yes [ ]

C2 Do you have boys or girls from a different religious group among your best friends? *(Tick one box only)*

- No [ ]
- Yes [ ]
C3 Would you want to do things together with youngsters of a different race or ethnic group? (go out, go shopping, play football, chat, etc) (Tick one box only)

- No, never [ ]
- I’d rather not [ ]
- Yes, I don’t mind [ ]
- Yes, very much so [ ]

C4 Would you want to do things together with youngsters of a different religious group? (Tick one box only)

- No, never [ ]
- I’d rather not [ ]
- Yes, I don’t mind [ ]
- Yes, very much so [ ]

How much would you say you can trust the following people?

Tick the box which best describes how you feel

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Not at all</th>
<th>Only a little</th>
<th>Some</th>
<th>A lot</th>
<th>Does not matter to me</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>C5 Someone of a different ethnic or racial group</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>C6 Someone of a different religious group</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C7 Someone of the same ethnic or racial group</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
There are different opinions about immigrants from other countries living in the UK. (By “immigrants” we mean people who came to settle in the UK)
How much do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements?
*Tick the box which best describes how you feel*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Disagree strongly</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Neither Agree nor Disagree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Agree strongly</th>
<th>Don’t know</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>C9 Immigrants take jobs away from people who were born in the UK.</td>
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<tr>
<td>C10 Immigrants are generally good for the UK’s economy</td>
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<tr>
<td>C11 Immigrants increase crime rates.</td>
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<tr>
<td>C12 Immigrants make the UK more open to new ideas and cultures.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Section D: Your School**

In this section we want to know your views on various aspects of your school.

**Part 1: The School Curriculum**

In this section we would like to know what you have learned in school.
*For each question indicate how much you agree or disagree with the statement by ticking the appropriate box.*
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Neither Disagree or Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>D1.1</td>
<td>In school I have learned to understand people who have different ideas</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D1.2</td>
<td>In school I have learned to understand people who have different religious beliefs</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>D1.3</td>
<td>In school I have learned to contribute to solving problems in the community</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>D1.4</td>
<td>In school I have learned to be concerned about what happens in other countries</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D1.5</td>
<td>I feel this school is preparing me well for life in a multicultural society</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D1.6</td>
<td>The way I’m urged to act and think in school is different from the way I really feel</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Part 2: In the Classroom**
When answering these questions think especially about classes in history, citizenship, PSHE and religious education
For each question in this section indicate how much you agree or disagree with the statement by ticking the appropriate box.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Neither agree or disagree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>D2.1 Students feel free to disagree openly with their teachers about political and social issues during class</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>D2.2 Students feel free to disagree openly with their teachers about religious issues during class.</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>D2.3 Students are encouraged to make up their own minds about issues</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D2.4 Teachers respect our opinions and encourage us to express them during class</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>D2.5 Students feel free to express opinions in class even when their opinions are different from most of the other students</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D2.6 Teachers encourage us to discuss political or social issues about which people have different opinions</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D2.7 Teachers encourage us to discuss religious issues about which people have different opinions</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>D2.8 Teachers present several sides of an issue when explaining it in class</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Section E: About You

In this section we want to know some details about you. Please fill answers as directed.

E1 Age:.................................

E2 Sex:.................................

E3 Date of birth:...........................................

E4 Where were you born?
  UK [ ]
  Elsewhere, namely .............................................

E5 Where was your mother born?
  UK [ ]
  Elsewhere, namely .............................................

E6 Where was your father born?
  UK [ ]
  Elsewhere, namely .............................................

E7 How often do you speak English at home?
  Never [ ]
  Sometimes [ ]
  Always [ ]

E8 Which best describes you? (tick one box only)
  White [ ] Black Caribbean [ ]
  Black African [ ] Black other [ ]
  Indian [ ] Pakistani [ ]
  Chinese [ ] Bangladeshi [ ]
Other…………………………………………………………………………

Are you religious?
No- please go to question E13
Yes- please answer the questions below

E9 What is your religion? *(Tick one box only)*

- Christian
  - Church of England [ ]
  - Roman Catholic [ ]
  - Baptist [ ]
  - Methodist [ ]
  - Other Christian please specify ..........................

- Buddhist [ ]
- Hindu [ ]
- Jewish [ ]
- Muslim [ ]
- Sikh [ ]
- Other please specify ...........................................

E10 On average how often do you attend services or prayer meetings or attend a place of worship? *(Tick one box only)*

- Never [ ]
- Major festivals only [ ]
- Once a month [ ]
- Twice a month [ ]
- Every week [ ]
- Rarely, but worship in my own home at least once a week [ ]
E11 Do your parents attend the same place of worship as you? *(Tick all that apply)*

Yes my mother attends [ ]
Yes my father attends [ ]
Neither attend [ ]

E12 Do you attend any of the following associated with your place of worship? *(Tick all that apply)*

Youth group (including Scouts and Guides) [ ]
Holiday club [ ]
Summer camp [ ]
Sunday school [ ]
Bible study group [ ]
Madrassa/Qu’ranic school [ ]
Homework club/after school club [ ]
Sporting activities [ ]

Any others you can think of……………………………………………………………………

E13 How many brothers and sisters do you have?

Brothers ...........................................    Sisters............................................

E14 How do you live? *(Tick the one which best describes how you live)*

I live with my parents [ ]
I live with my mother [ ]
I live with my father [ ]
I live with my grandparents [ ]
I live with my foster parents [ ]
Different from these [ ]
E15 Do any of your immediate family, those people you live with, have any serious disabilities (for example are partially sighted, use a wheelchair)? (tick one box only)

NO [ ]

YES [ ]

E16 If you know it please tell me what the highest qualification of your father was? (eg GCSEs, degree etc.)

E17 If you know it please tell me what the highest qualification of your mother was?

E18 How many books are in your home? (tick one box)

1-10 [ ]

11-50 [ ]

51-100 [ ]

101-200 [ ]

More than 200 [ ]

What are your parents’ occupations (jobs)? If they do not work please say if they are retired, unemployed, studying, looking after the house/family or anything else. Give as much information as you can.

E19 Father:

E20 Mother
**Section F: What Do You Think?**

The statements below are what people may think or say about things. You may find that most of the statements say things in the way you would. Or you may find that only a few statements say things in the way that you would. In any case, you will find that many students mark the statements in the same way that you do. The answers you mark should be what you think about things.

For each question tick one box +1, +2, +3 or -1, -2, -3 depending on how you feel in each case where

- **+1**: I agree a little
- **+2**: I agree on the whole
- **+3**: I agree very much
- **-1**: I disagree a little
- **-2**: I disagree on the whole
- **-3**: I disagree very much

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>+3 Agree very much</th>
<th>+2 Agree on the whole</th>
<th>+1 Agree a little</th>
<th>-1 Disagree a little</th>
<th>-2 Disagree on the whole</th>
<th>-3 Disagree very much</th>
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<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>We must believe what important people say. If we do not we will not know what is going on in the world.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Most people just do not care about others</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>It is not worth spending time listening to someone who will just try to change your mind.</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>By saying things over and over you can be sure people know what you mean.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>People who think about themselves first are terrible.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
6] There is so much to do and so little time to do it in.

7] It seems like many people I talk to do not really know about the good and bad things that are going on in the world.

8] It does not matter much if you are not happy with now. It is what will happen in the years to come that counts.

9] It is better to be a dead hero than a live coward.

10] Many times I do not listen to what people are saying because I am thinking of what I will say next.

11] People who do not believe in something important do not have much of a life.

12] People get the most out of life when they try hard to do what they think is best.

13] We have a good way of running our country. Even so, it would be better if we only let clever people do it.

14] If people knew what I really thought, they might not like me.
<p>| | | | | |</p>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>It is better to find out what clever people say about something before you say anything yourself.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>People seem to think that most of the things they do are bad.</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>We are going against our own side if we listen to what the other side says.</td>
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<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>People should not try to work together if they believe different things.</td>
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<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>There are many ways to think about things in this world. Even so, there is only one right way.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>I cannot stand some people because of the way they think about things.</td>
<td></td>
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Appendix B: The Student Interview Schedule

A. Identity

1a. Describe yourself- tell me which are the three most important things that you would want a person meeting you to know. What three things would you want to know when you meet a new person for the first time- say at school or at a youth group?

b. Who do you feel has most influence on your religious beliefs/what you believe about what is right and what is wrong.

2a. Do you feel as if your faith has changed since you came to this school? In what ways and what has made the difference.

b. How does the school encourage you and support you in your faith? How does it help you to explore your faith?

Prompts: Groups to join
Retreats
Activities organised by the school

3. Some people say that all schools should teach about all faiths, other people think that it is better to understand one faith first before learning about others. What do you think?

How do you feel about what happens in this school?

Prompts: Do you feel that this school gives you enough information about other faiths?

What does the school do well?
How could the school improve in this area?

4a. What do you believe that your scriptures/religion says about other religions and people who do not follow the rules you live by

b. Can you tell me what you think happens to people who are not of your faith when they die?

5a. How similar do you feel that your views and opinions and lifestyle are to those held by most people (of your age) in British society today?

In what ways are your views different?

b. How do you think your faith group are viewed by most people in Britain today?

Prompts: Are they respected
Are they ignored
Are members harassed?
Are they misunderstood?
6. Can you think of a time in school where you held a different view but did not feel able to express this, or may be a view that you hold that you would not like to express. You don’t have to tell me what it was/is, but can you tell me what stopped/ would stop you saying what you thought.

Prompt For example maybe you feel something, say abortion, is wrong, but most people felt it was right or you liked a certain type of music that others would think was stupid.

7a. Thinking about the students in this school can you tell me which characteristics are valued by the students in this school? What types of students are looked up to and admired?

What do the staff value. So if they were going to pick someone to be an ambassador for the school what type of person would they choose?

Prompt: would it be someone sporty or academic or...

b. Discounting anything criminal, what behaviours are the most disapproved of by the staff at this school? So what things would get you into trouble if you were found out doing them?

What behaviours etc.. are disapproved of by the students? So what things would annoy people or would be looked down on by other students

c. What do you think the school would want most for a person who went to this school? If you had to say one thing that this school most wanted for its pupils or most wanted its pupils to be or be like what would that be? So do you think they would most want you to be a xxxx or to have a good job or...

B: Active Tolerance

1. In the USA some places ban public nativity scenes at Christmas in case they offend those of other faiths. In Birmingham several years ago the council decided to celebrate ‘Winterval’ instead of explicitly celebrating of Christmas, Divali, Eid/Ramadan etc. Some people thought that this was done because the council felt that overtly celebrating other faiths festivals would cause offence. In London the Mayor now holds public celebrations in Trafalgar Square to celebrate Divali, Chinese New Year, Eid as well as Christmas. What do you think about these two different approaches?

2. In your local area the local [ name ] is being forced to close (emphasise that it is not their decision). How would you respond? Explore reason behind decision...

3. In your local area the local council wish to open/close a centre for immigrants and those seeking asylum- not a detention centre, a support centre. How would you respond to this proposal?
4. In your local area a group decides that they would like to open a centre which gives outwards bounds type experiences to groups on the margins of society such as those from the inner cities, drug addicts, asylum seekers, gypsies/traveller children, unemployed, ex/current youth offenders, those with mental health problems. How would you respond to this proposal? Are any groups who would be particularly problematic?

C Passive Tolerance: In-group/Out-group Dissent.

1. Marriage: if your brother or sister came home and said that they were going to marry someone who was not a [ ] tell me what your reaction would be? Would that be the same as other members of your family?

2. Can you think of something that your faith says you specifically should or should not do for example drinking alcohol.
   a. Your friend is not religious how do you feel if they do/don’t do [ ]. What about if your friend who is religious does it?

D Passive Tolerance: Human Rights

1. A few years ago a play was going to be performed in Birmingham. This fictional play was about murder and rape in a Gurdwara by a member of the Sikh community. It was written by a Sikh. The play was not performed because of violent protests from a number of Sikhs in the city who found it offensive. Do you think the group was right to act as they did?
   i. What if it was set in Mosque/Church?

2. Several months ago Nick Griffin, a BNP member of European parliament, went on to the BBC Question Time programme. Many people protested about this. Should the BBC have allowed him to go on?
Appendix C: The Questionnaire Pilot

For reasons discussed below, two pilots were carried out on the questionnaire. The piloting of a questionnaire can be conducted in a number of different ways and for a variety of purposes. In conducting the pilots described here the intention was to test for comprehension and ease of use, although in the case of the first pilot it was also used to try and assess the validity and reliability indicators (De Vaus, 1996; Punch, 2003).

The questionnaire was initially piloted in a girls’ independent school in Berkshire. The school caters for a mixed range of abilities, but does draw its intake almost exclusively from the white middle classes. Hence a second pilot was also conducted in an inner London comprehensive school which had a diverse ethnic and social mix of students. It was also a faith school (Church of England), but one in which the students came from a wide variety of religious backgrounds, including a large number of Muslims.

In both schools the pilot took a similar form, with about twenty students in each school participating. The students were aware that this was a pilot study, but the questionnaire was otherwise administered as it would be in the research. The week before the piloting took place the parents were informed by letter that their children would be asked to participate in the study and were given the opportunity to raise any concerns at this stage. Informed consent was obtained from each of the students on the day of the pilot. After the questionnaire about 50% of the students were interviewed regarding aspects of the questionnaire. The students were asked to comment on

a. the items in general
b. if there were any items they found inappropriate
c. any specific difficulties, particularly in understanding
d. how they interpreted certain questions.

Based on the responses changes were made, most of which were related to the need for more signposting in some places. The first pilot necessitated three major revisions. The first involved the use of the term ethnic. The students were uncertain about the meaning of this, preferring the term racial. It was decided to use the two words in combination eg. ethnic/racial.

In section E, the dogmatism questions, the use of +3/-3 numerical scale was disliked by some and so the columns were labelled in addition to the numbers.
Analysing the pilot data

The analysis of the pilot data was restricted to section A as this was the only section in which any measure of validity could be obtained.

Section A:

Each question was coded numerically on a scale of 5-1, where 5 indicated the most tolerant response, and the results entered into SPSS. This was done for each question so that each identity marker could subsequently be considered separately. An aggregate score for each candidate was obtained, with a higher score indicating a more tolerant attitude.

Although many of the questions in Section A have come from previous studies, the validity of this set of questions has not been determined. The Rokeach scale which has undergone significant amounts of validity testing can act as a suitable scale against which to assess the validity of Section A (De Vaus, 1996). The dogmatism scale measures mainly structural intolerance. This is concerned with the way the belief is held rather than content intolerance, which is more concerned with the actual belief itself. But it is not inappropriate to assume that there will still be a high correlation between this measure of structural intolerance and general intolerance. A scatter plot was produced of the Rokeach scores against the Tolerance total. The two tailed Pearson correlation was found to give a correlation of -0.512 and was significant at the 0.05 level. Although caution must be expressed at this stage because the range of the individual scores obtained was quite narrow and the sample small, this correlation suggests that the questions in Section A are not a completely inappropriate measure of general intolerance. It must also be remembered that Section A is only one of several indicators of tolerance being used in this study.
The questions in this section were also considered in respect of their reliability. Questions which pertained to the same identity markers were compared for each respondent’s consistency of response. Three questions, relating to class, sexual preference and free speech, all in a number of cases showed significantly different responses to the other related questions. Subsequent work with individual Year 10 students indicated that this difference was likely to be the result of differences in cognitive understanding and thus the wording of these questions was modified to account for this.
## Appendix D: School Aspects in the Student Interviews and Questionnaire

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School Aspect</th>
<th>Areas Covered</th>
<th>Questionnaire</th>
<th>Student Interview Question</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>The Religious Identity</strong></td>
<td>The importance of the religious identity to the student and the nature of that identity (exclusivist/inclusivist/pluralist,) How distinctive the identity was. Perceived threats to the identity and permeability. The role of the school in the formation of the religious identity.</td>
<td>B part 2 and C1-4</td>
<td>A1a (importance) A5a. (distinctiveness) A5b. (threats) A1b;2a,b;7c (school’s role) A4a,b (nature)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Contact</strong></td>
<td>The extent and type of contact with the Religious Other and to what extent it was felt that the school was preparing the students for life in a multicultural society.</td>
<td>Section C and D1</td>
<td>A3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Cognitive Sophistication</strong></td>
<td>The extent to which issues and the opinions of others could be explored and whether it was felt that aspects of the students’ faith and associated religious authority could be challenged within the school. (Classroom Climate)</td>
<td>Section D2</td>
<td>A6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Socialization</td>
<td>Whether the school was promoting certain groups as out-groups or promoting particular behaviours.</td>
<td>D1.3 and 1.5.</td>
<td>A7a,b</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix E: Faith School Definitions

The Working Definition of ‘faith school’ Used in this Research:

In this thesis the term ‘faith school’ was chosen to describe the schools which are associated with faith groups, and which form the focus of this research. The reasons for this choice are given in Chapter 1.3. Below is a working definition of how the term ‘faith school’ is understood in this research (see also Chapter 3.4):

A faith school is one in which the primary aim is faith nurture.

Faith nurture involves the desire to help the students to develop a religious identity and to strengthen their religious commitment, as well as the preservation of the faith and the religious tradition.

Department for Education Designation of ‘Schools with a Religious Character’:

Below are the Department for Education criteria, at least one of which a school needs to fulfil in order to be designated as having a ‘religious character’.

‘Maintained faith schools must be designated as having a religious character by the Secretary of State by order, if they meet at least one of the following criteria:

☐ At least one member of the governing body is appointed as a foundation governor to represent the interests of a religion or religious denomination.

☐ If the school should close, the premises will be disposed of in accordance with the requirements of the trust which may be for the benefit of one or more religions or religious denominations.

☐ The foundation which owns the site has made it available on the condition that the school provides education in accordance with the tenets of the faith.

The order states the religion or religious denomination of the school as reflected in the school’s trust deeds. This in turn determines the religious education which the school will be required to provide, in the case of VA schools; or may provide, in the case of VC or foundation schools.’ (DfE, 2012).

Definition of the Faith Schools Involved in the Research

Roman Catholic School:
A Roman Catholic School will be defined as one which is recognised as such by the Roman Catholic Church (Catholic Education Service (Great Britain), 2003)

**Evangelical or New Christian School:**

The main umbrella organisation representing these schools is the Christian Schools Trust (CST) and thus membership of this organisation will indicate that a school is suitable to be included in this category. However, for a school to be included in this category it is necessary to consider their statement of faith. The key aspects of the statement of faith, principally based on those supplied by CST (Christian Schools’ Trust, 2009) are:

- Belief in the inerrancy of the Bible
- Belief in the ultimate authority of the Bible
- Belief that salvation comes only through Jesus Christ
- Acceptance of Jesus Christ as one’s personal saviour.

**Muslim or Islamic School:**

Here the umbrella organisation is the Association of Muslim Schools (AMS, 2011) and again membership of this organisation will be taken as indicative of a school being in this category. A formal definition has not yet been obtained from this body. However, Gulham Sarwar from the Muslim Educational Trust would define an Islamic education as:

‘the process through which human beings are trained and prepared in a concerted way to do their Creator’s bidding in this life (Dunya) to be rewarded in the life after death (Ākhirah)’

(Sarwar, 1996)
## Appendix F: Interview Respondents

### Student Interview respondents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School</th>
<th>Student Initials (pseudonym)</th>
<th>Male/Female</th>
<th>UK born</th>
<th>Faith</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>MI</td>
<td>Yousef</td>
<td>MALE</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>MUSLIM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ibrahim</td>
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<td>MUSLIM</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Suliman</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Hussain</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Yasmin</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Saira</td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Anthony</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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<td>Staff Interview Respondents</td>
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<tr>
<td>MI</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Islamic Studies teacher</td>
<td>FEMALE</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>PSHE coordinator</td>
<td>FEMALE</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Imam and RE and Islamic Studies teacher</td>
<td>MALE</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>NFI</td>
<td>Deputy Head</td>
<td>MALE</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Head of RE</td>
<td>MALE</td>
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<td>RCS</td>
<td>Deputy Head</td>
<td>MALE</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Head of RE</td>
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<td>Head of Year 10 Chaplain</td>
<td>FEMALE</td>
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<tr>
<td>NF</td>
<td>Assistant Head</td>
<td>Head of Year 10</td>
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<td>Head of RE/Religions and Values</td>
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<td>Head of Life Skills</td>
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<td>Church youth worker</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Teacher of English</td>
<td>Director of Studies</td>
<td>MALE</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>FEMALE</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Appendix G: Research Schedule

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Approximate timing</th>
<th>Purpose</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Autumn 2009</td>
<td>September/October 2009</td>
<td>Questionnaire Administered in schools</td>
<td>All year 10 students. Administered in tutor time by HE or tutor. Time to complete 20mins</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>October-December 2009</td>
<td>Two days initial observation</td>
<td>Shadowing year 10 pupil/pupils- all subjects</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spring 2010</td>
<td>January - March 2010</td>
<td>Two days observation</td>
<td>Observation focus on RE, Citizenship and possibly PSHE All year groups</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>February - March 2010</td>
<td>Student interviews</td>
<td>Individual student interviews with 8 students from each school Interview length 25-30mins</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summer 2010</td>
<td>April-June 2010</td>
<td>Complete student interviews Complete outstanding observations</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May-July 2010</td>
<td>Staff interviews</td>
<td>Interviews with key members of staff including Head or member of SMT and Head of RE. Report of preliminary questionnaire analysis findings discussed as part of the Head’s interview. Interviews of approximately 30-45mins</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Appendix H: School Characteristics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School</th>
<th>NFI</th>
<th>NFS</th>
<th>RCI</th>
<th>RCS</th>
<th>ECI</th>
<th>MI</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Age range</td>
<td>7-19</td>
<td>11-19</td>
<td>13-19</td>
<td>11-16</td>
<td>11-16</td>
<td>11-16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Type</td>
<td>Independent Day</td>
<td>State maintained comprehensive Day</td>
<td>Independent Boarding</td>
<td>State maintained comprehensive Day</td>
<td>Independent Day</td>
<td>Independent Day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School size(approx)</td>
<td>1250</td>
<td>1000</td>
<td>600</td>
<td>680</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year 10 size</td>
<td>135</td>
<td>180</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>27</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% SEN pupils</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>7.2</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>13.8</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faith</td>
<td>none</td>
<td>none</td>
<td>Roman Catholic (run by religious order)</td>
<td>Roman Catholic (diocesan controlled)</td>
<td>Evangelical Christian (students must attend specific church)</td>
<td>Muslim (Hanafi and leadership Sunni)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Location</td>
<td>Inner London</td>
<td>Inner London</td>
<td>Rural, but students from a variety of locations throughout UK with 1/3\textsuperscript{rd} from outside UK.</td>
<td>Inner London</td>
<td>Home Counties</td>
<td>Inner London</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------</td>
<td>--------------</td>
<td>--------------</td>
<td>---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>--------------</td>
<td>---------------</td>
<td>--------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GCSE % 5 A*-C [2009]</td>
<td>98</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GCSE % 5 A*-C including English and Maths [2009]</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>76</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Appendix I: Year 10 Background Characteristics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measure (Number in Year)</th>
<th>RCI</th>
<th>RCS</th>
<th>ECI</th>
<th>MI</th>
<th>NFI</th>
<th>NFS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pupil born in UK</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>At least one parent born outside UK</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Frequency that English is spoken at home</td>
<td>Always</td>
<td>Sometimes</td>
<td>Never</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------------------------</td>
<td>--------</td>
<td>-----------</td>
<td>-------</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>9</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English is spoken at home</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English is spoken at home</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Religion</th>
<th>Roman Catholic</th>
<th>Anglican</th>
<th>Baptist</th>
<th>Methodist</th>
<th>Other Christian</th>
<th>Buddhist</th>
<th>Hindu</th>
<th>Jewish</th>
<th>Muslim</th>
<th>Sikh</th>
<th>Other</th>
<th>None</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Religion</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religion</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religion</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roman Catholic</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roman Catholic</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Attend activity at their place of worship</th>
<th>RCI</th>
<th>RCS</th>
<th>ECI</th>
<th>MI</th>
<th>NFI</th>
<th>NFS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Attend activity at their place of worship</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student’s religious attendance</th>
<th>Weekly</th>
<th>Twice a month</th>
<th>Once a month</th>
<th>Major festivals only</th>
<th>Own home</th>
<th>Never</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Student’s religious attendance</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student’s religious attendance</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parents' attendance</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------------------------------</td>
<td>----</td>
<td>----</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>----</td>
<td>----</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mother only attends</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Father only attends</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Both parents attend</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neither parent attends</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average Rokeach score</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Named School</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>77</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>These two are not significantly different.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>These two are not significantly different.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>These two are not significantly different.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</table>
Appendix J: School Area Ethnic and Religious Statistics
Ethnic composition of the Local Authority area in which the school is situated (ONS, 2004)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ethnic group</th>
<th>RCI</th>
<th>ECI</th>
<th>MI</th>
<th>NFI</th>
<th>NFS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>98.3</td>
<td>55.3</td>
<td>94.6</td>
<td>67.9</td>
<td>62.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mixed: White and Black Caribbean</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>1.4</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>1.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mixed: White and Black African</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>0.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mixed: White and Asian</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>0.9</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mixed: Other Mixed</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>0.9</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian or British Asian</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>6.9</td>
<td>4.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black or Black British: Caribbean</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>8.0</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>4.9</td>
<td>5.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black or Black British: African</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>16.1</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>3.9</td>
<td>4.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black or Black British: Other Black</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.9</td>
<td>1.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>2.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Religious Group composition of the Local Authority area in which the school is situated (ONS, 2004)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Religious group</th>
<th>RCI</th>
<th>ECI</th>
<th>MI</th>
<th>NFI</th>
<th>NFS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Christian</td>
<td>82.3</td>
<td>61.6</td>
<td>74.0</td>
<td>61.8</td>
<td>63.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Buddhist</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>0.7</td>
<td>0.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hindu</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>1.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jewish</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>0.7</td>
<td>0.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Muslim</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>6.9</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>5.2</td>
<td>6.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sikh</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>0.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other religions</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>0.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No religion</td>
<td>10.7</td>
<td>18.5</td>
<td>17.0</td>
<td>20.0</td>
<td>17.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religion not stated</td>
<td>6.6</td>
<td>9.9</td>
<td>7.2</td>
<td>8.8</td>
<td>8.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix K: Technical Details
The Analysis of the Student Tolerance Questions: Chapter 7

The Choice of Analysis: Multi-level Analysis v a Fixed Effects Model

In order to conduct the analysis of the questionnaire data which related to the students’ attitudes of tolerance it was necessary to consider the data at two levels; the individual (student) level, which is the level at which the tolerance data was collected, and the school level. Because the data was nested, in that we are looking at students within schools, problems were raised over correlations between the variables. Multi level analysis would have been an effective way to tackle this problem, but due to the sample size with respect to the school variable this was not possible (multilevel analysis requires a minimum sample size of 10 and preferably deals with sample sizes of at least 30 (Field, 2009)). Nevertheless it was possible to construct a ‘fixed effects model’ with the sample size of 6. One of the problems with this method is reduced as the survey design did not involve sampling at the individual level, as all year 10 students were involved. Using a fixed effects model does, however, mean that the findings cannot be generalised to the population of faith schools.

General Tolerance Questions (Passive Tolerance) Section A

In a preliminary analysis of the data, an inspection of the correlation matrix highlighted three problematic questions which had a significant number of correlations below 0.4. The first of these (QA4) asked about freedom of speech for religious groups, and the second two (QA1 and 8) were both related to gender and could possibly have been being interpreted as relating to sexual equality rather than tolerance. The decision was therefore taken to delete these three items.

A principal component analysis (PCA) was conducted on the remaining 10 items with orthogonal (varimax) rotation. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measure verified the sampling accuracy (KMO = 0.843) a score which is considered good (Field 2009). Bartletts’s test of sphericity (chi² 45) =1436.952 p< 0.001 indicated that correlation between items were sufficiently large for PCA. An analysis was run to obtain an eigenvalue for each component in the data. Two components had Eigenvalues of or over Kaiser’s criteria of 1 and above and this explained 52.097% of the variance. The scree plot inflections also justified the retention of two components. The first component contained the majority of the questions and so was considered to provide a measure of General Tolerance, whereas the second contained the two questions on sexual orientation and so this was considered to relate to Sexual Tolerance. The General Tolerance component had a Cronbach’s α > 0.7 in this case α =0.707 which is within the range which Kline considers indicates
good reliability. For the second component, Sexual Tolerance, the reliability is lower with the Cronbach’s α slightly outside the range indicated by Kline (α=0.578) (Kline 2000). The item inter-correlation is still acceptable at 0.406 and the low Cronbach’s α may be due to the fact that only two items are included in this component. In addition an α <0.7 is not considered unusual for psychological constructs such as those tested here (Kline 2000, Wiggins 2010)

General Religious Tolerance (Active): Questionnaire Section B Part 1 Views on Religion

Consideration was given to whether the nine items in section B1 could be considered as one component. In a preliminary analysis of the data an inspection of the correlation matrix highlighted two questions (QB1.3 and QB1.6) with a significant number of correlations below 0.3, although this was much greater in the case of QB1.6. The decision was therefore taken to initially delete QB1.6

A principal component analysis (PCA) was conducted on the remaining 8 items with orthogonal (varimax) rotation. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measure verified the sampling accuracy (KMO = 0.872) a score which is considered good (Field 2009). Bartletts’s test of sphericity (chi² 28) =1065.854 p< 0.001 indicated that correlation between items was sufficiently large for PCA. An analysis was run to obtain an Eigenvalue for each component in the data. Only one component had an Eigenvalue over Kaiser’s criterion of 1 which explained 45.5% of the variance. The items within this component, Religious Tolerance, could be seen to relate to general religious tolerance. The component showed good reliability having a Cronbach α= 0.818. The factor score generated was used in the analysis.

Average General Tolerance Scores [Chapter 7.3.1 and 7.4.1]

Generally the analysis on the tolerance indicators (General, Homosexual and Religious tolerance) was conducted using the factor scores generated from the principal component analysis. However, it was felt that in some instances it was more informative to be able to compare the level of tolerance, for example whether the students were tolerant or intolerant, something it was not easy to ascertain from the factor scores. Therefore in some cases Average Tolerance Scores were calculated and used. These were an average of the sum of the responses from the individual items pertaining to each tolerance measure. Each score ranged from 1-5 and a score of 3 and over indicated a tolerant response and under 3 an intolerant response. The higher the score the more tolerant the students were, and therefore a score less than, but close to, 3 indicates mild intolerance, whereas a score close to 1 indicates that the students are very intolerant.
### Appendix L: t-Statistics

Table L1: General and Homosexual tolerance showing t- statistics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>VARIABLE</th>
<th>General Tolerance</th>
<th>Homosexual Tolerance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Standardised β</td>
<td>t-statistic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roman Catholic independent</td>
<td>-0.169</td>
<td>-1.896</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roman Catholic state</td>
<td>-0.0404</td>
<td>-0.535</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evangelical Christian independent</td>
<td>-0.144</td>
<td>-1.253</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Muslim independent</td>
<td>0.103</td>
<td>1.137</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non faith independent</td>
<td>0.058</td>
<td>0.789</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non faith state</td>
<td>REFERENCE</td>
<td>REFERENCE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rokeach</td>
<td><strong>-0.211</strong>*</td>
<td><strong>-3.855</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GENDER (Boy=1)</td>
<td>-0.075</td>
<td>-1.357</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BOOKS</td>
<td><strong>0.162</strong>*</td>
<td><strong>2.586</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STUETH (White=1)</td>
<td><strong>-0.256</strong>*</td>
<td><strong>-3.143</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STUBIRTH (UK born=1)</td>
<td>0.070</td>
<td>1.223</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PARBIRTH (Both UK=1)</td>
<td>0.080</td>
<td>1.208</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attend Major Festivals</td>
<td>0.035</td>
<td>0.405</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attend Regularly (at least once a month)</td>
<td>0.140</td>
<td>1.535</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roman Catholic</td>
<td>0.297</td>
<td>0.629</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Christian (including Evangelical)</td>
<td>0.191</td>
<td>0.701</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VARIABLE</td>
<td>SES Tolerance</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------------------------</td>
<td>---------------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Standardised β</td>
<td>t-statistic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roman Catholic independent</td>
<td>-0.128</td>
<td>-1.372</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roman Catholic state</td>
<td>-0.098</td>
<td>-1.252</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evangelical Christian independent</td>
<td>-0.035</td>
<td>-0.375</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Muslim independent</td>
<td>0.112</td>
<td>1.180</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non faith independent</td>
<td>0.058</td>
<td>0.746</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non faith state</td>
<td>REFERENCE</td>
<td>REFERENCE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rokeach</td>
<td><strong>-0.180</strong></td>
<td>-3.137</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GENDER (Boy=1)</td>
<td>-0.090</td>
<td>-1.562</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BOOKS</td>
<td>0.093</td>
<td>1.418</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STUETH (White=1)</td>
<td>-0.144</td>
<td>-1.692</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STUBIRTH (UK born=1)</td>
<td><strong>0.133</strong></td>
<td><strong>2.225</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

** significant at 1% level; * significant at 5% level
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>PARBIRTH (Both UK=1)</th>
<th>Adjusted R²</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Attend Major Festivals</td>
<td>-0.086</td>
<td>-0.959</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attend Regularly (at least once a month)</td>
<td>0.029</td>
<td>0.304</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roman Catholic</td>
<td>0.462</td>
<td>0.931</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Christian (including Evangelical)</td>
<td>0.170</td>
<td>0.580</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Church of England</td>
<td>0.187</td>
<td>0.496</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Muslim</td>
<td>0.361</td>
<td>0.870</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other non Christian</td>
<td>-0.012</td>
<td>-0.050</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

** Adjusted R² 16.3%

** significant at 1% level; * significant at 5% level
Table L3: Religious tolerance showing t-statistics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>VARIABLE</th>
<th>Religious Tolerance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Standardised β</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roman Catholic independent</td>
<td>-0.024</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roman Catholic state</td>
<td>-0.038</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evangelical Christian independent</td>
<td>0.011</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Muslim independent</td>
<td>-0.035</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non faith independent</td>
<td>0.110</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non faith state</td>
<td>REFERENCE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rokeach</td>
<td>-0.050</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GENDER (Boy=1)</td>
<td>-0.175**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BOOKS</td>
<td>-0.040</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STUETH (White=1)</td>
<td>-0.238**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STUBIRTH (UK born=1)</td>
<td>0.048</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PARBIRTH (Both UK=1)</td>
<td>0.031</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attend Major Festivals</td>
<td>-0.086</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attend Regularly (at least once a month)</td>
<td>0.215*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roman Catholic</td>
<td>0.072</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Christian (including Evangelical)</td>
<td>-0.045</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religious Group</td>
<td>Coef1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------------------</td>
<td>--------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Church of England</td>
<td>-0.028</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Muslim</td>
<td>0.192</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other non Christian</td>
<td>-0.054</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adjusted R²</td>
<td>20.6%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

** significant at 1% level; * significant at 5% level
Appendix M: Is there an Indirect School Effect?

The t-statistics for the General, Homosexual, and SES tolerance measures all indicated that the extent to which a person has an authoritarian personality was a significant explanatory variable of these attitudes (all at the 1% level). In the case of General and SES tolerance this was the most important explanatory variable. The question that this raised was whether there was an indirect school effect, meaning that, instead of the school impacting on the students’ attitudes of tolerance directly, what was possibly occurring was that the school was making the students more authoritarian, which was in turn making them less tolerant (fig 1)

![Direct School Effect](diagram)

![Indirect School Effect](diagram)

Fig 1: Direct and Indirect paths

If this indirect effect were the case then, although this increase in authoritarianism would be the result of some aspect of the school, the regression analysis would not indicate this. The effect of the school on authoritarianism would be indicated through the authoritarian variable, not the school variable, and would increase the significance of the authoritarian variable.

In order to investigate whether this was the case, further analyses were conducted. In the first a regression analysis was run using the Rokeach score as the dependent variable (table M1). If there was an indirect school effect then it would be expected that the school would be a significant explanatory variable in this case. This was not seen, which gave a strong indication that there was no indirect school effect. Furthermore, it also indicated that the Rokeach score was not strongly correlated with the other explanatory variables, apart from the gender variable.

In addition regression analyses were run using the main tolerance indicators (General, Homosexual and Religious tolerance) as the dependent variables, but this time omitting the Rokeach score from the list of explanatory variables (table M2). Again none of the schools were indicated to
be significant explanatory variables. Therefore it can be concluded that it is highly unlikely that there is an indirect school effect with authoritarianism as the intermediate variable.

Table M1: Determinants of Multiple Linear Regression of Rokeach Scores

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>VARIABLE</th>
<th>Rokeach (Standardized β Coefficients)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Roman Catholic independent</td>
<td>-0.048</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roman Catholic state</td>
<td>0.067</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evangelical Christian independent</td>
<td>-0.075</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Muslim independent</td>
<td>-0.183</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non faith independent</td>
<td>-0.152</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non faith state</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GENDER (Boy=1)</td>
<td>0.178**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BOOKS</td>
<td>0.057</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STUETH (White=1)</td>
<td>-0.034</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STUBIRTH (UK born=1)</td>
<td>-0.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PARBIRTH (Both UK=1)</td>
<td>0.036</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attend major festivals only</td>
<td>0.013</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attend place of worship regularly (at least once a month)</td>
<td>-0.033</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roman Catholic</td>
<td>0.146</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Christian (including Evangelical)</td>
<td>0.016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Church of England</td>
<td>0.030</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VARIABLE</td>
<td>General Tolerance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roman Catholic independent</td>
<td>-0.151</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roman Catholic state</td>
<td>-0.082</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evangelical Christian independent</td>
<td>-0.081</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Muslim independent</td>
<td>0.053</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non faith independent</td>
<td>0.106</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non faith state</td>
<td>REFERENCE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GENDER (Boy=1)</td>
<td>-0.093</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BOOKS</td>
<td>0.116</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STUETH (White=1)</td>
<td>-0.232**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STUBIRTH (UK born=1)</td>
<td>0.057</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PARBIRTH (Both UK=1)</td>
<td>0.083</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attend Major Festivals</td>
<td>0.059</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attend Regularly (at least once a month)</td>
<td>0.188*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

** significant at 1% level; * significant at 5% level

Table M2: Determinants of Multiple Linear Regression of General, Homosexual and Religious Tolerance indicators omitting Rokeach Scores
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Religious Group</th>
<th>Value 1</th>
<th>Value 2</th>
<th>Value 3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Roman Catholic</td>
<td>0.663</td>
<td>0.242</td>
<td>0.331</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Christian (including Evangelical)</td>
<td>0.412</td>
<td>0.116</td>
<td>0.089</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Church of England</td>
<td>0.404</td>
<td>0.133</td>
<td>0.170</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Muslim</td>
<td>0.633*</td>
<td>0.180</td>
<td>0.420</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other non Christian</td>
<td>0.131</td>
<td>0.009</td>
<td>0.063</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adjusted R²</td>
<td>21.6%</td>
<td>15.1%</td>
<td>21.7%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

** significant at 1% level; * significant at 5% level