

**WHY THEY STAYED: A STUDY OF THE
WORKING LIVES OF LONG SERVING
TEACHERS IN INNER CITY SCHOOLS**

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Abstract

This study explores ways in which the experiences of long-serving teachers within three inner city schools can improve our understanding of factors that influence teachers to remain in the profession. The research is situated within a socio-political climate where there are concerns about teacher attrition in general and where the issue of teacher retention is perceived to be particularly acute in challenging schools. The thesis challenges the prevailing discourses surrounding inner city schools and the teachers who work in them by turning to the voices of experienced teachers and exploring their reasons for remaining in these schools.

The research was conducted with twenty long-serving teachers within a qualitative research paradigm employing semi-structured interviews. The design of the research was influenced by Goodson's concept of the 'Valhalla of voice' (2003). The analyses of these data comprise a 'bricolage' approach, blending thematic analysis with a discourse analysis of the teachers' use of conceptual metaphors. The theoretical underpinnings for these analyses were inspired and guided by the data generated. Tonnies' concepts of *gemeinschaft* and *gesellschaft* (2001) have been influential and the thesis identifies locational and relational ties as important factors in motivating teachers to commit to working in challenging schools and the communities they serve. The study suggests that a more informed understanding of community context and of the 'funds of knowledge' (Gonzalez, Moll and Amanti 2005) that exist within that community enhances the experiences of teachers working within the community.

Analysis of the metaphors used by the teachers provides insights into how they form their professional identities and respond to the demands of teaching in challenging schools. The study shows that dominant discourses around challenging schools and the teachers who choose to work in them need to be questioned and that there is not one homogenised way in which teachers experience their work. The study thus calls for policy-makers and researchers to find ways of recognising and valuing teachers' individual strengths and commitments in order to support retention in the profession.

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'I'm me and nobody else; and whatever people think I am or say I am, that's what I'm not, because they don't know a bloody thing about me'.

(Sillitoe, A. 1958 *Saturday Night Sunday Morning*. London: W.H. Allen)

Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 The focus of this study

Both within the United Kingdom and further afield, there are concerns about the fact that teaching is a profession which is characterised by high rates of attrition. The problem of teacher retention is regularly headlined in the media. For example, on the first day of the new decade, the Guardian newspaper printed a story with the headline: 'Hundreds of thousands of qualified teachers not working in profession' (Williams, *The Guardian*, 1st January 2010). The article discussed some of the reasons why so many teachers in England who had invested time and effort into qualifying to teach had chosen to leave the profession; it was one of a number of other articles archived under the heading 'Teacher Shortages'. The 2010 newspaper story was published thirteen years after the Labour Government came into power in 1997, with an election slogan of 'Education, Education, Education,' and a mandate of improving the quality of education.

The problem of teacher shortage is heightened in urban schools within areas of high socio-economic deprivation (Smith and Smith 2006). Studies depict teaching as an ageing profession (for example, McKenzie 2005) and there are concerns that the gap left by those reaching retirement age will not be filled.

This is an important part of the context for my study, which is about the working lives of teachers in three inner-city secondary schools. The teachers whose careers I have studied have taught in challenging inner city schools for the entirety of their careers. Put simply, the aim for this study is to understand why they chose to stay and work in schools serving areas of social and economic disadvantage whilst others chose to leave.

The study therefore sets out to answer the following research question:

- What can we learn about teacher retention from the experiences of long-serving teachers in challenging schools?

1.2 Starting points

The thesis has arisen from my personal experience of working in a small urban school which faced 'challenging circumstances' throughout the time I worked there. According to multiple deprivation indices, it served one of the most disadvantaged areas in the country. During my training year in the early 1990s I had gone to the school on my main teaching practice; I successfully obtained my first teaching post in the school in the following year. I remained at the same school for the rest of my teaching career, albeit with a two year period of secondment as second in department at a much larger county school. I finally handed in my notice in the summer of 2008 as the school was officially closed, to be taken over and run by another, more 'successful', neighbouring school prior to being re-opened as an Academy the following September.

During my time at the school, which features in the current study, I had progressed from being a newly qualified teacher of English to Head of the English Department. My final role was an Advanced Skills Teacher with responsibility for beginner teachers. On my last day in the school there were still colleagues who referred to me as 'junior', for despite its 'challenging circumstances' the school had always been served by a very stable staff.

I wanted to try to understand the reasons for this stability. There were two other schools in the Local Authority facing similar changes and I realised

that these seemed to have sizeable cohorts of teachers who had spent most of their careers at the same school. These observations appeared to conflict with the widely circulated representation of teaching as a profession suffering from problems of retention.

I became a teacher for many reasons. I can't remember a time when teaching didn't seem like an attractive option to me. On work experience, at the age of 16, I went to a local junior school and neatly slotted into the role of teaching assistant for a week. I remember watching films and TV programmes set in schools and thinking that the job of a teacher seemed like something I would want to do. This was not because of a desperate need to make a difference or because I perceived myself to have a strong sense of vocation. I found that I identified with the teachers on the screen and felt that school seemed a comfortable and natural workplace to be in. My father was a secondary school teacher. I think this had an impact upon my decision, though it is hard to exactly say why. I remember thinking that it was nice that kids in the neighbourhood knew him and knew us, his family. My brother and I would walk to his school at the end of our primary school day and, again, I felt very comfortable there. He taught technical drawing and woodwork and even today I have very strong associations between sawdust, his teaching area and the happy atmosphere. He seemed to my young eyes to be well regarded by his immediate colleagues (members of his department), the caretaking staff and the pupils. He had strong emotional and relational ties with all of the staff in the school apart from the senior management, who he seemed to regard as foolish.

My father had come into teaching as a second career. Formerly he had been a draughtsman. He was the first of his family to be a member of a profession. He was committed to gaining formal qualifications and I

remember him studying for his BA and later his MA during the evenings. I did not attend the school he taught in as he believed it would be detrimental to my own education for us to be in the same place. Consequently I never saw what the day to day realities of his work were. Later, when I was in my early teens, he went to work in the further education college. This seemed to mark the end of his love affair with teaching. Many years later he was made redundant from the college, he received the letter in a pile of post we brought to him in hospital during the week we found out he had lymphoma, a form of cancer.

At present, in remission, he works for the Lymphoma Association travelling the country to set up support groups for people whose lives are affected by the disease. In these recent years I have been reminded of the role he held within the community when he was the local secondary school teacher, as people from all walks of life who have come into contact with him through his support group work address him with warmth. The standing he had as a teacher is there once again. He excels at building relationships with people especially those who are vulnerable. He has strong relational ties with the people within his community.

Once I left home to study for my first degree in English, I embraced the concept of social (in) justice, finding evidence of it everywhere. I went on political marches, was involved in sit-ins and came home during the holidays to row with my father, whose politically conservative outlook clashed with my own youthful left wing political ardour. I discovered a passion for the study of language and the possibility that such study could make social injustices visible. I was convinced that education had a key role to play in redressing social injustice and volunteered for a student home literacy scheme where university students were matched with

families in inner-city Liverpool. Through this I met Ola, a seven year old living in one of the poorest areas of the city. Ola introduced me to the experience of urban education from the perspective of a second language learner whose only exposure to English was in school, outside the home and family environment. It was 1989, the National Curriculum had just been introduced, and I chose to write a sociolinguistic analysis of the English Subject Order as my undergraduate dissertation; I wanted to highlight the injustices of the curriculum proposed for pupils such as Ola. It was my first knowing encounter with the impact of policy on lives lived on the edges of the dominant discourses.

Throughout my engagement with this research I have encountered a range of reactions to the subjects of my study, from both within and outside the world of education. The majority view amongst those who have asked what I am researching, accords with media portrayals of long-serving teachers in challenging schools as 'dinosaurs' who have remained in the schools because they were too lazy, or not good enough to move on. Those who have countered this view tend to fall into one of two camps: they either have worked in challenging schools themselves or they are training to teach in such schools.

1.3 Dominant discourses

Teachers in 'challenging' schools have to deal with negative policy and media portrayals. In the United Kingdom, the relationship between educational policy and media has many dimensions; the media can critique government policy, but the media can also be used by government to put a particular spin on policy. Whilst policy makers are reliant upon the media to act as a main means of communication with the electorate (Levin 2004),

the media is dependent upon policy-makers for sources of news. Blackmore and Thomson (2004) note that educational stories have a high priority within British media texts and that media and policy-makers have become embroiled to the extent that there exists a 'coercive culture of collaboration' within the UK (2004; 303). As a result there are some 'givens' within the discourse of both policy and media texts.

One 'given' is the discourse of 'challenging circumstances' in which poor examination performances are equated with failing schools and teachers; within this discourse other measures of success are not valorised. The stereotypical response within the media is to portray 'challenging' schools as hostile, bleak places where failing students are taught by failing teachers. At the time of conducting my study, the policy 'solution' to the 'problem' of failing schools is to condemn them, close them and then either place them in the category of 'National Challenge' or open Academies in their place.

A second discourse is that of teacher 'performance management'. According to government policy, a teacher's performance can be measured by setting targets, for example, in relation to pupil examination results. Success in achieving these targets and externally imposed standards can be rewarded by movement up the pay scale (TDA 2007). A frequent media response is the publication of news stories about parents having the power to 'out' teachers who are not performing:

Parents are to be given powers to identify weak teachers and seek their removal from schools after critics said a series of initiatives had failed to break the cycle of failing schools.

(Preston 2005)

These depictions feed into the increasing problems associated with attracting, and more specifically, retaining teachers in the schools which cause such concern.

Thomson (2007) objects to media and policy representations of 'challenging' schools which fail to study the relationships between context and student and school outcomes. My own experience of teaching in a 'failing' school makes me sympathetic to Thomson's view. I question both the media depictions and the policy responses; my experience as a teacher, and latterly as a researcher, challenges the overwhelmingly negative portrayals of lives lived in such schools. Whilst the communities served by the schools in this study share some commonality in terms of the 'problems' they face in their areas, each school had different experiences of working within these contexts. The individuals living within these disadvantaged communities were not a disenfranchised homogenous group with little agency. There were plenty of examples of resilience, good-humour and dignity to counter-balance the negative elements.

So, for example, whilst the school I worked in was in a community characterised as having low literacy levels and low aspirations, there were many families who were fiercely supportive of their children's education and immensely proud of the efforts their child made. Whilst there were few male role models for individual children outside of school, the school worked with an Education Improvement Partnership which utilised male parents and community elders to help run clubs. Most tutor groups were comprised of at least one student who was also a carer for the adult in their home. There were many refugee children whose time in the school was transient. There were children living in homes affected by alcoholism, drug addiction and ill-health. Whilst there were many students living lives

of crisis or stress, there were individual students who became positive role models for their peers.

Community crisis had an impact upon school life from time to time, one of the most tragic examples being the death of a year 10 student, shot whilst she was walking home from a fair with her friends, fellow-students in the school. In this period of extreme sadness, the school worked with the local community to help nurture and care for the student's friends as they came to terms with this tragedy. Two years after her death, her fellow students were in the national news when they dedicated their GCSE results to her memory. Six years later her best friend is producing a play about gun crime in one of the city's theatres.

Like Thomson, I feel it is imperative that there is a greater awareness, on the part of policy-makers and those responsible for media portrayals of policy, of the diverse ways in which different communities experience socio-economic disadvantage:

Understanding the patterning that produces the difficulties in urban schools leads to understanding the ways in which public policy agendas might better support urban education. It also suggests schools can benefit from getting to understand their local circumstances rather than assume that what they see is the result of individual deficiencies or homogenized cultures of poverty.

(Thomson 2007: 1061)

Rather than seeking solutions to the problem of teacher attrition in schools serving disadvantaged communities within the discourse 'givens' of measurability and standards, my study seeks to find possible solutions through long-serving teachers' accounts of their working lives within these

communities. In this way, I question the model of teacher identity enacted in the media and policy discourse, where professionalism can be reduced to a set of individual standards and functions.

The main motivation for my study therefore was to explore what had motivated a sample of twenty long-serving teachers – those who had been in the same school for twenty years or more – to stay in schools facing ‘challenging circumstances’ and serving ‘disadvantaged communities’. Analysis of my data uncovered three macro-themes emerging from their interview-conversations; these themes demonstrated the ways in which individuals and communities are linked through relational ties, locational ties and ties of shared values.

A further impetus for my study came from my own observation that experienced colleagues across the Local Authority were not being involved or consulted about the huge structural change that was about to affect the ways in which education was to be altered by the new Academy policies. My previous experience, before teaching, had been in Government sponsored research into the effects of its own policies, as a research associate on the national project evaluating the impact of the National Curriculum (Raban, Clark and McIntyre 1994). The project incorporated interviews with teachers as part of the research design, though little attention was paid to this strand of the data by the sponsors. This experience had shown me at first hand how important it is to be ‘on-message’ with government decisions about educational policy if your voice is to be heard. I have sought here to try and provide a means of representing long serving teachers’ voices regardless of whether these are ‘on-message’.

During the research, the teachers have allowed me access to highly privileged data and accounts of their working lives which were often inspiring and moving. I share Beverley Stanford's response:

I found the real treasure in this study was the discovery of the group of remarkably strong, wise, positive, compassionate, and persevering teachers. How many others like them are in schools across the nation, battling "the plight of children and youth in our decaying cities," and doing so, unnoticed? Their days in the classroom are approaching an end. We need to listen to their wisdom before they go.

(Stanford 2001: 840)

1.4 Outline of the thesis

The thesis follows a traditional structure, beginning with a review of the literature in chapter two. In this chapter, I set the context for the rest of the study by exploring differing policy and research responses to the problem of teacher retention within the United Kingdom and internationally. In my discussion of this literature, I am interested in the ways in which teachers' work is constantly being refigured and reconceptualised by policy and so present an account of the debates into the professionalization of teachers' work. Since any discussion of teacher retention needs to take account of studies of beginner teachers, there follows an analysis of work about what attracts new entrants to the profession and the perceived rewards of the profession in terms of motivating people to stay.

Underpinning the thesis is a consideration of what it means to be a long-serving teacher and the construction of professional identity. The literature

review explores the ways in which the concept of identity is contentious and from this perspective looks at different representations of long-serving teachers within media texts and academic literature. The experience of conducting the research and the subsequent analysis of the data led me to explore literature on place and identity and the special construct of schools as places of identity formation. The chapter focuses on ways in which this has been discussed within the field of social geography. I then move to consider the ways in which urban inner-city schools have emerged as an important focus for recent educational research. I conclude with an examination of the different portrayals of community within the research into schools and schooling. This is where I introduce Tonnies' theories of *gemeinschaft* and *gesellschaft* which became, during the period of my analysis, important metaphors for helping me to make sense of the stories emerging from the data.

In chapter three I present the research design for the study. I seek to clarify my own position within the research and to identify ethical considerations and concerns.

I justify my choice of interviews about the teachers' working lives by following the recommendations of key figures within the field, notably Ivor Goodson, and endeavour to find ways of representing the teachers' voices without speaking for them (for example, Goodson and Sikes 2001). My analysis of the data follows a 'bricolage' approach (Kvale and Brinkmann 2009) blending thematic analysis with a discourse analysis of the participants' use of conceptual metaphors.

The next section of the thesis presents in detail both the findings and the thematic analysis of the data. In chapter four, I look at the ways in which the concept of place and the long-serving teachers' relationships to places

over time may provide a lens into deepening understanding about why this group of long-serving teachers chose to stay in schools in challenging contexts. I show how in a climate in which the profession is tightly controlled and suffering from problems of retention and recruitment, the teachers discuss intensely personal and emotional commitments to their outwardly unattractive workplaces. The teachers talk about the emotional dimensions of their work and the emotional ties of their work-‘place’. The chapter concludes that in choosing to belong to one community of place, these long-serving teachers are bound by ties of loyalty and professionalism to a particular community. Their emotional commitment to teaching as a vocation is highlighted. Their stories offer alternative portrayals of teaching in challenging school contexts.

Chapter five reports and analyses the ways in which the teachers in this study drew on memories which Goodson, Moore and Hargreaves (2006) refer to as ‘social nostalgia’. These memories were analysed and the emerging themes were grouped under the macro-theme of relational ties, as the participants described events which linked aspects of their professional lives to key relationships that had evolved over their time in the school. This macro-theme of relational ties is presented in the chapter as being made up of three dimensions: themes that draw on relationships originating in school; themes which extend the family; and themes relating to relationships which extend beyond the school gates. From this analysis, I propose that strong emotional ties that have developed over time are highly relevant factors in motivating teachers to feel a sense of belonging and attachment to a ‘community of kin’ They are therefore important drivers in motivating teachers to remain in the profession.

In chapter six, I report and analyse the metaphors used by the teachers as they described their experiences in the schools. I suggest that these metaphors provide a possible reading of the data through which we can reach an understanding of the ways in which individual teachers have viewed their experiences. In this chapter I follow Lakoff and Johnson's premise that the metaphors we use demonstrate the ways in which we conceptualise our experiences (2003). After a detailed presentation of the ways in which one of the participants draws on the conceptual metaphor of life as a journey to structure his experiences, I suggest that the teachers in this study draw on clusters of metaphors. The conceptual metaphors are, I believe, context dependent and reflect a snapshot of an individual's experience within a specific time and situation. Therefore whilst I am tentative about generalising from this data, I suggest that individuals can change their conceptual metaphors and link them to the process of identity reformation. I conclude that as these conceptual metaphors are not fixed, teachers have agency in choosing to change the metaphors they live and teach by.

In the final chapter I draw the chapters together and return to the original research question. The study shows that long-serving teachers have a great deal to contribute to debates about retention and my cohort's experience is especially relevant to discussions about retention in 'schools facing challenging circumstances'. I propose that Tonnies' theory of *gemeinschaft* and *gesellschaft* offers a powerful lens for understanding more about what has motivated this group of teachers to stay. Through this research, I believe that I have demonstrated that the teaching profession is not, nor should it be, comprised of a homogenous standardised type of teacher. I suggest that the metaphor analysis provides a means of understanding how teachers can construct their

experiences and help them to retain agency during challenging periods. I argue that an understanding of local community context matters and that dominant discourses should find ways of valuing experience, commitment and loyalty.

Chapter 2: Review of the Literature

In this chapter, I present a review of literature relevant to the themes of this study beginning with studies into teacher attrition and retention. I then discuss some of the literature on teacher identity and long-serving teachers in particular. The chapter concludes with a review of literature which focuses on place, schools and community.

2.1 Problems of retention

A central focus of this study is the retention of teachers within a profession that is characterised by high rates of attrition (Borman and Dowling 2008). According to Cochran-Smith, 'teacher shortages are not new' (2004:387); in the editorial of a journal issue devoted to teacher retention, she argues that the problem of teacher shortage has recurred periodically throughout the latter half of the twentieth century. Teacher shortage is a feature of the international landscape of teacher employment which, according to Ladd, is bleak:

Despite differences in their histories, cultures, and economies, all industrialized countries face the challenge of how to ensure a supply of high-quality teachers sufficient to meet demand.

(2007:202)

Hayes, in a discussion of teacher shortages within the primary sector in the United Kingdom, reiterates these concerns arguing that 'ensuring that there will be enough skilled teachers to educate all children is a priority for the government of almost every Western nation' (Hayes 2004: 37). The 'dominant response' to teacher shortages has been to invest in high-profile

strategies aimed at recruiting new entrants to the profession (Ingersoll 2001).

Ashby et al (2008) provide a detailed review of the literature on beginning teachers' experiences of initial teacher preparation which includes a focus on what are termed the 'push and pull' factors influencing potential teachers' decisions to enter the profession. In the United Kingdom the recruitment strategy which began shortly after the Labour government came into office took many forms. The strategy incorporated financial incentives, such as 'golden hellos' and training bursaries for shortage subjects, and there was also increased provision of training routes into the profession which allowed for more flexibility by accommodating employment-based and part-time options, encouraging mature entrants and career changers (Hobson et al 2009a).

There is literature that challenges the view that this focus on recruitment is the most appropriate strategy for addressing the issue of teacher attrition. Ingersoll and Smith argue that attracting new recruits to the profession is 'the wrong solution to the teacher shortage problem' (2003: 30); their focus is on the high numbers of teachers who leave after they have qualified. Ingersoll and Smith and others (e.g. Smithers and Robinson 2004) propose that the solution lies in strategies to reduce the numbers of teachers leaving the profession. Similarly Dean argues that 'of the two elements – recruitment and retention – which constitute the current headline problem of teacher shortage in United Kingdom schools, it is commonly agreed that the more problematic is retention' (2001: 492-493). Retention of qualified teachers has also been identified as an international problem (Kyriacou, Kunc, Stephens and Hultgren 2003), it became a priority in America (NCTAF 2002; Ingersoll 2003; Jalongo and Heider

2006), in Australia (Skilbeck and Connel 2003; O'Brien, Goddard and Keefe 2007) and across Europe:

Many national policy-makers are concerned that the teaching profession should be an attractive one and are aware of the importance not just of mobilising prospective teachers for initial training and recruitment but ensuring that they then remain in the profession.

(Eurydice 2002: xxv)

A worldwide study into teacher retention was undertaken by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). The report, *Teachers Matter: Attracting, Developing and Retaining Effective Teachers* (McKenzie 2005) discussed the different approaches that were undertaken across twenty five different countries to try to improve retention rates. It found that policies aimed at retaining high quality teachers were a main concern and that this concern would influence future educational policy initiatives across the globe. The OECD study also found that teachers in the early stages of their career were most likely to leave. Ewing and Smith articulate widespread concerns about the number of beginning teachers who are leaving the profession:

It is well established in countries in the Western world that between 25% and 40% of all newly-recruited teachers resign or burnout in their first three to five years of teaching (Ewing and Smith 2003:15)

Whilst Smith and Smith report that in America, 'teacher attrition shows that 30 to 50 percent of teachers leave the profession within the first five years' (2006: 34), the problems of retaining beginner teachers is particularly acute in England where fewer than half of those who begin teacher training programmes are teaching five years later (HMSO 2004: 3).

The OECD's report also identified the fact that internationally the profession was characterised as an ageing workforce with many members of this workforce due to retire in the near future (McKenzie 2005). Smithers and Robinson found that wastage rates were 'related to age and length of service with those at the two ends of the spectrum more likely to go' (2004: 40). The age profile of the teaching force leads to further anxieties about the impact of long-serving teachers reaching retirement age in the UK (HMSO 2004: 8) and in the United States. Smith and Smith report that 'this situation is further complicated by an aging teaching population with an expected retirement rate of fifty percent in the coming decade' (2006: 34).

The attrition of teachers is particularly acute in urban high-poverty schools, where the data 'reveal a disproportionately high turnover rate for teachers' (Smith and Smith 2006: 35). This supports other studies which portrayed the picture of attrition as being most problematic in schools serving disadvantaged communities; these reports appear to foresee a bleak future for recruitment and retention in such schools (McKenzie 2005; Quartz 2003; Guin 2004). Cohen discusses yearly attrition rates for urban American schools which are consistently higher than for other types of school, explaining that

It is rare for a teacher to remain in one urban school for more than 10 years, and even more unusual for that teacher to be highly educated and deeply invested.

(2009: 472)

McKinney, Berry, Dickerson, and Campbell-Wheatley describe the turnover of teachers in such schools as 'disturbingly high' (2007:2), whilst other research points to the cost implications of this pattern of attrition:

The exit of teachers from the profession and the movement of teachers away from low-performing schools are costly phenomena. Students lose the value of being taught by an experienced teacher, and schools and districts must recruit and train their replacements

(Alliance for Excellent Education 2008:1).

Again writing in an American context, Jalongo and Heider make the point more starkly: 'Simply stated, teacher attrition is disruptive to the education of students' (2006:380).

In the United Kingdom, government reports identify problems with recruiting and retaining staff in 'schools facing challenging circumstances' (DfES 2001: 55; HMSO 2004: 12). Smithers and Robinson advised that:

Schools, particularly in the secondary phase, with low achieving pupils, with high eligibility for free schools meals, and with an above average proportion with special needs, tend to find it more difficult to retain staff. Further consideration should be given as to how to attract and retain good teachers in those schools.

(2004:38)

The literature that explores problems associated with retaining long-serving schools in inner-city schools is especially pertinent to my study. In order to develop an informed understanding of why some teachers stay however, it is important to explore what the literature suggests are reasons for choosing to leave the profession.

Studies which have tried to establish the reasons for the high attrition rates from the profession have found that there is a range of contributing factors. The *Becoming a Teacher* project found that pupil discipline and workload were reasons cited most often by beginning teachers leaving the

profession (Hobson et al 2009b: x). This supported an earlier study by the Department for Education and Skills (DfES) which also found that workload and pupil behaviour were factors contributing to the attrition rates (2001: 55). They also found that teachers would have welcomed more opportunities for professional development which was often adversely affected by competing demands on their time (2001: 55). According to Smithers and Robinson, workload was also identified as a factor by Ross and Hutchings in their review of the administration and management of the recruitment, development and retention of teachers in Wales, Scotland, Northern Ireland and England:

All four administrations are taking steps to ensure that workload patterns are reduced, career patterns and remuneration addressed, and the nature and status of the profession is recognised and enhanced

(2004: 4).

Leaton Grey (2006) links growing attrition rates within the profession to large scale changes to public sector work as a result of the 'UK Government quest for professional accountability' (2006: 14) which began in the 1970s and which she argues was still having repercussions in 2006. According to Leaton Grey, an increase in 'removing autonomy of time and task' from teachers and other professional groups within the public sector, as they work to a prescribed centralised mandate, has explained why so many teachers left the profession (2006: 15). Dean also attributes the attrition rates of long-serving teachers to increased control of the profession:

No-one who examines the educational history of the past 25 years can be surprised at the crisis the United Kingdom now finds itself in over teacher recruitment and, particularly, teacher retention. It is this latter which should be the greater concern. The haemorrhage is of

experienced teachers. Those who have been there and done that and want no more of it.

(Dean 2001: 495)

Thus in these arguments, the responsibility for the teacher shortage problem is placed on the policy-makers.

For Ingersoll and Smith, the road to retaining good teachers lies in looking at improving workloads, improving working conditions and support, and by managers creating a better working environment by providing effective administration systems, and supporting discipline (2003: 33). Bartlett (2004) also argues that teachers' workload has increased beyond all recognition and that the solution to the problem of retention lies not in increasing salaries and other extrinsic rewards but in a careful consideration of teachers' working conditions and the demands on their time in terms of workload. However she warns that

simply mandating a reduction in work-hours will not ensure teacher retention. Any effort to relieve teacher overwork by reducing teachers' working hours—and thereby improve retention—needs to attend not only to what teachers are doing in their work-hours, but also why they are doing it. ...Policy efforts to support teachers' work must start with a clear understanding of the conception of teaching work being supported and ensure that there is a fit between conception of and support for teaching work. Misfits between conceptions and supports are more likely to exacerbate teacher stress and overwork than to increase teacher retention

(Bartlett 2004: 579).

For Ingersoll, the answer lies in organisational characteristics and conditions of schools. The teachers in his research suggested that improved salaries, smaller class sizes, improved mentoring and reduced student discipline problems would help. They also wanted more input into and ownership of decision making that affected their working lives: 'increasing teacher decision-making power and authority is also, not surprisingly, suggested by teachers as a step to aid retention' (2003: 20). Ingersoll's emphasis on the characteristics and conditions of schools appears to suggest that the individual context of the school is an important factor; this is a theme which is explored in more detail in chapter four.

2.2 Professionalism vs professionalization

Alongside problems of recruitment and retention, there is another consequence of this increased control of the educational agenda by central government: a shifting sense of teacher professionalism. Hargreaves describes professionalism as a 'contested' concept (Hargreaves 2000: 152) and Lawn considers professionalism to be a fluid idea which is 'situational and relational' (1996:120). Lawn illustrates this point by arguing that during the years preceding the 1988 Education Reform Act (ERA) in the UK, teachers were given a relatively high degree of autonomy and that this was a measure of professional confidence afforded to them by both government and society. However during the years following the ERA, Lawn claims that

Professionalism as an employer discourse has almost entirely disappeared; this is a sign of its lack of positive significance to the new time.

(Lawn 1996: 112)

Hargreaves describes four ages of professionalism, and says that at the time of the 1988 ERA, teachers were experiencing the age of 'the collegial professional' where they were enjoying autonomy and the freedom to work with peers with a high degree of independence and trust. During the years following the introduction of the National Curriculum, teachers in Hargreaves' 'post-professional' age would, he predicted, find themselves having to adapt to working under much tighter control in a market-led educational economy (Hargreaves 2000). For Hargreaves this post-professional age:

is marked by a struggle between forces and groups intent on de-professionalizing the work of teaching, and other forces and groups who are seeking to re-define teacher professionalism and professional learning in more positive and principled postmodern ways that are flexible, wide-ranging and inclusive in nature.

(Hargreaves 2000: 153).

He went on to argue that teachers would increasingly need to work with people outside the school and to engage with the communities on their doorstep, and that these relationships would be dependent upon reciprocity and on strong collegial relationships within the school (Hargreaves 2000: 173).

Some authors (e.g. Menter, Muschamp, Nicholls, Ozga and Pollard 1997; Ozga 1988; Hall 2004) have offered an account of the history of teacher professionalism using Labour Process Theory, which affords a post-Fordian analysis to explain why teaching has been increasingly controlled and is susceptible to an accountability model. Labour Process Theory has been used by Smyth, Dow, Hattam, Reid and Shacklock (2000) to analyse the

ways in which teachers' working lives have evolved; the authors suggest that in order for teachers to be effective actors in the labour market their output has to be closely controlled. They argue that the control mechanisms are linked to 'the ideology and techniques of accountability, measurement, and 'management'' and that control of the curriculum is the primary means of managing teachers' work (Smyth et al 2000: xi). The notion of teaching being carried out within an 'audit-culture' (Strathern 2000) is not confined to the changes in teachers' lives in the United Kingdom, the experience reflects a wider international trend. Bottery and Wright argue that the across the globe, as a consequence of globalised education policies, teachers are being 'deprofessionalised' (2000). Sachs takes the view that within the United Kingdom, the United States and other parts of the western world, the teaching profession has been portrayed as being 'in a state of crisis' (2003: 3) with teachers blamed for poor standards and that the profession has been placed 'under close scrutiny' by 'governments and the community' (2003: 6). For Sachs the 'development of the standards regime' has come about because 'Governments want control over a compliant teaching profession and see that standards regimes provide the regulatory framework to achieve this end' (Sachs 2003: 6).

Similarly, Goodson and Hargreaves suggest that this increased control has been a deliberate consequence of globalised educational discourses such as 'school improvement 'and 'performance management'. They distinguish between teachers' *professionalism* and a social and political project undertaken by governments leading to the *professionalization* of teachers. They argue that this process of professionalization is contentious and describe it as a means of control which has led to the deprofessionalisation and demoralisation of teachers (Goodson and Hargreaves 1996:4).

Hargreaves also argues that 'in teaching, stronger professionalization does not always mean greater professionalism' (Hargreaves 2000:152).

Helsby carried out a study of the ways in which teachers understood the terms 'professional' and 'professionalism' and suggested that teachers did not necessarily polarize the terms professionalism and the processes of professionalization in the ways suggested by the literature above, and that the major influences on their developing understanding of professionalism was from the school or departmental culture. She therefore argues 'that 'teacher professionalism' is a complex and dynamic concept which is constructed in the everyday realities of teachers' working lives' (Helsby 1999:146).

David Hargreaves in his discussion of the 'new professionalism' (1994) offers a positive and different perspective on the reforms, claiming that the new policy changes offer new challenges which could lead to 'greater professional pride and self-confidence' and could enhance professionalism and lead to school improvement (Harris 2002; Hopkins 2001; Mortimore et al 1988). Hoyle discusses the semantic interpretations of the terms 'status', 'professionalism' and 'professionalization' and concludes that whilst 'new professionalism' as described by David Hargreaves may 'improve the quality of teaching and learning, there is no indication, as is often suggested, that it would improve the prestige, status or esteem of teaching as an occupation' (Hoyle 2001: 149). Brennan argues that there is the danger that the 'new professionalism' has led to teachers struggling to capture a sense of professional identity because of a perceived (and real) lack of autonomy:

The more teachers have to produce to order, to ends and assessments organized by others, the more likely it becomes that a

disjunction will grow between their desired and lived practices. Their knowledge becomes abstract, something owned and organized by others, and in which they find it hard to recognise themselves.

(Brennan 2009: 352).

Some commentators argue that a consequence of the professionalization of teachers' work in England is the move to a 'performance culture', characterised by targets and accountability, within the workplace (Hartley and Whitehead 2006). Sikes, writing about the experiences of teachers of students with special educational needs, argues that this culture is having a negative impact on teachers' self-esteem (Sikes 1999). Gray, Hopkins, Reynolds, Wilcox, Farrell and Jesson conclude that the performance culture will lead to strategies with short-term outcomes (1999).

Jeffrey and Woods' (1998) study of UK primary schools' inspections found that teachers voiced a conflict between their own understandings of what would be best for the children in their class and what they were expected to do in order to impress the inspectors. Ball refers to this conflict as 'values schizophrenia' (Ball 2003: 221). He refers to teachers experiencing 'shame' and feeling compromised in playing the game of performativity by becoming what the inspectors want to see, 'the sort of teacher that is hailed and rewarded by educational reform and school improvement' (Ball 2003: 222). Ball goes on to suggest that in working in this way an individual teacher's 'value as a person is eradicated' (2003:224). Ball asserts that this performance culture has implications for the ways in which teachers view their work if what they do is not 'valued within the metrics of accountability', and that performativity 'engenders cynicism' (Ball 2003: 223).

Fink, writing about the consequences of teachers not being involved in decisions which have an impact on their working lives, said that:

at a time when teacher shortages and teacher morale are growing problems for many educational jurisdictions, there is an urgent need to build better bridges of understanding between policy makers and policy implementers, and for researchers to provide research that is more sensitive to the work and the lives of 'real' people in 'real' schools

(Fink 2003: 105)

Hargreaves also directly links the effect of teaching in a performance-based, audit-led 'knowledge society' to teachers choosing to leave the profession:

in standardized reform, teachers are treated and developed not as high skill, high capacity knowledge workers, but as compliant and closely monitored producers of standardized performances. Socrates said that the unexamined life is not worth living. For teachers, it's the overexamined life that is the problem. Teachers with overexamined professional lives complain of eroded autonomy, lost creativity, restricted flexibility and constrained capacity to exercise their professional judgement.

(Hargreaves 2002:6)

The literature on changes to initial teacher training suggests that this intensification of teachers' professional lives has been echoed in the wide-scale reforms to the ways in which new entrants to the profession are educated. For example, in the UK initial teacher 'education' became re-branded as initial teacher 'training' (ITT) with increased directives about the number of hours spent training in schools and, for one period, the introduction of a national curriculum for the university-based elements of

the training course (DfEE 1997). Wright and Bottery argue that 'a cloak of technical rationality shrouds the training of new entrants to teaching' (1997: 235). In 1998, the Teaching and Higher Education Act meant that after qualifying, new entrants to the profession in the UK had to undertake a statutory period of induction and meet the Induction Standards. Ashby et al argue that this new arrangement for induction, 'places the onus on schools to ensure adequate levels of support for new teachers' (Ashby et al 2008: 37). According to Wright and Bottery, beginner teachers would continue to have judgements about their professional competence and performance assessed against externally imposed standards which will, they claim, reduce the beginning teacher's capacity 'to think too much or too deeply about the larger, social, moral and political issues, which a richer conception of professionalism would commit them to' (1997: 252).

However there is literature which suggests that teachers *do* have agency and can have more of a say in the ways in which their working lives are being run. Goodson suggests that there is a need for a 'new concordat...between those in schools and in universities concerned with the development of teacher professionalism' which might move teaching beyond the 'technical delivery of other people's purposes' (Goodson 2003: 7). Reflexivity on all aspects of praxis has, since Schon's notion of the 'reflective practitioner' (1983), been 'widely accepted as an aspect of professionalism' (Hoyle and Wallace 2009: 210). Sachs advocates 'recasting teacher professionalism in a more activist form' (2003: 8); she focuses on the ways in which teachers can work collaboratively in order to restore the moral and intellectual direction of the profession. Goodson writes about the 'principled professional' (2000). Hall also argues that teaching is more than a technical activity; it is 'complex, moral and cultural, as well as intellectual, work' (2004). Jeffrey (2002) and Leaton Grey

(2006), look to ways in which re-prioritising the human face of teaching may help teachers regain and/or retain a sense of professional pride and independence. Galton and Macbeath write that 'good teachers... refuse to collude with the victim mentality which relinquishes initiative, self-belief and a sense of agency' (2008: 115) but that in order to do so they need to have the support of a good senior leadership team.

Whilst it is perhaps appropriate, therefore, to concur with Brennan that the 'professional teacher' is 'being remade by successive waves of reform' (2009: 355), Day and Smethem offer a positive contribution to the largely negative discussions about the imposed professional standards. They point out that:

The beginnings of a change of discourse in England are perhaps evident in one of the 33 standards for the Award of Qualified Teacher Status, which requires qualified teachers to 'Have a creative and constructively critical approach towards innovation...'
This small step may signify support for a re-emergence of teachers' individual and collective sense of autonomy which may have been lost or hidden in cultures of managed compliance.

(Day and Smethem 2009: 151)

The different constructions of professionalism over time within policy and within academic studies of teachers' work are drawn upon later in this study. Of particular importance are the concepts of change in relation to what constitutes teacher's work and the notion of individual agency with regard to these changes.

2.3 The attractions and rewards of teaching

Hobson, Malderez and Tracey (2009) draw on the findings of the *Becoming a Teacher* project in their discussion of different factors that student teachers reported as attracting them to begin a teacher training course. The 'biggest single response was 'helping young people to learn', which 98 per cent of all respondents said had attracted them to teaching' (2009: 16). Hobson et al refer to factors such as these and 'wanting to make a difference' as 'altruistic' motivations. They also identified 'intrinsic' motivations, such as 'the challenging nature of the job' and 'extrinsic motivations' such as 'job security' (2009: 16-17).

Smethem found that new teachers in her study were attracted to the profession by similar motivations:

working with young people...the challenge of making a valuable contribution to society and job satisfaction. Relationships with pupils and improving teaching and learning brought satisfaction

(Smethem 2007: 471).

Some of the literature demonstrates that more experienced teachers were motivated by the same factors as the beginning teachers in the studies above, when they reflected on their original decisions to join the profession. The idea of becoming a teacher in order to be an agent for change seems to be a particularly pertinent theme in the literature about teaching in challenging schools. For example, Prosser in his study of long-serving teachers in challenging Australian schools found that some of the teachers had been attracted to the profession by 'a commitment to making the world a better place' (2006:9). According to Prosser these teachers had remained committed to the desire to oppose 'deficit images about the

students, school and community' (2006:7). Quartz found that teachers in high-poverty, urban American schools had joined such schools because they were deeply committed to teaching because of a sense of social justice and were, at the latter stages of their career, 'too angry to leave' (2003). Bush found that some teachers from the beginning of their careers appeared to be motivated to work in schools serving disadvantaged communities, 'they had chosen their current school on this basis and intended to teach disadvantaged pupils in the future' (2005: 35). Bush suggests that more attention should be paid to the factors that attract individuals into the profession and that moves should be made to 'differentiate teachers according to their motivations and priorities' (2005:35). Within my study, this emphasis on what attracted the teachers to a particular school is explored further in chapter four.

In their evaluation of the Teach First programme of initial teacher training, Hutchings, Maylor, Mendick, Menter, and Smart also found that the idea of working to 'turn around educational disadvantage' was a strong motivational factor for those embarking on the programme (2006). They explain that the Teach First programme appeals to prospective teachers' senses of idealism and altruism: 'Teaching is presented as a challenge, and as an opportunity to benefit those who are disadvantaged' (2006:13). However what sets the Teach First programme apart is the fact that trainees only have to commit to the classroom for two years; the programme also incorporates leadership and business skills training and, according to Hutchings et al, actively encourages trainees to believe they can become 'future Ministers, CEOs, and serial entrepreneurs of our times' and consequently the authors argue that 'the programme appeals both to altruism and to ambition' (2006:10). The Teach First programme is another strategy aimed at boosting recruitment to the profession. It is too early to

comment on whether it has had an impact upon the problem of teacher retention as the programme has not been running long enough to track how many of the beginner teachers have opted to stay beyond the original two year commitment.

Nieto's research in America provides an interesting contrast to this as she is interested in 'what keeps teachers going' and her focus is on 'a group of tremendously respected high school teachers who have persevered for many years' (2003: 389). She discovered that the altruistic and intrinsic factors that had originally motivated these teachers to join the profession were still there and had been strengthened by their experiences. They were sustained by working with others with a similar outlook: 'teachers can best learn from others who do this work well and with energy, and who remain committed to teaching and hopeful about the outcomes' (2003:394).

Regardless of whether or not teachers have been motivated by a specific desire to work in areas of disadvantage, 'there is a general agreement that perceived intrinsic rewards (such as working with children, intellectual fulfilment and contributing to society) play an important part in attracting new recruits to the profession' (Ashby et al 2008: 4). Furthermore these rewards can sustain their desire to stay in teaching, as O'Connor comments that 'the humanistic and ethical dimensions of teachers' work frequently act as a source of intrinsic motivation for individual teachers, and inspire them to remain in the profession' (2008:118). Ayers reflected that:

Teaching can still be world-changing work. And this, I believe, is finally the reason to teach. People are called to teaching because they love children and youth, or because they love being with them, watching them open up and grow and become more able, more competent, more powerful in the world. They may love what happens to themselves when

they are with children, the ways in which they become their best selves. Or they may become teachers because they love the world, or some piece of the world enough that they want to show that love to others. In either case, people teach as an act of construction and reconstruction, and as a gift of oneself to others. I teach in the hope of making the world a better place.

(Ayers 1993: 8)

Studies show that there are many ways in which teachers continue to find satisfaction and reward that are sustained beyond their initial decision to enter the profession. Ayers explains that these rewards sometimes appear intangible:

Teaching is an act of hope for a better future, the rewards of teaching are neither ostentatious nor obvious – they are often internal, invisible and of the moment...The reward of teaching is knowing that your life makes a difference.

(Ayers 1993: 24)

Lortie utilised the term 'psychic rewards' to describe the factors that contribute to individual teachers' enjoyment in their work (1975). Unlike extrinsic or ancillary rewards, Lortie argues that psychic rewards 'consist entirely of subjective valuations made in the course of work engagement' (1975:101) and such rewards are cited as 'the major source of work satisfaction' (1975: 104). Oplatka explains that 'when teachers are asked about what they find satisfying in their jobs, they spontaneously refer to the emotions of joy, wonder and excitement' (2007:1375).

One source of this joy is the satisfaction that comes from working with young people and seeing them 'learn and grow' (Brunetti 2001; Stanford

2001; Lortie 1975; Nias 1989). According to Kelchtermans, 'the relational aspect in education is of existential importance for teachers in their job' (2005: 6). The teacher-student relationship has been identified as another source of job satisfaction by Nias who makes the point that for some teachers the fact that they like the children they work with is an important aspect of the work that they find enjoyable (Nias 1989: 86). This finding is supported by others (e.g. Hargreaves 2000; Brunetti 2001; Stanford 2001; Casey 1992). Sikes argues that as teachers progress through their careers they find themselves becoming more detached from the interests of their pupils, so that one way of retaining 'the satisfactions they get from informal contact' is to involve pupils in their lives outside of school (e.g. as babysitters) and that as they approach retirement this satisfaction comes from a 'vicarious' pleasure in hearing how former pupils have made successes of their lives (Sikes 1985). Another source of satisfaction is the relationships that teachers make with their colleagues within the school (Nias 1989; Woods and Jeffrey 2002; Little and McCloughlin 1993; Troman and Woods 2001).

Brennan (2006) describes teaching as an act of 'emotional labour', following Hochschild (1983). Zembylas explores the ways in which emotions shape her relations with pupils and colleagues in her school (2004). Some of the literature on the emotional aspects of teaching has explored the ways in which caring is an important element of the job and is often a source of reward for teachers, though O'Connor warns that caring 'frequently acted as both a motivation to continue teaching and as a 'terribly exhausting'...professional demand' (2008: 125). Liston describes teaching as a 'vulnerable undertaking' which entails a kind of 'romantic love' (2000). Noddings writes about a 'culture of care' (1992): Hargreaves says that teaching involves a 'commitment to care' (1994a) whilst Jeffrey

describes teaching as having 'affinities with other 'caring' professions' (2002: 535). However, some authors warn that this emotional dimension, whilst remaining a source of satisfaction for some teachers, is at risk as it is not valorised in policy and standards discourse (e.g. Jeffrey 2002; Ball 2003; O'Connor 2008).

I revisit some of the literature about intrinsic rewards and emotional ties within the analysis of relational ties presented in chapter five.

2.4 Identity formation

Identity is a contentious term, partly because 'in general, the concept of identity has different meanings in the literature' (Beijaard et al 2004: 108). In his essay, 'Who needs 'Identity'?' (2001:15), Hall traces the development of the notion of identity and rejects the idea that there is an essential concept of identity in favour of a 'strategic and positional one' (2000:17). For Hall identities are:

increasingly fragmented and fractured; never singular but multiply constructed across different, often intersecting and antagonistic, discourses, practices and positions. They are subject to a radical historicization, and are constantly in the process of change and transformation.

(Hall 2000: 17)

The concept of teacher identity is defined variously in the literature. For example, Lasky describes teacher professional identity as 'how teachers define themselves to themselves and to others' (2005: 901). For Lasky, this combines 'individual teacher capacity' with a 'construct of professional

self' that evolves over time and 'can be shaped by school, reform and political contexts' (2005: 901). Others suggest that identities are unstable and vulnerable; Leaton Grey argues that as teachers' lives are becoming more policy driven within a context where vocation is devalued, their sense of professional identity is being eroded (2006). Britzman warns of the problem of restricting the definition of teacher identity to the discourse of skills and standards; she argues that 'role and function are not synonymous with identity; whereas role can be assigned, the taking up of an identity is a constant social negotiation.' (1993: 24). Day and Kington maintain, however, that teachers' identities are 'neither intrinsically stable nor intrinsically fragmented' and that they are made up of 'a composite consisting of interactions between personal, professional and situation factors' (2008: 9-11). They argue that resilience, commitment and effectiveness are related to the ways in which individuals are able to manage any instability or tensions within these three dimensions and, in this way, the authors connect identity and agency.

Beauchamp and Thomas (2009) present a detailed overview of the issues involved in trying to reach an understanding of the concept of teacher identity. They stress that attempts to reach a shared understanding of the term identity are complicated by the variety of approaches and range of lenses through which the topic is viewed within the literature.

A major hurdle in gaining an understanding of identity is resolving a definition of it, as a variety of issues surface in any attempt to reach a definition. One must struggle to comprehend the close connection between identity and the self, the role of emotion in shaping identity, the power of stories and discourse in understanding identity, the role of reflection in shaping identity, the link between

identity and agency, the contextual factors that promote or hinder the construction of identity, and ultimately the responsibility of teacher education programs to create opportunities for the exploration of new and developing teacher identities.

(Beauchamp and Thomas 2009: 176)

Day and Leitch write that 'the professional self in teaching affects and is affected by personal history past and present as well as political and social contexts of teaching' (2001: 414). Similarly, Nias suggests that teacher identity is formed through a combination of the personal self and the professional self (1996). For Benwell and Stokoe, identity is defined in relational and social 'terms of who people are to each other' (2006: 6). Some authors argue that problems arise if either the personal or the professional notion of identity clashes with the views of others within a (personal or professional) relationship (Leaton Grey 2006; Lasky 2005; Hargreaves 2001). Weber and Mitchell's study of conceptions of identity by student and experienced teachers illustrates how some can find it difficult to negotiate the tension that occurs when there is such a clash between the personal and professional self: they describe how one teacher's 'inner struggle highlights the intersection of personal and professional social identity - to be a teacher who fits in, she's not sure if she can also be 'herself'' (1996: 308). Woods and Jeffrey emphasise that when teachers have to take on new social identities which are outwardly seen to conform

their erstwhile substantial self-identities have been dismembered, the 'substantial' element of aspects they hold most near and dear now being displaced to life outside teaching, while their personal identities within teaching have become more 'situational', constructed to meet different

situations and purposes with which they might be presented, but in which they feel they cannot invest their full selves.

(2002: 21-2)

So, for Woods and Jeffrey, teachers' identities are continually 'in flux' and they warn that 'identity work consumes enormous emotional and intellectual energy that might otherwise be dedicated to teaching' (2002:29).

Day, Kington, Stobart and Sammons present emotions as a factor that can contribute negatively or positively to teachers' professional and personal identities (2006). Zembylas examines the ways in which teachers' emotions can 'become sites of resistance and self-transformation' (2003: 213) and uses a poststructural concept of identity to focus on 'the place of emotion...as a social, cultural, political, and historical resource for identity formation' (Zembylas 2003: 218). Prosser, writing about what motivates Australian teachers in socially deprived communities, explores the link between emotion and identity and argues that understandings of teacher identity are bound up within 'pedagogical moments' and 'educative relationships with their students' (2006: 2). Inevitably for Prosser, teaching in the context of educational reform 'has had significant implications for teachers' emotional work and identity' (2006: 5) especially when teachers find that their original motivations for coming into teaching are in tension with the new reforms:

They negotiate these tensions through teacher identity, with the resultant long-term struggle often leaving teachers feeling

emotionally drained and despairing; which raise the important question of how teacher identity is sustained.

(Prosser 2006: 5)

Similarly, Lasky presents findings from a sociocultural examination of teacher identity in the context of government mandated reform which illustrate that, for the teachers in her study, being able to be 'openly vulnerable and authentic with their students' was an essential component of their teacher identity. She writes that even when the reforms devalued these elements of their work 'one of the most powerful enduring elements of participants' agency was their unwillingness to change their identity as individuals working in a human-centred profession, which required making real connections with their students' (Lasky 2005: 913). Hargreaves also writes about the emotional dimensions of teacher work and describes the ways in which teachers' 'emotional geographies' impact upon their professional and personal identity formation (Hargreaves 2001).

In addition, narratives are used to explore the different ways in which stories of teachers' experiences (usually with a highly emotive content) can be used by teachers to express identity (Connelly and Clandinin 1999; Watson 2006) as the act of story-telling gives meaning and shapes their understanding of their professional identity. Søreide's study of five elementary school teachers found that the teachers drew on multiple identities ('the caring and kind teacher'; 'the creative and innovative teacher'; 'the professional teacher'; 'the typical teacher') which was a 'necessary part of the construction of teacher identity' (2006:527) and that this 'multifaceted' construction of identity could be a site of potential conflict when there is an imposed notion of a universal teacher identity in the dominant discourses.

The idea that discourse contributes to the processes of identity formation is an important tenet of my study. Hall and Noyes suggest that the discourses of evaluation and surveillance that characterize the education system in the United Kingdom have for a number of teachers shaped their professional identity:

uncontentious technologies of hierarchical observation, judgment, normalised to an inspector's eye view and the Ofsted 'examination' become for some teachers, the everyday conditions which mould their professional identities and sense of purpose

(Hall and Noyes 2009:855).

The idea that identity is shaped by dominant discourses underpins Foucault's 'discursive production of the subject' according to Benwell and Stokoe, for whom Foucault's account of identity is 'political toothlessness' because of the perceived lack of agency by the subject (2006: 32). They argue that Judith Butler 'reformulates' Foucault's account by introducing the concept of 'performativity' in a way which 'is able to accommodate concepts of both structure and agency' (2006: 33).

Sachs argues that 'two competing discourses are shaping the professional identity of teachers. The discourses she refers to are democratic and managerial professionalism' (2001: 149). Sachs' thesis is that the managerialist discourses are creating what she refers to as 'entrepreneurial identities' where 'the market will play an important part in how teachers constitute their professional identity collectively and individually' (2001: 156), whilst democratic discourses 'give rise to an activist professional identity in which collaborative cultures are an integral part of teachers' work practices' (2001: 159). Maguire examines the ways in which

managerial discourses shape the identities of teachers working in urban schools and identifies three elements of 'classed identity': namely 'an embodied identity; a cultural-experiential identity; and an educationally-constructed identity' (2001: 320). She argues that this group of teachers, because of their 'classed identity, are able to contest the 'normalising discourses' of professional identity and offer alternative approaches of 'what it is to be a teacher' through 'their perceptions, values and sometimes their actions' (2001: 329). This notion of identity formation involving agency and being continually reformed is echoed in the literature which refers to teachers continually being in the 'process of becoming' (MacLure 2003; Flores and Day 2006). Clarke writes that:

Our identities are thus partly given yet they are also something that has to be achieved, offering a potential site of agency within the inevitably social process of becoming.

(Clarke 2008: 3)

Clarke goes on to argue that teachers have an 'ethical obligation' to reflect on the identity work involved in this ongoing process of becoming a teacher and that this could 'be utilized to resist any attempt to impose a narrowing of focus on the meaning of teaching' (2008: 12).

2.5 Long-serving teachers

Long-serving or 'veteran' teachers are the focus of this study. Ben Peratz and McCulloch's editorial for a special issue of *Teachers and Teaching*, on the theme of International Perspectives on Veteran Teachers, illustrates the range of studies in the field and provides an overview of the differing views on what constitutes a 'veteran' within the teaching profession.

What are the criteria for defining a veteran teacher? One might be identified as 'veteran' because of years of tenure, or because of having achieved some special expertise in the profession, for instance in pedagogy or subject matter knowledge.

(Ben Peratz and McCulloch 2009: 405)

Within the special issue of the journal veteran teachers are variously defined as 'accomplished teachers' who may be in their 'third or thirtieth year in the classroom' (Liebermann and Mace 2009: 459); teachers who have 'over 10 to 15 years' experience (Eilam 2009: 494), or who 'have weathered over 25 years' (Cohen 2009: 471) or as 'teachers who identify themselves as' veteran (Schonmann 2009: 517).

The OECD's report *Teachers Matter*, amongst other studies, found that the numbers of teachers retiring was particularly acute in schools serving disadvantaged communities and appeared to foresee a bleak future for recruitment and retention in such schools (McKenzie 2005; Quartz 2003; Guin 2004). Some of these studies represented long-serving teachers as being disengaged as they reached the final stages of their career (e.g. Huberman 1993), or as barriers to modernisation and improvement (Fink and Brayman 2006). Others present more positive images of teachers who, in these later years, have reached a sense of purpose and fulfilment (Cohen 2009; Day and Gu 2009).

As well as the academic literature on long-serving teachers, there exists a wealth of media and literary representations of veteran teachers (McCulloch 2009; Bulman 2002; Trier 2001). These range from images of cantankerous hero figures such as Mr Chipping (Hilton 1934) and Miss Jean Brodie (Spark 1961), to portrayals of out-dated teachers, such as Mr Nolan

in *Dead Poets Society* (Haft, Junger-Witt and Thomas 1989), who fail to understand the needs of their students. Typically the students in the latter narratives are saved by the arrival of a (younger) outsider who transforms their lives; Louanne Johnson is the archetypal representation of this in the film, *Dangerous Minds* (Simpson 1995). Whilst these media heroes often leave the fictional schools after a year or two, or have to be persuaded to stay, Quartz et al emphasise that in the real world,

The real heroes of urban schools are those who figure out ways to stay connected to their profession, their pursuit of social justice, their colleagues, their students, and their communities. These heroes are not born; they emerge from an extensive network of support and a solid understanding of pedagogy

(Quartz et al 2003: 105).

Media portrayals of disengaged and disenfranchised long-serving teachers working in deprived and often dangerous communities are typically negative representations: 'These veteran teachers are burned out and have failed to do what was assumed to be their professional obligation—to reform these students into respectable, educated, and well-behaved citizens' (Bulman 2002: 261). It could be argued that such deficit images further add to problems of retention in urban schools serving disadvantaged communities. McKinney, Berry, Dickerson, and Campbell-Wheatley describe the turnover of teachers in such schools as 'disturbingly high' (2007: 2), whilst other research points to the cost implications of this pattern of attrition, 'the movement of teachers away from low-performing schools are costly phenomena. Students lose the value of being taught by an experienced teacher, and schools and districts must recruit and train their replacements' (Alliance for Excellent Education 2008: 1).

However, there are some teachers who 'persist and thrive' in such schools and have remained 'fresh' and engaged' during the process (Cohen 2009). Stanford highlighted the need to 'seek the insights of positive veteran teachers' before they reached retirement and 'leave the field' (2001: 75).

One of the greatest challenges to long-serving teachers has been the rapidity of change that has characterised their careers. A review of the extant literature on teachers' working lives shows that the prevailing view of what constitutes teachers' work has altered. The work of Day and his colleagues engaged in the VITAE project captures the various ways in which teachers at different stages in their careers have experienced factors that have changed their work and lives over time (Day et al, 2006; 2007). In a study commissioned by the General Teaching Council and Saga to investigate ways to support and utilise the experience and expertise of older (45+) teachers, Wilkins, Head, Taylor and Keaveny found that

the older teachers studied, who continue to enjoy their work and have been given opportunities for career development or variety of experience, do generally display two important characteristics: they have maintained and developed their practitioner skills, so that they are acknowledged as good teachers, and they have demonstrated an openness to change and development.

(Wilkins *et al* 2004:10)

This is countered by Mortimore and Mortimore who studied the reactions and responses of teachers to working in the (then) new environments of a City Technology College (CTC). They found that some of their respondents and senior managers held the view that 'it was easier to grasp the opportunity to be innovative when one was starting with a blank page –

with no history, no traditions, no 'baggage" (1996: 154). Goodson examines the social history of educational change and argues that any study of change should move from the focus on 'how to get people to change in institutions, the focus should instead be on how people change internally and on how that personal change then plays out, as and through institutional change' (2001: 57).

In the United Kingdom, the most significant change to education in the second half of the twentieth century was the 1988 Education Reform Act (ERA). The long-serving teachers who are the focus of this study taught both before and after the ERA of 1988. Consequently they have lived through the changes it brought about to their working lives. Leaton Grey explores the 'brave new world' of professionalism facing teachers after the Act was introduced and summarises her findings in the table which I have reproduced below:

Table 1: Characteristics of Teacher Professionalism (Leaton Grey 2006: 17)

Characteristics of teacher professionalism before and after the 1988 Education Reform Act	
(Table developed from Beck (1999, 2002), Bernstein (1996), Education Reform Act (1988))	
Pre-1988	Post-1988
Autonomous work	Directed work
Lifelong habitation (known sociologically as <i>habitus</i>) alongside peers	Infinitely retrainable according to needs of economy or state agency
Industrial action	Locally-negotiated agreements
Moral Imperative	Audit
Public service ethos	Technical efficiency
Individualism, holism	Standardised product
Ownership of pedagogy	National Curriculum
Vocation	Career

Leaton Grey's table illustrates that the long-serving teachers will have experienced a shift from independence and autonomy to control and direction.

Similarly, Woods and Jeffrey explain that teachers who began teaching in the 1980s have had to engage in 'identity work' as they have had to realign their values in their later working lives as 'the human element gives way to the commodified experience' (2002: 96). Goodson and Hargreaves suggest that this has been a deliberate consequence of globalised educational discourses such as 'school improvement' and 'performance management' (1996). Long serving teachers have experienced a move to a performance culture, characterised by targets and accountability, within the workplace where, according to Ball, 'value replaces values – commitment and service are of dubious worth within the new policy regime' (2003: 217).

It is this emphasis on accountability and the administrative aspects of teaching that has led to the production of policy documents encapsulating the official view of what constitutes teachers' work. In England, this official view is summarised in the document 'Why sit still in your career?' (TDA 2007) which summarises the professional standards that teachers in England have to meet in order to be considered to have made progress in their career. The document 'defines the characteristics of teachers at each career stage' (TDA 2007: 2). Its underpinning assumption is that movement and change characterise a successful career, including movement between schools to gain a variety of experiences in different sites and with students from different backgrounds. Contrary to this notion of career development, my own interest is in those teachers who have

conceptualised their careers as rooted in a particular, disadvantaged, community; teachers who have 'sat still'.

2.6 Schools as places of identity

Benwell and Stokoe describe the 'spatial turn' in the social sciences when 'writers began to theorise the links between place, space and identity' (2006: 210). Heidegger's notion of 'being in the world' has been influential in the literature about place and identity; 'For Heidegger, the human person is a *dasein*, literally a 'being there' – so that placedness is of the essence' (Inge 2003: 18). Manzo (2005) builds on Heidegger's notion of 'being-in-the-world' with what she calls 'experience-in-place' leading her to conclude that 'significant places reflect people's evolving identity' (Manzo 2005: 73). A recurrent theme within the literature on place and identity is the role of space and time. Massey (1993) emphasises the importance of defining the terms used in such writings. For Massey, time and space are inextricably linked by the social relations that are played out in space and time; for her the world is four dimensional.

Others have developed this view in relation to school spaces:

In their efforts at making effective learning environments, teachers' modifications of their classroom point to other important purposes of this space. Specifically, teachers use the walls and other elements of the classroom to display things as a way of claiming the space as their own, as a reflection of who they are as a teacher, and as a communication device to make personal connection with the students and to actively engage the students in learning. From these purposes the physical classroom can be understood as a basic

component or toll of the process of teachers' daily interaction; not just an interchangeable space.

(Bissell 2004: 29)

Nespor (1997) raises the need to examine and understand spacetime topographies because for him places are 'dynamic, fluid spaces'. He writes about the ways in which architects lose control of the 'abstract places' they have designed as people use them and redefine them as they become 'lived spaces'. This could be what Massey's fourth dimension (1993) looks like, when static floor plans bear no relation to the spaces that people inhabit because they are continually redefined over time.

Nespor's view that school buildings are more than 'sealed containers' is echoed in McDowell's writing about schools where social-spatial relations are constantly evolving and where the boundaries between home and school as places where teachers carry out their work are not clearly demarcated (1999). Similarly, McGregor argues that schools are in the process of being recursively redefined (2003). She supports McDowell's observation that the boundaries between home and school, as places to conduct school work, are not clear.

For McGregor this is a result of increased workload and government pressure whilst McDowell's reading of this has a more emotional dimension, describing the home as 'the locus of love, emotion and empathy' (1999: 75-76). She refers to Bachelard's concept of home transcending physical locational boundaries; 'all inhabited space bears the essence of home'. Bachelard describes the home as a site for constituting a 'community of memory' (Bachelard 1969:2), again linking place with identity.

Similarly, bell hooks writes about home as being more than one static site: 'home is no longer just one place' (hooks 1990: 148). For hooks, however, home takes on a different meaning: it is a political site of resistance.

It is many locations. Home is that place which enables and promotes varied and ever-changing perspectives, a place where one discovers new ways of seeing reality, frontiers of difference

(hooks 1990: 148)

In writing about the history of African-Americans, hooks discusses how they as a group and, in particular, the women have recognised the 'subversive value of homeplace' (1990:47) because it was a place where people could 'strive to be subjects, not objects', a place where people 'could be affirmed' in their 'minds and hearts' and be restored to the 'dignity denied' in the 'outside world' (1990: 42). hooks argues that without the space to construct homeplace, a community of resistance cannot be built.

So in this selection of the literature at least, space is a political concept bound up with notions of identity. Keith and Pile (1993) summarise these points, arguing that we construct multiple identities in relation to spatial contexts, and in addition we also leave gaps or spaces in the identities 'we present in different socio-spatial settings' (1993: 225). As a result of these gaps or spaces, they argue, 'there is hope for us all' because these gaps allow us to 'refuse to let things - in this case particular political mobilizations around political concepts of space - settle'. So, for Keith and Pile, 'space is constitutive of the social; spatiality is constitutive of the personal and the political' (1993:225). This may be what hooks is alluding to when she talks of 'choosing marginality as the space of resistance' (1990:

152). For hooks there has to be another choice beyond assimilation, imitation or rebellion of the 'centre-space' if this centre has been created by a dominating power of force. Soja and Hooper (1993) draw on Foucault's concepts of domination and exploitation when they talk of a hegemonic power which 'actively produces and reproduces difference as a key strategy to create and maintain modes of social and spatial division that are advantageous to continued empowerment' (1993:183-5). They talk of the 'spaces that difference makes' as being a 'thirdspace of political choice' (1993:192) where choosing to inhabit this thirdspace means moving across and through the boundaries that are being imposed. Gruenwald calls for a critical pedagogy of places:

Place becomes a critical construct ... because it focuses attention on analyzing how economic and political decisions impact particular places ...[it] foregrounds a narrative of local and regional politics that is attuned to the particularities of where people actually live, and that is connected to global development trends that impact local places. Articulating a critical pedagogy of place is thus a response against educational reform policies and practices that disregard places and that leave assumptions about the relationship between education and the politics of economic development unexamined.

(2003:3).

Finally, Elbaz-Luwisch writes that what is lacking in the research 'is a sense of the teacher teaching in a place - a given location that is not only specific, describable and distinct from other locations, but that holds meaning, that matters to the persons who inhabit it' (2004:388). In the following section

I look at some of the literature which is about the places the teachers in my study inhabit: high poverty urban schools.

2.7 Challenging inner city schools

In some of the literature about schools located within socioeconomically disadvantaged communities there is recognition that they face a number of challenges:

These schools operate under one or more of the following conditions
– high teacher turnover, newly appointed teachers and leaders, low student retention, high student and teacher absenteeism, and persistently low student achievement

(Johnston and Hayes 2007: 371).

According to Ball, the 'accountability culture' of schools described in section 2.4 above usually has stronger implications for schools serving disadvantaged communities with low socioeconomic status:

Those in a weak 'market' or performance position may well submit to becoming whatever it seems necessary to become in order to survive. Performance improvements may become the only basis for decision-making. The heart of the educational project is gouged out and left empty. Authenticity is replaced entirely by plasticity. The organization becomes an 'auditable commodity'. For others, in a stronger 'market' or performance position the impact of performativity may be different; either forms of complacency or reinforcement and/or the possibility of retaining commitment to non-performative values and practices. Elite institutions are the best

places to evade the judgements of the 'technicians of transformation'.

(Ball 2003: 225)

For schools who cannot evade these judgements, there is a discourse of failure surrounding them in the media and policy rhetoric where they are described as 'failing', (the Education Act of 1993 identified a small proportion of schools as 'failing to provide an acceptable standard of education'), or 'struggling' (Stoll and Fink 1996) or facing 'challenging circumstances':

The term 'challenging circumstances' usually means schools in communities with high poverty rates, high rates of English as a second language, high migrancy, high unemployment, poor housing, and so on.

(Levin 2006: 405)

The literature therefore highlights the influence of school context on school performance; Thrupp and Lupton in their exploration of the impact of socioeconomic status (SES) on schools found that 'SES composition affects school processes in numerous ways which would cumulatively boost the academic performance of schools in middle-class settings and drag it down in low socio-economic settings' (2006: 309). In the United Kingdom and the USA the focus has been on ways in which the academic underperformance of such schools can be 'turned around'. In the USA the focus has been on school-wide reform which aims to restore to health those low performing schools serving low socioeconomic status communities (Anyon 1997). Some of the literature has examined the impact and consequences of the *No Child Left Behind* policy (2001) on high

poverty schools in America and found that these school tend to fall short of the accountability measures inherent in the standardised testing used by the policy (Abedi 2004; Kim and Sunderman 2005; Fusarelli 2004). Murphy explains that whilst:

There is not much empirical evidence to guide policymakers and educators...there is no shortage of ideas being promulgated to turn around failing schools. Nearly all of these solutions leap from problems (i.e. failure) to solutions with remarkable little analysis of the variables and conditions in the school-failure algorithm. At best, solutions are grounded in some macro level theory of action about reform. For example, that competition via markets (e.g. choice) will encourage (or force) failing schools to improve and, if they do not, they will find their warrant to continue operations in question, if not withdrawn outright.

(2008: 2).

In the United Kingdom, the Education Reform Act of 1993 resulted in schools that were perceived as 'failing' being put on a programme of 'special measures' which involved specific targets and a series of inspection visits by Her Majesty's Inspectors who could remove the label of special measures or, in some cases, make the decision to close the school.

The school improvement movement places the responsibility for improving a school's performance upon the school itself. Levin compares schools who have not adopted school improvement strategies with individuals deliberately ignoring advice to eat healthily and to exercise (2006: 403). A central tenet of the school improvement movement is that all schools have the potential to improve and 'that there are certain internal conditions that

are conducive to raising performance' (Harris 2005: 573). The advocates of the school improvement movement all stress that schools can 'make a difference' (Silver 1994; Rutter et al 1979; Mortimore et al 1988; Reynolds and Cuttance 1992; D. Hargreaves 1998, Hopkins 2001; Harris 2002). Potter et al, in their review of *School Improvement for Schools Facing Challenging Circumstances*, conclude by developing a model of successful school improvement for under-performing schools, claiming that for schools which have not 'improved' or 'turned around' there is a need for 'greater external input and probably a more external locus of control' (2002: 252).

According to Gray, 'the most obvious contextual characteristic shared by schools in special measures is that they tend to be located in areas experiencing high levels of social deprivation' (2000: 7); Gray is one of a number of authors linking the labels of 'failing' and 'special measures' to socioeconomic context (Gewirtz 2002; Stoll and Fink 1996). The school improvement movement has its critics who argue that the school improvement agenda 'completely ignores the broader sociological problem of the relationship of social background and school achievement' (Thrupp 1998: 202). Others who uphold this view are Ball (1988) and Tomlinson (1997).

Thrupp and Lupton caution against generic improvement measures aimed at all 'failing' schools by emphasising that 'one SES school cannot be assumed to face the same contextual challenges as another' (2006:309-310). Thrupp and Willmott argue that school improvement theories are based on scant research and point out that 'if poverty has an impact on achievement, it is going to have a continuing impact until the poverty itself is addressed' (2003: 117). Thrupp and Willmott posit that effective teaching and learning takes place in schools that are deemed to be 'failing'

as well as those deemed to be 'successful'. They go on to recommend that teachers in contrasting schools have a mutual respect for the work that each do. One example of this recommendation is that teachers in more affluent schools be modest about the relative popularity of their schools, accepting that a school deemed to be of poor quality or failing may, in real terms, have teachers and senior staff who are working harder and smarter than themselves (2003: 118). By doing so, the authors hope that teachers in so called 'failing' schools will cease to feel devalued, will be less likely to leave, and that the children in such schools will receive the quality of teachers they deserve.

Whitty (2002) and Ball (2003) argue that the school improvement movement has done little to improve performance and that instead it has had negative consequences because of the additional pressure caused by the constant scrutiny of schools in disadvantaged communities who find it difficult to meet the normative outcomes and targets sanctioned by the effective school improvement movement. Nicolaidou and Ainscow point out the flaws in the argument that 'inspection reports are published with a view that such a 'naming and shaming' strategy will promote improvement and effectiveness' (2005: 232) by emphasising that the 'traumatic experience' of being placed in special measures has 'negative effects on their morale and self-esteem' (2005:232). Their analysis found that by 'stigmatising a school as failing, its internal capacities to change may be disabled' (2005:232), 'the prevailing culture is one of recrimination, denial and negative emotions' (2005:237) and that 'special measures presented barriers to staff collaboration' (2005:241). They conclude that 'our understanding of such schools indicates that they are faced with complex, and simultaneously, unique issues' (2005: 245).

Some of the literature from an Australian perspective takes on board this need to think about the influence of context. Thomson writes about the 'thisness' of individual schools and communities and argues against the 'homogenising rhetoric of disadvantaged schools' (2002: 174). There is a body of research underpinning the Priority Schools Funding Programme in Queensland which is based on 'social justice and equity principles' that argues that 'quality teaching and learning is more than a technical process. It is a social and cultural activity' (NSW DET 2003: 3). One approach is that of 'productive pedagogies' which as Hayes, Lingard and Mills explain is

not an attempt to de-skill teachers. Hence the pluralising of pedagogy to imply that there is no one true way of teaching and that appropriate pedagogies for particular contexts need to be determined by teachers, often in conjunction with their students and local communities.

(Hayes *et al* 2000:12)

Within this literature (and that of disadvantaged schools outside of Australia) there is a growing body that looks at the role of *leadership* (Blackmore and Thomson 2004; Hayes, Christie, Mills and Lingard 2004; Fullan 2001; Leithwood and Steinbach 2003) and of *community* in relation to disadvantaged schools. Whilst the study of leadership is beyond the scope of this study, community has emerged as being an important concept and some of the literature about community is reviewed in the following section.

2.7 Community

Lave and Wenger coined the term 'communities of practice' when they applied a social theory of learning to an ethnographic study of apprenticeship (1991). They found that the traditional understandings of expert/apprentice relationships were challenged and better explained by 'one of changing participation and identity transformation in a community of practice' (Wenger 1998: 11). The concept of groups of people learning together has been popular and the study of 'communities of practice' has been applied to various studies of organisations and groups of people, with the conclusion that:

communities of practice are everywhere and that we are generally involved in a number of them - whether that is at work, school, home, or in our civic and leisure interests. In some groups we are core members, in others we are more at the margins

(Smith 2003:2).

However whilst Wenger states that the theories underpinning 'communities of practice' are relevant to a wide range of contexts including schools (1998: 225), his ideas have been mostly applied to studies of organisational learning, especially with regard to business environments. Recently however studies of leadership have turned to the importance of communities of practice as a means to improve school performance and to engender a sense of professional responsibility amongst members of the school community. Hoyle and Wallace advise that this adoption of the theory can be misused if it is not properly understood:

Communities of practice can play a significant role in fostering professionalism (Wenger 1998, Bolam et al. 2005). They are

inherently temporary, protean and have an evolving membership. The success of such communities leads to the managerialist temptation to transform them into formal components of the organization.

(Hoyle and Wallace 2009: 212)

The notion of community is contestable within literature about schools and schooling. Furman traces the interest in schools as communities back to the work of Dewey, *The School and Society* in 1899 (Furman 2002: 5). Westheimer is critical of the 'many underspecified uses of the word community ...in the abundance of recent reform literature on teacher professional communities' (1998: 1). He argues that the increased interest in 'the ties that bind' teachers together has been based on under-developed understandings of school workplaces. It has been adopted by the effective schools movement who use the term 'collegiality' to impose professional contexts for teachers to work together (typical mechanisms include whole-school targets, enforced team-teaching and coaching). These are enacted through a vision of the school as a 'professional community' where relationships are largely based on professional rather than personal ties (D. Hargreaves 1995). Such mechanisms have been described as a form of 'imposed collegiality' (Little and McLaughlin 1993) or 'contrived collegiality' (Hargreaves and Dawe 1990). Hargreaves describes school settings where there are groups of teachers working together but in ways in which outsiders to these sub-groups feel isolated; he refers to this as 'balkanisation' (Hargreaves 1994b).

Smyth outlines a range of ways in which recent educational policies in the western world have been 'wrongheaded' and argues that the rigidly

imposed structures and strategies have impeded the development of relational ties and community building:

Taken collectively, this ensemble of supposed remedies can only be regarded as a crude form of barbarism of the most primitive kind, and it is having the effect of literally gouging the heart and soul out of teaching and learning.

(Smyth 2007: 228)

Huberman describes structures that impose professional community as 'naïve' and challenges the notion that collegiality is a totally positive experience:

the lure of a common mission enacted by a family of like-minded adults – of professional work planned, observed, and carried out in concert – can be a hazardous one...it allows some people to interpret the professional practice of others in moral terms rather than technical terms...[and] it may not square with the actual conditions, limitations, and perversities of school life...by obliging people to subscribe to commitments they may not have or may feel unable to meet under normal working conditions, we run the risk of creating more defensiveness and vulnerability among staff, all in perpetuating most of the same instructional practices.

(1993: 13)

Similarly, De Lima challenges the 'current dominant discourse on the virtues of teacher collaboration' (2003:197). In his study of student teachers' attempts to become part of a collaborative school culture, he found that despite external appearances of collegiality, the reality for these beginner teachers was 'professional isolation':

It seems that it is not the structural arrangements themselves that are positive or negative for teachers, but what actually occurs within them. ... in spite of the regular structuring of relationships among the different parties involved, these arrangements served basically to transmit technical knowledge and to enact evaluation procedures that were highly individualistic. The student teachers were thus socialized into a view of teaching as the production of individualized acts and products for which only the person who plans and performs them is accountable

(De Lima 2003: 215)

In contrast to notions of professional community in the school effectiveness and improvement literature, are those who write about professional communities based on shared values and a commitment to social justice and learning for all (teachers and students) involved (Westheimer 1998; McLaughlin and Talbert 2001; Cochran-Smith and Lytle 1992). McLaughlin argues that there is a need to change from the 'metaphors of school as a formal organization [which] direct attention to incentives, management structures, oversight and accountability, governance, technology, and material aspects of the workplace' to a 'metaphor of community' (1993: 99). For McLaughlin this would highlight the importance of 'collegiality and collaboration' which 'indicates a professional community with norms of innovation and learning in which teachers are enthusiastic about their work and the focus is on devising strategies that enable all students to prosper' (1993: 94). According to McLaughlin's research, teachers who are in schools with low norms of collegiality and 'characterize their workplace in terms of norms of privacy also see their job as routine, their workplace setting as highly bureaucratized, and their subject matter as static or unchanging. Teachers who describe their workplace settings in this way are less likely to innovate and to report support for learning...to lower

expectations of their students, and to report low levels of commitment to teaching' (1993: 94). But she cautions that strong professional communities are not always a good thing because they can generate rigidity and be inflexible.

As Achinson writes, 'the metaphor of community was to replace the formal organisation or factory model that had made so many schools alienating places for both students and adults' (2002: 6). Strike outlines the obviously attractive features often associated with community: 'membership, rootedness, belonging' and the inherently good 'socially beneficial characteristics as trust, loyalty and mutual attachment' (2000: 617) before going on to detail 'certain bads' such as lack of inclusivity, and a tendency towards 'sectarianism' that can 'erode such public goods as tolerance or citizenship' (2000: 618). Strike concludes that it is important for practice and policy to examine not whether schools should be communities but 'how can we have schools that are communities in which the 'bads' of community are minimised and the goods maximised' (2000: 639).

Tönnies developed the theory of 'gemeinschaft' and 'gesellschaft' to describe qualities of human relationships and interactions.

My theory will concentrate on investigating only relationships that are based on positive mutual affirmation. Every relationship of this kind involves some kind of balance between unity and diversity. This consists of mutual encouragement and the sharing of burdens or achievements, which can be seen as expressions of people's energies and wills. The social group brought into existence by this positive relationship, envisaged as functioning both inwardly and outwardly as a unified living entity ... and the social bond that

stems from it, may be conceived either as having real organic life, and that is the essence of Community (Gemeinschaft); or else as a purely mechanical construction, existing in the mind, and that is what we think of as Society (Gesellschaft).

(Tönnies 2001: 17).

Applying Tönnies' theory, the effective school model of a professional school community represents a shift towards *gesellschaft* because of the imposition of business models of performativity and accountability (Merz and Furman 1997). In contrast, depictions of schools where relationships are 'personal, committed and familial' (Merz and Furman 1997:4) are representations of communities which are *gemeinschaft* in nature. According to Butler, belonging and participation in such relationships moves the individual from a sense of the 'I' to 'sedimentation of the we' (Butler 1993: 105). Through this metaphor of 'sedimentation', as different elements of the I 'settle' to consolidate bodies or groups of people that are 'phantasmatic efforts of alignments' (Butler 1993: 105), emerges the notion of an organic process of community. An important distinction between *gesellschaft* and *gemeinschaft* is that the former is an imposed community 'a mechanical aggregate and artefact' (Tönnies 2001: 19) whilst the latter evolves organically. For Tönnies, *gemeinschaft* is dependent upon kinship (relational ties), place (locational ties) and mind (ties of shared values) whilst *gesellschaft* is dependent upon external factors, contracts and motivations of self-interest. Strike emphasised the distinctions between the two types of community:

In the world of Gemeinschaft both people and practices are valued intrinsically. In Gesellschaft they are valued instrumentally. Gemeinschaft is where we belong. In Gesellschaft we are strangers.

(Strike 2000: 629)

Sergiovanni applied this theory to schools and explained that 'gemeinschaft and gesellschaft represent ideal types that do not exist in the real world in their pure forms...schools are never gemeinschaft or gesellschaft. They possess characters of both' (1994: 224). Sergiovanni drew on the theories of gemeinschaft and gesellschaft when he called for researchers to consider using a new metaphor to understand schools and suggested moving from metaphors of schools as organisations to schools as communities (1994: 217). Sergiovanni also added a fourth form of community, building on those of kinship, place and mind, 'communities of memory' (220).

The movement to adopt Tönnies concept of community in school settings was not without its critics. For example, Achinstein warns that, when teachers engage with collegial practices, what often emerges is conflict. She examines two schools with very different approaches to collaboration and discord and concludes that the ways in which they respond to conflict have an impact upon the successful implementation of a professional community:

It is through the examination of real teachers' lives that we can come to see the complexities of fostering unity amid diversity, and begin to unravel some of the promises and dilemmas engendered by the resurgence of a call for community for teachers and schools.

(2002: 20).

However, Sergiovanni makes the point that whilst 'there is no recipe for building community' (1994: 218) it is an outcome worth trying to reach because

replacing the medical metaphor of objectively delivering expert services to clients with the family metaphor of providing for students' needs as if they were our own children. Concern for the practice of teaching means understanding differently what teaching practice is in a school and who is responsible for it. Teachers are not only concerned about their own practice but about the larger practice – the practice of teaching itself that exists in the school. As teachers come to share in this common practice, collegueship becomes redefined as a morally held web of mutually held obligations and commitments.

(Sergiovanni 1994: 226).

Hargreaves wrote about the effects of years of 'soulless standardization' (2003: 6) underpinning, in his opinion, education policy in the United States and the United Kingdom. He claimed that these effects had led to living in a 'high-risk society' which 'extends to our personal lives, families, and communities' (2003: 49):

In high-school systems driven by performance results at the expense of relationships, too many adolescents find themselves disengaged from learning and alienated from society.

(2003:49)

Hargreaves goes further and attributes high-school shootings, financial insecurity and an erosion of humanitarianism to the 'collapse of community' (2003: 52). For Hargreaves, there is a need to return to teaching about values, social justice and caring.

Teaching beyond the knowledge society therefore means serving as a courageous counterpoint for it in order to foster the values of community, democracy, humanitarianism, and cosmopolitan identity. Without these, there is little hope of sustained security for any of us.

(Hargreaves 2003: 59)

The review of the literature enabled me to develop an understanding of the ways in which some scholars have attributed high rates of attrition within the profession to changes to teachers' professional lives. The review also helped to consolidate my view that the solution to the problems of teacher attrition and retention lies not in an increased emphasis on recruitment but rather in a closer examination of what might be the underlying factors affecting the choice of some teachers to remain in the profession. This is particularly pertinent to long-serving teachers in challenging schools who are the subjects of my study. The selection of some of the literature on identity, place and community reviewed in this chapter was guided and inspired by the data generated and will be revisited later when I report and analyse the findings of the study in chapters four to six. In the following chapter, I outline the design of my study and the choices I have made in order to address my research question and to seek ways of learning from the lives of the long serving teachers in three inner city schools.

Chapter 3: Methodology

3.1 Introduction to the Research Design

This research design, which utilises career history interviews, is qualitative in nature, as such an approach is 'suited to examining the complex and dynamic contexts of public education in its many forms, sites, and variations' and is 'demanded if policy, legislation, and practice are to be sensitive to social needs' (Lincoln and Cannella 2004: 7). Denzin and Lincoln offer a generic definition of qualitative research that resonates with the motivation for this study described above:

Qualitative research is a situated activity that locates the observer in the world. It consists of a set of interpretive, material practices that make the world visible. These practices transform the world. They turn the world into a series of representations...At this level, qualitative research involves an interpretive, naturalistic approach to the world. This means that qualitative researchers study things in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of, or interpret, phenomena in terms of the meaning people bring to them.

(Denzin and Lincoln 2005: 3)

The drive for the study came from sharing Sikes' conviction that teaching is 'intensely personal and relationship-based' work and that it is important to find out 'about the sort of people teachers are, and how they see themselves and the work they do' (1999: 106). Nearly twenty years ago, Goodson argued that in order to understand teacher development we 'need to know more about teachers' lives' (1991: 35) and that teachers' voices should be 'heard both loudly and articulately' (1992: 112). Goodson and

Numan, in an examination of teachers' daily work, promoted the idea that because teachers are 'the central agent in the delivery of all versions of schooling' it is important to listen to their voices to understand different perspectives about 'new moves to reform, restructure and reconceptualise schooling' (2002: 274-5).

This has particular resonance for this study, which has a specific educational and historical context in that the teachers' workplaces are in the process of being restructured by the policy of creating Academies and their work is reconceptualised within a culture of accountability and performance. The importance of locating teacher voice within these contexts was a key factor in the choice of career-history interviews used in the study.

The data corpus is made up of interviews with twenty teachers from three schools serving disadvantaged communities that were in the process of being structurally reorganised as part of the Local Authority's Academies programme. The data collection began in June 2006 and was concluded in April 2007. The criteria for drawing up the sample of teachers from these three schools for the doctoral study were that the participants had been teaching in the community for twenty years or more and were willing to take part in the research. This resulted in a sample of twenty long-serving teachers, which comprised eleven men and nine women. It is worth pointing out at this stage that there were no discernible gender differences in terms of the responses to the interview questions. This may be because of the relatively small sample size.

3.1.0 Setting the context

One element of recent educational policy is known as the 'academisation process' (Gorard 2009). Academies are schools which are externally sponsored by businesses and are located in deprived areas of the country; the 'Academies programme aims to challenge the culture of educational underattainment and to deliver real improvements in standards' (DfES 2006). In 2005, there were proposals to build three Academies within one inner-city Local Authority. The proposal to introduce the academies was part of the Local Authority's 'exciting 'once in a generation' opportunity to transform secondary and special education in the city...to continue our drive to improve standards, 'according to a press release (Way Ahead for City's Secondary Schools, 2005).

Consequently the existing schools in the designated areas for these academies faced closure, amalgamation or significant structural change. In each case the character and ethos of the existing school would be radically changed. In order to position the research within one specific socio-political context, it was decided to locate the study in three schools affected by this policy.

3.1.1 Description of the schools

The data for the research project are derived from three schools within one Local Authority in the Midlands. In order to maintain their anonymity, I have chosen to call the schools The Bernard L Stone School; Joseph Moore School and Thomas Tunney. The three schools serve communities which are located within socially deprived areas and are typically depicted in the media in this way:

...the daily problems inevitably reflect the social deprivation of the local community. On the day of our visit, (HEADTEACHER) had excluded a boy for 25 days for assaulting a teacher, while the same morning a stolen car (admittedly not taken by pupils from the school) had been driven at high speed around the school perimeter, providing an entertaining distraction for his youngsters. Burnt-out vehicles are regularly dumped on the school premises and litter blows around the playgrounds.

(Smithers 2003)

The three schools are briefly described below in order to try and convey what Thomson describes as the particular 'thisness' of each site.

In order to understand thisness, it is necessary to think of the school as a particular material place. Each school 'place' is a distinctive blend of people, happenings, resources, issues, narratives, truths, knowledges and networks, in and through which are the combined effects of power-saturated geographies and histories are made manifest

(Thomson 2002: 73)

The Bernard L Stone School

'the city school has suffered the unenviable fate of being labelled the worst in the country' (Local Paper, March 30th 2006)¹

This was the site for the pilot study (briefly described in section 3.2 below).

The school was located in the east of the city and the large 1960s structure

¹ Throughout this chapter, documents which could compromise the anonymity of the schools have been cited but not referenced. These include local newspaper stories, the DCSF Expression of Interests, and Ofsted reports.

was set in attractive grounds. The school was built for much larger numbers than it catered for at the time of the research. According to the 'Official Expression of Interest' there were 390 pupils on roll though the school capacity was 750 (DCSF June 2008). It served an area of the city 'which suffers severe social and economic disadvantage' (Ofsted 2007). According to this Ofsted report, roughly 40% of students were drawn from minority ethnic groups and a higher proportion than average had a first language other than English. The proportion of students with learning difficulties or disabilities was much higher than found in most schools.

The school had falling numbers of students and high levels of mobility. It was also part of an Education Action Zone (Education Action Zones are partnerships, funded and answerable to the DfES, of interested parties working together to overcome educational and social disadvantage within a community). In the Local Authority's original plans, the Bernard L Stone School was to be closed and an Academy built on its site with the staff and students of the existing school transferring to the Academy. However, ten months later the Local Authority revised their plans and stated that the new Academy would be run by a rival school and would be built in a new location. This led to a period of instability for the staff and students of Bernard L Stone, and at the time of the data collection this insecurity continued as the 'Official Expression of Interest' necessary for the building of the Academy had not yet been processed by the DCSF.

As a consequence of the uncertainty over its future, the school has considerable difficulty in recruiting a full complement of permanent staff.

(Ofsted 2007: 3)

In addition, throughout this period of turbulence, there had been several changes to the leadership of the school. At the time of the announcement of the proposal that the school was to become an Academy, the school was led by an acting Headteacher who subsequently was promoted to Headteacher before leaving to take up a headship in another school. A member of the Senior Leadership Team was promoted to acting Headteacher in 2007 to lead the school to its closure date, all of these changes involved a consequent change of personnel within the Senior Leadership Team.

Joseph Moore School

'volatile and sometimes dangerous comprehensive school'

(Local Paper, June 28th 2006)

This small school was located in the north of the city. According to the 'Official Expression of Interest' the school roll was projected to fall from 523 pupils to 382 in the year that the proposed Academy would open (DfES 2006). It was in an area of social and economic deprivation which was designated an Education Action Zone in 1999. Over 85% of the students were from White British backgrounds, the remaining student population was from a small range of different ethnic backgrounds. The school had been built in 1929 and although the condition of the building was poor the site was of architectural interest and the staff and students talked about it with fondness. In March 2005, the school gained its specialist sports college status with information and communication technology (ICT) as a

second specialism. It was proposed that the school be merged with a neighbouring school to become an Academy serving the North of the city.

Thomas Tunney School

'During its most recent Ofsted inspection, an inspector confided that it was the second worst secondary school building he'd seen in his entire career'

(The Guardian, March 18th, 2003)

Thomas Tunney School was a much 'smaller than average size secondary school' with 594 pupils on role according to its Ofsted report in 2007. It was situated in the north west of the city in an area of high deprivation. The school had falling rolls and above average levels of mobility. Pupils' attainment on entry to the school was well below average and the number of pupils with learning difficulties was higher than average. Less than 10% of pupils were from a minority ethnic background and almost all of these pupils had English as a first language. Thomas Tunney was also part of an Education Action Zone. The school was designated to close and become an academy specialising in health and science in September 2009. One of the sponsors of this Academy was the local University. The poor condition of the 1960's school buildings were referred to quite often by both the staff and the students.

The three schools shared some commonality. Since the introduction of school league tables in 1992, each of the three schools had taken its turn at being labelled the 'worst in the country' by the local press and at varying

times the schools had been designated by the inspection regime in categories describing them as having 'Serious Weaknesses' or in need of 'Special Measures'. The schools served three of the most disadvantaged areas within the city; areas which are ranked amongst the 10% most deprived in the country². The proportion of students with learning difficulties or disabilities was much higher than found in most schools. The schools all had falling numbers of students and high levels of student mobility.

Despite these turbulent times, it was not difficult to create a sample of twenty teachers whose years of experience within inner-city education collectively totalled 614 years.

3.2 The pilot

A pilot study in one of the schools, Bernard L Stone, was undertaken in order to reduce the risk of potential problems in the full research design (Van Teijlingen and Hundley 2001). The pilot study attempted to understand how a small group of six long serving teachers' perceptions of their working lives were shaped by discourses about education within the United Kingdom. One aim of the pilot was to explore whether the semi-structured interviews would generate rich data for analysis. The second aim was to examine the ways in which a Critical Discourse Analysis methodological approach could offer a lens through some of the ideological constructs within globalised educational discourse were 'naturalised' (Fairclough 2003) within these teachers' voices. The study was designed to trial the application of a specific model of Critical Discourse Analysis to

² The information is available on a website which has not been fully referenced because the name of the city is included.

interview data. Hyatt's model of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) was chosen because his design accounts for specific socio-political contexts (in this case the Academisation policy) within a CDA framework (Hyatt 2005).

The analysis found that the qualitative interview schedule generated rich data and seemed to provide a way of analysing teacher voice. The application of Hyatt's model to this data set produced an analysis which showed that some globalised discourse of 'managerialism' and 'marketisation' had been 'naturalised' into the voices of the sample of long-serving teachers. The pilot study found tensions in trying to apply an existing model of analysis, namely Hyatt's framework of critical discourse analysis (2005), because of the complexity of the interview data which required a much deeper analysis. These issues are discussed more fully in McIntyre (2006). Accordingly, the decision was made to work from the data in the doctoral study, to allow the data to drive the analysis rather than try and fit the data to an existing schema. This process is described more fully in section 3.5 below. The data generated for this pilot have been re-analysed for this present study (discussed in section 3.4 below).

3.3 Data generation

The following sections describe various considerations and decisions made in the period of data generation activities which lasted for a period of around four months. It is important to note at this stage, that whilst there is a separate section outlining ethical considerations and implications for this, the approach of Kvale and Brinkmann has been followed in that I have been mindful that:

Ethical issues go through the entire process of an interview investigation, and potential ethical concerns should be taken into consideration from the very start of an investigation to the final report.

(2009: 62)

3.3.1 Negotiating access

Access to the sites was negotiated with the aid of my PhD supervisor and existing contacts with individuals within the sites. I had originally intended to try and collect data from a school in the north of the city centre which was going to be amalgamated with a 'rival' school in a process which would involve closing both existing schools down and re-opening a new Academy on a new site. However the head of the school declined to grant access to her staff as she felt there was already too much pressure on the staff involved and because the school was potentially facing an Ofsted inspection during the period of my data collection. Goodson warns that because of 'recent changes and reforms' in teaching this 'is a difficult and, in some sense, a dangerous time to be promoting studies of the teacher's life and work' (2003: 57). It is therefore not surprising that the head teacher of this first school was sensitive in this regard. Fortunately, for my study, the headteacher of the school they were amalgamating with gave permission for me to conduct the research in his school. This forced me to consider more fully the ethical issues surrounding who gives the consent for the data generation to take place. Whilst I needed the permission of the headteachers in the schools that gave me access to potential research participants, I had to consider whether 'subtle pressure' had been put upon the 'subordinates [teachers] to participate' (Kvale and Brinkmann: 2009: 71). Ensuring that I went through the procedures for obtaining written

'informed consent' for each participant was the way in which I felt I could alleviate some of these concerns.

It was intended that the sample of interview participants be drawn from those who were willing to take part and who met all of the following criteria;

- the participant was eligible (or has already received) the local authority long-service award
- the participant had worked within the school for a significant proportion of their career
- the participant was working in the school at the time of the announcement of the change to secondary provision within the Local Authority.

In one school, I drew up the list and negotiated access with participants on an individual basis. This was because I had an existing relationship with the participants within the school having worked there for most of my teaching career. However in the other two schools the headteachers looked at these selection criteria and drew up a list of potential participants. In one of these schools all the participants on this list were interviewed whilst in the other school six of the original eight took part in the research. The remaining two were off sick during the period of my research in the school.

During the process of negotiating access, I found it helpful to highlight my own ongoing experience as a teacher in an inner-city school. Throughout the data generation and analysis I was thus positioned as an actor within the discourse with, in Fairclough's terms, a definite 'social position' (2001: 236).

Gaining access through existing networks – Bernard L Stone

The negotiation of access to the participants was different in each school. I had worked in 'Bernard L Stone' for a number of years and the interviewees were all long-standing colleagues and friends. Each participant gave up their non-contact time to be interviewed and the interviews usually took place wherever I could gain access to a quiet place at the time. Five of the interviews took place in a deputy head's office. One interview took place in a small office with windows onto a teaching space reserved for students with emotional needs.

There were some ethical implications inherent in conducting the research in my own workplace. The problem arose from my dual status as both teaching colleague and researcher. Unlike James, in her role as participant observer on the nursing ward, a teacher cannot distinguish herself from her colleagues and be identified as a researcher by wearing different clothes as state school teachers have no compulsory corporate uniform (James 1984: 136). It was necessary to establish that the research was overt and ensure that the people within the field understood that everything seen and heard was on-record unless explicitly directed otherwise. This was made clear with each interviewee when negotiating the fieldwork, as was the need for them to provide 'informed consent'.

Kvale and Brinkmann describe 'informed consent' as the process by which potential research participants are informed of the overall design and purpose of the research and which 'involves obtaining the voluntary participation of the people involved, and informing them of their right to withdraw from the study at any time' (2009: 70). Details of the information sheet about the study and the consent form signed by those participants who took part are provided in Appendix A.

Gaining access through the snowball effect– Thomas Tunney

Access to Thomas Tunney was initially negotiated through my supervisor after some initial difficulties in gaining a response from the Acting Head in her role as gate-keeper. This resulted in a meeting with the Acting Head who supplied me with a list of prospective participants. I interviewed the Acting Head first and then she introduced me to my second interviewee. This second interviewee advised me to interview one of his colleagues as she was retiring that week; he made the original contact with her. As I was leaving the site after this second interview I happened to see the Acting Head on the corridor and she opened a classroom door and introduced me to my fourth interviewee. After this period of 'snowballing semi-coercion' my access to the participants on her original list seemed to disappear. I tried to telephone the school to speak to individuals but rarely made contact with any. Eventually I asked another teacher in the school, who I had met at a conference previously, to try and make contact with the other participants. This was successful as her good-humoured approach seemed to allay any possible fears and help them to feel positive about being involved in the research. However with all my participants I ensured that they understood their involvement in the research was voluntary and that they could refuse to take part. Once I explained what I was doing and shared my outline of the research project with them they seemed happy to be interviewed and signed the participant consent form thereby providing 'informed consent' (Taylor 2001: 21).

The interviews at Thomas Tunney took place in a range of locations each chosen by the participant. They usually took place in their teaching space or their office if they had one. One took place in the library at the end of the school day.

Gaining access through the gatekeeper – Joseph Moore

In the north of the city two schools were to be amalgamated to become an Academy. I contacted a local authority staff member with responsibility for development of the Academy and he provided the initial contact with the headteacher at Joseph Moore. I then met the headteacher to explain the project. At that meeting the headteacher drew up a list of participants and said he would arrange a timetable for the interviews which would take place over consecutive Thursdays for a period of three weeks.

When I arrived for the first of these days, the receptionist was expecting me and there was a room booked for me to conduct the interviews in. Each participant had been contacted by the head and turned up at the appropriate time. Again this had ethical implications; I was worried about the participants feeling pressurised to take part and so I went through the same procedure described above to ensure I received 'informed consent'.

The cohort of twenty long-serving teachers represents a range of experience within the profession, in the sense that some have taken a pastoral route alongside those who have taken a department management route through the profession in a range of subject areas. Two of the participants were Acting Headteachers of their school; another of the participants has been promoted to the role of Acting Headteacher in the third school since the data were collected. Six have Assistant Headteacher roles. Ten have middle manager roles. Those with no management responsibility have some type of whole school role such as ICT co-ordinator.

Eight of the participants had worked at the same establishment throughout their career. Five participants had joined their current school because their previous school was being closed. One was deployed from another school. Three were carrying out different roles in the schools before being approached by the schools to apply for a permanent position. The remaining three applied for a post that had been externally advertised.

3.3.3 Descriptions of the participants

The interviews, which were one-off events, record a snapshot view of the participants' memories of their working lives. These are context-dependent. By this I mean that the place and the timing of the interview will have influenced what the participants talked about or presented as significant to them at that moment in time and place. All of the interviews took place at a significant time in the long-serving teachers' careers as they captured a specific socio-political moment in the history of schooling within the Local Authority; the introduction of the Academies. However within this, there were more localized contexts, so for example, impending retirement or news of an imminent Ofsted inspection will have had an effect on the ways in which individual participants remembered their careers in schools. I have tried to provide a portrait of each of the teachers in the descriptions below. The information for the descriptions are grounded in the information generated during the interview conversations and are not intended to represent any more than an introduction to the long serving teachers at a specific point in time. In order to avoid trying to speak for the teachers, I have presented the descriptions in the third person and supported my observations with actual comments from the interviews reproduced in italics. Whilst I have endeavoured to find a way of presenting the voices of the teachers, what follows is still an interpretation of the information and should be read as such.

Bernard L Stone

Liz

Liz had taught in the Science department at Bernard L Stone for 19 years. At the time of the interview she had worked for the authority for 31 years. She was a member of the Senior Leadership Team, as Assistant Head with responsibility for Key Stage 3. Liz's husband had worked at the school too, as Head of Science. He had retired a few years previously but worked on a part time basis as the school's examination officer. Liz and her husband had lived in a house at the top of the school drive during the early part of their marriage and she described most of their social life as being centered around events at the school. Liz had originally trained as a primary teacher but had been asked informally by a former head teacher to join the Science department on a temporary basis to cover a period of maternity leave. When the teacher she was covering returned to school, Liz described a post being advertised that seemed to have been created for her ('science teacher required; an ability to play the piano would be an advantage'). She worked with the special needs groups in Science for most of her time at Bernard L Stone and had held a variety of pastoral roles within the school. She explained during her interview that she enjoyed working with the children and that her role on the SLT was not where she saw her career developing as she felt she was dealing with the negative rather than the positive aspects of the work.

The interview took place in one of the deputy headteacher's offices, next door to the staffroom. Liz throughout the interview made references to the ways in which her husband and later her children had been involved in her work in the school. When asked if she would go on to work in the Academy, Liz replied that she thought she would try and apply for early retirement but that, like her husband, she would hope to come back and help out in the school (*'I can't see it not being a part of my life and if I retire I can still see myself being associated with it in some way whether it be coming in voluntarily to do displays or coming in and being the attendance officer. I can see it going on for some time really.'*).

Through my continued contact with Bernard L Stone, I knew that a year after the interview took place, Liz became Acting Headteacher of the school.

Stewart

Stewart had taught at Bernard L Stone for 27 years at the time of the interview. He was a Head of Year and a Science teacher. The interview took place in a small room, which looked onto the 'Star' room (a space designated for working with pupils with social and emotional needs) where a small group of pupils were working with some adults. I interviewed Stewart shortly after he had returned to school after a period of illness and he talked about how he felt the staff and pupils had made his return to work easier through their support. Throughout his interview Stewart talked

about taking children on camps and trips. Prior to becoming a teacher he had been an Outward Bounds instructor. He also spoke about the importance of the pastoral side of teaching and of building relationships with students and their families. He appeared to empathise with some of the problems faced by the students and talked quite emotionally about a range of sensitive topics. He expressed concerns about the school closing and becoming an Academy and had a strong personal reaction (*'I'm dismayed. Very dismayed'*) and said that the LA's decision angered him. He stated that he would not be seeking a position in the new structure.

Marilyn

Marilyn had taught at Bernard L Stone for the whole of her career which at the time of the interview amounted to 31 years in the profession. Marilyn was a member of the SLT, an Assistant Head with responsibility for Key Stage 4. She also taught Food Technology and Health and Social Care. The interview with Marilyn began in one of the deputy head's offices and then moved because the room was needed to deal with a troubled student. We continued in the Career Advice room. As we walked along the corridor, Marilyn engaged with a student who was passing in a conversation about the local football team of which she was an ardent fan, she wore ear-rings with their mascot during the interview. Marilyn talked of strong bonds with the children and explained that she had taught generations of some families, she also mentioned that she had no children of her own. Marilyn emphasised that there had been a culture shift during her time in the school and that some of the pastoral elements of school life had been replaced by a more academic focus which she thought was the right approach. She spoke about how the school had *'been fighting for recognition all the time I've been here and just as we are making progress it seems that they are now closing us and I ought to think: 'Why the hell am I bothering?' But we are still bothering.'* She said that she planned to retire when Bernard L Stone closed.

Kathryn

Kathryn had been teaching in the Modern Languages Department at Bernard L Stone for 34 years. She was also a Head of Year. Kathryn appeared to be very nervous throughout the interview and her answers were very succinct. When I gave her the transcript to check afterwards, she apologised for the brevity of her responses saying that interviews always made her feel anxious.

During the interview, she spoke of how different the school and its community was to her own experiences before teaching, especially with regard to the multicultural dimensions of school life. She described the school as a *'caring community'*. Kathryn's daughter had also worked at the school as a teaching assistant though she hadn't enjoyed it. As she reflected on her time in the school, Kathryn said that she had *'always enjoyed the atmosphere'* but that she felt that the pupils had become more *'confrontational'*. Kathryn referred to working in the inner-city

as *'challenging and rewarding'*. Although Kathryn planned to retire when the school closed, she said that the decision to close the school had made her *'feel devalued'*.

Dean

Dean had taught at Bernard L Stone for 26 years and during that time had held a variety of positions. He had very close links with the community which he referred to during his interview. During his time in school, Dean had put on a number of drama productions and shows and he referred to these with a sense of pride and fondness (as did other teachers in the school). He also spoke of other extra-curricular events he had been involved in, including the creation of a nature area within the school grounds. Throughout his interview, Dean referred to the social aspects of school life for both students and teachers. He said that he felt this had been lost in recent times. He expressed frustration that the hard work of his colleagues was not recognised by people outside school and repeated that he was angry about the ways in which the decision about the future of education in the community had been taken. He was actually in favour of a new Academy as he said it might be good for the community but he was angry about the LA's authority to put the control of the Academy in the hands of the rival, more 'successful' school, *'It was the fact that they were closing the school and passing it over to someone who has worked against this school for so long and that's what made me bitter'*. Dean had taken retirement shortly before the interview took place but was working there in a part-time capacity on some areas of the 14-19 curriculum.

Isabel

At the time of the interview, Isabel had worked at Bernard L Stone for all 25 years of her career. She was Head of Modern Languages. Isabel had decided to send her daughter to the school after she had been unhappy with her son's experiences in another school. Isabel lived within the catchment area of the school and her children had attended the local primary school so she knew some of the families in the community. Isabel referred to her political beliefs many times in the interview and it seemed that this had influenced her decision both to work in the inner-city and send her children to local schools. Isabel spoke with empathy about the children and was anxious about the move to a larger school structure. She felt that the small size of the Bernard L Stone was a strength and that some of the pupils would be *'lost little souls in a school of two thousand'*. Isabel was uncertain about her future, she was too young for retirement but was not sure about whether she wanted to work in the new structure, saying that whilst she would *'wait and see'* she would *'avoid it'* if she could. She said she wanted to wait until her daughter left before she made any decisions.

Joseph Moore

The interviews at Joseph Moore all took place in a small meeting room leading off from the school reception. Each teacher arrived at reception to meet me according to the timetable set out by the headteacher.

Ava

Ava had been teaching at Joseph Moore for 12 years at the time of our interview. She held the position of Second in the Special Needs department. Prior to this, she had taught at another inner city school in the Local Authority for twenty years. When that school closed she was re-deployed to Joseph Moore. Although she had started her career as a PE teacher, she moved into Special Needs teaching, after she started a family, and went part-time. The experience of having lived through one school closure was something that Ava referred to frequently in the interview, *'I have experienced enormous lows because of it and my life changed completely'*. When I asked her about her reactions to the Local Authority's plans for Joseph Moore her response was, *'I have grave, grave, grave reservations in my heart'*. Throughout the interview, Ava spoke of how important the relationships she had built up with her colleagues had been during her career. Ava became very emotional at times during the interview, both when she spoke about the plans for the school and when she spoke about her family and the ways in which her working life had had an effect on her home life. She was very open about the difficulties of balancing commitments to her children, to her elderly sick parents and to her school work. When I asked her about her plans for the future, she explained that she felt that the easiest thing to do would be to look for a position in another school but that she intended to *'stick it out, go through with it, follow it on.'*

Frank

At the time of the interview, Frank was Assistant Headteacher at Joseph Moore. He had worked at the school for fifteen years and in inner city schools within the Local Authority for 25 years. Frank pointed out early in the interview that he had not sought out an Assistant Headship and that the senior management had approached him to take up the position. He had been the Head of English before this and explained that for a while he was doing both the Head of English and the Assistant Headship but that he had gone to the headteacher and said *'I am politically opposed to Academies but I'm determined to get a job down there and I said how shall I place myself for this academy? And he said well there aren't going to be a lot of positions for a Head of English/Assistant Head you ought to actually become more of an Assistant Head so I said Ok I'll come off Head of English which I did in September'*. Throughout the interview, Frank spoke about various ways in which he did things that were intended to *'stir it up a bit'*. He spoke with passion about the ways in which he encouraged his

colleagues to do things differently to continue to keep English teaching as interesting as possible. He said that he believed that the point of education was to *'turn out people who were happy and subversive'*.

Gary

At the time of the interview, Gary had worked at Joseph Moore for all 31 years of his career. He described his current position as Director of PE and School Sports and Assistant Headteacher. In his interview, Gary spoke about the ways in which his career in PE had developed and that he had gained a reputation both locally, where teachers in other schools emailed him for advice, and nationally, working with the Premier League. Gary explained that he felt that the PE department was recognised for its excellent teaching and he was proud of his involvement in the successful bid to become a school with Sports as a Specialist status. In terms of the proposed changes to the school structure, he said, *'we are going to be an academy no matter what we say and that's really annoying because as a school we are going on leaps and bounds'*. He intended to stay on and apply for a position in the new Academy but he was concerned that the proposed sponsors did not have Sports as a high priority: *'I am deciding if I am going to make a fuss about it and spoil my chances of a job there but I would need to email the Sports Schools Trust in London'*.

Grant

Grant, having worked at Joseph Moore for all of his 30 years of his teaching career, was Acting Headteacher at the time of the interviews. He, too, came to be interviewed in the same meeting room as the other teachers rather than meeting in his office. Grant's subject background was PE. During the interview, Grant appeared to be very candid about some of the highs and lows of his career. He spoke in detail about how a few years previously, he had applied for a deputy headship position within the school and how he had coped with the position being offered to an external candidate. This, and the experience of working with a particularly difficult head who put Grant in some very difficult situations with colleagues was the reason why he said now he always tried to have an open and honest approach with his staff, *'I keep saying to people look I don't want to promise you something that I can't do'*. Grant spoke about how at first adjusting to the headship role had been difficult as he found it *'an incredibly lonely role'*. Throughout the interview, Grant spoke about the importance of building strong relationships with his colleagues and with the students. During the interview, he gave lots of examples of initiatives and ways of working that he felt had helped take the school out of the Ofsted category of 'Special Measures'. He explained that these approaches were as a result of being *'braver'* and not following directives *'like sheep'*. He spoke about the challenges of leading a school that was going to merge with its traditional rival and become a new Academy. He said that he intended to work in the Academy when it opened.

Greg

At the time of the interview, Greg had been teaching for 29 years. Greg had worked in the science department at Joseph Moore for the past fifteen years. He had moved from another inner city school within the Authority to Joseph Moore when the headteacher at his previous school took up the headship at Joseph Moore. As well as a teacher of science, Greg was also a Head of Year and was involved in managing a range of Local Authority initiatives within the school. He said that he enjoyed the fact that the school was well regarded now by the Authority after a difficult period, *'now we have got out of special measures and we have continued to move there is nobody I know that has just fallen back into a comfort zone. It's always like now if there's something there that's going to happen 'shall we do it?' 'Yeah we'll do it'*. Greg spoke fondly of the students and their parents. He also spoke about the ways in which he tried to mentor younger teachers. Greg said that he wasn't worried about the proposed changes to the school, he felt that under Grant's leadership they were well prepared for working in the Academy, *'its not like all of a sudden well you're going to the Academy and everything is going to change if you actually look at the school we are down that road anyway'*. Greg talked a lot about change, he perceived that the school had moved on from the *'hideous time'* before and during Special Measures, and that he would be applying for a position in the Academy but if he was unsuccessful he would view the opportunity to apply elsewhere as *'a breath of fresh air isn't it? So there's no fear in that for me at all'*.

James

James had been teaching for 27 years and had been at Joseph Moore for 19 of these when I interviewed him. His first school had encountered financial difficulties, 19 years ago, and he had been redeployed to Joseph Moore where he has worked his way up to Head of Humanities. James arrived slightly late for the interview because he said he had been supporting a colleague within the department who was having some difficulties. During the interview, James talked about the difficult relationship he had had with a former headteacher and in particular about the impact of a negative HMI inspection and on a staff restructuring programme which had resulted in James losing a senior teacher position. He referred to this as a *'sledgehammer blow'* and felt that despite changes in leadership he was still trying to prove himself, *'I am still trying to improve myself despite a lot of younger staff now in senior positions, now I am doing leading from the middle I have done that one, I am doing these extra courses, I am doing NPQH possibly and looking at leadership pathways'*. James was unsure about whether he would apply for a job in the new Academy, he was waiting to see what the curriculum would look like.

Lauren

Lauren was the only one of my participants who had taken a break from teaching. She had been working as a PE teacher in another school in the Local Authority when she felt the need to move out of teaching because she couldn't see any ways of progressing her career in the school she was in. After a short time working in ' *financial institutions*' she came to Joseph Moore on a short-term maternity cover contract and was asked to stay on permanently in the PE department. She had been teaching at Joseph Moore for 26 years when I interviewed her and during those years she had gradually moved from PE into Special Needs teaching and was now the Special Needs Co-ordinator (SENCO). Lauren spoke throughout her interview of the ways in which Special Measures had been a very difficult time. She referred to the ways in which she felt that support networks in the school had helped her manage this. Lauren also spoke of the ways in which she felt that the demands of her role had become more difficult and that this had affected her life outside school which was in her words '*all work, no play*'. Lauren planned to take early retirement rather than move on to the Academy.

Laurence

Laurence had been teaching at Joseph Moore for all 33 years of his career. In his interview he explained that he had during the early stages of his career held quite senior positions in the school, and had been Head of the Lower School. At the time of our conversation, he was Second in Maths and the Year 9 achievement coordinator. '*I changed from somebody who had been at the forefront. I tended to get, as often happens when new management comes in, pushed aside so I have got a lesser role now than I had 20 odd years ago*'. As he talked about his time in school, Laurence reflected on the ways in which his work had changed as the educational climate had evolved. He spoke of the supportive environment of the school and of the relationships he had established there. At times, the interview touched on very emotional issues as Laurence reflected on the ways in which his work life had been affected by events in his life outside school.

Thomas Tunney

Joan

When I interviewed Joan, she had been teaching at Thomas Tunney for 15 years of her 32 year career for the Local Authority. At the time of the data collection at Thomas Tunney, Joan held two positions. For the majority of the week she was the deputy head, with responsibility for teaching and learning, on Fridays she took on the additional role of Acting Headteacher. Our interview took place on a Friday. When I arrived, I was told to wait in Joan's office because Joan was taking a special staff meeting. Joan later joined me and told me that she had just been telling the staff that they had received notification of their Ofsted inspection. During our interview, Joan took two phone calls from concerned staff about the inspection. The third time the phone rang, Joan asked the secretary to transfer all calls. I suggested we postpone the interview but Joan said she was happy to continue. During the interview, she spoke of the experiences of previous inspections and of working under 'Special Measures', which she found a 'buzz'. Joan said that she had learnt a great deal from working in the inner city and that she felt that everything should be about improving the opportunities of the pupils. She appreciated the relationships she had with members of the SLT and talked of the difficult decisions that had to be made as a leader. She also spoke about the importance of '*getting the work and life balance*'. She was looking forward to the thought of working in the new Academy, '*I'm really looking forward to it. It's like another challenge and it could be the last bit of my career so to finish it in a different environment, still with the same children and having a look at what impact that has on those people, I think it's really exciting*'.

Cliff

The interview with Cliff took place in his office. Whilst I had been waiting for him in reception, he had rushed by me as he was dealing with two students. He asked who I was waiting for, when he realised it was him he apologised saying he had not had the chance to look in his diary and took us both to his office after finding another member of staff to deal with the two girls. He was initially quite brief in his responses though he appeared to become more comfortable as the interview progressed. Cliff was Assistant Head and he said he had responsibility for '*achievement and curriculum*' across the school. He appeared to be very interested in the role of data and tracking in teaching and learning. He also taught Maths and ICT. He had worked at Thomas Tunney for all 25 years of his career. He explained that he had started as a PE teacher but had '*made a change partly through desire, partly through a sporting injury to change from PE to Mathematics*'. At the time of this change, Cliff was able to take a secondment and study at the local University. Cliff said that he felt he had been supported throughout his career by the Local Authority, and by his colleagues. He talked about the ways in which he felt that the work had changed and that particularly in his current role, '*Getting the life work balance is extremely difficult*'. He said that he '*welcomed*' the proposed

changes to Thomas Tunney because of the *'buildings, the facilities, the resources, opportunities, you name it, will come with it.'*

Grace

I interviewed Grace on her penultimate day of teaching as she was retiring that week. She had been teaching for 38 years, and the last 15 of these had been at Thomas Tunney where she held the position of Assistant Head and SENCO. The school secretary walked me across to the block where Grace's office was. As we walked through the school, the secretary drew attention to the state of the buildings. The exteriors of the building looked run down with peeling paint, there were seagulls swarming around and there was a lot of litter flying around, it was also very muddy. Just outside Grace's block I ran into Cliff who greeted me pleasantly, he was rushing around after some pupils who were out of lessons. Grace was waiting at the end of a long dark corridor ready to show me to her office. She apologised for the fact it was stripped of all decoration because she was in the process of moving out ready for retirement. The interview proved to be a very emotional experience and at times in the interview she cried as some of my questions drew on memories for her at this poignant time. During the interview when she talked about the school and the students she repeated the word *'love'*. After the interview she said she was really interested in my research and would love to read what other teachers like her had to say. Grace was optimistic about the proposed changes to the school, *'Well I am being positive. I am leaving so I am not worried about my job and lots of people will be but as far as I am concerned as long as they get a new building, new facilities and a curriculum that is tailored more to suit the children then I will support it. The means by which it is being done I don't approve of but that's a political matter and you know the ends to the means and that's different.'* She said that the interview had helped her to prepare herself for her leaving ceremony the following day, responding to my thanks for her contributions by saying, *'Well I have enjoyed it and you have helped me because by tomorrow I might be a human being but I doubt it!'*

Mick

At the time of the interview Mick had been teaching for 35 years, 21 of these in the Maths department at Thomas Tunney. The interview with Mick took place in his classroom. It was at times quite distracting as his classroom faced onto a corridor which was quite busy with students and staff walking by chatting quite loudly. This was the last period of the day, though he was going into a meeting with his department straight after we finished. We were interrupted twice, once by Joan to discuss the arrangements for an interview the following day for an academic coach, Mick was to be on the panel and secondly by Cliff who had two boys with him who needed some maths work. With both these interruptions, Mick was very friendly, later in the interview he described his good relationships with students and colleagues, *'I've got a very jovial attitude'* and

throughout the interview he laughed a lot. As the interview progressed he explained how he had worked hard, as Head of Maths, to build up a strong and supportive team. He was keen to raise achievement and made many references to the ways in which he and his team had achieved good results. He said that he works extremely hard. Five years previously he had had a health-scare which he said '*knocked my confidence*', and caused him to reassess his life style especially with regard to the amount of time he was devoting to work outside school hours. The illness clearly had frightened him and for him the move to the Academy was a good reason to apply for early retirement. He had spoken about this to his second in department and said he had promised her '*if you are struggling then I'll come back*'. After the interview he took me to meet two other potential participants.

Judy

Judy met me at reception and took me to the library for our interview. Judy explained that she had had an unusual pathway throughout the 35 years of her career. At the time of the interview, she was Head of Languages and Head of PHSE as well as being a Head of Year. She spoke at length right from the start of the interview about her experiences balancing a teaching career with life as a single parent. Judy explained that she had taught at Thomas Tunney for the past 15 years and had been redeployed there after the closure of her previous school which she described as a '*very, very traumatic experience*'. At times during the interview, Judy became quite upset and emotional and spoke candidly about events in her personal and her professional life. She said that her experiences of the previous school closure had led her to mistrust what people were saying about the proposed changes to the school, '*what they're saying makes me very uneasy because I have been there before*'. She said she was not sure if she would apply for a position in the new Academy, believing that there would not be a role for her, '*I can't see anybody having a structure that's got my job in it because nobody in their right mind is Head of PHSE and Languages*'. She also said that when she reflected on her achievements, her greatest had been her career, '*I'd do every single day of it again. So that is what I think I have achieved*'.

Howard

My interview with Howard took place in the last week of term. When I arrived, I was directed towards the reprographics room where Howard was waiting for me. Howard's wife worked as a reprographics assistant in the school though was not present for the interview. Howard had been teaching for 36 years, and like Judy had been redeployed at Thomas Tunney when his previous school closed. Whilst he was a Science teacher, he was also ICT coordinator, and the school Gifted and Talented coordinator. Howard took his time to think about his answers to my questions. He referred to the satisfaction he had received over the years through working with the pupils. He explained that he had enjoyed his career but was finding the latter years more difficult, '*the lows that I have*

had are all fairly recent and they are all to do with change'. He explained how changes over the last 5 years to his work had affected his life outside school and that coping with change was having a detrimental effect on his health. He described the move to the Academy as a 'change too far'. He said he was able to cope by focusing on the fact that he was working towards buying a house in France. At the end of the interview he apologized for appearing so 'mercenary' and said that his answers may well have been different if the interview had been at the start of the term when he was less exhausted, he described himself as 'hanging on by my finger nails'.

The table below presents an overview of the cohort of research participants.

Table 2: The Cohort

<i>Pseudonym</i>	Gender	Name of School	Position in School at time of data collection	Reason applying to the school	Years at the school	Years in the Local Authority	Years of Service
<i>Ava</i>	Female	Joseph Moore	Second in Special Needs (p/t)	Redeployed from school closure	12	32	32
<i>Cliff</i>	Male	Thomas Tunney	Assistant Head Maths and ICT teacher	First Appointment	25	25	25
<i>Dean</i>	Male	Bernard Stone L	14-19 curriculum leader English teacher	Asked to apply after being a community teacher	26	36	36
<i>Frank</i>	Male	Joseph Moore	Assistant Head English teacher	Applied for advertised post	15	25	25
<i>Gary</i>	Male	Joseph Moore	Assistant Head Director of School Sports	First appointment	31	31	31
<i>Grant</i>	Male	Joseph Moore	Acting Headteacher	First appointment	30	30	30

<i>Pseudonym</i>	Gender	Name of School	Position in School at time of data collection	Reason for applying to the school	Years at the school	Years in the Local Authority	Years of Service
<i>Grace</i>	Female	Thomas Tunney	Assistant Head SENCO	Redeployed after school closure	15	38	38
<i>Greg</i>	Male	Joseph Moore	Head of Year Science teacher	Applied for advertised post	15	29	29
<i>Howard</i>	Male	Thomas Tunney	ICT Co-ordinator/ G+T Co-ordinator Science teacher	Redeployed after school closure	15	36	36
<i>Isabel</i>	Female	Bernard Stone L	Head of Modern Languages	First appointment	25	25	25
<i>James</i>	Male	Joseph Moore	Head of Humanities	Redeployed	19	27	27
<i>Joan</i>	Female	Thomas Tunney	Deputy Head Acting Headteacher (p/t)	Applied after school closure	15	32	32

<i>Pseudonym</i>	Gender	Name of School	Position in School at time of data collection	Reason for applying to the school	Years at the school	Years in the Local Authority	Years of Service
<i>Judy</i>	Female	Thomas Tunney	Head of Languages Head of PSHE Head of Year	Redeployed after school closure	15	35	35
<i>Kathryn</i>	Female	Bernard Stone L	Head of Year French teacher	First appointment	34	34	34
<i>Lauren</i>	Female	Joseph Moore	SENCO	Asked to apply after covering maternity cover	26	34	34
<i>Laurence</i>	Male	Joseph Moore	Second in Maths Year 9 achievement co-ordinator	First Appointment	33	33	33
<i>Liz</i>	Female	Bernard Stone L	Assistant Head (KS3) Science teacher	Asked to apply after covering maternity cover	19	33	33
<i>Marilyn</i>	Female	Bernard Stone L	Assistant Head (KS4) Food Technology teacher	First appointment	31	31	31

<i>Pseudonym</i>	Gender	Name of School	Position in School at time of data collection	Reason applying to the school	Years at the school	Years in the Local Authority	Years of Service
<i>Mick</i>	Male	Thomas Tunney	Head of Maths	Applied for advertised post	21	35	35
<i>Stewart</i>	Male	Bernard Stone L	Head of Year Science teacher	First appointment	27	27	27

3.3.2 Ethical considerations

As stated above, 'ethical issues permeate interview research' (Kvale and Brinkmann 2009: 16), and were considered at each stage of the research design, analysis and the dissemination, which consisted of papers presented at conferences and in the writing of this thesis. Throughout the processes of access, data collection, analysis and dissemination, I aimed, as far as I was able, to 'protect participants from harm', and follow the guiding principle that the research will 'make a difference' (Murphy and Dingwall 2001: 347). As a result the design of the research strategy has been mindful of BERA's guidelines (BERA 2004). I also obtained ethical clearance for the research design from the university.

I took particular care to take ownership of the responsibility to ensure that my conduct before, during and after the interviews demonstrated 'integrity':

The knowledge produced by such research depends on the social relationship of interviewer and interviewee, which rests on the interviewer's ability to create a stage where the subject is free and safe to talk of private events recorded for later public use. This again requires a delicate balance between the interviewer's concern for pursuing interesting knowledge and ethical respect for integrity of the interview subject.

(Kvale and Brinkmann 2009: 16)

However there were some ethical consequences of the interviews that I hadn't foreseen at the research design stage. For example, neither interviewer nor participant can be fully prepared for what emotional responses the interview might provoke. Goodson and Sikes refer to the 'therapeutic potential' of such interviews (2001: 26). For some participants, the interview drew on poignant memories from both their professional and

personal lives; in two cases the participants were in tears as they talked to me. In her interview, Ava explicitly refers to '*memories I have tried consciously to suppress*'. The participants seemed to want to share these experiences and Goodson and Sikes's advice to let the participant decide 'whether to talk about a particular issue' was followed (2001: 98). At times the participants talked about very personal emotional events and these interviews had an unanticipated impact upon me as I took some of this 'emotional baggage' away from the interview with me as the stories they had shared about deeply poignant issues stayed with me for some time after the interviews.

Another concern was that of my conducting a form of 'insider research' in one of the schools. This has obvious implications in terms of confidentiality and anonymity because anyone reading the research who knows me will know the identity of one of the three schools and may possibly be able to identify some of the participants. I took measures to ensure that only very hazy details of the interviewees are shared (in terms of subject area taught and years of service). When I have been discussing the study at conferences and seminars I have taken the decision to omit the reference to one of the schools being a former workplace of mine. However for the purposes of this thesis I felt it important to retain this detail. Another related ethical dilemma was how to manage the tensions that I encountered when dealing with information presented in the interview situation which might run counter to my own beliefs and practices when working alongside the participant outside of the context of the interview. In many ways my experiences echoed that of Portelli, who writes about the issues surrounding conducting research in one's 'own personal and professional backyard' (2008: 83).

There was another ethical conflict that I had not foreseen either at the time of the research design or the period of data collection. Since conducting the interviews, I have moved on professionally and my work now involves going into schools to work with beginner teachers on a range of Initial Teacher Education programmes. One of my tutees is working in a school where one of my research participants is now headteacher. This participant voiced some very anti-authoritarian concerns during the interview and was very 'off-message' about the forthcoming move to Academy status, which if known could compromise his position as leader of the Academy. Sikes describes a similar experience which as she says raises 'more ethical questions about personal and professional responsibility and about the ways in which different roles can overlap – but this is the reality of research' (Sikes 2001: 92).

Each participant was given a pseudonym based on a Hollywood icon from the 1940s and 1950s (for no other reason than I enjoy films from the era). In order to preserve the anonymity of the respondents, the interview data were analysed vertically and horizontally (Kelchtermans and Ballet 1999). This involved analysing each complete interview transcript separately and then subsequently tracking themes across the data set as a whole. As might be expected from conversations about an individual's career some questions/prompts had deeper significance than others and these varied from participant to participant.

The interviews were voice recorded and transcribed. One participant from Thomas Tunney asked how long the data would be stored for. I explained that it would be held securely on my university computer and would only be held for the period of dissemination activities. None of the other participants commented on the recording of the data. To ensure that the

data is an accurate representation of what they said the interviewees were given transcripts of the interviews for verification. This was a further imposition on their time and good will which in some sense had been already compromised by giving up non-contact time or time after school to participate in the interviews. However it was ethically important to provide an opportunity for respondent validation. No changes to the transcripts were requested

3.4 The Interviews

3.4.1 Interviewing the participants

The importance of locating teacher voice within these contexts was a key factor in the choice of qualitative interviews used in this study. However the processes of trying to locate teacher voice are not unproblematic.

Within a growing body of research into teachers' experiences of their working lives (Buchmann and Schwille 1983, Buchmann 1989, Hargreaves 1984, Huberman 1983, Troman and Woods 2000, Dhunpath 2000, Day et al 2006) is a growing interest in teachers' voice. Hargreaves emphasises that 'teachers' voices have frequently been silenced by policy and suppressed or distorted within educational research' (Hargreaves 1996: 12). When this research has not been silenced or distorted, Goodson and Hargreaves argue that it is able to 'throw new light on the 'language of power' which is used within official rhetorics and discourses of educational change' (Goodson and Hargreaves 1996: 22).

In an article analysing the social histories of educational change, Goodson identifies 'externally mandated change' as an example of social and political context which has had an adverse effect on experienced teachers' senses of 'passion and purpose' (2001: 49). Goodson challenges the

assumption that change is synonymous with improvement and advocates that we question the 'morality of change' (Goodson 2003: 74). He argues that there is a danger that the 'hearts and minds' of individuals within the profession could be lost with the increased pressures on accountability and in the administrative aspects of teaching. He warns this 'could leave teaching as technical delivery divorced from patterns of caring commitment, vocational purpose, and emotional ownership and investment' (Goodson 2003: 69). Hargreaves (1994a) draws on extensive interview material and provides detailed descriptions of teachers and teaching within the context of perpetual educational reform. He recognises that teaching is highly personal and creative and suggests that these features have been eroded within the current climate of schools. Day et al's (2006) longitudinal study of teachers and their working lives seems to echo the need for the emotional and personal aspects of teaching, for teachers to feel high levels of self-esteem in their private and professional lives:

Effective teaching requires emotional and intellectual investments from teachers which draw upon personal and professional capacities and experiences, knowledge and skills

(Day et al 2006: 40)

Research into teachers' lives needs to embrace professional and personal experiences within an understanding of the wider political and social contexts. Goodson turns to teachers' stories and narratives as a means of moving beyond 'the representational crisis' towards the 'nirvana of the narrative, the Valhalla of voice' (2003: 23).

However, Goodson acknowledges critics who articulate problems associated with trying to re-present the voices of teachers who are often cast into the role of the other or the oppressed. He describes this as 'the devil's bargain

of research' (1993) where educational researchers have too often 'talked past' the people they have sought to represent, and that in the discourses of productivity and accountability this has been potentially even more damaging to teachers who have been silenced in many of the debates about the ways in which education is moving:

The politics of representations associated with the devil's bargain, have, therefore, had a pernicious effect in representing teachers. The task is to use the current crisis to reorder priorities, and develop patterns of research and representation which rescue silent lives and silenced voices. A new collaborative model focusing on the teacher's life and work but retaining a reflective critical and theoretical dimension is required, and faculties of education must play a proactive part.

(Goodson 2003: 14)

Goodson proposes that research which attempts to 'give voice' should incorporate what he refers to as 'genealogies of context' (Goodson 2003: 48). This involves the researcher locating the voice within wider social and political contexts so that teachers' voice moves from anecdotal recollections to representations which can be generalisable to broader contexts.

Goodson proposes that life histories rather than life stories are an important methodological tool in attempting to represent teacher voice because whilst the latter provides a 'snapshot' into an individual teacher's experience, the former 'contextualises and politicises' (1995: 10). Life histories therefore incorporate the participant and the researcher's understanding of the social and historical contexts underpinning the story told in the interview. Goodson and Sikes explain that 'life history work' is

'often collaborative, with researcher and informant seeking meanings and explanations together' (2001: 36). I was unable to build this type of collaborative analysis into my research design because of constraints on my participants' time. I have therefore avoided the term 'life histories' and used the label 'career histories' to try and retain the importance of the socio-political context of the interview. There were times during the interview conversations when I felt that the participant and I worked together through discussion to further our understanding of an issue or an event though I can only make a claim here for any analysis being my own interpretation of the discussion and not speak for the teacher involved.

A method which attempted to capture a socio-political context was considered especially relevant to the research focus of my study. The three schools which were on the cusp of structural change at the time of the data generation were in danger of losing the elders within their community for whom this latest change was too much. Goodson argues that the 'purging of the 'old professionals' in the face of new change and reform' could result in the schools suffering from collective 'memory loss' and could potentially leave a school without 'passion or purpose' as a result of their departure (2007:33).

Consequently, in-depth semi-structured interviews with long-serving teachers about their career histories in the three schools generated privileged data. I have also drawn on Kvale and Brinkmann's notion of a 'semi-structured life world interview' which is

defined as an interview with the purpose of obtaining descriptions of the life world of the interviewee in order to interpret the meaning of the described phenomena.

(2009:3)

The 'looser' structure of semi-structured interviews afforded the long-serving teachers the opportunity to reflect on events and choices made in their recollections of their career histories, corresponding to Fontana and Frey's concept that 'interview participants are 'actively' constructing knowledge around questions and responses' (2000: 647). The purpose of the interview was not to generate 'correct' answers or elicit a body of facts. Rather it was to enable participants to 'actively construct their social worlds' (Silverman 1993: 91) and attempt to 'understand themes of the lived everyday world from the subjects' own perspectives' (Kvale and Brinkmann 2009: 27). It would be unrealistic to assume that the researcher does not have greater control over the content of the interview than the participant. An interview is after all a 'conversation with a purpose' (Burgess 1988). It was necessary for the interviewer to take responsibility for creating an open atmosphere which was made more difficult by the fact that the interviews were one-off events, so it was important to create an environment for the encounter which did not make the interviewee or respondent feel inhibited.

In addition, this 'looser structure' can lead to the interviewer appearing to lose 'some control over the interview, and yielding it to the client' (Measor, 1985: 67, cited in Bryman 1988: 50). The extract below is taken from the transcript of the beginning of my interview with Ava, one of the teachers at Thomas Tunney. Throughout the thesis, I present data from the interviews in italics.

JM: Can you tell me a little about yourself? What subject do you teach?

Ava: I was going to ask you that.

However Ava's response or avoidance of the question and my handling of this may reflect what Kvale and Brinkmann refer to as an ethical issue pertaining to the specific context of the interview situation (2009: 63). Ava's response could indicate that she was feeling an element of stress and needed to assert herself in a position of strength which is evident in the extract from the way in which the interview conversation progressed:

JM: I teach English

Ava: You teach English. Well I do actually, but it was a secondary subject to me I came as a PE teacher. So I teach the Special Needs and Foundation students in the school who are the lowest of the ability range so we take them off and do work which is absolutely catered to their needs

During the interview itself, I interpreted Ava's unconventional reply to the apparently neutral non-confrontational 'warm up' question about her subject area as evidence of Ava feeling under pressure. This became clearer a few minutes later in the interview, when Ava referred to the fact that her previous school and my, then, workplace had been in competition with each other: '*you were our arch rivals*'. Her previous school had been closed down and I interpreted that Ava apportioned some of the 'blame' for this onto my own workplace which I was, in her mind, representing at this point in the interview.

It was intended that the interviews should be held in a quiet place with minimal chance of disruption. In reality this was not always the case, where the interviews took place in an interviewee's office we were often disturbed by phone calls. A more extreme illustration of this was my interview with the Acting Headteacher of Thomas Tunney School. The

interview took place immediately after she had informed the staff that they were to be inspected the following week. Our conversation was marked by a series of interruptions from concerned staff. Where interviews took place in more public places, such as a classroom or a library we were often interrupted by students needing help with something. As already stated, I worked in one of the sites, and this flow of interruptions in the other schools gave me a picture of how similar school environments are; they helped me

gain a recognizable impression of how particular lives are lived and expressed in a day-today context.

(Goodson and Sikes 2001: 3)

3.4.2 The interview topics

A possible advantage of the one-time interview is that it could 'bring to light new topics and themes in previously unexplored areas' (Hargreaves 2004: 290) thereby allowing for 'truths' to possibly be 'uncovered' (Wetherell 2001: 391). Kvale and Brinkmann's traveller metaphor has resonance here. They use the metaphor of the 'interviewer-traveler' (sic) who

walks along with the local inhabitant, asking questions and encouraging them to tell their own stories of their lived world...The journey may not only lead to new knowledge; the traveller might change as well. The journey might instigate a process of reflection that leads the traveller to new ways of self-understanding

(2009: 48-9)

Howard's interview is an example of this:

If someone had said 'Are you stressed? Are you feeling close to a nervous breakdown?' I'd have said 'No'. But on reflection if you are going to bed at one o'clock because you can't get to sleep and you are waking up at four thinking of school that is pretty bad...

Throughout the design and conduct of the interviews I have followed another of Kvale and Brinkmann's positions on interview conversations being '*inter views*' where 'there is an alternation between the knowers and the known, between the constructors of knowledge and the knowledge constructed' (2009: 3).

Because the interviews were semi-structured it was unnecessary to ask the questions in an identical order. To try and create a conversational atmosphere, with the interviewer being a responsive participant, some of the questions were embedded within others or dealt with by responses to other questions. As discussed above it was my intention that the interviews followed a loose structure taking the form of a '*grounded conversation*' (Goodson and Sikes 2001: 28). The interviews at Bernard L Stone (my own school) usually began with a conversational preamble about specific events that may have occurred during the day before I would remind them of my research topic and explain why I wanted to talk to them in particular. In the other two schools, I usually started the interviews by sharing my experiences and background to communicate to my participants that I shared a '*common ground*' with them (ibid: 28). My intention in doing so was to help them relax and the interviews often started with them asking

me questions about how the Local Authority decisions had been impacting upon my colleagues at Bernard L Stone.

The interview schedule was used as a series of prompts and the extent to which I had to refer back to it varied with each participant. Some seemed to take the opportunity to use the interview to talk about topics that had particular significance to them whilst others were happy to respond to each question in turn. The interview conversation for some participants became a vehicle for evoking what Goodson et al (2006) refer to as 'social nostalgia' where memories of events in their professional lives were linked with home, family and the school community whereas other participants evoked 'political nostalgia' where these events were tied in with ideologically charged memories of loss of status and power. Some combined both types of nostalgia in their conversations.

The topics covered by the pilot interview schedule were as follows:

- Career history/progression
- Change (mandated and self-initiated)
- Highs and Lows of their time in the profession
- The urban context
- What their school symbolises
- Responses to the Local Authority's plans.

The interview schedule was revised slightly after the pilot study and three further topics were introduced. This was because they emerged as seemingly important topics to the participants in the pilot:

- Coping with change
- The point of education
- Specific policies aimed at turning around underachievement.

As the interviews progressed the topic of life-work balance emerged and this was added as a subsequent prompt in later interviews. The interview schedule is presented in Appendix B.

I have presented a full transcript of the interview with Laurence from Joseph Moore in Appendix C. This is to provide some transparency to the interview process described in this chapter.

3.5 Analysis

Following Kvale and Brinkmann, the approach to conducting and analysing the interviews was 'pragmatic' in that I have not followed a specific epistemological or ontological process of inquiry (2009). Rather the analysis of the transcribed data blends a phenomenological approach, looking at how the teachers have experienced their lives in schools, with a hermeneutical focus on the ways in which they and I have interpreted this experience, and a discursive approach which examines the ways in which they have constructed this experience through their use of metaphors.

3.5.1 Thematic analysis

The analysis of the data took place over a series of months and involved slicing through the data whilst looking at it through a variety of 'lenses'. It was important to my commitment to the voices of my participants that I endeavoured to allow the data to speak. This was behind the decision to transcribe the interviews in full. For the pilot study I paid for a transcriber to do this but I felt that this created a sense of distance between myself and the data, so for the doctoral study I undertook to carry out the transcriptions myself (taking care also to listen to the original recordings of

the interviews used in the pilot and to ensure that the transcripts were an accurate representation). Consequently, an inductive analysis of the dataset was undertaken (Kvale and Brinkmann 2009). As Braun and Clarke explain, 'inductive analysis is therefore a process of coding the data without trying to fit it into a pre-existing coding frame...so thematic analysis is data driven' (2006: 83). In the first instance I analysed the full transcripts of three interviews (one from each school site but otherwise a random selection) to try and capture a sense of any emerging 'themes'. According to Braun and Clarke,

a theme captures something important about the data in relation to the research question, and represents some level of patterned response or meaning within the data set.

(2006: 82)

From this initial analysis of the three interview transcripts, emerging themes were compared and categorised, and subsequently confirmed or modified following coding of the data (using NVivo). The two major 'themes' that came out of this were the importance of place and relationships. The remaining transcripts were then analysed to see how far these macro-themes were also reflected in the interviews with the remaining participants.

Then, the literature on place and relationships was studied to allow for a more informed review of the transcripts. The review of the relevant literature has already been discussed in chapter two. The re-analysis of the data took place at two distinct stages. The literature on place helped to provide a more detailed account of the group of themes associated with this concept and facilitated a slice through the data using place as a lens of analysis. The findings and discussion of these findings about locational ties

are presented in chapter four. This approach was repeated at a later date with a focus on relational ties. This analysis is reported and discussed in chapter five. These social memories were grouped together under the macro-theme of 'relational ties' during the process of categorising the emerging themes from the data. This macro-theme is made up of three strands. The first comprises themes that draw on 'relationships originating in school'; the second is made up of themes which 'extend the family'; the third encompasses themes relating to relationships which extend 'beyond the school gates'.

Chapter six provides a very different re-analysis of the data which incorporates a discourse analysis approach to the long-serving teachers' use of metaphor to express their experiences. This approach is described in section 3.5.1 below.

So throughout the analysis, I adopted a 'bricolage' interpretation and analysis of the data; in doing so I 'moved freely between different analytical techniques and concepts' (Kvale and Brinkmann 2009: 231) and throughout the process had to 'adopt a phenomenological suspension, placing [my own]...conceptions in brackets, in an attempt to attain a maximum openness to the texts as they present themselves' (Kvale and Brinkmann 2009: 239). This has led to there being, at times, an uneven presentation of the data where, for example, Kathryn's interview is not referred to in the discourse analysis because she did not in any manifest way draw on conceptual metaphors to voice her experiences.

3.5.1 Discourse analysis

The interviews carried out with the participants were discourse events within a particular context, where the long-serving teachers could (consciously or otherwise) construct a particular identity in their career history narratives within a 'situated encounter' (Abel and Myers 2008: 159). Analysis of the whole interview transcript within a particular socio-cultural, historical and political context involves approaching the interview data from a 'discourse analytical perspective' (Wodak 2008: 22) which allows for an understanding of identity and experience as a postmodern concept which is socially and linguistically constructed. One way in which this can be explored is through an analysis of the metaphors which the participants draw on whilst articulating their working-life histories. I have taken the position that the participants are not providing a 'true description' and that the 'interviews do not produce reliable, objective knowledge' (Kvale and Brinkmann 2009: 228). If they were to be re-interviewed or interviewed by another researcher the long-serving teachers may well present a different account of themselves. However I have found that 'interviewing is a sensitive method to investigate the varying social presentations of the self' and as such my analysis of the metaphors within the discourse is a 'valid method' since I am not trying to articulate the teachers' selves as 'stable authentic essences' (Kvale and Brinkmann 2009:228). What I can articulate is a provisional attempt to re-present ways in which the long-serving teachers conceptualised their working-life-histories at a time of enormous change in their careers through their use of metaphors.

Black argues that metaphors 'reveal teachers' self-understandings' (2001: 4). According to Black, the study of metaphors is a particularly useful means of understanding more about teachers and the work that they do because:

non-linear forms of data representation such as visual imagery, drawing and metaphor, have great potential for revealing teacher knowledge and meanings and for eliciting reflection.

(Black 2001:3)

Previous research illustrates the ways in which metaphors have been used as a 'tool of pedagogical process' (Berman, Boileau Little, Graham, Maurer, Paterson, Richmond and Sergeant 2002) and this has been commonly applied in studies of the ways in which pre-service and beginning teachers reach an understanding of their own conceptions of what it is to be a teacher. According to Berman et al, the study of metaphors provides a 'connecting agent' where metaphors help connect ideas about teaching and invite experienced teacher educators and their students to 'risk entertaining different and challenging ideas about themselves and their work' (Berman et al 2002: 1).

Other studies have examined the ways in which metaphors can help encourage reflective practice (Bullough 1992; Volkmann and Anderson 1998; Leavy, McSorley and Boté 2007). Hunt (2006) examines how an individual's use of metaphor is an important component in making meaning and developing a sense of professional identity. Clandinin and Connelly (1995) present a range of studies of the use of narrative and other artistic means of expression to study teachers' experiences. Within this volume, Craig presents a series of studies which look at the ways in which teachers employ what she refers to as 'storied metaphors' where metaphors drawn from classical and literary texts are employed to describe teachers' experiences. In a later article, Craig explains why stories and metaphorical language are so important in her work:

narrative and, by association, metaphors, offer us an inexhaustible supply—with limitless reach—of everything we could possibly need to make sense of our lives lived in relationship and in context and to distinguish and celebrate our humanity. We have no other way of making sense of school reform—or any other humanly experienced phenomenon, for that matter—without succumbing to the complete disregard or flattening of experience itself.

(Craig 2005: 200)

A book that I found hugely influential in approaching the data from this analytical perspective was *Metaphors We Live By* (originally published 1980 and reprinted 2003) in which Lakoff and Johnson introduced the idea that metaphors structure conceptual understanding, arguing that this is not something of which we are normally aware but is evident in our language, thoughts and actions (2003: 3). They use the metaphorical concept of 'ARGUMENT IS WAR' to illustrate how pervasive this concept is in our understanding of arguments which we can win or lose, we can attack our opponents, we can defend our own position, we can gain and lose ground and so on. Lakoff and Johnson argue that the metaphorical concept ARGUMENT IS WAR is culturally specific and that members of the culture are not necessarily consciously aware that they are drawing on this metaphorical concept when they use the discourse of argument. They claim that:

Metaphor is not just a matter of language, that is, of mere words...on the contrary, human thought processes are largely metaphorical...Metaphors as linguistic expressions are possible precisely because there are metaphors in a person's conceptual system.

(Lakoff and Johnson 2003: 6)

According to Clark and Cunningham (2006),

rather than being true or false, metaphors and other cognitive models are apt or not apt (i.e. appropriate or inappropriate) for use in a given situation depending on the extent to which their structure and entailments fit our experiences

(2006: 275)

The 'given situation' of the interviews for this study were within the context of a specific discourse setting, in that both the participant and myself had similar experiences of teaching within a particular socio-political epoch. In other words, any metaphors used by the participants to describe their experiences drew on metaphorical concepts which, generally, I could share. Cameron emphasises that successful use of metaphor is dependent on 'shared background' (2003: 111). I could therefore reach some tentative understanding of the metaphors these teachers had 'lived by' because as Clark and Cunningham explain, metaphors 'carry with them a worldview of who we are and hope to be' (2006: 288).

One criticism of Lakoff and Johnson's approach is the 'lack of specification of how the researcher has made decisions about whether language is metaphorical or not' (Cienki 2005: 4). For example, Cornelissen, Kafourus and Lock examine the different heuristics at work in studies of organisational theory metaphors (2005). This involves an analysis of the different judgemental rules for deciding what constitutes a metaphor. Members of the PRAGGLEJAZZ group, led by Gerard Steen, produced a method for identifying metaphorically used words in discourse, the 'metaphor identification procedure' (MIP). The MIP method looks at the level of 'metaphorically used words' (Pragglejaz 2007). A different approach, (known as VIP) was utilised by Lynn Cameron in her analysis of

metaphors in educational settings, which identified 'the metaphorical focus (also known as the Vehicle of the metaphor), in contrast to the Topic which is the content of the on-going discourse' (Cameron 2003: 11). Both the MIP and the VIP methods aim to uncover metaphors using an inductive analysis of discourse. The latter method was used in this study to examine the metaphorical concepts that grew from the data.

Steen examines the various issues surrounding any analysis of metaphor in language and thought. Steen proposes four approaches to the study of metaphor in relation to language and thought:

- 1) metaphor in language in system; 2) metaphor in thought as system;
- 3) metaphor in language as use and 4) metaphor in thought as use.

(Steen 2006: 21)

My main approach has been that of the study of language in use (in an interview situation between two interlocutors who share some common understandings of socio-historical and political contextual factors relating to teaching in disadvantaged schools within one urban location) as a means of trying to make *tentative* conclusions about the speaker's (and my own) metaphor as thought as use. The point to emphasise here is that the findings and analyses presented in chapter six are a discussion of 'metaphors [which] *suggest* perspectives and attitudes' (Steen 2006: 37, original emphasis).

Whilst the decision to re-examine the data from this discourse analytical lens focussing on the use of conceptual metaphors was a conscious attempt to commit to the voices of the teachers being heard, it is also important to echo Cameron's warning that

While the conceptual metaphor is a convenient device, we need to remain cautious about its existence beyond the mind of the analyst and its actual use by the discourse participant.

(Cameron 2003: 25)

Therefore the findings and the discussion presented in chapter six are 'cautious' and because of the nature of the career-history approach to the data collection are not necessarily generalisable.

The data is both reported and analysed in chapters 4-6 below.

Chapter 4: Locational Findings and Analysis

4.1 Identity and (work) place

I am here now and I can't see myself being anywhere else.

(Grant, Joseph Moore)

Grant's comment is illustrative of many of the ways in which teachers in this study seem to have conceptualised their careers as rooted in a particular, disadvantaged, community. This has led me to take a particular interest in the ways in which the participants talk about place as they share memories of their work as long-serving teachers in urban schools. In this chapter, I report the findings and present an analysis of the data which has shown the ways in which the teachers developed relationships to places over time. These locational ties also help to foster a sense of attachment and belonging to 'a community of place' (Tonnies 2001).

Malpas, amongst others, writes of the relationship between place and identity arguing that the relationship is multilayered and complex; he utilises Proust's principle through which people are described as 'being who and what they are through their inhabiting of particular places and their situation within particular locations' (Malpas 1999: 184). Manzo draws on Heidegger's concept of 'being in the world' in her reformulation of this to 'experience in place'; her study of forty New Yorkers' stories of place experiences led her to conclude that 'significant places reflect people's evolving identity' (Manzo 2005: 73). In our interview conversation, Grant made a comment that emphasised his own identification or connection with his work-place.

So I think probably from about six or seven years in I just thought to myself well this is me, this is my environment, this is what it'll be. (Grant, Joseph Moore)

This very subjective identification with the work-place as 'my environment' is something I wanted to unpick. Grant explains that it took him some time to develop this uniquely personal relationship with his professional work-place. Other teachers made similar comments about their attachment to their school and from the data there emerged a sense that the schools had a particular character and culture which the majority of the teachers shared. Laurence's comment below demonstrates this connection to work-place:

I probably could have got a job somewhere else but it's just been the sort of thing where I have stayed so it's like a comfortable pair of shoes you fit in it and it seems right and you just continue to do it. (Laurence, Joseph Moore)

Whilst the purpose of the interviews for this study was to ascertain why people had stayed for so long in these urban schools, the questions that shaped the interview conversation were not intentionally about the ways in which the teachers felt about their work-spaces and home-space. It soon became apparent however that there was a strong emotive relationship with these places as Laurence's shoe metaphor and Grant's description of a place over which he feels ownership demonstrate. The picture of place that emerges from these interview conversations indicates that individuals find different aspects of place significant and that the three institutions have distinctive cultures and characters.

This picture of the school-place resonates with Habermas' development of the idea of a 'lifeworld' (a concept he develops from Husserl) which is a

non-static representation of an environment where shared understandings, values and visions are communicated. For Habermas there is a distinction between 'lifeworld' which is driven by communication and 'system' world which is driven by function (Habermas 1984). Sergiovanni, draws on Habermas' concept to explain that 'school character flourishes when the life-world is the generative force for determining the 'systemworld' (2000: ix). The next sections of this chapter explore the ways in which individuals have developed a relationship with the school and examine how this helps them feel a sense of belonging and affinity to the community of place that makes up this school character. A closer examination of this theme provides ways into understanding why these long-serving teachers chose to stay for as long as they did within the one work setting.

4.2 Blurring the boundaries

Some of the teachers spoke about the blurring of the physical and emotional boundaries between home and school life. This is unsurprising given the fact that the teachers in the sample had spent so much actual time within the various buildings and so much time emotionally engaging with issues related to their workplace. For Grace, for example, the workplace seemed all encompassing.

Why is it so small when it takes up the whole of your life? (Grace, Thomas Tunney)

One of the participants described this very forcefully.

We both work in this school and the changes that are being wrought in the last four or five years have devastated our family life out of school they really have. Until a year ago I would quite regularly be

working at ten o'clock at night and what was even sadder was on a number of occasions I have sent emails at ten or eleven o'clock at night and got bloody replies to them because somebody else is working at that time which I find utterly depressing. (Howard, Thomas Tunney)

Howard's outlook is not typical. Although other participants refer to long working hours and work-related activities being carried out at home, their comments suggest a more positive attachment to their work and workplace, despite the fact that none of the three schools seemed immediately attractive to an outsider.

You know these are horrible schools to come into and when you first arrive it's just what am I doing? Psychologically it just takes a while and why are you doing it you know? But for some reason you stick at it. (Frank, Joseph Moore)

Interestingly most ended up in their school by accident rather than deliberate choice. Only three of the twenty teachers actively applied for a post in a particular school, eight applied to a pool and were placed in a school:

I applied to (A) as an Authority and we applied here because my wife's parents lived in (C) so we thought it would be a reasonable place to work and we both got jobs in the pool and I ended up here. (Laurence, Joseph Moore)

Six were redeployed because of school closure:

I job-shared and the job share I did was with my head of department so it was quite complicated we came as a pair together and we were placed here because obviously when they closed (N)

they found jobs for people who were losing their posts (Ava, Joseph Moore)

Three were on temporary contracts, maternity cover for example and were asked to stay on permanently. So the choice of workplace was not deliberate for this cohort and some were clearly shocked by the state of the buildings:

My feelings when I first worked in Thomas Tunney were how appalling the buildings were... I found they were dated, badly equipped and very dirty and that's the honest truth. So when I first looked around I was horrified by the paucity of provision for the children. I really was. (Grace, Thomas Tunney)

The schools were located within the teachers' existing social networks. Those who came via the pool in the main chose to work in the Local Authority because of existing family ties within the area; those who were redeployed came with other colleagues. So these social networks or 'circuits', 'the networks of practices that orient people within arenas of institutional life' (Nespor 1997: 30), were established before relationships with and within the school were developed.

4.3 Schools as dynamic spaces

Schools are much more than physical structures. Nespor describes them as 'dynamic fluid spaces' (1997). When they are designed these physical structures are full of potential in the eyes of administrators and planners, the individual spaces are 'abstract' and ready to be used in a variety of ways each serving a different educational purpose (laboratories, classrooms, computer suites, learning resource centres, sports halls).

Although the spaces specifically designated for social activity for adults in a school (the staffrooms or workrooms) are usually quite small in relation to the rest of the building, schools *are* social places because the administrators and planners can not realistically anticipate the ways in which 'abstract' spaces evolve as people use them. They become 'lived spaces' as they are used and take 'their meanings from the ways people did things in them' (Nespor 1997: 91).

-the staffroom

The staffroom is a dynamic space too. In all three schools within this study, children could only enter the staffroom with permission from an adult, it was a space where the adults could relax and where they could be freer to express their personalities. Although meetings and briefings could take place there, it was largely a social space.

During the period of data collection, it was observed that the staffroom in each of the three schools was in many ways a transient place in that people did not stay in it for long periods of time. They came to the room for a reason; to collect something, to check their message tray, to make a coffee. These functional tasks provided opportunities to engage with colleagues briefly. The teachers in the sample reported that they remembered a time when the staffroom was much less functional. Liz described the use of the staffroom at Bernard L Stone:

We used to sit sometimes till five o'clock and just talk and it would have nothing to do with school. (Liz, Bernard L Stone)

Liz was one of a number of the teachers who emphasised how important it was to have a place to socialise with colleagues. The staffroom in each of the schools was recalled, by the teachers in this sample, as a sociable place.

In Joseph Moore, for example, Frank described a staff snooker tournament taking place in the staffroom whilst Mick from Thomas Tunney explained how the staffroom was a place to let off steam:

Oh the staffroom in this place has been very, very good it always has been. You know you go in there you sound off if you've had a bad day...The 'highs' is the staffroom I would say. (Mick, Thomas Tunney)

For Stewart, remembering a particularly difficult time in school, the staffroom was a symbolic space which epitomised the team spirit or camaraderie within the school:

The school, I think, at that point, under that particular leadership, was at a bit of a low but having said that in the staffroom everybody rallied round and got on with the job. (Stewart, Bernard L Stone)

Grant, the headteacher at Joseph Moore, had worked for his entire teaching career in the school. He described how during the first few months as a new head he had kept his distance from the staff and students as he had seen other heads do.

And then it just dawned on me really that I was trying to do the job in a way that was alien to me you know I was getting cut off from the kids and I was getting cut off from the staff and I was thinking why? Just because that's the way that other people did it why have you got to go and do it? Do it in a different way. So I made that decision ... I need to be out on corridors I need to be in classrooms I need to go and sit in the staffroom sometimes. And I remember somebody said to me at one time that's one of the things that people appreciate the fact that you come down and sit in the

staffroom with your arm on the back of the chair and you just have a conversation and that's good. (Grant, Joseph Moore)

For Grant the places that had defined his identity as a teacher became important again as he defined his identity as a headteacher. The staffroom was a place that was especially important during this process.

The teachers in the study talked about the staffroom with affection and a strong sense of attachment. They felt it was a place to meet friends who were also colleagues as well as a place to let off steam in a confidential and supportive environment. It was a symbolic space representing the camaraderie and team spirit of the school community; a space where they felt they belonged.

However, from analysis of the interview conversations, there was an emerging sense that the staffroom had changed. The staffroom had evolved from a convivial hub where the staff naturally gathered at the end of the day to a transient functional space.

Some of the teachers explained that the staffroom had changed as schools and individuals working in them had become more accountable there was increased pressure to be seen to be working at all times. For example, the staffroom at Bernard L Stone has undergone stages of subtle transformation. There was no longer a pot of tea to greet staff at break, lunch time and at the end of the school day. The chairs had been rearranged from small circles to one row of chairs against three walls. The remaining chairs had been replaced by computer workstations, the screens facing out to the body of the staffroom. Where there used to be a mixture of educational and non-educational magazines on the tables there were now copies of school information. Staff 'meetings' where discussions took place had been replaced by staff 'briefings'. Liz, from Bernard L Stone,

finished her explanation of the changing use of the staffroom space with the words:

Is it because we are doing more monitoring and more scrutiny? We are asking staff to up their game, aren't we? (Liz, Bernard L Stone)

The staffroom, the usage of which can, according to Paechter, throw light on power relations within the school (2004: 33), had become a contested space. Some of the teachers observed that, as the three schools had become more accountable (to Ofsted and HMI, for example), the space was being used differently. Liz explained

People don't sit in the staffroom and talk anymore and because they've changed the structure of the school day you really have no time for anything and you go into the staffroom now at the end of the day and no one's there. ... But now everything is transformed. People are in the classrooms preparing or marking or they've gone home and I just think that there is less socialising going on.... I still think that we are a caring school but I don't think the Ofsted report would now start with that sentence – and it did. 'Bernard L Stone is a caring school'. (Liz, Bernard L Stone)

Liz's use of language suggests that, when the staffroom was a place for 'socialising', 'talk' was important. The more managerial language of transformation, 'preparing or marking' signifies some of the current difficulties in maintaining the pupil centred ethos of the school (Goodson, Moore and Hargreaves, 2006). This suggests a two-way relationship: just as bottom-up social practices constantly redefine the work-space, so top-down managerial pressures also redefine the social practices. The changing use of the staffroom space thereby becomes part of what

McGregor refers to as the 'manipulation of teacher workplace culture' (2000).

This 'manipulation' had the effect of making individual teachers feel that their working lives were under constant examination and pressure. New legal requirements, combined with a sense of being under surveillance and on show, also contributed to the transformation of other social spaces and practices.

The teachers in the sample also talked about how other places within the schools became important social spaces as the staffroom became more work-orientated.

- other spaces

Whilst the staffroom at Bernard L Stone had been very much the 'heart of the school' in the past, during the period of the data collection this was no longer the case. At lunch times and break times only a handful of staff were observed using it other than in the transient way described above. The majority of the staff spent these periods of the day either in their classrooms or in 'other spaces'.

Three 'other spaces' had evolved into important social places. These were the ICT support room; the Science preparation room and the 'Star' Room. The ICT support room at Bernard L Stone School was located at the furthest point from the staff room and the Senior Management Offices, on the fourth floor; throughout the day staff dropped in to ask for help with technical issues or advice about accessing resources, there was a kettle and the technicians worked with the radio on. The Science preparation room was similarly located away from the main offices on the third floor and also had a kettle and sink. The 'Star' Room, on the first floor, was a

teaching area designated for working with students who had specific emotional or behavioural needs who often spent break and lunch times with support staff in a safe environment. The room was comfortably furnished and the ethos was 'respectful but relaxed'; there was also a kitchen attached. There was a small lobby area between the 'Star' Room and the corridor and passers-by couldn't see directly into the room. Teaching and non-teaching staff from a range of curriculum areas gathered there at break and lunch times and especially after school where it was perceived to be a safe place to let off steam.

As a result these spaces which were designed with very functional purposes had evolved into social hubs as staff gravitated towards them rather than the staffroom. This would not be apparent from a static floorplan of the school because as Nespor comments:

space can't be treated as a static totality. It is constantly lived, experienced, reordered by those who move through it

(1997: 94)

These other spaces had been defined by the fusion of practices and 'socio-spatial relations that intersect there and give a place its distinctive character' (McDowell 1999: 4).

From talking to teachers in the other two schools it seems that the changing use of space at Bernard L Stone was similar to that within Joseph Moore and Thomas Tunney. Other important spaces in the three schools seemed to be year team offices, reprographics rooms and department shared areas.

Although these 'other spaces' were in many ways inferior to the staffroom they began to feature as important places within the school because of the

teachers' needs to be sociable, to seek support, to let off steam. They became replacements for the symbolic space that the staffroom used to represent. For example, Judy described the smoking-room in Thomas Tunney as a place in which teachers could be more relaxed:

We used to have a very decadent smoking cupboard ... well it was mostly stuffed with people who didn't smoke but were trying to get away from those people they didn't like... But the laughter, the crying with laughter at some of the most awful things really but the laughing that we don't have now.

JM: Why don't you have it now?

Because they got rid of the cupboard and you can't be seen to be doing it in the middle of the staffroom because you know outsiders are watching or you can't take the mick can you in case there's a visitor or something? I mean you can't be your normal ridiculous self like you could in the cupboard. (Judy, Thomas Tunney)

Paechter observes that 'smoking rooms in schools tend to be the hot beds of rebellion, or the places where the action is' (2004: 34), certainly this is perceived to be the reality for Judy. However with the new laws about smoking in public places smoking rooms are a thing of the past so new spaces have to evolve to allow teachers to be 'normal' away from the 'outsiders...watching': new 'illegitimate' spaces. This offers a further explanation for the ways in which the ICT support space has evolved in Bernard L Stone. This ability to constantly re-make the work-space, including such illegitimate spaces, contributes to long-serving teachers feeling rooted in their workplace.

- the classroom

The teachers often talked about their classrooms and this shed light on the differing ways in which their classroom was a significant place for them. The long-serving teachers were in the latter stages of their career and had all established a role within the school which involved some form of whole school responsibility ranging from whole-school ICT co-ordinator to Acting Head teacher. These whole school roles often took them away from the classroom. All of them, however, emphasised that it was the time spent in the classroom that they most valued.

We meet every morning, the SLT. But I think the focus for me should be in the classroom and the lesson should come first. When I arrive at school I always go straight to my room and do my lesson. When I'm in the classroom the children must come first. (Liz, Bernard L Stone)

Grant, one of the Acting Headteachers in the sample, in the course of his interview discussed some of the pressures he had experienced in his career explaining that being in the classroom 'grounded' him when things became difficult:

There are times when I've been really low professionally and it's the kids that bring me round more often than not. You walk in and you get into a classroom and you start working with kids and then it gets pulled back round again. (Grant, Joseph Moore)

Some of the participants explained that they were able to take on a unique identity within their classroom as they experienced a sense of freedom there because they felt they owned the space. Ava, for example, acknowledged that she behaved differently in the classroom to other places.

*People wouldn't recognise me in a classroom to what I am socially.
(Ava, Joseph Moore)*

They described feeling free to experiment with teaching ideas and approaches as well as with their personality within the classroom.

I have developed from being a boring quiet monotone teacher to being a very weird teacher who will do things other teachers won't do. Ok I'll stand on a desk that's no problem if I want to demonstrate a football kick for BTEC I will stand on a desk because it's the best place to do it from, the kids can't see it from there so you stand on a desk. (Gary, Joseph Moore)

I don't go for this (idea) that the classroom's dull ...the whole thing is the classroom should be good ...so you identify what it is ahead and you try to enjoy the day. Now having said that I have some terrible days, appalling lessons...I have terrible times like everyone else but the picture of what I wanted to create and with some of the groups ...I've got them to a point where we don't read plays for GCSE they are acting them out at the front... thinking yes this is what it should be like. (Frank, Joseph Moore)

The participants articulated a sense of obligation and responsibility for their classroom space. For some this was expressed as owning the space and becoming quite territorial about it. They described decorating and furnishing the space in much the way they would their own house. Ava literally said that she had made her classroom 'sort of my home'. There were other illustrations of the ways in which they had furnished their workspaces like a domestic space. Judy described being angry that her

former school had been closed and that other people were enjoying 'our nice flowerbeds'. Marilyn described her desire to be the last person in school before the Academy became a reality; she said she would be there to 'switch the lights off'. So for Marilyn the news of the impending school closure brought a sense of relief that she would in some ways retain exclusive ownership of this space:

*on a personal level and on a selfish level it's great for me because nobody's going to take over my room; I don't have to worry what's happening at Bernard L Stone. I'll be here until the very end.
(Marilyn, Bernard L Stone)*

For others this responsibility was expressed as a commitment to ensuring that the classroom space was a place in which students experienced high quality learning.

my belief is that I can't go into a classroom unless I am prepared and my lessons were always prepared and so my lessons were alright and I transferred that belief to the staff, you know you can't go into a classroom and be unprepared because if the kids play up it's your fault. (Mick, Thomas Tunney)

I couldn't go to bed at night without preparing my lessons I couldn't walk in here unprepared because the children would see straight through me and I would be doing them a disservice. (Ava, Joseph Moore)

For Ava, the classroom became a bounded space within which to develop her professional identity and map her career progression:

I'm not a very ambitious person but I'm ambitious in my classroom and that's where it counts. (Ava, Joseph Moore)

She described how others had recognised this ambition and that her classroom was used when visitors were in school to demonstrate good practice but that this was not something that she believed her colleagues would know about. She explained that she and her teaching assistant were

observed regularly and we're recognised for our standard of teaching ...and if there are people coming into school they tend to come and look at us in our area because we do well. And I hate saying that because it's not something I would say outside these walls because I am not sort of extroverted about this. (Ava, Joseph Moore)

Whilst having visitors in the classroom space had positive consequences for Ava in terms of her self-confidence, there were other teachers in the sample for whom such an experience had been very damaging. James described how one thirty minute visit from an inspector had devastating consequences for the succeeding months in school for him.

HMI walked in and observed me for half an hour and I got an 'unsatisfactory' for it with this new head who had been head-hunted in; and it was only because the teacher I was with we had planned the lesson as we always do but for some reason that day the kids just weren't onto it and it just didn't work and yet all the other lessons that week had been fine. As a result of that, the head then monitored me because that was the sort of head that he was and basically just before Christmas he wrote me a personal letter saying your teaching is unsatisfactory ... and so then for a term and a half

every single lesson I had to have a lesson plan and could expect at any minute for him to walk in. (James, Joseph Moore)

James' experience was not uncommon within the stories from the participants. There was a strong sense that the inspection system and the performance management mechanisms were invasive of the teachers' classroom which was a very personal space.

Oh awful, absolutely awful. Just the fact that even though you're reasonably confident yourself in the classroom and you think you've done a good job it just wears you down because you feel that what is being said on the school on the report hits you personally, it hit me personally, and you think gosh I must be awful type of thing, it is, its absolutely an awful feeling. (Lauren, Joseph Moore)

These teachers have redefined both themselves and their classroom spaces over time. Consequently, the classroom had for this group of teachers represented a space where they had become somebody in the school; it was the locus for their professional identity formation. Their stories of their experiences in and relationships to their classrooms illustrate how

as centers of experience, places teach us about how the world works, and how our lives fit into the spaces we occupy. Further places make us: As occupants of particular places with particular attributes, our identity and our possibilities are shaped

(Gruenwald, 2003b, p. 647, cited in Somerville 2007: 9).

4.4 The permeable boundaries of home and school

This redefining of space is not restricted to areas within the school; Judy explained that for her, 'school' was not a bounded concept.

It's a major part of my life its like 11 or 12 hours a day plus anything I may take home with me like baggage in my head it's a major part of my life and the people that I work with are friends and colleagues I can't really say more than that it's a major part of my life I love the school. (Joan, Thomas Tunney)

Nespor argues that the topography of a school is more than the 'sealed container' of the building itself, it incorporates relational attributes associated with it by the people who inhabit it and these relational attributes flow beyond the confines of the school structure and the school day, they are beyond 'space-time', Nespor describes schools as

an intersection in social space, a knot in a web of practices that stretch into complex systems beginning and ending outside the school

(1997: xiii).

McGregor argues that this remaking of the space-time offers a more open conceptualisation of workspace, which has resulted in the boundaries between home and school becoming 'permeable' (2003:366). This is an understanding that seems to be shared by Ava when she talks about the experience of inhabiting her former school which was closed by the Local Authority:

They took virtually the carpet from under my feet and fittings off the wall things that I had bought for the place and you know I had made it sort of my home. (Ava, Joseph Moore)

McDowell draws on Bachelard's suggestion that 'all really inhabited space bears the essence of the notion of home' (1999: 72). These long-serving teachers, as Ava demonstrates, have over the years '**really** inhabited' the spaces and in doing so have formed an emotional attachment to their

work-place which has become an extension of their home-place. Children develop a similar emotional attachment to these places.

Grace, amongst others, is particularly sensitive to the importance of the place to the children and to herself:

I think this building shows no respect for our children, none at all. I am ashamed that they have to come to this place in 2007; it's awful, don't you think? (Grace, Thomas Tunney)

Grace almost takes personal responsibility for the state of the buildings in her use of the words 'our' and 'ashamed'; she is able to do so because of the time she has spent in the school, 'really inhabiting' the space.

In the following chapter the importance of relational ties is discussed. This discussion contains many examples of teachers using concepts of home/school and family/colleagues with a degree of fluidity. Over time, these relational ties which define the workplace combine with what McDowell refers to as a 'storehouse of memories'. McDowell describes an

interesting parallel between the home and the body as memory stores...and the power attributed by theorists to the... dwelling with its connotations of shelter and security, of pleasure, and as a storehouse for memories.

(1999: 72)

Laurence illustrated how this 'storehouse of memories' became a comfort in difficult times:

I've actually spent more waking hours in this place than anything else. Something happened a few months ago, which just summed it

up. I'd had a thing after school, an evening thing it may have been, a year 7 open evening or something like that and my wife suddenly appears at the door of the staffroom and we are shepherded down here and we sit down in this room [gestures to the room we are seated in]. And she tells me that she has got cancer. And you just think, you know, typical. You find out in school, you know? And everything has gone really well and it's all been sorted and whatever but it's just you know that you feel that's typical of your life. One of the most serious bits of information, that you are here and it's while you are sitting in the interview room in the school.
(Laurence, Joseph Moore)

Laurence explained that he spent so much of his time in school that his wife had to find him there to tell the news of her illness. For Laurence the school building was the right place to hear such news as the physical building for him represents 'security and shelter' as well as support. This is emphasised by his use of the verb 'shepherded' with its connotations of the school caring for its flock. Later in the interview he talks about how the people within the school community supported him during his wife's illness and how that support inspired loyalty from him in return:

If people kind of look after you when you are down then when you come back you feel as if you owe them something and I think that has always been one of the things about the school here. (Laurence, Joseph Moore)

This further ties in with McDowell's descriptions of home being constructed as 'the locus of love, emotion and empathy' (1999: 75-6). Feelings of love and empathy have been very important to Stewart:

I've had my problems myself, you know, but I still want to carry on. And I think the other thing was I've always felt welcomed here: the kids always make you feel welcome. If you're off for any reason they will say: 'Nice to see you back!' And all the staff have always gelled together. The amount of support I've had has been amazing. I could never have come back after long term illness in another school but this school will just put you at your ease almost immediately. Everyone rallies round and they still do. (Stewart, Bernard L Stone)

For Ava too, there was a deep emotional bond with the school

I felt, as I left the building, I felt bereaved and when I talk about it, I get emotional. I'm sorry. (Ava, Joseph Moore)

For all of the teachers, school had become an important constituent of their home-life. For some, this was realised discursively:

And if you talk to my kids they will tell you how frustrated they got because all we ever did was talk about school. (Liz, Bernard L Stone)

For others, school became particularly important when they had experienced critical incidents within their work-life. Judy evoked a vivid picture of how events related to her 'workspace' had redefined her 'home-space':

You didn't realise how much it had impacted upon your life until one evening the phone went and it was a colleague from the closing school to say that he had got a job and I heard the children whooping upstairs in the bedroom. And I went up and they had picked up the extension and I went up and I said 'What are you making that whooping sound for?' and they went 'Graham's got a

job.’ They didn’t even know Graham. Two eight year olds were celebrating that this mysterious... because obviously at home I had been going ‘Graham hasn’t found a job yet...Graham’s looking for a job’. And they celebrated when a man they had never ever met got a job in a school they had never heard of at eight years old because they had lived it day and night for months and months and months. (Judy, Thomas Tunney)

Other evocations of work being brought into home were more light-hearted:

we used to do daft things like I used to go round in my pyjamas to drop her (job-share partner) off things you know what I mean I used to skip up her drive in my pyjamas to post things that she would need the next day. (Ava, Joseph Moore)

For Liz the proximity of the work-place to her home-place meant that there were no appreciable physical boundaries between the work-place and the home-place:

I could hear the school bells going from my kitchen. So we used to have children come and help us with the garden and then, when we had our own children, Bernard L Stone children babysat for us. So I’ve always had this association with Bernard L Stone...The children always struck me as being open and friendly and they just accepted me ... I trusted them. They came into my home; I trusted them with my children so I suppose I had a good relationship with them. (Liz, Bernard L Stone)

As the boundaries between home and school became more ‘permeable’ (McGregor 2003: 366) the relational ties across the spaces were strengthened.

4.5 Belonging to a community of place

The participants spoke emotionally at times about the proposed changes to the structure of the school and their reactions provide an insight into their relationships with the place which seemed to be bound up with their conceptions of their personal and professional identity. Stewart's words, which illustrate the interweaving of the personal and professional, were typical of many of those I spoke to:

On a personal level for me I don't want to carry on after Bernard L Stone. Once Bernard L Stone's gone I'm gone. (Stewart, Bernard L Stone)

Liz seemed to be unable to foresee a period in her life when the school work-place wouldn't be a part of her life even beyond her working life:

I can't see it not being a part of my life and if I retire I can still see myself being associated with it in some way whether it be coming in voluntarily to do displays or coming in and being the attendance officer. I can see it going on for some time really. (Liz, Bernard L Stone)

Cliff demonstrated how external criticisms about the school had a personal and emotional impact on him:

I care about this place desperately. It really hurts when people say bad things about it because you know that the majority of kids who come to this school are nice kids; you know that the majority of staff who work here are excellent teachers; and if you look what they do here they work damn hard for sometimes little gains which

are seen externally but they are very committed and hard-working.
(Cliff, Thomas Tunney)

Like many of the teachers in the sample, Grace struggled to be able to put the strength of her feeling for the school, a place of huge significance for her, into words.

So those are the things it means, Thomas Tunney; it is a life; it is a social; it is a community; I can't explain really, it is very, very important, very important to me. (Grace, Thomas Tunney)

In her study of forty New Yorkers' relationships to places, Manzo concludes that:

significant places reflect people's evolving identity; provide opportunities for privacy, introspection and reflection; serve as transitional markers as well as bridges to the past; and reflect the salience of safety, threat and belonging which are fundamentally connected to socially constructed identities, thus reflecting the political underpinnings of our relationships to places

(Manzo 2005:73).

Manzo's observation seems to have resonance for the stories in this study. In particular, significant places provide 'bridges to the past' because these participants evoke memories and stories which journey across places and times; the blurring of home and work place boundaries by the teachers echoes the 'salience of safety, threat and belonging' and the idea that 'our relationships to places' have 'political underpinnings' for this data collection is set against the specific political context of school improvement and professionalization.

Choosing to belong to one 'community of place' for the majority of a teaching career has negative connotations in the governmental policy discourse of professionalism. Grace explained why she made such a choice:

I think that commitment comes from the fact that it is worthwhile but I think it also attracts the people who want to do that sort of thing because if you didn't you wouldn't half move quick ...you'd get out wouldn't you? You couldn't live with this could you? (Grace, Thomas Tunney)

The long-serving teachers in this study, like Grace, have made a decision to stay rooted in the same place. Nearly a quarter of a century ago, Connell writing about the working lives of teachers in Australia argued that:

Increasing length of service has also meant increasing personal investment in being a teacher. This is an important case, as there are at present incentives for experienced teachers not only to move out of the classroom, but also to move on from a given school. If state schools are to become organic to working-class suburbs, it is necessary for teachers to be able to find both personal and professional satisfaction in sticking with them.

(Connell (1985: 163)

The teachers in this study have not always found that there have been many of Connell's 'incentives' to stick with their urban schools. Their decision to not 'move on from a given school' has not always been a strategic one. The teachers described the various routes and paths that their careers had taken. Typically these were not planned in advance and promotions often seemed to be reactive rather than proactive. Although these teachers had remained in the same school for the majority of their

working lives, there had been times when some had considered applying for jobs in different institutions.

One participant spoke about the fact that the choice to work in an inner-city school had limited their options for moving to a different type of school.

*I gradually came to realise that if you taught in the city for a certain amount of time it became increasingly difficult to move out because people would say that you had no experience of other schools.
(Dean, Bernard L Stone)*

Joan explained that when she had gone to look around a county school which was advertising a post she had been interested in applying for, she had been told by the deputy head of that school 'we don't want any city teachers here'. When I asked her if she thought that would still be the case today she replied:

Possibly not because I think that people have started to appreciate that people who can work with challenging pupils and do well can cope with any pupils and I think there is more appreciation now. I still think it's been easier for people to move around the city than it is for people to move out. Not many people apply out of here and that's interesting. (Joan, Thomas Tunney)

She went on to describe the staffing situation at Thomas Tunney which she portrayed as long-standing and very stable.

Other teachers explained that the school had provided an environment which fulfilled their professional needs in terms of career development.

That's one of the reasons why I've stayed here so long. During my stages of development there has always been a promotion I could

go for...So every time I've been thinking about where the next step might be there has always been an opening here. And it's been in the direction I have wanted to go. (Cliff, Thomas Tunney)

They described how the school context and perhaps the nature of the students led to a working environment in which they had '*never been bored*' and where '*there was always something more to learn*' (Marilyn, Bernard L Stone). So the teachers said that the schools had helped their careers evolve and they had received professional satisfaction from staying there.

Some of the teachers simply found that the school suited them and as Marilyn explained:

It's perhaps not so much a decision to stay but rather I haven't made the decision to leave. (Marilyn, Bernard L Stone)

The teachers have stuck with their workplaces and by inhabiting these spaces they have found personal satisfaction in their lives through making organic links to the working class communities they serve. The teachers talked about the emotional dimensions of their work and the emotional ties of their workplace. The boundaries between home and school are reconceptualised as notions of belonging, and school, colleagues and pupils take on the role of an extended family. This emotional dimension within these locational ties together with the relational ties outlined in the following chapter, go some way towards offering an explanation as to why these teachers have stayed. They are bound by ties of loyalty and professionalism to a particular community; their emotional commitment to teaching as a vocation is foregrounded. As Sergioivanni explains:

This sharing of place with others for sustained periods of time creates a special identity and a shared sense of belonging.

(1994: 219)

Through this the long-serving teachers have come to belong to a 'community of place' (Tonnie 2001: 27).

Chapter 5: Relational Findings and Analysis

5.1 Building relationships; forming identities

*There is a family feeling in schools like this.
(Grace, Thomas Tunney)*

Grace's observation about the close-knit nature of her school community is echoed in the interview data by many of the other teachers in this study as they describe their time in school.

Over time these teachers have had opportunities to reflect upon the processes of identification with a body of people to whom they feel a sense of alignment, loyalty and belonging. As Grant explains, the school has provided a locus for identity formation and re-formation.

I suppose it [the school] has just shaped everything that I am really. (Grant, Joseph Moore)

As I discussed in chapter two, the term 'identity' is contentious (for example, Hall 2000). The literature on teacher identity reflects the complexities of the concept. Stronach et al (2002) refer to 'fragmented' identities; Volkmann and Anderson (1998) describe teacher identities as complex and dynamic; for Coldron and Smith (1999) teacher identities are not 'fixed or unitary'; Clarke describes identity formation for teachers as 'ongoing' (2008) whilst Zembylas refers to the 'the role of emotion in dynamic identity construction' (2003). All of these notions of teacher identity incorporate aspects of the professional and personal self. Trier, a teacher-educator uses school films to engage trainee teachers to critically reflect about 'the issue of the relationship between the personal and the professional lives of teachers' (2001: 131). In reporting some of the critical reflections made by the pre-service students he writes:

a valuable bit of knowledge for a pre-service teacher to acquire: the knowledge that 'being a teacher seems to involve a special relationship with other people that you don't find' in most other professions

(2001: 135).

For the purposes of this chapter I have found Benwell and Stokoe's definition to be useful:

Generally, we understand the term 'identity' in its broadest sense, in terms of who people are to each other.

(Benwell and Stokoe: 2006: 6)

This accommodates an emphasis on the pivotal role relationships play in identity construction and formation which in turn supports Sikes' observation that 'teaching is intensely personal and relationship based' (1999: 106).

During the course of the interviews, the teachers have used narratives of self and group solidarity to create identities that have worked to keep them in one place. The interview prompts were generic; for example I asked about memories of 'highs' and 'lows' of their working lives. It was interesting to note the prominence of personal and professional relationships within the discourse of these interview conversations. Kelchtermans explains that identity is not a static notion and that identity formation is part of an 'ongoing process', claiming that this identity construction or process of 'self-understanding' results from a range of personal and professional contexts (2005: 1000).

As might be expected from conversations about an individual's career some questions/prompts had deeper significance than others and these varied

from participant to participant. The interview conversation for some participants became a vehicle for evoking what Goodson et al (2006) refer to as 'social nostalgia' where memories of events in their professional lives were linked with home, family and the school community.

These social memories were grouped together under the macro-theme of relational ties during the process of categorising the emerging themes from the data. This macro-theme is made up of three strands. The first comprises themes that draw on 'relationships originating in school'; the second is made up of themes which 'extend the family'; the third encompasses themes relating to relationships which extend 'beyond the school gates'. An exploration of these three strands is presented in this chapter.

5.2 Relationships which originate within school

I don't think I would still be here if it wasn't for (a) the staff or some of the staff and (b) the fact that I know families because I have been here so long and I've got children in year 9 now whose parents I taught; that sort of thing keeps you going along the way because you know them all very well. (Lauren, Joseph Moore)

Lauren draws attention to the relationships she has sustained with various people within her work-place as she reflects upon her choice to stay at the same school for the majority of her teaching career. One consequence of staying in the same school has been the opportunity to develop strong relationships amongst different groups within the school community. Some teachers explained that these relationships had been influential in shaping their perceptions of their identity both professionally and personally. As one teacher explained:

I thought this is because I valued everybody and everything around me that I worked with and I felt that they had made me what I was.
(Ava, Joseph Moore)

According to Britzman,

Teacher identity is not synonymous with the teacher's role and function; role speaks to function whereas identity voices investments; that is, function refers to what one should do, and investments refer to what one feels.

(Britzman 1993: 29)

Ava's explanation above illustrates the ways in which her investment in relationships within school had impacted upon her perceptions of her own identity construction, '*they had made me what I was*'.

In the following sections of the chapter, I explore different types of relationships that originated in the workplace, beginning with an analysis of the teachers' relationships with individual students, both past and present. These relationships with individual students were particularly important to the processes of teacher identity formation.

- with students

During the data collection and the subsequent data analysis it became apparent that all of the teachers in this study invested a great deal of psychic and physical energy into building relationships with the young people in their care, sometimes into being their significant '*grown-up*'.

They probably love you more than most people. And this came out last week as well, when Ofsted were saying to me, 'Children love it here'. They said that, 'They love it here; they think the teachers are great'. And they are wandering around going 'f-ing this' and 'you're

a bitch' and it's not apparent in any way. Except we do know it, don't we? You do know it when they are saying it sometimes they just want to be close to somebody ...so I think as long as you can, you always have to be the grown up. (Grace, Thomas Tunney)

As Grace's comment emphasizes, it is sometimes difficult for teachers who are very involved with children on a day to day basis to see the benefits of investing time and energy into building relationships with the children in these schools. However the interview data suggests that these teachers continue to make such efforts whilst also negotiating top-down pressures relating to their function which is increasingly outcome rather than relationally defined (Prosser 2006). The reasons for this investment are numerous. One consequence of establishing strong relationships with the children in school is a greater sense of belonging to the community within and surrounding the school. As the teachers in the study spend time in schools developing existing relationships and building emerging relationships with new students, this sense of belonging is increased.

The data from the interviews is full of references to the 'buzz' teachers feel from working with students both in and out of the classroom. A number of the teachers referred to the relationships they had forged with students over the years and spoke of events or occasions involving students as 'highs' in terms of their memories of their time in school.

There's too many [highs]. It's all to do with enhancing the lives of children who you know wouldn't have those opportunities. (Lauren, Joseph Moore)

Other participants echoed the ways in which relationships with students had been strengthened through providing or taking a part in activities

which they believed enriched children's lives. They spoke about the pleasure they got from providing new experiences, for example organising trips and camps for the students.

I have enjoyed doing Field Studies with the kids ...I used to run, with PE, a week's field trip to Griffith Park. You know we'd go in October or November when it's really cold and we did that for 5 or 6 years. (James, Joseph Moore)

I can remember the first time I went out with the school trip, in the mini bus, and we were going camping for the weekend up in the Peak District and they saw a waterfall and they all rushed over to one side of the bus and the bus nearly tipped over. But they'd never seen a waterfall before. (Stewart, Bernard L Stone)

Taking children abroad has been a huge thing: children who have never been down the motorway and have been amazed to see rabbits. That has been absolutely brilliant. We used to do exchange visits in the past and that was fantastic. Extra curricular things have been brilliant like shows and performances in this school that I've been involved with. I've really enjoyed that. (Isabel, Bernard L Stone)

Dean explained why being involved with special events such as concerts and productions had been so enjoyable: the satisfaction was derived from taking part in a shared experience that would have long-lasting happy memories for both the children and the staff.

And the performances that we did I used to love doing those. And you got such a lot out of the kids and that was a big highlight when

the curtains closed on the first night and they were all so pleased with themselves. They'd got through the whole thing after all the rehearsals and all the pressure and the tension and we'd got through it on the first night and they'd realised that they'd done it. And there was always a huge cheer, a cheer of release and everybody was going round kissing and hugging each other. It was just great to see them succeed. And I'm sure a lot of them will remember that for the rest of their lives. (Dean, Bernard L Stone)

The shared experience of highly memorable events perhaps explains why for many of the participants these relationships with students had longevity. In many cases they continued after the students had left school and become adults. Grant talked of relationships with members of the community that had been built because of these shared memories:

I've got someone coming round to do some plumbing work for me this week who is an ex-pupil and was actually in my first ever tutor group here. And I can ring them up and talk to them on the phone. They've got so many special memories of the place and speak very kindly about the people here and the care and support that they gave them when they were here and that's great. (Grant, Joseph Moore)

Liz described the experience of attending the funeral of a young man who had been involved in a motorcycle accident in a street close to the school; he had been a pupil at the school who had left eight years previously. Liz had been his head of house. She recalled that a large proportion of the congregation had been made up of people that she and the two other teachers attending the funeral had previously taught. Liz remembered that the former students had been pleased to see their old teachers there:

It was clear at that funeral that some kids were drawn like a magnet to the staff. (Liz, Bernard L Stone)

Marilyn described the same event in her interview:

It was funny. It was like seeing old friends. It was almost like seeing your family that have grown up and I wish I could have a whole day asking them about what they were doing. I mean we always get a few back and we do see them around but it is a feeling of warmth. (Marilyn, Bernard L Stone)

On one level, it seems odd that Marilyn's abiding memory of the day was one of warmth when she describes the funeral of a boy she had taught. However her memories of this event illustrate the role that student-teacher relationships can play for the teachers themselves. In this case, Marilyn's comments suggest that, for some teachers, relationships with students are more than altruistic acts, the teachers gain as much (and sometimes more) from them as the students do. Lortie (1975) sheds some light on why these relationships matter to teachers. Lortie's observation was that the teachers he studied worked in relative isolation from their colleagues, in what he described as an egg-crate classroom structure; he claimed that their work with students provided teachers with ways of sustaining relationships which helped them to combat these feelings of isolation. Lortie described the psychic rewards they received as a result of this work with students. According to Lortie, psychic rewards usually come about as a result of an individual teacher's relationship with groups or individual pupils. These psychic rewards are linked with fostering a love for learning, with student achievement, and with ways in which the students return and express gratitude after they have left the school (1975: 103-104).

Whilst the teachers in this study did not vocalise to me the same sense of isolation that Lortie describes, there are similarities with Lortie's teachers in terms of the relationships with students. For example, some of the long-serving teachers derived pleasure from knowing that they had had an important role in the children's lives that often continued after they had left the school. Some talked about the pleasure they derived from former students coming back and sharing the successes they had made of their lives. These correspond to what Lortie refers to as an 'express gratitude' reward (1975: 103).

I was on duty the other day and a lad came in and it must have been about 4 or 5 years ago when he left. And he had been and got his college qualifications and so on and he had been picked up by a multinational and given 15 grand to have a year off and do that because when he comes back he is going to be on a really high level. And you kind of feel that you've had some sort of hand in somebody moving forward greatly and you've proven that the opportunity is there for everybody and people regularly hear these kind of success stories of people you know. (Laurence, Joseph Moore)

Unsurprisingly, the long serving secondary teachers in these urban schools like children and received a great deal of professional and personal satisfaction from their work with children. Some of their responses corresponded to Nias' observation that 'teaching met a felt-need to love and be loved' (1989: 87):

It's because they offer you so much love actually in the end don't they? And when you do get through it's such a pleasure being with them. And that's a fact. (Grace, Thomas Tunney)

It's really hard to explain what it is about [Bernard L Stone] kids. They will come up and hug you sometimes or give you a kiss on the cheek. They are very tactile and they do look at you as a person you are not just a thing. (Marilyn, Bernard L Stone)

The work of both Nias (1989) and Woods and Jeffrey (2002) explores the importance of the relationships that teachers forge with their students. The authors describe these relationships as 'caring' and the word 'love' is often repeated. When trying to explain why teachers invest so much into their relationships with students, Nias made a distinction between rewards that arose from a sense of satisfaction in their 'teaching competence' and more 'affective' rewards:

Some teachers were also quite open about the way in which teaching met a felt-need to love and be loved. Several mentioned 'giving' as one of their rewards... Some of the teachers talked about the high levels of self-esteem they got from being a teacher and most of this personal worth came from positive feedback from children.

(Nias 1989: 87)

Nias' study of primary teachers' work, which included a discussion of the nature of teachers' relationships with students and their reasons for sustaining them, was written over twenty years ago. What the teachers in her study said about these relationships is similar to what the teachers in my study have described two decades later. The teachers in my study were entering the profession at the time Nias was conducting her research; although they were secondary rather than primary teachers it is likely that they were inducted into school cultures and staffrooms similar to the ones she described where relationships with colleagues and students were very important. It is possible that what the teachers in my study found during

their early days in the profession about building relationships has endured throughout their own careers. Grace, in reflecting on her decision to teach, discussed how she thought there had been a shift in emphasis away from the importance of relationships:

*I will be honest; I have always considered myself a vocational teacher. And I wonder if I had to start now, when I see an NQT and I see how they are treated principally and the pressures I don't know if I would have bothered. And I seriously I think I'd have thought, no. Because the rewards you get back are the emotional ones and if you are feeling stressed out all the time trying to add up to what people... you wouldn't have time to build up relationships I don't think. I just feel that for people going in now it's very, very hard...I suppose I would have got through it because I wanted to do it but I don't think its nearly the same... because you have to be so rotten accountable don't you? For everything, every breath you take.
(Grace, Thomas Tunney)*

Grace's comment about the pressures of accountability implies that newer entrants to the profession would say very different things about their relationships with students than the comments recorded in my data. More recent entrants to the teaching profession are used to a much more technicized career where relationships have less value than performance outcomes (within the current policy discourse) which as Ball explains gives rise to a 'tension' in teachers' lives 'between metric performances and authentic and purposeful relationships' (Ball 2003: 223). This suggests that factors which have been influential in forming teacher identity have changed during the work-lifetimes of these long-serving teachers and supports Britzman's observation that identity-formation is an evolving

process which 'hints at the tensions of our times and the contradictions of our places' (Britzman 1983: 28).

When I asked Frank what he felt he had gained from working in the inner-city, his response drew on how he had grown both personally and professionally from living in and working within a community of students whose own experiences had been so different to his own. His response began with an identification with a particular class through his assertion that he was a product of a public school education, he then moved on to identify with working class Avondale (the community that Joseph Moore is situated in) and stressed that he was living with, and not married to, his partner whose occupation as a plumber confronted stereotypical gender assumptions.

I'm a public school product who lives in Avondale. And I'm not married to a plumber...

This fusion of class associations and challenges culminates in the statement

so my whole thing is I need to sort of you know be a teacher here quite a lot...

There is a sense here of Frank doing the job he does, in the place that he does it, and with this particular community, because of what he gets out of it. The remainder of his response continues to reflect upon what he gains from working in and with this community and is an interesting example of the interweaving of professional and personal identity formation.

...not that I'm sentimental about it. I get pissed off with everyone on a daily basis: the laziness, the aggression, the low ambition all of that stuff. But having said that, they do actually have loads of qualities that I'm not very good at. You know they're really good on

loyalty. I'm quite good on humour but they've got loads of humour. Yes, I guess it's a challenge to me to connect with them, you know. I imagine people see me in like a university or something like that but ... I go up there and I fall out with people left right and centre ... It just doesn't work...whereas with the kids over time if I get a group over time I can relate to them and I guess they bring out a better side to me a bit more inclusive. You know, you get who is teaching who? I don't know. They are good for me. I like my long summer holidays but actually I'm ready for another term and another year. It's a bit sad really. (Frank, Joseph Moore)

Like Frank, other teachers made references to the different ways in which their contact with and relationships with students and the surrounding community had deepened their understanding of people from very different life circumstances to their own. As a result they believed they had become more accepting and tolerant, they felt their world-view had been enlarged and that they had become better human beings. Dean's response to my question about what he had gained from working at Bernard L Stone typifies the response of many of the teachers:

Friendship, tolerance, understanding people and their problems and that was something that I didn't have when I first started working in the city. Because I came from a middle class background, I went to a grammar school and didn't understand the problems of the inner city. I think I understand people better now. (Dean, Bernard L Stone)

Comments such as these would fall under Nias' category of 'opportunities for personal growth' (1989: 89). Another aspect of personal growth that emerged from the teachers' comments about working with their students

was that of intellectual satisfaction. For example, Grace who had been a SENCO for the latter part of her career described devising strategies for her students as both challenging and rewarding whilst Frank talked about investing '*psychic energy*' on '*materials and the teaching strategies*' and deriving '*professional pride and intellectual pleasure*' from doing so.

Other teachers derived satisfaction from 'seeing children make progress' (Nias 1989: 88): Kathryn from Bernard L Stone succinctly explained that the most rewarding aspects of her career had been:

Seeing kids develop emotionally and academically (Kathryn, Bernard L Stone)

Ava, when talking about being involved in a child making progress, draws on what Nias would describe as an 'affective' reward:

Highs...teaching someone to swim, that was a pinnacle...seeing her joy. Just a very simple thing. (Ava, Thomas Tunney)

Mick's descriptions of highs in his career clearly blend Nias' 'affective' and 'competence' reward-descriptors (Nias 1989: 91).

We've had highs in good exam results. Obviously, you know, they're always a bonus. And when year 11 come in and they get the results, and you're there, and they never thought they were any good at Maths and they've got a C or above, we have hugs from them, you know, which is great. And a year or two ago we got some super results and it was fantastic and the kids were really over the moon about it when they came in, so that makes it rewarding. (Mick, Thomas Tunney)

When asked about their career highs, eighteen of the teachers referred to memories which involved being with or working with students. Of these,

three teachers described receiving satisfaction from working with students in ways which reflected their 'competence' needs, by helping them realise their (usually academic) potential; six described experiences which drew on 'affective' indicators of satisfaction; whilst eight gave responses which mixed 'affective' and 'competent' rewards. As Nias explains, it is difficult to distinguish between such rewards because teachers often can not themselves

make the distinction – whether pupils' responsiveness is most valued because it gives teachers a sense of emotional well-being or an awareness of professional success.

(Nias 1989: 91)

Nias concluded her work with an expression of anxiety about the possible repercussions of the 1988 Education Reform Act (which introduced the National Curriculum as a statutory element into schools in England and Wales) (Nias 1989: 213). She was worried that the imposition of such a controlled curriculum might have an effect on the relationships teachers make with their students. Twenty years later, the long-serving teachers' comments and observations about their relationships with students suggest that many aspects of teacher-student relationships have not been affected in the ways in which Nias feared. This group of teachers has formed close connections and ties of attachment and belonging to the communities their students inhabit. In the future, it will be interesting to see if the threat to these relationships lies not with the controlled curriculum, as Nias feared, but rather with the evolution of a controlled teacher work-place dominated by systems of accountability and performativity.

The relationships described above all seem indicative of the emotional connections made by the teachers with the young people in their schools

and seem to challenge Hargreaves's observation that secondary school teachers (and in particular mid-late teachers career-wise) have few emotional connections with their students (1999). Zembylas argues that emotion is not just located within the individual; rather it is constructed in social relationships and systems of values which come from families, cultures and the school situation (2003: 216). Certainly, there are references within the teachers' interview conversations to providing a 'system of values' or moral guidance for their students. This guidance takes a number of forms; one of which is the teacher providing a role model for his or her students.

And we are an example to them that they won't see anywhere else probably for the rest of their lives. And they know that which also I find a bit sad for them. (Grace, Thomas Tunney)

Some teachers felt that the students were struggling to understand what was expected of them in school because of a lack of moral code in the home; the teachers usually perceived this as being caused by a lack of parenting skills:

Because for some kids their home life is awful in which case we try, I try, not to let them bring that into school. There's nothing I can do when they go back to their parents so I try not to think about that. But when they are in school its dead important that they realise that they are very important and that what they actually do is important here. I suppose that that is one thing that we do or I try and get other people to do (Gary, Joseph Moore)

Gary moves between 'I', 'we' and 'they' in the above quotation which is perhaps indicative of his struggle between his personal, professional and corporate identity. It is interesting that he is conscious of the separation

between the students' personal lives and identities and the identities they forge within the school. For Gary, this separation is crucial if the students are, in his words, to succeed in school and later life and '*become the best they can possibly be*'.

For Greg, it seems to be almost the opposite situation in that he prefers there to be no separation of the students' personal and school identity. This is illustrated in the following example, which shows how being reminded of the students' identities away from school (through meetings with the parents of the students) actually helps him to understand their identity within school.

I think a lot of inner-city kids they might be a little bit rough around the edges but some nights you can go home and you'll be moaning about some kid has done something. And you have to get the parents in and then you get talking to them and you think 'ah bless him'. I suppose there is a little bit of empathy there you know
(Greg, Joseph Moore)

Merz and Furman argue that roles are defined more clearly in professional communities whereas in traditional family and localised social communities, relationships overlap and roles are diffuse (1997: 16). This sample of teachers saw a shift in their relationships with students as their daily work became more clearly defined and encompassed a more 'professionalised' role which reduced the possible contexts for conversations to evolve between teachers and students where they could discuss issues associated with moral values, outside the realms of planned lessons on personal, social development or citizenship. Judy echoes a common anxiety for the teachers in this study; namely that increased surveillance coupled with pressures to meet performance outcomes had led to a lack of opportunity

for students to seek help and guidance in the ways they would have done previously.

We started to lose a lot of the children who relied on teachers for moral guidance; they'd sit and chatter to you and they'd say 'My dad was knocking my...' and you know they'd sit and chat but now you don't have time to chat. 'Get this piece of work done' and that is something that's changed much to the detriment of a lot of children whose parents don't have the social skills or parenting skills to talk to them about you know just issues. You can't sit and chatter about what happened on the news this week because you've got to get this done and some snoop might be coming in and checking where you are on the lesson plan so I think that has been bad news for the inner-city schools. (Judy, Thomas Tunney)

Judy's observation provides evidence of how she sees herself; there is a sense that her professional identity is being eroded. Others, like Judy, talked about loss and change with regard to the relationships they have forged with their students especially with regard to taking on roles traditionally associated with parents/ elders in these communities. Judy's ability to take on the role of 'elder' is under threat as teachers' roles become increasingly governed by 'function' at the expense of the 'identity' which voiced investments by creating and maintaining bonds with students and consequently the wider community (Britzman 1993).

Judy and Gary in the quotations above seem to be acting 'in loco parentis'. This could be linked to Laurence's observation that teacher-student relationships imbue the students with a sense of security and trust that their teachers would always understand them and their needs; he explains

how he views the part that teachers play in providing stability and a place of safety for the children:

[For] a lot of the kids that we have got, their biggest sense of security is what they get at school and I don't know if I can rationalise the fact with myself or whatever but sometimes the kids kick off with us because they need to and it's the only place that they can do it and feel safe. You know it's their one chance of getting the attention from somebody who is not going to smack them or hit them or you know fall out greatly with them. And let's face it, everybody as they are growing up needs to kick off some time or other. There are very few people who don't and in inner-city places it is more [so] than others. And I think that what we have done is give the opportunity in a fairly safe and secure environment to test the limits to do this that or the other but to do that in a situation where they are safe. (Laurence, Joseph Moore)

Laurence, Judy and Gary (whose views are not atypical in the sample) appear to have provided their students with an appropriate 'system of values' (Zembylas 2003: 216) in a secure and constant environment. This has been an important element of the work that these long-serving teachers have felt they have had to do, largely because of a sense of instability amongst the communities surrounding the schools. Relationships between students and teachers within these schools offer stability, set boundaries and are fixed points of reference.

For this group of teachers, there are two elements of their relationships with students that appear to strengthen attachments with the school and its community. The first of these is *longevity*; relationships that have been established and deepened over time not only with students within the

school but with their parents and even grandparents have a positive effect in terms of becoming part of a community. The second, *spatiality*, is related to *longevity* in that as former students become members of the wider community, the teachers retain their relationships with them (although the nature of these relationships has changed slightly) and feel attached to the community beyond the school gates as a result. Long-serving teachers who have built up relational ties over time that have spread into the wider community thus have *spatio-temporality*; they belong to both the space and time of that community. Some of the implications of this were discussed more fully in the previous chapter which explores the importance of locational ties.

In the next section of this chapter I examine the ways in which relational ties with other adults within the school have contributed to the long-serving teachers' sense of identity and belonging.

– with colleagues

As the participants shared stories of their time in the schools a recurring theme was the importance of the close relationships they had developed with their colleagues.

These relationships within the workplace were diverse and served different functions. Most of the teachers described friendships with colleagues that had evolved over the years in the school. Although these relationships began in the workplace the teachers often referred to ways in which they extended beyond school.

People would go away on holiday together; people would socialise together or you would play in a cricket team or a football team. We had staff cricket and football; we had staff mixed hockey; we had

staff playing football on a Friday night. There were a lot of social events going on and people got to know each other and support each other. (Dean, Bernard L Stone)

Little and McLaughlin describe the various ways in which teachers gravitate towards collegial groups that arise out of a range of relationships amongst different groups of people such as pastoral teams, curriculum groupings, and those who teach within the same geographical area of the school (1993). The role of such informal friendships with other adults in the school which have formed as a result of exposure to 'multiple reference groups' has sometimes been open to criticism, especially because they may or may not involve 'professional' contexts. For example, Hargreaves' study of the emotional geographies of teachers' relationships in school found that whilst friendships with colleagues 'help build emotional and intellectual understanding... such friendships seem to be the exception rather than the norm' (Hargreaves 2001: 523). He found that, when they did exist, such relationships were not always a good thing as they were perceived to be obstacles impeding the route to progress in terms of the discourse of school improvement. Drawing on the work of de Lima (2001), Hargreaves argued that teachers in such groupings were anxious to preserve the friendships and consequently avoided opportunities to engage in 'professional disagreement and mutual critique that can move teaching forward' (Hargreaves 2001: 523). Consequently they created 'mutually affirming friendships for a few and a more distanced conflict-avoiding culture of friendliness or politeness for the rest' (Hargreaves 2001: 523-4).

Achinstein (2002) describes a school which she refers to as 'Washington' where there is a close knit community of like-minded individuals who

regard their professional colleagues as friends and have familial like ties with them. Achinstein attributes the slow turn-over of staff within the school to this sense of community. Echoing the point made by Hargreaves (2001) above, she warns that collegiality such as this does come with associated problems especially for newcomers or staff who might find themselves outside the shared values of such a community. Achinstein argues that a necessary component of collegiality is conflict and that professional communities which are based on strong emotional ties may not be equipped to manage conflict in a positive or constructive manner as those involved react personally rather than professionally to the conflict. As a result such communities can lead to individuals who are outside the central group feeling isolated. Whilst the teachers in my study did not talk in their interviews of feelings of isolation, it obviously can not be assumed that they did not at times share the feelings of conflict described by Achinstein. However, when the teachers in my sample talked of their colleagues during the interviews they spoke in positive terms, in ways which would echo Hargreaves' description of 'mutually affirming' relationships.

A lot of my friendship group are Bernard L Stone staff so I suppose that it is a great big chunk of my life. (Marilyn, Bernard L Stone)

Such relationships appeared to have helped strengthen their sense of attachment to their colleagues and work-place. In contrast to de Lima (2001), Nias et al in their examination of staff relationships in primary school settings value school workplaces where 'colleagues behaved and reacted to each other as persons rather than practitioners' (1989: 79). Nias et al (1989) make the point that what seems to an outsider like

inconsequential talk is actually 'chat [which] is a high-level activity' because what looks like everyday talk and trivia have important long-term implications for individuals experiencing a sense of attachment and affinity with a place. Using Britzman's distinction, attachment and affinity are affective concepts linked with investment and identity and are divorced from role and function (1993). The teachers in my study draw on their own 'sense of attachment and affinity' in their frequent references to the importance of friendships with the other adults in their schools.

Nias et al demonstrate how having a sense of shared values and vision, humour, and the importance of finding a common enemy contribute to this sense of attachment (1989). Dean in his interview explained that Bernard L Stone was often directed by the Local Authority to take in students who had been excluded from other schools. Initially these children were challenging in terms of their behaviour and their attitude, however Dean's interview shows that he perceived that, over time, they gradually began to fit in and accept the Bernard L Stone ethos. Dean took obvious pride in this as he depicted Bernard L Stone staff as one sharing the same 'vision and values'. There are also many references to the importance of 'humour' in sustaining relationships amongst colleagues within the three schools. Judy referred to the importance of having opportunities to let off steam with colleagues as she described memories of '*crying with laughter*' with her friends during the school day at Thomas Tunney. Finally (in terms of Nias et al's description above), for teachers working in urban schools in disadvantaged areas, there are many 'common enemies', the most prominent within the data being Ofsted and other outsiders who judged the schools. When faced with such an 'enemy', the teachers talk about drawing on each other for support. James at Joseph Moore described how the friendship and support from other teachers in the school helped him to

survive a difficult few months of prolonged scrutiny after an Ofsted inspector's rating of his teaching competence.

It is difficult to extrapolate from the data the extent to which all individuals felt a part of this apparently unified front because this analysis is based on what participants chose to share. All those who mentioned relationships with colleagues related positive stories and the impression one is left with is of three very sociable work-places and this sociability appeared to extend beyond the work-place. Socialising out of school with work colleagues allowed the teachers in the study to mix with a range of people regardless of their status within the workplace. This appeared to strengthen these relationships with the result that the teachers found themselves working with a closely knit group of friends and so they felt that they belonged to a supportive network of colleagues with a wide range of experiences. Lauren explained that having long-standing relationships with her colleagues across the school helped her feel secure and supported in her work.

There's quite a lot of us, as you are obviously aware, that have been here a long, long time; there's still three or four members who were here before I came. That friendship, that working together, knowing that you've got support doesn't matter what department they are in or what status they are in the school you know there's people there who you can go to for absolutely anything. (Lauren, Joseph Moore)

However, when Marilyn described the social atmosphere in her school she commented that such sociability wasn't necessarily a feature of other schools she had been in. She developed this by stating that such social 'togetherness' might not be perceived as professional in 'other schools'.

It seemed much more aloof and much more professional maybe in some of the other schools whereas here we've always got on and we've always helped each other out and that's the bit I like.
(Marilyn, Bernard L Stone)

Emerging from the data are repeated stories of individuals bound in love, trust and togetherness against perceived forces of repression. It is of course impossible to know if these are memories that are fuelled by a sense of social nostalgia with 'rose-tinted' lenses. A more sceptical reading of the narratives might suggest that the stories reflect the neediness of this group of teachers or might question whether the stories are representative of small group solidarity rather than the institutions as a whole. What can be extrapolated from these stories is that for these individuals, memories (whether real or imagined) of feeling part of something have been important to them and have helped them feel a sense of attachment to the schools they have worked in. These are memories of personal and professional relationships which have developed organically and offer a different perspective to the school improvement discourse of professional relationships.

I would argue that recent policy initiatives and references which appear to prioritise professional relationships within schools have involved a form of metonymic substitution whereby individual teachers are in reality impersonalised by these mechanisms of collegiality. The 'collegial school' implies an environment where relationships are paramount but in actuality has come to be a metaphor for a strand of school improvement where collegiality is imposed and constructed top-down from the school management. Teachers who are 'struggling' are directed to work with a more 'successful' or more senior colleague who will coach them to meet a set of targets linked to performance outcomes. Individual social actors

within such a structure become less important as the 'collegial school' obfuscates their roles and contributions (Benwell and Stokoe 2006: 114). The version of a school community which links professional collegial relationships with corporate goals of improvement is a very different version of the relationships which foster affinity and belonging that have emerged from analysis of the data within this study.

One of the dangers of imposed collegiality is that individual enthusiasm and creativity can be stifled. Frank in his interview conversation repeatedly referred to how the label and pressures of working in Special Measures had stifled creativity as teachers were pressured to prepare lessons using the same lesson formats and teach prescribed lesson content. He described how he survived the process by reacting to those outsiders who were paid 'in bucket loads' to tell him what and how to teach.

You know I am completely off-message with everyone else who is paid in bucket loads... you have to do your own thing ... you know you may be in an institution but ... I am finding ways of, yes, the humanity of it; being able to break out of the rigid compartments that the government with budgets and management structures and all of that...This is what I was saying about measures because this is what happened. We got control of the agenda. We weren't trying to at the time. We were just trying to get out of measures but I am now overtly saying to people let's do things differently, let's enjoy things and there aren't enough people saying this in teaching but I think there are more. I think people have had enough and you know we are quite bright and we are quite well educated and ... I want to be very proud of teaching, especially English teaching. We've always

led it. I think we are still the most awkward squad in school virtually any school. (Frank, Joseph Moore)

Frank in this extract from our interview conversation is exhibiting what Huberman refers to as the characteristics of an 'independent artisan'; Huberman challenges the notion that collegiality is a totally positive experience, he cautions that

the lure of a common mission ... of professional work planned, observed, and carried out in concert – can be a hazardous one...

(1993: 13)

In contrast to structures that impose collegiality, Huberman argues that teachers working as 'independent artisans' inevitably seek out and collaborate with 'peer artisans' as a matter of course (rather than force) when they need clarification and support with making the appropriate steps forward with their craft. There are many examples within the interview conversations of individual teachers forging relationships with colleagues that could be viewed as measures which would contribute to school improvement and fit within the 'effective schools' discourse. For example, Ava describes in detail the ways in which she and a colleague team-teach and are often used by the school to spotlight good practice when external visitors tour the school. Frank talks about the various ways in which he and his colleagues plan a range of activities and teaching approaches with the specific aim of raising student achievement. However these are relationships that have evolved naturally over time, with proven success, rather than the product of top-down imposed structures.

For the teachers in this study, the close friendships with colleagues which have developed '*over time*' have helped the teachers form an attachment to the school which, as Laurence explains, is immensely rewarding.

It is just that sense of belonging over time that is one of the highest points.

This 'sense of belonging' is strengthened by the fact that they entered the school as young inexperienced teachers and their professional and personal identity has evolved over the years within the workplace. Grant evoked a picture of colleagues sharing experiences which had helped them to be nurtured and develop within the workplace; a process which he believed had very positive outcomes.

The thing that has really made a difference to us and the achievement of the children here has been the development of the staff here, which is as strong as I've known it in 30 years. And they are people that have grown up within the school so that they work in a way which we know is successful and it's just about building those relationships with the youngsters. (Grant, Joseph Moore))

This idea of 'growing up' within the workplace was repeated by some of the other participants. Ava described how this experience had shaped her professional identity:

I had grown up there and they'd nurtured me as a teacher in that school and all my values came from working with a really loyal staff ...because I valued everybody and everything around me that I worked with and I felt that they had made me what I was. (Ava, Joseph Moore)

So relationships with colleagues are formed and sustained in a variety of ways. The teachers described relationships with colleagues that are 'real' friendships that sustain beyond the school gates and whilst they might

have originated in the workplace are built upon a mixture of personal and professional shared connections. There are many examples from the teachers' conversations about the ways in which these personal relationships have helped individuals to feel a sense of security within the workplace enabling them to turn to colleagues in times when they have needed support. The distinctions between personal and professional become blurred. These relationships help the individuals feel valued and a deep emotional connection both with other individuals and with the school community itself (they feel 'part of Thomas Tunney', for example). At times these connections have fostered a familial atmosphere for the teachers and students within the schools. It is this sense of family that I go on to explore in the next section of the chapter.

– extending the family

Ava, alongside many of the participants, described being nurtured by these workplace colleagues in terms of her growth as a teacher; she also described how these colleagues took on more traditional parenting roles when for example her head of department helped her to choose her first car. Similarly, Judy seemed to view her first headteacher as a father figure to whom she could turn for advice:

The old head I had, and my father, who is long gone, taught me something that ...I try to work from, [that] is, what is the end result you want from this? And then work backwards and how are you going to achieve it? And I try to apply that to everything. (Judy, Thomas Tunney)

A number of the teachers perceived that their relationships with colleagues had been strengthened because of the particularity of their school circumstances. Their years of teaching in an inner-city context entailed

specific shared experiences and challenges that meant the teachers within the school believed they had formed closer bonds as a result. Grace described this as being part of a group of colleagues who had come together in the face of a common adversity:

There is an enormous family feeling and we are all very fond of each other ...because you do need each other for support because there is nothing like when somebody has been really ghastly to you is there? Knowing that everyone else is in the same boat and I think that that's unique to city schools. (Grace, Thomas Tunney)

Others echoed Grace's sentiments about the familial atmosphere within the workplace that appeared to be a consequence of these close relationships with colleagues who had bonded through these shared difficult experiences.

I think that that's probably the thing in inner-city schools - we are all in it together and we are all part of one big family and you know if you are going through a bad patch then we'll look after you. (Laurence, Joseph Moore)

Laurence here identifies with the third person plural, echoing Butler's observation that belonging to a community deepens as individuals align themselves and evolve through a process of sedimentation to the plural 'we' (1993). Laurence's comments echoed many of the others in the sample. He repeated and developed the point later in his interview when he raised the notion of feeling 'valued' and of the importance of feeling a deep emotional connection with the people and his workplace:

there is always a strong staff bond here ...I think that it might be worth looking at how people feel that the school treat them as an individual as a person and do they feel valued and whether this us

against the rest of the world attitude that a lot of typical inner-city schools have is a thing that helps them to succeed. And the fact that they sometimes feel that they are part of a family and partners know other partners and they meet socially. And so if you go through a bad spell, people will kind of ease off a bit and take that time there and I think that if there is that... it is amazing how I repaid that over the years three or fourfold you know. If people kind of look after you when you are down then when you come back you feel as if you owe them something and I think that has always been one of the things about the school here. (Laurence, Joseph Moore)

The emphasis that Laurence puts on inner-city schools being different is echoed in the many references to the 'unifying against a common enemy' narrative which is weaved throughout some of the teachers' memories of their time in school. This point will be developed further in Chapter Six below but typical examples of this include references by the participants to the Blitz spirit, and to the notion that school is a metaphorical family unit and family members can criticise each other but outsiders can't.

For others, workplace relationships with colleagues and students seemed to supply a kind of proxy family unit. Marilyn explained why her home life and school life were so indistinguishable at times; she said that because she had no children of her own the school was '*fulfilling some kind of need*'.

The sense of school becoming like family for the teachers in the sample was illustrated by the many occasions when they referred to the workplace or work colleagues with a vocabulary of deep emotional attachment. Grace summarised this simply:

I love it. (Grace)

They offer you so much love. (Grace)

A number of the participants described how the school became an extension of their home or family life, especially during the early stages of their professional lives. Liz is typical of many of the participants when she explained how her work-place had provided the locus of her social life:

We married in 1973 and Rick started teaching here and he was very much involved in extra curricular stuff so Friday nights we were always here for the swimming club or the disco. And being a young married couple we did most things together so if Rick was involved then so was I. ... and our lives seemed to revolve around Bernard L Stone at that time. (Liz, Bernard L Stone)

So for Liz being married to Rick was a way into the social networks associated with his workplace. She later also became a teacher in the same school. Liz went on to describe how the interweaving of home and school life went a stage further when her daughter also for a time worked at Bernard L Stone:

I've always been associated with it through Rick and then through working here and even my daughter came. (Liz, Bernard L Stone)

Two other teachers in the sample described how their home and work lives became intertwined through their daughters. Kathryn, like Liz, encouraged her daughter to work for a short amount of time in the same school. However unlike Kathryn, her daughter found the school to be a difficult place to work and left.

After experiencing dissatisfaction with her son's experience at another school, Isabel explained that she decided to send her daughter to the

school she worked in. At the time of the interview, this decision was having repercussions in Isabel's career choices. It is interesting that the imminent structural changes to the workplace seemed to have started to erode her trust in the capability of the school to continue her daughter's education. She reported experiencing anxieties about remaining in the school after the Academy opened but felt that she could not move until her daughter had finished at the school:

My immediate plan was to stay here while my daughter is here because she is in Year 9 and she is adamant that she wants to stay. So I want to see her through. I'm teaching her and I want to see her through her French. (Isabel, Bernard L Stone)

Liz, Kathryn and Isabel illustrate how entrenched within the school culture their personal lives were in that they felt they could entrust members of their family to the workplace and its community.

Some participants talked about the ways in which events in their personal lives had consequences on how they experienced their work place; so if they were encountering problems at home this might have an impact upon their working lives. These difficult periods were sometimes made easier because they felt that they were coming to work with colleagues who were also supportive friends. For example, as noted earlier Laurence described candidly his wife coming to school to tell him the deeply upsetting personal news that she had cancer; Laurence recalled in detail how the people in the workplace supported him through this and how this deepened his connection with the workplace as a result. Gary also explained how critical incidents in his personal life had led him to consider how this had affected his professional life:

I had a real crisis, must have been about 10-15 years ago, what was it? H born, mother died, moving house within the same week. And for whatever reason that just kicked off stress came out. But I coped with it. I got on with it. I didn't have a day off which is important to me. And it was at that point I thought, ok what else is adding to your stress? Ok working with the head (as part of SLT) ... at that time we weren't on the same wavelength ok so resigned and came back to PE. (Gary, Joseph Moore)

Judy also described how important it was for her that when she experienced difficulties at home, she could rely upon the deep emotional relationships she had forged with work colleagues. This was especially apparent to her when she had to move schools because her first school was closed:

If you're with people when things happen in your life that you have been with and who know you then they help you to deal with things don't they? It's obvious. But then if you've then got to start in a new structure trying to pretend that you've not suddenly got divorced or in some cases your mother hasn't just died or that your kid hasn't just been born handicapped and all that stuff because the family you were with knew. That is very, very difficult and it takes a lot out of you especially ...while you're needing time to heal you haven't got time to heal because you've got to show these people that you're different. (Judy, Thomas Tunney)

Judy here appears to have elided family and school in this memory of school being 'the family you were with'. For the majority of the teachers in this study, work life and family life complemented each other. However, for Greg and Ava, this was not the case. They described how their family

responsibilities restricted their opportunities for career progress. Greg's perception was that his desire to spend time with his wife and children explained *'why I've never gone as far'* and Ava stated that, *'all this family stuff, it prevented me from climbing any ladders'*. However Ava also emphasized that experiences in her home life had positive consequences for her professional life:

I was a better teacher for becoming a mum. (Ava, Joseph Moore)

Some teachers also described the importance of knowing the families of the students they had taught over the years. This understanding of the family networks and the backgrounds of their students helped them feel an increased attachment to the school. For Lauren, who like Marilyn had no children of her own, her in-depth knowledge of the family networks amongst the pupils and the close relationship with colleagues had helped motivate her to stay at Joseph Moore. In the next section of the chapter, I explore the ways in which relationships with families of students and with the wider community have contributed to the teachers in this sample's feelings of affinity and belonging to their workplace.

5.3 Relationships beyond the school gates

The teachers in the study also spoke about their relationships with another community. Just as their relationships within the school helped them to forge an identity within the workplace, their relationships within the external community appeared to help them to feel that they belonged there; that they had over the years become someone in that community.

A number of the teachers both lived and worked in the local community and saw this as a positive experience. Gary explained why living so close to his workplace was important for him:

Why would I want to go further afield when I can be at home in 15 minutes time? I would move if I wasn't doing a very good job, or I would move if I was bored but again I find it challenging enough here but in a nice way... you can walk down the corridor and you say hello and we have a chat at lunch-time. At the gates you have a chat with the parents walking by. (Gary, Joseph Moore)

There were many other occasions when the teachers talked about how they had experienced a sense of positive well-being that had come about from belonging to an extended community and in many ways working in the school had provided a gateway into that community. For example, Grant talked of relationships with members of the community that had been built because of his time in school such that he felt he had become somebody in that community:

Some of the things I really genuinely treasure in terms of memories are the number of adults now who actually still take time out to come and speak to you. I had one yesterday, I was stood at the gate and he turned his car around and came over for a word and they still do that and that's really pleasing to see. (Grant, Joseph Moore)

Similarly Greg explained that one of the things that he had gained from working in the school was a sense of belonging to, and being accepted by, the local community. He described the pleasure he received from his daily encounter with parents of students he had taught on his way to work:

I go into the paper shop in the morning and they who run it they talk about their lad who is in Canada. Their C., who has become a teacher and they all come back to see you ...call it fulfilment call it

what you want but the thing is at the end of the day when you have worked with some kids it's a nice feeling. (Greg, Joseph Moore)

This idea of becoming somebody within the community is echoed in Sandiford and Seymour's study of face to face service occupations; they note that one of the perceived rewards of such work was the 'sense of status and recognition' that the local community afforded the workers (2007: 220). The teachers in this study also derived pleasure from their status in the community beyond the school gates.

Whilst individual teachers spoke confidently about their own identity within the local community, the *corporate* identity of the school within the community was a more difficult relationship to manage. Some of these teachers who had individually forged successful relationships within the wider community were also aware of the importance of the perceptions of their school by this community. In their interviews they spoke about various ways in which they had tried to improve these perceptions.

Some of the teachers at Bernard L Stone felt that their school was seen as not belonging to the local community; they felt the community felt no ownership of the school. This was partly due to the physical location of the school buildings; Bernard L Stone was located at the top of a steep hill some distance from the housing estates where the residents of the community lived. This led to problems as Liz described:

We've never been in a very advantageous position as regards the estates because we are not part of a community geographically, are we? And whilst we have an open door policy parents are just very difficult to get into the school. ..I don't feel at the moment that we are the centre of a community at all. (Liz, Bernard L Stone)

However Liz went onto explain that she felt that the school and more particularly the teachers in the school had an important role for the children which continued after they had left the school.

That's not to say that the staff haven't played an important part in their lives. (Liz, Bernard L Stone)

Some of the participants discussed taking part in activities which were expressly aimed at improving school-community relations. For example, Dean talked about how part of his job description in the past had involved being a 'community teacher' and the aim of this was to try and establish that '*the school would have a presence in the community*' in this case the community of Morgan Park:

So you would go out and you would be working in the community at different things. I was working with the Morgan Park's Residents' Association trying to set up a newspaper...that sort of thing. And we ran an old people's club in the school. We had Christmas parties for the old people. (Dean, Bernard L Stone)

This active commitment to raising the profile of the school within the community had mutual benefits for both the members of the local community and the members of the school, as Dean explained:

I think I was having to build bridges... One of the things was bringing the old people in because I think they had a lot of influence. They came in and had coffee and biscuits and the kids came and talked to them if they were doing a history project about the second world war or things like that. So it was just the idea that the school wasn't such a bad place and you could come into it... When we first had this school it was a bare site; there were no

trees; no bushes, just empty banks.... So I had the idea of turning it into a nature area And we got people from the S Centre, which is for people with disabilities, working with us. And all the kids from the junior school came up and planted a tree each. So we developed that area and I'm really proud of it because it was once empty and it is now a wood that has wildlife in it and all sorts. But that was about getting the community involved. ... It was all part of seeing it evolve. (Dean, Bernard L Stone))

Dean uses the metaphor of bridge building to describe his role in the relationship between the school and the community. His active role in this process is similar to Carmichael et al's 'broker' (2006). Wenger describes the broker as working on the boundaries or peripheries of two communities acting as an interpreter for the actors in each community (1998). Many of the teachers in this study understood that this commitment to strengthening the relationship between the school and the community was more than an exercise in public relations. The teachers believed that the school they were part of had an important and unique role to play in the community. They had seen how changes over time had affected the children and adults within these communities. The children of the community had to negotiate dual positions as they were obviously part of 'the school'. At times the differing contexts of this duality were in conflict if the school wasn't valued by the community or if problems from the community affected life in the school. Grace believed that unreal expectations, from policy-makers and the media, had brought about increased pressures on students and that when the students couldn't live up to these expectations the community lost faith in the school.

But the aspirations that have been forced onto some of these children and I mean forced have not given them hope. They have

done the opposite to be honest. So when the education has changed and probably benefited most people [it] has done more damage in schools like this because where they would have a really good aspiration to be regularly employed in a factory ...and if you were really high powered then you would do an apprenticeship and they would have such respect ... if a lad got an apprenticeship they would have a big party and everything and now everything is...you're a failure if you haven't got to university you know everybody has to go to uni now. (Grace, Thomas Tunney)

Isabel described how she thought increasingly negative societal pressures were changing what the children were experiencing in the community and as a result teachers had to work harder on maintaining relationships with these children.

I think what they are encountering out and about in the streets and at home is a lot tougher. They are seeing a lot of things that young children shouldn't really have to see. And it colours their view in the way that they deal with one another. If they are going out in the streets then they are seeing violence and they are seeing that all the while. They will hear lots of things that are not very nice. And that is all going on: adults openly discussing things in front of children. And all that is going on in the background so I don't think there is as much respect for teachers that there once was. The kids are far too quick to want to sort things out in an unpleasant verbal way and they resort to fighting a lot easier. (Isabel, Bernard L Stone)

Laurence felt that the school had had some success in helping the young people manage to overcome some of these problems:

And if I look back at the biggest success of the school then it's that we have been in a very difficult community and we have actually taken some very damaged young people and sent them out the other end being able to cope. (Laurence, Joseph Moore)

As a consequence of this, some teachers perceived that the school's role was to provide a refuge for the children, and their parents. For example, Stewart explained that the school had an important job to play in the life of the community which he felt was at times volatile:

I suppose you can think of it as the last bastion of hope for the area. You hear all the appalling things ... and life at the school still carries on its calm path on the whole so, despite what goes on in the community, this place is a place of calm and a refuge for both the parents and the kids. (Stewart, Bernard L Stone)

This relationship between the school and the wider community at times had been reciprocal. For example, when Joseph Moore had gone through a period of difficult inspections and was subject to prolonged media scrutiny, Laurence took comfort from the families within the community who remained loyal to the school.

It's when you see people come back and it's when you see people as parents and they've got the respect for you and they've got fond memories of the school and things like that. It's just the whole thing about being a part of a school that went through a really bad spell where it got a lot of criticism from outside the area for a long time but there were still an awful lot of people that remained and had confidence in the school and would send their children there because they had been there. (Laurence, Joseph Moore)

Babyegeya (2001) drawing on the work of Swap (1993) describes four different modes for the ways in which schools and wider communities can develop relationships. These models are on a continuum with the 'protective model' at one end (where schools feel the need to protect themselves from the surrounding community and devise strategies to restrict the impact of home-school collaboration) and the 'partnership model' at the other (Babyegeya 2001: 135-137). The relationships between school and the wider community evoked by the teachers in my study does not sit easily along this continuum. This is perhaps because Swap's models of relationships have been constructed with specific outcomes or goals in mind whereas the relationships described above by the teachers in the study have evolved naturally over time. The communities that the teachers feel part of beyond the school gates have been happened on by chance. They are according to Nelson 'found' communities and are different from 'chosen' communities which have been consciously created (Nelson 1995). With 'found' communities relationships develop organically and, as evidenced by this study, echo features of the Swap's four types of community, at different times in response to differing needs in their histories of the three schools and their wider communities.

Laurence and Stewarts' memories of the community and the school taking on mutually supporting roles when necessary appear to have some resonance with Tonnies' description of relationships that 'are based on positive mutual affirmation'; such relationships 'consist of mutual encouragement and the sharing of burdens and achievements' (Tonnies 2001: 17). Such a relationship and 'the social bond that stems from it..' according to Tonnies either has

real organic life, and that is the essence of community [Gemeinschaft]; or else as a purely mechanical construction, existing in the mind, and that is what we think of as Society [Gesellschaft] (Tonnies 2001: 217)

The lives the teachers live outside of the school gates as well as within seem to be more than a 'purely mechanical construction'. They are 'real' and have evolved over time; they are relationships that have deep emotional significance for the teachers in the study. Ava had worked in a school that had been closed before moving to Joseph Moore. When she described that experience she talked in emotive terms of the crucial function she felt that an inner-city school held within its community:

I think we wanted to save the school more than our jobs, do you know? I do because the community there, we felt would have its heart ripped out. (Ava, Joseph Moore)

5.4 Belonging to a community of kinship

For this group of long-serving inner-city teachers, relationships within the workplace comprise relationships with colleagues, with managers, with students (past and present), with families of students and colleagues and with individuals within the wider community. Multifaceted relationships such as these inevitably draw on many layers of teacher identity. The data has led me to consider the ways in which long-serving teachers in these three schools have combined self and group-identities to create identities which have helped to foster a sense of attachment to one place and to think about the ways in which these identities are being unsettled by the changing environments of these workplaces.

For these teachers, relationships matter: relational ties are key to an individual's sense of identity and to their identification with a close-knit

community of people. When these relationships have evolved naturally they take on some of the characteristics of familial attachments. The boundaries between personal and professional lives become indistinct as professional activities merge with non work-related activities.

In communities, we create our social lives with others who have intentions similar to ours. In organizations, relationships are constructed for us by others and become codified into a system of hierarchies, roles, and role expectations.

(Sergiovanni 1994: 217)

Teachers form relationships as they come into contact with different groups and these relational ties are not hierarchical. Strong attachments are made to students and to their families, to colleagues and their families, and to individuals and their families within the wider community. Their sense of loyalty and belonging has been strengthened by such relational ties; the school has become an extended family which incorporates 'multiple reference groups' (Little and McLaughlin 1993). These relational ties have been the source of or reservoirs of resilience that have helped individuals to stay rooted within the workplace as they feel an attachment to their '*community of kin*' (Tonnie 2001: 27).

Chapter 6: Metaphorical Findings and Analysis

6.1 Introduction

It's the Blitz spirit! We can all do this together if we all keep our tin hats on (laughter). (Grace)

This extract from Grace's interview was analysed in the previous chapter. In explaining her experiences of working at Thomas Tunney, Grace used a metaphor which compares the camaraderie of teaching in inner city schools to the spirit of Londoners in the Blitz during the Second World War. As I have read and re-read the data I have been struck by the prominence of metaphors in the interviews. Some teachers, like Grace, used metaphors to emphasise the esprit de corps of life in their school whilst others, like Frank, drew on different metaphors to describe their experiences, 'I just made a game of it'. This chapter is based upon an analysis of the metaphors used by the teachers as they spoke to me about their lives in school and draws on some of the literature previously discussed in section 3.5.1 above. The findings and analysis are presented in a different way to the thematic analyses in chapters four and five, as here, I follow stylistic conventions employed when discussing metaphorical analysis (Lakoff and Johnson 2003; Cameron 2003). As such this chapter presents a different lens through which to view the data and tries to offer further answers to the question, why did these teachers stay in these inner-city schools for all or the major part of their career.

The analysis of metaphors used by the teachers in the interviews has generated an interesting and potentially rich lens through which to discuss the ways in which different teachers view their lives in school. According to Liberali, metaphors can help reach an

understanding of the ideas and thoughts of teachers about their school realities in a broader sense, that is, they 'can serve as a tool for investigating the way we construct reality' (Elis 2001: 67)

(Liberali 2008: 269)

However before I discuss the ways in which these realities may have been constructed, it is important to express some caution as to the extent to which claims can be made about understanding the teachers' thoughts and intentions, especially without recourse to verifying these with them. Steen distinguishes between 'language as use' (which in this chapter would refer to the teachers' words in the interviews) and 'thought as use' (which here refers to my reconstruction of the themes behind these words) (Steen 2006: 39). Steen cautions that any findings which allow for formulating implications for thought as use must be 'tentative' (2006: 41). Consequently the findings that have been presented in this chapter and the accompanying discussion of the metaphors used by the teachers are not postulated as definitive claims about the teachers' thoughts and rationales but rather suggest possible readings of their perspectives and attitudes.

6.1.1 An example of metaphorical clustering.

To exemplify the methodological procedures that I used to re-analyse the study of metaphors in the data, one case study is presented. Howard was a teacher at Thomas Tunney. He had been a teacher of Science and was in charge of IT across the school. At the time of the interview, Howard was experiencing doubts about wanting to stay in the school once it re-opened as an Academy and his interview evidences his 'jaded' attitudes towards the school, and the senior management team in particular. He explained

that whilst he had been prepared to devote all his energy to the school and to the students in the past, however, he was now reluctant to do so; he was looking forward to retirement.

The following table shows some of the metaphors of journeying Howard used in his interview. The second column provides a justification for identifying the words or phrases as metaphorical with the Vehicle of the metaphor italicized. According to Cameron (2003) the Vehicle is a word or phrase which is somehow incongruous with the rest of the talk yet connections can be made between the meaning of the Vehicle and the Topic domain of the on-going discourse.

Table 3: Examples of metaphors of journeying from Howard’s interview

Extract	Vehicle	Topic
Is this the way we want to go?	<p><i>the way, to go</i></p> <p>directions, route which are metaphorical when talking about school policies and initiatives</p>	WORK IS A JOURNEY ³
everybody else in the school was stymied	<p><i>Stymied</i></p> <p>obstacle in the path, metaphorical when used to indicate that colleagues couldn’t do anything or were powerless</p>	WORK IS A JOURNEY
others are being driven by the need to improve results	<p><i>being driven</i></p> <p>moving forward along a route by an external person or force, metaphorical when used to describe pressures to get pupils to achieve exam results</p>	WORK IS A JOURNEY

³ The convention employed in metaphor analysis is to present the topic in capitals (*cf* Cameron 2003; Lakoff and Johnson 2003)

Extract	Vehicle	Topic
I am coming up to the Academy	<p><i>coming up to</i></p> <p>making progress in approaching a destination, used metaphorically here to indicate that time is passing and that he will be working in the Academy soon</p>	CAREER PROGRESS IS A JOURNEY
this is not the move I want to make	<p><i>the move</i></p> <p>change of location, used metaphorically when describing change in status and structure of the school</p>	CHANGE IS A JOURNEY
a change too far (repeated four times)	<p><i>too far</i></p> <p>measuring of distance, used metaphorically when describing the changes in his working environment</p>	CHANGE IS A JOURNEY
the dependence on ICT that seems to be the way we are going	<p><i>the way we are going</i></p> <p>route or pathway for a journey, used metaphorically when describing the increased use of ICT in teaching</p>	CHANGE IS A JOURNEY

Extract	Vehicle	Topic
in dire straits	<i>in dire straits</i> naval terminology for difficult journey through narrow waterway, used metaphorically to indicate someone in difficult circumstances	WORK IS A JOURNEY
attempt to turn it round	<i>turn it round</i> change direction, used here metaphorically to indicate improving the reputation of the school	PROGRESS IS A JOURNEY
good friends who have moved on from here	<i>moved on from here</i> physically made progress on a journey from one place to another, here used metaphorically to indicate that friends who have left and moved to different schools have made progress with their careers	CAREER PROGRESS IS A JOURNEY
giving way to young blood	<i>giving way</i> yield the right of way, to step aside, here used to show that he and his peers are ready to let younger teachers get on with working in the Academy	giving way to young blood

Extract	Vehicle	Topic
change upon change upon change, not incremental, like a pendulum swing from side to side	<p><i>like a pendulum swing from side to side</i></p> <p>motion, movement but not free-flowing movement as it is fixed and controlled by a central force, here used as a simile to illustrate how a series of imposed changes which at times seem to be contradictory have been a source of frustration</p>	CHANGE IS A JOURNEY
a long-lived government initiative and it has had time to get bedded in	<p><i>get bedded in</i></p> <p>to plant, to become fixed here used metaphorically to illustrate how new projects need to be given time to work</p>	CHANGE IS A JOURNEY
just about getting our social and personal life back on an even keel	<p><i>on an even keel</i></p> <p>a naval term, indicating a boat's stability during a sailing journey, here used as a metaphor to emphasise how Howard's life has sometimes lacked stability because he is regaining a work-life balance</p>	LIFE IS A JOURNEY
dug in her heels	<p><i>dug in her heels</i></p> <p>is used to describe the action during a tug of war to prevent the team being moved or pulled along, used here to indicate that Howard's wife made decisions about what she would and would not do in relation to her work life balance</p>	WORK IS A JOURNEY

Extract	Vehicle	Topic
thus far and no further	<p><i>thus far and no further</i></p> <p>limiting the extent of the journey, here used metaphorically to indicate that Howard and his wife would not agree to any more work commitments</p>	WORK IS A JOURNEY
walking along a cliff-top path literally along the edge	<p><i>walking along a cliff-top path</i></p> <p>indicating a precarious section of the journey, used metaphorically to indicate that Howard at this time was feeling at risk and in danger</p>	WELLBEING IS A JOURNEY
all I can see or focus on is the next immediate step ahead	<p><i>the next immediate step ahead</i></p> <p>the next small stage in the journey, here used to indicate that Howard could only cope by concentrating on small aspects of the job or project at hand at any one time</p>	WELLBEING IS A JOURNEY
a step by step experience	<p><i>step by step</i></p> <p>incremental stages in a walking journey, metaphorically used to express how Howard has broken down experiences into the smallest elements to make them manageable</p>	WORK IS A JOURNEY
hopefully I can start to look ahead a bit rather than looking down	<p><i>to look ahead a bit rather than looking down</i> spatial perspectives, here used to indicate that Howard has been feeling in danger and wants to be able to feel out of danger and make progress</p>	WELLBEING IS A JOURNEY

The metaphors that have been presented in the table above could indicate that Howard conceptualised his life as a teacher using the 'LIFE AS A JOURNEY' metaphor. The next logical aspect of this it would seem to me is to consider the ways in which Howard had navigated this journey. Whether he has been a passenger reliant on others or an explorer forging his own path could offer some possible insight into the ways in which he has reacted to changes and challenges during the course of this working life.

Whilst the metaphor LIFE AS A JOURNEY seems to have resonance with Howard's memories, it was rare to find so predominant a convergence on one set of metaphors. The range of metaphors that emerged from the analysis of the data was categorised by creating clusters of metaphors that seemed to share some commonalities. The findings of this analysis are presented below. During the process of the analysis it became apparent that there were phrases and chunks of texts that though not explicitly using metaphors were examples of entailments of the greater over-riding metaphorical concept that the teacher was using often unconsciously to describe their experiences in school. Cienki defines entailments (drawing on Lakoff and Johnson's use of the term) as 'inferences which are logical consequences of a given conceptual metaphoric mapping' (2005: 5).

So in the example from Howard's transcript above where I used LIFE AS A JOURNEY to capture the conceptual metaphor of the interview, his description of digging his heels in could be taken to be a metaphor of competition in terms of the tug-of-war analogy but as part of the discourse of the journey it symbolises a decision not to move forward and as such is part of the logical consistency of the journey metaphor.

6.2 Metaphors of game playing

From the close analysis of the interview transcripts, there emerged a range of metaphors that the teachers used where they seemed to be viewing their experiences as different examples of game-playing and these were subsequently categorised under the metaphorical concept of 'TEACHER AS GAME-PLAYER'.

- **Tacticians**

Some teachers talked about teaching during the interviews as a type of intellectual challenge like a strategic game (such as chess) or one in which tactics have to be thought out in advance. Grace appeared to be a one such tactician – she enjoyed the intellectual challenge of devising strategies for the Learning Support Unit *'devising strategies is as good as doing crosswords (laughter) it really stretches your mind, you have to get to know a child really well and you don't often have time to do that to work out what their problems are and then you have to think how to solve it... it's really quite exciting actually. It's not an experiment but you do see if things work and using an instinct which perhaps you wouldn't get the chance anywhere else would you?'*

Ava also positioned herself as a tactician, a game player who strategically chose where to play; *'I'm not somebody who climbs ladders and gets posts you know I'm not very ambitious I'm not a very ambitious person but I'm ambitious in my classroom and I think that's where it counts'.*

In order to be a successful strategy game player, one has to understand the rules of the game and perform well within the confines of these rules or know enough about them to subvert them to the player's own advantage. For Ava, her understanding of the rules of the game allowed her to

rationalise challenges that she has had to face during different phases of the game. For example, she justified the Local Authority's decision to close the school by the rules of the game which in this case were politically governed: *'being recognised by Ofsted before we closed that we actually were a good school. And we resigned ourselves to the fact that it wasn't that we were poor teachers; it was political, the reason, why in the end we did close'*.

Liz appeared to accept the rules of the game and knew it was a game she could achieve success with, *'I've had some very good results'*. She exhibited some elements of the game-playing tactician in her role on the Senior Leadership Team when she discussed how to raise achievement: *'high-lighting the zero-tolerance groups'; 'I've met with the LEA to develop strategies'; 'there are a lot of children that you have to accept you're not going to win with'*.

At times knowing the rules of the game isn't enough and on occasion some game-players feel the need to challenge the authority of the game. For example, Grace appeared happy to play the game when she was playing for herself but when she felt students were being forced into a game which had inequitable rules she questioned these rules on the students' behalf, imploring those in charge *'let's be fair.'* She drew on this sense of injustice within the game *'it's just another way of cheating them really isn't it?'* in her description of the ways in which children from deprived areas who went to her school were being hard done by because of the paucity of resources available to them.

James described his experiences of teaching as being in a war like situation with unfair conventions. There are many tactical games which aim to re-create war scenarios in which players have to employ different strategies

according to the roles they hold within the game; one such example is the board game, Risk. James' was a passive role, he appeared to lack agency, he presented himself as a foot soldier responding to orders and decisions made from above (within and external to the school). He talked of being hit and of receiving blows when the school was inspected: *'Special Measures hit me quite badly'; 'I had that sledgehammer blow'*. When he referred to a headteacher with whom he had had a particularly difficult relationship and who delivered the *'sledgehammer blow'*, he described him as *'the new head who had been headhunted in'*. (According to the Oxford Dictionary, 'headhunted' is a term used in sports to denote a particularly rough or violent player). As a result James explained that he has *'been battling against all sorts of odds'* and that this had been *'like a personal sort of crusade'*. He spoke of changes in his role and status (over which he perceived he had had no control) as losses *'I lost the head of upper school....I have lost management kudos...I am now going to lose one of the posts as well which means I'll be losing two thousand pounds.'* He used imagery associated with the foot soldier when he explained that through education the students *'are kitted out for life'*.

Greg also described being in Special Measure as being in a war zone, *'they really did hammer middle managers'*. However for Greg it was not a war in which everything was lost: *'I won that bit of the battle'*. He described life in school under the present head as a contrast to life under the previous head during Special Measures: *'we've got the peace that we want'*.

When talking about the planned change to the school (the proposed closure) Stewart drew on war metaphors to explain his feelings. He described the school as the *'last bastion of hope for the area...a place of calm and refuge for both the parents and the kids'*. He expressed concern that the students

wouldn't fit into the '*regime*' of the proposed new Academy and using the horse riding, or cavalry, semantic field he described the new authorities getting '*hold of the reins*' and taking his former team on '*the course that suits them*'.

Grace's interview drew on the comradeship implicit in many war metaphors: '*I'll miss that sort of camaraderie. Unfortunately because they shortened the school day a bit of that was lost you know because you do need each other for support because there is nothing like when somebody has been really ghastly to you is there knowing that everyone else is in the same boat and I think that that's unique to city schools. There is a Dunkirk spirit we are all in this together, we all understand how each other is feeling and I don't think that that applies very much elsewhere.*' Grace drew on iconic metaphors of 'brothers in arms'; facing common adversities with her teaching colleagues had strengthened her bonds to the team and a commitment to win the battles together.

- **Jugglers**

With the exception of Grace, the tacticians above have all been solo game players. Another solo player is the juggler. As the term suggests jugglers have achieved a degree of success within the game by being able to juggle or balance a range of competing demands on their time and resources. For example, Ava dealt with crises and challenges by juggling her priorities. She spoke of the difficulties of being an only child of sick and elderly parents; she also had two children and a husband who worked night shifts. The balance required to cope with all of these things '*prevented me from climbing any ladders...I should have gone for posts but I'd got so many*

pieces of baggage.' She did not allow these circumstances to negatively define her, *'I became a very good juggler I became this expert that just caught people as they dropped.'* Ava appeared to see the benefits both in her professional and personal life to this ability to juggle competing demands on her attention: *'I was definitely a better mum from knowing children; I was definitely a better teacher for having children so it was two-sided. Yes it's made a big difference in different ways to me and I was a better teacher for becoming a mum I think.'* Ava also was constantly juggling her identity *'People wouldn't recognise me in a classroom to what I am socially.'*

In his interview, Cliff also drew on the teacher as juggler metaphor when he reflected on his experiences, explaining that at times, he has had to re-balance or re-prioritise work activities because they were in danger of taking over his social and family life.

- Lone warrior/ Adventurer

Frank seemed to conceptualise the world of teaching as a game of chance, where winning the game is a good and desirable option. However playing the game involves a compromise of principles as it accepts the rules of the dominant ideology. Frank appeared to manage this by presenting 'winning moves' as unintentional/ coincidental, *'I'm not ambitious, I'm trying not to get anywhere'* (he was an Assistant Headteacher); or as deliberate acts of cheating or manipulating the system, *'to be fair to myself, I think I have been fairly consistent; the first full inspection I set myself some challenges...I went through with no policies as a Head of English, I did cheat a bit I had some Strategy statements but I would not do the policies so I just made a game of it'*. This allowed to him to keep face with his work

colleagues whilst achieving success within the rules of the game; *'I have managed to get away with it'*. He had had to take risks and these had usually (though not always) paid off; *'no-one has come in with a little clipboard and caught me out'*. His interview was full of contradictions and tensions which could be read as part of his game-playing: *'recently I went to (Name of Head) because of the Academy and I said I am politically opposed to Academies but I'm determined to get a job down there and I said how shall I place myself for this Academy?'* Frank's use of metaphors suggests that he was a solo game-player who was not necessarily motivated by feeling part of a team; he positioned himself as a lone warrior and the hero of his own game narrative (many computer and video games feature such protagonists). Frank's view of the goal of education was to *'turn out people who are happy and subversive...who will feel a bit more in charge of their own lives'*. He treated the interview, I would argue, as a game in itself. He retained agency throughout and this is an example of the way in which he conceptualised the world of teaching: *'you make it a game...you just find ways of making it intellectually interesting because you refuse this passive subordinate role all the time'*.

In his interview, Gary seemed to exhibit characteristics of a lone protagonist. He appeared to want to be perceived as very successful but wanted to also be seen as different, *'the fact that I can talk to students, can mess about with students, can get away with things that other staff can't, the same with the parents'*. He portrayed himself as not being afraid to take risks and to challenge something he did not believe in. *'The roles I have had within the time have been numerous and varied, head of PE, second in PE first, head of year, head of upper school which was KS4, acting deputy, didn't like that because I like to get things done and I didn't really get on with the head, at the time we just had different ways of*

working, dropped back down again to the head of PE'. He was not afraid of new challenges and appeared to be proactive; seeking ways of making the situation better if he felt it needs to be. At times this meant he went against the rest of his team or the designated leader: 'frustration when you are working with someone who is really senior who you think is not doing their best for the school. And obviously I am talking headteachers or deputy headteachers and it is so frustrating. Ok there's ways round it but it's unpleasant but sometimes it has to be done so you go to governors instead. When the headteacher pleads with you not to go to a governor over certain key issues, ok yes, I understand what he is saying but I am still going because I feel it has to be done'. He presented the rules of the game as not applying to him: 'we were in special measures but not for PE.' He was very confident and liked to stand out from the crowd 'I'm known for being honest, hard-working, different but also excellent' and to be perceived as risky and different: 'I have developed from being a boring quiet monotone teacher to being a very weird teacher who will do things other teachers won't do'. He enjoyed subverting the rules of the game. His aim to be perceived as different, as an individual, also appeared to drive the ways in which he viewed the school, 'other achievements? Making sure that Joseph Moore is different, I am not going to say we are better than anybody but we are certainly different'. He perceived that he is the only one who can help the school achieve this: 'how have I gained? Quite a bit of a reputation locally within PE'.

The final rule of the game was to become an Academy. Gary, as a lone voice, was thinking of going behind the back of the leaders of his team in order to get what he wanted, which was the Academy to maintain the Sports specialism that Joseph Moore had but that the sponsor wasn't prioritising: 'so now I am deciding if I am going to make a fuss about it and

spoil my chances of a job there but I would need to email the Sports Schools trust in London'.

- Team players

The most frequently used metaphor was that of teaching being a team game with colleagues and students being team players often facing common adversities. Liz seemed to exhibit characteristics of the team-player, especially when she reflected back to her early days at Bernard L Stone. She began her teaching life by being part of a team she trusted (her marriage to a teacher within the school was the first incarnation of the 'team') *'being a young married couple we did most things together so if R was involve then so was I'; 'our lives seemed to revolve around Bernard L Stone at that time'; 'I've always had this association with Bernard L Stone'.* This small team of two expanded to incorporate students and staff and over time she formed a very close team built upon strong bonds of trust: *'The children always struck me as being open and friendly and they just accepted me as Mr X's wife and I trusted them. They came into my home; I trusted them with my children so I suppose I had a good relationship with them.'*

When reflecting on the processes and decisions involved in closing Bernard L Stone, Liz's discourse was that of a player who knew the team she was part of was under threat: *'I feel let down because they've changed their mind. They've pulled the wool over our eyes. They've come in and they tell us one thing and... they've changed their minds'.* She talked of the rules of the game changing and of losing because of unfair rules and an uneven playing field: *'so I do feel let down by the LEA for not being honest with us.*

They said that our numbers weren't big enough but then they always knew that. That was never an issue to begin with so what's changed? They then said it had to be schools in challenging circumstances ... and then the government changed the boundaries ... Of course they (the new Academy) are successful. They went grant maintained twelve years ago and got a lot of money. And although the LEA won't admit it, they have their own admissions policy and I know that they do. And they will not have kids in that they don't want. I know that they say they will take in Level 3s but they only take in the well behaved Level 3s. Why can't our children transfer to the academy?' and later she talked of the new school 'poaching our staff. I don't trust them at all'.

Dean also drew on the concept of teacher as team player. He talked about the social elements of working together at BLS, of pulling together as a team, of the comradeship: *'we had staff cricket and football; we had staff mixed hockey; we had staff playing football on a Friday night. There was a lot of social events going on and people got to know each other and support each other.'* He described new pupils having to adjust as the team ethos had an effect on them over time: *'you see them wear down and fit in and change. And I like to see that because it means we are getting to them.'* But at the time of the interview, this team atmosphere was under threat; it was fading: *'there isn't a feeling of togetherness in Bernard L Stone now. Before there was a Bernard L Stone feel about the place'.* He spoke of the *'continuous battering that the school takes'* because he conceptualised the experience of working to meet imposed whole-school targets as having to compete within the sporting metaphor of league tables: *'we are bottom of the league'.*

Ava began our discussion by subverting the rules of the game of the interview discourse '*I was going to ask you that*' and asserted her team allegiance as counter to what she believed was my own: '*you were our arch rivals*'. Ava positioned herself as a team player whether this was in a two person team (her and her job-share partner) '*we batted ideas off each other*' and when they were struggling to succeed in the game they supported each other: '*my job-share person she knew we could do it she needed to tell me that she was my sort of jiminy cricket on my shoulder*' '*we can do this*' and when she was down I did the same'; or as part of the larger team of the whole staff. When she spoke of her old school closing she used life as war game metaphors '*we always thought we'd win somehow*'; '*we protected and boosted each other*'; '*if you got a weakness and there was a problem, there was somebody there to back you up and defend you or stand along beside you*'. Moving to a new school she initially struggled to find team mates '*it was a battle, I didn't know names...I missed the camaraderie of my staff*'.

Marilyn used the teacher as team-player to explain how she and her colleagues found strength in a shared experience: '*the staff all stick together*'; especially when facing adversity: '*we just keep going, don't we? And I think really the spirit of Bernard L Stone can be summed up in the last meeting when we had a chance to fight the closure and when thirty or forty of us went to fight it and no other school turned up*'.

Stewart described how being part of a team had positive outcomes for the school, '*in the staff room everybody rallied round and got on with the job*'. He believed that the existence of a strong team of adults in the school had knock-on benefits for the wider team which incorporated the student body too: '*everything has to fit in together to get the best out of everybody. If*

there is any conflict anywhere down the line then the kids are going to suffer as well as staff morale.' When there have been difficult experiences (specifically, extreme circumstances like the death of colleagues and students), he believed that facing these challenges together had strengthened the team: *'but, again, they are lows but sometimes going down that far brings everybody back together again and so you come together and are perhaps stronger afterwards. I think that is the case after the last one as well and I think the school is now stronger than it has been for many years'*. Stewart spoke of having to take time off work, saying he'd had his *'problems'* and *'long-term illness'*. Feeling that he was part of a team helped him through these times: *'the amount of support I've had has been amazing. I could never have come back after long term illness in another school but this school will just put you at your ease almost immediately. Everyone rallies round and they still do'*. For Stewart, his team drew further strength from the diverse influences that individuals brought to it: *'we've got staff that come from all quarters of the world and by and large we all get on really well. And I'd have to say that 99% of the kids are fantastic and they've always been fantastic – it's only that 1% that let us down or themselves down'*.

Stewart challenged the rules of the game if he felt his team were being unfairly treated. He explained what he saw as the iniquity of the authorities changing the rules of the game to suit themselves and to disadvantage his team: *'I think if we had the last inspection framework from the start we would have passed it each time with flying colours. But each time it was a new framework – the goal posts move every time'*.

Stewart ended the interview by justifying why his team had started to break apart: *'I can understand why so many people have jumped the gun*

and gone. If I was a young teacher I would be doing exactly the same thing'.

For Stewart, the role of education was to create team-players who would be an asset to society by making positive contributions and supporting each other: *'My idea of education for the youngsters here is to give them the opportunity to better themselves. To give them the necessary skills that they are going to need to become worthwhile adults: to be able to contribute; to raise their own families; to support their extended families; to keep out of trouble; to avoid crime. And just generally make a better life for themselves. That's what education should be about'.*

Isabel's team membership appeared to be motivated or driven by her political ideals: *'I like the kids and I suppose I like what I know and I've got my area very well sorted and I have a good team to work with. I really enjoy teaching and I think that my lessons are good. I like my colleagues but I also have a strong social sense and I think this has grown. I've always been quite left wing and I want everybody to have a good quality education wherever they come from and whatever their background'.*

Isabel knew that the team needed to be nurtured if it was to evolve and be strong enough to win: *'add a person to talk to everyday. And it could be anybody and you might be the only person in their day who has had a conversation with them. Or choose a person for a week or so and always single them out when you see them and say hello'.* She understood that the game was a difficult one *'I know I enjoy it here but you have to be on your guard all the time: really prepared; really on the ball'.* Her comments about being there for the children - *'I think I am the sort of person who would have time for kids after school if they wanted to come in' -* were more about looking after her team members than being an advocate/

counsellor (see below) because she was not portraying the children as victims and seeking them out to protect them, rather she wanted to be there should they choose to talk to her.

Greg drew on aspects of the team player to explain why he had stayed and why he had been happy at Joseph Moore. He enjoyed being part of a well led team: *'there is a much more relaxed feel to the place and I think also because these days it is a management team, it's not like you've got one head to have a go at you've got a management team'*. His faith in the present team captain (the head) and the leadership team meant that he felt he could cope with change: *'if you're happy with the situation so if they say this has got to be done and you know the systems are in place and you are controlling it its not a problem...every change might be imposed but if there is no preparation for the change I think..the powers that be have learnt by now and everything is so different.'* The proposed move to an Academy in his opinion would be a positive one because of the people he worked with. He valued and he enjoyed being part of a good team: *'a lot of these people will be the lead team because they have done so much'*. So he drew strength to accept and deal with change because of his faith in the team of which he was part.

- **Coaches**

Another sub-set of the conceptual metaphorical field 'teaching as game' is 'teacher as coach'. Gary embodied the role of coach both literally (he runs school sports teams) and figuratively. He talked of working with other teachers using the discourse of a coach. *'It's a big high that we have no PE advisor in [Name of city], there is nobody but it is myself that gets*

regularly invited to the Heads of PE meetings, it's probably experience more than anything else, to act out a partly advisory role. The same with teachers from other schools, they email me which is very nice'; 'I feel it has to be done and because the rest of the staff or my staff feel it has to be done. So as a team I need to be seen to be pushing forward what they wish'.

Special measures provided opportunities for him to develop this coaching role further: *'you carry on as normal but you have to become a teacher-coach so I've got three or four other teachers that I work with.'* *'And in certain situations like that there are three or four other departments across the city that work with me or have asked me to work with them'.*

Through her discourse, Ava also emerged as a coach figure *'we now coach people'; 'I had high expectations for everybody to succeed as well as they can'.* She portrayed herself as a coach figure for the students too, *'I feel somebody needs to fly their flag. They need somebody in their corner'.*

Grace described situations where she had to support other members of her team (her colleagues) and sometimes this involved 'rescuing' them: *'the thing is you know you're alive, you really are alive because you are humiliated and you have to learn to take humiliation without flinching and you are made very happy and you are made tearful as I have been but I mean in classrooms the number of times I have to go into classrooms and rescue staff who are tearful and I tell you what people that don't do it naturally shouldn't be doing it'.* This could also be interpreted as a Strict Parent characteristic of her identity (see below). However the difference is that she wasn't blaming individuals for not coping rather she was blaming the system for allowing them to struggle in the ways they did. This defence of her colleagues/ team mates positions her in the coaching role. Grace

appeared to thrive on the unpredictability of the game which at times could seem dangerous: *'you know in actual fact you are always on the edge of a knife ... The trouble is the children are unpredictable ... and you never know so things like that are enormously stressful, so it's being able to stand that not knowing what your day is going to be like'*. She used this to motivate her team mates: *'I always say to staff, it's not boring, it's never mundane, it is exciting and that is rewarding. The one [thing] I do think is that you really have to be able - and I don't mean they don't have to respect you - but you've not got to want to win too much. Do you know what I mean?'*

Liz in her SLT role seemed to embrace the coaching characteristics: *'I do feel that we have some inexperienced staff who find some of our children very difficult. It is hard, isn't it? To go into classrooms ... and you see children not doing any work or being engaged in what they are doing. It's very difficult to do anything without undermining the classroom teacher but I do go in I mean I will say to staff: 'Shall we sit down and discuss how things are going?''*

During his interview, Mick appeared to interpret life and work events as stages in a game, knew what the rules were and knew how to break them to his advantage; however the game of teaching had taken over the other games in his life, so this was now the only game that he played. He had been successful in the game, *'really on the ball'*; *'got a strong team'* therefore though at some cost (poor health through blood pressure problems which were like a *'warning shot'*) with the result that he still played the game but he had moved into a coaching role to let the younger players have more direct action.

- **Game-players and agency**

Having the 'teaching as game' metaphor as an underlying concept appears to allow some teachers to claim agency for over-coming adversity/ challenge. For example, Ava saw Special Measures as another challenge within the parameters of the game and this appeared to give her the perspective and distance to work out how to succeed in the game: *'Oh god I have been in Special Measures for longer than that, it seems like forever, and each hoop they asked us to jump through we did! And yes, yes fine they came and said what a good job we were doing but when it came down to the nitty gritty we just missed the mark you know? And it made me want to give up at one point and I kept thinking 'no it's not going to beat me' (laughs). I think it was I am a bit of a bull like my star sign so I am a bit stubborn'; 'I'm better than this. I'm established. I can do this. I just had to dig deep inside my own person.'*

Grace seemed to understand that part of the game was knowing that every little battle did not have to be won in order to win ultimately. She allowed herself to lose occasionally. This again gave her a sense of agency: *'you know if you want to win too much if you want to be the teacher, like some people do, I think you could be very unhappy but if you're prepared to accept that you're going to have failures as well and not take it too much to heart ... I think a lot of people who take it home it's because they are taking it too personally. Working with children like ours it's never personal. As soon as it's happened it's gone'.*

When Isabel's team was under attack (from external pressures) she reacted strategically rather than becoming a victim with no agency. She rationalised the situation: *'when you talk to people who are in other schools – county schools – they don't appear to be doing a lot of the things*

that we are doing here. You talk about some initiatives and it is all new to them. I think that maybe the senior management team feel that we need to over compensate. Because we are judged on our results we are always low down and we've never quite fitted the bill when Ofsted have been and looked at us. And yet the quality of teaching has been something like 96% good or better but the results are still not reaching the standards. So why is that? So we must have some weaknesses but really they have been weaknesses that we can't solve. The attendance problem is a huge issue and that isn't the fault of the teachers to my mind. It isn't the teacher's responsibility to sort that out but we feel that we need to put another ten measures in place to try and make things better'. She also knew that she had to protect herself and seemed to have the strength to do so: 'you have to look after yourself'.

6.3 Metaphors of championing

At times the teachers drew on metaphorical concepts that, although linked to the metaphorical field of game-playing, did not involve the teachers as actors within the game. Instead they metaphorically move to the sidelines and take on the role of champions of the students. An example of this is where teachers place themselves outside of the game and become cheerleaders for the students.

- Cheerleader

Stewart was one example of a teacher who described some of his experiences by drawing on the metaphor of teacher as cheerleader. In discussing his earliest memories of the school, Stewart described the children as seeming to be very naïve and he portrayed a picture of them

playing games in ways in which children in other schools did not. *'the pupils seemed to be behaving in a very young way: there were kids running around playing whereas in all the other secondary schools I'd seen they just stood around talking but here they actively played and they still do'*. This evocation of the students as playing games sheds light on one of the ways in which he conceptualised his role in school – as the adult who needed to help them with the game playing. Stewart portrayed part of his role in school was to act as a kind of cheerleader for the students. *'It just shows what the kids from this area can really do when they put their minds to it. They need a lot of jogging along but they do get there eventually if people are patient enough to stick with it'*. And for Stewart this cheerleading role involved speaking out against unfair pressures that were put on the children. *'I can't put my finger on it but there is now a hard core element that just aren't interested no matter how much you cajole or try to tempt them – they are just not interested. We didn't really experience that in the past. We usually would find a way through but there again the targets that a lot of them had were much lower and they were achievable. The targets that a lot of them have now aren't achievable within the time frame that we've got.'* This change in external pressure was a recent one. *'It's all external targets driven now whereas going back twenty-five years or so we were looking at trying to motivate the kids to want to stay in school whereas now – although we still want to do that – we are constrained by what we have to teach. I think there has been a step backwards in that. We have so many kids with special needs and home circumstances that don't lend themselves to proper learning and they are the ones that are really missed out here, I think'*.

Isabel employed the cheerleader metaphor at times in her interview and she talked about helping them to do well in the game of results and league

tables: *'I think we understand the children here and work hard. I think they really benefit from being in a small school where everybody knows everybody. I think there will be some lost little souls in a school of two thousand...when I think about the mentoring that goes on here with the children at Key Stage 4 it really helps children who are perhaps very borderline to achieve. I cannot see that there will be the time and resources for those children in the same sort of way. The bright children will do well I'm sure but I question whether the very borderline children will do as well'.*

Some of the teachers, such as James in the following example, used the discourse of cheerleading when talking about working with the students in classroom, cheering them on to success: *'rewards, praise let the kids see that they are achieving and show them where they have got to go next'.* Similarly Mick dipped in and out of the cheer-leading metaphor when he talked about the way he had achieved success with younger students when teaching them Mathematics. He explained how in the past Maths lessons for students in years 7-9 would be based on playing quizzes and games but whilst the curriculum had changed the cheerleading aspects of his teaching approach had remained: *'the kids like it because we praise them, we are encouraging, they get good results at the end of it so they see success, so they enjoy it. Whereas before they used to enjoy it because we'd do games ... I'm more driven by the exam. We'll play games now and again but a lot of games are mathematically based anyway'.* This ability to bolster and champion students in his teaching was a source of professional and personal fulfilment for him: *'I have gained the satisfaction of getting the kids through exams that they wouldn't have got through but I've always been what I would call a team player, I've managed football teams, I've managed a number of football teams, I've coached football teams, I*

always try and get the best out of everybody and that's what I try and do in maths, I try and get the best out of the kids and that's what I enjoy doing'.

- **Protector**

Marilyn's first experiences of Bernard L Stone were from her own childhood memories of a place where she perceived she needed her parents' protection: *'I used to come and play netball here. We used to have county training here and I was never allowed... I was always picked up and brought by my parents. We weren't allowed to walk around the area'*. This seems to have laid the groundwork for her adult experiences of the same place. In her interview she talked about the students and her perceptions of her relationships with them. These perceptions formed her conceptual map for teaching at Bernard L Stone. *'I always wanted to work in a rough school'*. Her language was like that of a counsellor or protector: *'there is something about the kids here and they came and talked to you'; 'a lot of it is needy children wanting to talk to you and get attention and things'; 'the kids can come and talk to you when they have a problem'; 'I think that is why I have stayed at Bernard L Stone because they are our kids'*. Ava also drew on the teacher as protector metaphor during her interview. Although her students had had very different life expectations to her own, Ava had taken the time to find out more about their lives and as a consequence empathised with them and sought to protect and help them to succeed as far as she could: *'I just want them to get so much out of it... I think it all boils down to your expectation in the classroom, the ethos of the school and that it's achievable especially for our kind of students. We are only as good as the students that come here. We are in a very deprived*

area ... You are only as good as your children ... and if they realised how deprived some of our students are and I think my banner is always flying for them, not because I experienced it as a child because I didn't, but I just have this sort of empathy for those kids who had virtually nothing... I just felt when I started teaching at that school that it was my role in life to help kids like that and it opened my eyes and it always has stayed with me'.

When they feel that their students are at risk, the protector questions the authorities and becomes the students' advocate: Marilyn did this when she suggested that the dominant discourse which prioritises academic achievement was not always appropriate: *'their world is falling apart and we are still going: 'Achievement! Achievement!'* Ultimately the protector can become the students' saviour: *'our kids don't rate themselves as highly as I rate them. I think they've always felt that they are never going to achieve and they have low aspirations. They see themselves as just (Name of area) kids who have no future. Some think that their future is prison. I have one at the moment who says that prison is his future...You tell him that you are proud of him and he's talking a load of rubbish. But, in actual fact, he's probably right and that is what will happen to him. But we keep fighting it and that's how we've got to carry on'.*

6.4 Metaphors of family

There were many references within the interviews to the teachers describing working in the three schools as like being part of a family. Aspects of this have been discussed in the previous chapter about relational ties. However when I began to look again at some of the metaphors of family-like relationships it became clear that there were distinctions within these. TEACHER AS PARENT emerged as a category but

there were different approaches to parenting which surfaced during the sorting of the data. There were references to metaphorical parenting which seemed to overlap with the TEACHER AS CHAMPION metaphor; the difference was that the champions were nurturing the children exclusively whereas the metaphors in this category were related to parenting adults and children alike. I grouped these together as 'nurturing' parental metaphors. Other metaphors which corresponded with the parenting metaphor felt far more disciplinarian in character and were grouped under the category of 'strict parent'.

Grant and Joan in their roles as headteacher typified parental figures in the interview data. Their comments below were about the future of the school and what would happen when the Academy opens. From a superficial reading of their comments, it looks as though they were saying the same thing:

Grant: I keep thinking the Academy won't work if you just ship a load of staff in who you think are brilliant teachers because within 6 weeks you will have none left and you need to have people that can work with each other and have built up relationships.

Joan: I think the people running the academy will have all hell let loose and if they haven't got people like me there and some of the other colleagues here who know how to work with these children. They really will have their hands full.

However closer analysis suggests that Grant was conceptualising the change from the perspective of a protective leader who was relationship-driven and who trusted in the colleagues he had worked with. Joan spoke in emotive terms and believed that she had to lead by example and that

she spoke from a position of moral authority rather than trust. These typify the different approaches to metaphorical parenting that emerged from the data.

- **Nurturing Parent**

Grant's discourse was one of a parent caring for his charges: *'I've got a situation with a guy at the moment who has been trying to qualify for four or five years and he is never going to get a degree and I had to sit him down and say to him let's be honest you're not going to do it but I want to secure your future. But we are not going to do it through QTS route so let's look at something else and we'll do it together'*. In this, he embodied the values of a nurturing parent.

He appeared to believe in the nurturance of social ties and viewed the loss of relationships as personal costs and sacrifices; *'and I think the other real lows have been about certain year groups of kids that have gone that I have been particularly close to and there have been times when that has been a really sad time to actually get through because you are so used to them and their banter and the relationship that you have built up and then they've gone and you start almost all over again with a new group. So they've been particular lows and it's been the same with certain staff you know, you get really close to and you establish really good working relationships and its really hard when they go until you build up relationships with other people'*.

Grant's metaphors seemed to encompass the notion of morality as empathy, seeing the world through the eyes of his pupils. His notion of parenting was leading by example, encouraging a community where

children and adults had commitments and responsibilities that grew out of empathy for others: *'I think you get a real sense of what some of these youngsters are putting up with day in and day out and people who haven't worked within the city never quite understand that and they see the youngsters and they label them as naughty kids, anti-social kids but they don't have a true understanding of what these youngsters are like and what they have to cope with. So it's that I think. It's also about real relationships with the adults who are working in the same situation. I think you form a real bond with that team of people that you probably don't gain in other schools really and I say to anyone who works here, it's about sharing the responsibility and if you are having a hard time it's about talking about it and people who are well settled and managing well need to be pro-active in actually supporting people who are struggling. And that camaraderie and team approach to things is something that has been brilliant to work as part of.'* Grant believed that restitution was more long-standing than retribution and recognised that children need care and understanding: *'you get that relationship with some of these youngsters who appear real hardcore but actually have a nice sense of humour and the thing that I have always said about the Avondale kids is that they never bear a grudge. We bear a grudge far longer than they do and we worry about things far longer. I remember an incident where I had a real blazing row with a youngster who I'd spent loads of time with and got on really well with and worked really hard to keep them going and it had just broken down one day. And I'd worried about it all weekend and I'd come back in on the Monday morning and he's walked in and gone 'Ey up sir you alright?'* And he walked on and it's forgotten. They just don't think anything more about it and I think that's one of the lovely things really. So I think

probably from about 6 or 7 years in I just thought to myself, well this is me, this is my environment this is what it'll be'.

Grant's discourse was that of a parent putting the needs of his children first and of seeking ways to empower them: *'It's about ensuring that the youngsters have the best possible opportunities to make the most of their talents when they need to'.*

He protected and fought for his school and was willing to take risks on behalf of his children: *'possibly I think we or I was able to be brave because I was able to view it as look, I'm an acting head, we've got an academy on the horizon, is this what we believe is the best way forward? If it is, then let's go for it and if the LA come in and say well you can't do that but they would only be bothered if their league table position was affected and their authority figures would be badly perceived. And I said well that doesn't interest me to be honest, not bothered about Key Stage 3 results. What would your Key Stage 4 results be like if everybody was doing this? I'm looking at 80+% 5 A-Cs and how much better is that and then you start looking at your Key Stages 2-4 CVA [Contextual Value Added] and what we've done to that. You know, think long term and ok there's a bit of short-term pain, we know that but we would hope that over time because we get better at it that the Key Stage 3 results will rise anyway because we are not stretching it out over a three year period, we're not giving them a dead year in year 8'.*

Laurence conceptualised his role as helping children become adults who were able to contribute in a range of ways: *'it's this whole thing that you have ... youngsters in difficult circumstances and not everybody has taken them and not everybody is a raving success story but you see people who have just quietly got on with it and made quite reasonable success of their*

lives. They've had children and the children are fairly solid reasonable sort of children and you can tell that they come from a good caring home. And not all the time are you going to get people at the top I think it's this idea that you are trying to produce solid citizens just people who can actually play a useful part in society and we see these on a regular basis. It's just that sort of thing and we're perpetuating the idea that people from any sort of background can make it'. This is a feature of nurturing parenting, helping to equip the next generation with the nurturing skills to help create and perpetuate a caring society.

Laurence wanted to continue to nurture those in the teaching profession after he had left, believing he (and others like him) have had experiences that would be helpful to others: *'there's loads of things in education that if you just talked to people who have been through there and as I say I wouldn't expect it to be more than one or two years because once you get out you very quickly forget what it's like. But there is a huge wastage of talent, ability, of understanding you know of what makes schools tick. But these people have not got the faintest idea about you know and well I feel we could save them millions just by having a kind of, I don't like the word focus group, but by having something like that of people to talk to who have recently come out of the profession, that you just have on some sort of minor retainer where you can just go through and think well we are thinking of doing this what are your impressions? You know have you got any ideas about that? Chew over it and in a week's time we will go over it again and it's ever so logical' .*

Liz appeared to take on the role of nurturing parent when she fought to protect her school against outsiders who threatened its reputation: *'it used to make me really cross because my kids went to [Name of feeder junior]*

School and whilst I worked part time I went to collect the kids and you'd have mums standing outside and I heard them talking and saying that they wouldn't send their kids to our school. And I challenged them and asked them why they wouldn't and they said that such and such happens at that school. And I said: 'Says who?' And they said that they had heard that. So I asked them if they would want to come in and have a look. But they said they wouldn't cross the threshold. So it is just rumour and it is very difficult to change that perception because they won't even come in and have a look'. She also defended the school against external top down criticism and challenged the status quo: 'I don't think it is until you get into being a management position you know what all the external pressures are. The majority of staff just don't see; they just don't see what the pressures are from the LA ... it doesn't matter what we do, Ofsted come in and we are still a school in serious weaknesses. Of course we are always going to have poor attendance and high exclusions; we are never going to hit the target for GCSE and they don't seem to accept that. They don't look at the big picture. It's just those three national benchmarks and if you are not hitting them you are judged purely on this raw data and not on the kids that you have. They just put schools into categories: they say all schools with more than 50% free school meals but we are nearer 65% free school meals. We are in the lowest, the most deprived – we are in the bottom 1% for deprived children in the country and they don't seem to take that into consideration and all the pressure from external agencies. And it is all this stuff from above. You think you have your planning right and the teaching right; you think you've got your attendance right and then something else comes and it's all the initiatives and the new things that come along all the time. And I think that is what drives some teachers to leave the profession

because there never seems to be a period of stability and consolidation. There always seems to be something else and people just get overloaded'.

There was one example within Joan's interview of her framing her discourse from the position of a nurturing parent when she questioned the dominant ideology: *'Look in terms of the Government always sending down edicts, you must do this and you must do that...I think you have to take what's right from that and make it work in your environment so not always pay lip service to everything. Make sure you get the key things right but after that it's about, you know, having the kind of guts if you like to say well yes performance management fair enough we've got to do that but lets do it so it works for this school'.*

- Strict Parent

Joan employed language usually associated with a strict parent who believed that her children would benefit from a tough love approach. This became particularly apparent when she talked about being on the Senior Leadership Team during the experience of Special Measures; *'there is no room for slackers or wasters or people without broad shoulders'.* Like any good strict parent she wouldn't ask them to do anything she wasn't willing to do; she led by example, *'I didn't find it soul destroying in fact quite the opposite it's quite a buzz really because I like to work at a pace. I'm that sort of person'.* Joan appeared to believe that she was a strong role model who could cope with the pressures of leadership during challenging times: *'It's not caused me what I would call stress or anything like that. It's not very nice but I'm quite hard I am a tough person. People say that I am a survivor so I have been able to cope with that'.* This position gave her the

power of moral authority judging what was right - *'I have never been distracted by what other people might think. I am just me and I just do what I think is right'* - and what was wrong and enforcing these as appropriate; *'There are some staff that I would wish to get rid of and we are working on procedures because there are people who are just not good enough'*. In her role as rule-enforcer, Joan appeared to believe in the truth of the dominant ideology. This manifested itself in her acceptance of top down directives. She adopted the discourse of the dominant ideology, *'the only way we, this school, is going to make better progress is by holding people to account and checking on what they are doing because that's one of the reasons we are in this mess really'*. She knew what was good for her children. In this example, the metaphorical children were the pupils within the school: *'my family is a family who have made progress and valued education. Now, what working in the city has taught me, is that there are thousands of kids out there who don't have that, they need school. They need a good school as well. They need good teachers and they don't always get that because one of the stresses of working in a school like this is that it is hard to keep good staff and maintain good teaching and learning'*.

Marilyn exhibited some of the characteristics of the Strict Parent accepting and enforcing the rules of the dominant discourse when she reflected on the change in focus from pastoral to academic within schools: *'With turning to the academic, we are not heads of year anymore we are 'achievement organisers'. You can't just say that the pastoral doesn't exist just because of these changes, but I think more and more in the future we could find it hard to do the pastoral even though our kids depend on it. Maybe we were doing too much before.'* This is further evidenced by her zero-tolerance

approach: *'sometimes the kids are in the wrong and that's the end of it, you know'.*

Liz in her SLT role demonstrated characteristics of the Strict Parent when she used managerial discourse endorsing accountability: *'it's really strange being a member of SLT having been a member of staff for a long time and seeing it from a different angle because most staff really don't know what is going on and what pressures there are. I'd never want to be a head'.*

'I think everything is much tighter now than it was. .. the focus is much more on the teaching and learning. We show the children we care by delivering through the teaching and learning. We don't show that we care by coming in with a motherly attitude. It's more professional now I think...there's much more scrutiny and monitoring which I think is a good thing...But now there is much more accountability which I think is a good thing because we know now what is going on in classrooms. ...we are making progress because we have managed to improve on attendance and on exam results... we used to say that we couldn't do it with these kids but we have. Is it because we are doing more monitoring and more scrutiny? We are asking staff to up their game, aren't we?'

Gary would probably prefer to be framed in the domain of a nurturing parent though in actuality he exhibited characteristics of a strict parent: *'So special measures was not really a problem, it's just getting other teachers to raise their game or in the harsh reality of life, get rid of teachers who are not up to it who have been soldiering on and getting by because they are just nice people but in the end that just lets the whole school down and the students down.'* The strict parent believes that if (s)he can overcome challenges then anyone can: *'PE examinations took off which*

allowed me to develop another side: my teaching. Did that very well fortunately, well it's not fortunate it's just hard work, anyone can do it'.

- **Child**

Many of Judy's metaphors positioned her as a child-like victim. She described each event in her life and career as happening *to* her. She appeared to have had no control or sense of agency: *'I have never applied for a job in my life'*. She described herself quite literally as a victim of a crime when a local shop she was in was held up by armed robbers. She survived the ordeal but reflected later at what cost. This was how she seemed to view her working life. She portrayed herself as very passive. She blamed other people or circumstances for the things that have happened. She seemed to need protecting and guiding: *'here we look after these children; the authority is supposed to look after us'*. She hoped not to be part of the Academy but instead of proactively seeking an alternative, she hoped that she would be old enough to not be wanted. This was a very different view from Mick who spoke of the same thing but viewed it from a gambling perspective where if the deal was right he would take it. Judy appeared to have no agency; if she was not offered redundancy she would blame the decision-makers. She was looking for a comforter/protector – and at times this had been the children: *'so the children at my old school if you had sat down and sobbed because life at home was bad they picked up the pieces and said 'shut up she's having a bad day'. But here you've got to be [intake of breath] because you are proving yourself again. I can do it now; I cry all the time. The kids just go round me going [mimes shaking her head]...'* Judy used the word 'traumatic' four times in the interview.

Judy's mention of her family life could be a nod towards being a juggler but she did not portray herself as having juggled family and work successfully.

She described her family as being a victim of her work life *'I am the worst parent in the world'*.

When she said she had never applied for a job in her life, though her words echoed Frank's 'I'm not ambitious' comments, she did not have the edge of manipulating the rules of the game as he had. At times she appeared to exhibit some game-playing skills (she appeared on paper to have been successful, she is head of two departments. and a pastoral head of year) but she described the process of getting these roles in a very passive way.

6.5 Metaphors of travelling

- Passenger

Howard portrayed his working life as a journey through the metaphors he employed during the interview, he viewed changes as milestones along the journey (he repeated the phrase *'a change too far'* four times during the course of the interview). Latterly, things had become difficult for him and the passage of that journey had reduced to small steps: *'I feel like I am walking along a cliff-top path literally along the edge and at the moment all I can more or less see and focus on is the next immediate step ahead it is that bad at the moment'*. He had recently had no control of the direction of the journey's route, he had become a passenger, he talked about *'giving way to young blood'* to others who could cope with the demands of the journey. He talked of the school being in *'dire straits'*. This was because of those who had been directing the journey who *'led this school into outstanding failure'*. The only way he could take an active role and have some agency was by stopping the journey to dig in his *'heels and... [say] thus far and no further'*. He seemed to be looking for someone (the new

headteacher) to guide him through the next steps of the journey: without this guidance he could only keep his eyes to the ground and take tiny steps forward *'I am looking forward to the new head arriving here and then hopefully it won't be such a step by step experience I can start to look ahead a bit rather than looking down but at the moment it is that bad'*. The driving mechanism behind Howard's journey was the imposition of top down structures and ideologies. He attempted to take control by questioning *'is this the way we want to go?'* but did not actually take action to change the direction, *'now I am coming up to an Academy I know damn well that this is definitely not the move I want to make ...I feel that that would be a change too far for me'*.

Like Howard, James appeared to be powerless to take control of his space and the journey he was on. He explained that he didn't choose to work at Joseph Moore, he *'was redeployed'*. This entry into the school where he had no control or agency appeared to dictate the way he viewed some of his experiences there; when he first arrived in the school he remembered his new department was *'coasting'*. He talked about being *'pushed a little today'* and of the students being *'pulled ...round'*. When speaking of his difficult experience of Special Measures (which led to increased monitoring of him by his head teacher), James's movement was portrayed as being limited, he was trapped *'I couldn't walk out of here could I?'* It could also be said that he at times viewed the students as being trapped too, in the local area of the city; *'Just to get them out of Avondale, the kids don't know what it is to get out of Avondale'*.

Greg also used the metaphor of a journey to describe how he felt about change. Whilst he was not necessarily in control of this journey, he seemed to have faith in the route and the guide and the ultimate destination: *'I've*

a fair bit of hope really and you know gratitude in some ways in the fact, that they have pulled, I can't speak for other members of staff, but they've actually taken me through quite a transition stage in quite a pleasant way'; and so his conception of this journey was incredibly positive: *'we have got out of Special Measures and we have continued to move. There is nobody I know that has just fallen back into a comfort zone'*. In terms of the change to working in an Academy again he felt he had been guided through the journey: *'most staff realised that when [name of advisor from the authority brought into oversee the move to the academy] came here we knew where we were going. It's almost like feeding change to you. So it's not like all of a sudden well you're going to the Academy and everything is going to change. If you actually look at the school we are down that road anyway'*. External visitors to the school had expressed their faith in him as a member of staff who could help others, in this case children, along the journey of change: *'it was this [name of LA consultant] who sort of turned me around for a bit and he said to me if there's one person who can change the kids in this school it's you and there's only one way to go, onwards and upwards'*. Unlike Howard and James, Greg's lack of agency in terms of the journey was not represented as a negative. It seems that lack of agency is bearable if there is faith and trust in the journey guides.

- **Guide**

Cliff portrayed his work career as a journey. He has usually been in control of the direction of the journey and when he hasn't (sometimes he perceived the journeys that have been mapped out from above, through a series of top down directives, as pointless and circuitous bringing him back to where he started), he had two strategies. One was to *'sit down and re-*

evaluate where he was going – so he took control by stopping the journey and thinking about it. The other was to continue along the path but to treat it as a *'challenge'*. This appeared to have kept him interested and motivated. From his perspective, the point of education was to help equip youngsters with the necessary skills and aptitudes to be in control of their own life journeys. During the interview, Cliff positioned himself as being worried about the speed of the journey which he was not able to slow down.

Laurence also portrayed his life (both personal and professional) as a journey, referring to different *'walks of life'*. He seemed to understand that success was equated with making progress along this journey; *'that's what teachers do, there is this thing to get on'*. Whilst he explained that he had not consciously had anything *'mapped out'* in terms of his own career progression, he has however been in charge of his own journey; *'I have tended to go my own sweet way'* despite feeling at times that he has been *'moved on'* or overtaken by others on the journey who have been promoted ahead of him. He explained that his progress along the journey was initially very rapid and he then found that he stalled as new people came in and the management wanted to *'move forward and do different things and they wanted different faces in management'*. He realised that his longevity at Joseph Moore meant that it would be difficult to deviate from his journey: *'the chances of me going anywhere are slim'* and he was worried that a younger colleague and friend *'might pack up and go somewhere else'*. Whilst he had seen other people who had been on the same journey find themselves lost, asking *'where are they going?'*, he has in the main enjoyed the journey. He used the travelling metaphor *'it certainly broadens your horizons'* to describe his experience of working in challenging schools. He recognised that he was approaching the end of the journey which at times, if others have led, had been circuitous: *'a lot of*

these new initiatives just let them ride themselves out and you will come back'. He expressed his feelings about the end of his career using a journey metaphor: 'the moment you walk out of school your years of experience don't count for anything'.

Laurence tried to help students along their own journey; *'you kind of feel you've had some sort of hand in somebody moving forward greatly'.*

- **Border Crosser**

Schools are places where there can be clear demarcations and fairly fixed boundaries in terms of peoples' roles and career trajectories.

Dean appeared to have been able to resist being contained or confined by his teaching role, *'but I just became an English teacher here because they took me up. ... So I was acting head of English for two years ...And then I changed to pastoral. And then I was doing drama and whilst I was in charge of drama I became head of house And I was head of house for a number of years and then this job came up and I applied for this job and then that job came up and I decided to apply for that job'.* He has also resisted being contained in his role as a teacher more generally (he moved across to mix non-teaching roles with classroom based teaching), *'and a lot of the jobs have involved administration so I've not been teaching the whole time',* or by the school itself (he moved across to work with the feeder schools), *'I would often be in the junior schools visiting people. They all knew me',* to work in the community, *'I think I was having to build bridges'.* At one point he left Bernard L Stone to become a community teacher but in this new role was metaphorically 'repatriated' back to Bernard L Stone: *'I applied to the authority because you were centrally employed and then they sent me back BLS. So although I'd left they sent*

me back here'. He portrayed himself as an independent figure who had become attached to Bernard L Stone almost as a by product of staying there as long as he had. His longevity at Bernard L Stone was not intentional: *'I gradually came to realise that if you taught in the city for a certain amount of time it became increasingly difficult to move out*'.

So Dean's working life has partly been characterised by his ability to migrate and travel across traditional career borders and boundaries whilst sticking to roughly the same territory. *'I've done lots of different jobs and it's always been interesting; it's always been different angles and I've sort of had several different jobs but all in the same environment. So it's kept my interest going*'. Despite this adaptability and his attempts to move on, Dean has stayed in the same environment. However he said he would advise beginning teachers to traverse new territory with a view to returning if they choose to do so: *'So my advice to a young teacher would be not to stay longer than a few years and then to go and do something else and then if you like the city you can come back to it*'. He therefore appeared to be advising them to become border-crossers too.

6.6 Discussion

Metaphor is a vehicle uniquely well-designed to negotiate and make sense of the creative space between what is personal and what becomes public.

(Hunt 2006: 317)

I hoped that my analysis of the metaphors used by the teachers would help further my understanding of the ways in which they have been motivated to remain teaching in these 'challenging' schools. In order to do this it was

important that I tried to make sense of the metaphorical concepts underpinning the interviews, rather than trying to identify every metaphor used by every participant. Consequently, I made decisions about those metaphors which seemed to be central in shaping the ideas discussed by the teachers as they shared their experiences with me. I was attempting to draw out the metaphors that the teachers have 'lived and worked by'. There were positive consequences to my decision to examine the teachers' metaphors after the data had been collected because the teachers were not made consciously aware of the metaphors they used. Through the 'grounded analysis' approach to identifying metaphors, I found that

Metaphors have a coherence and internal consistency, which provide insights into ideas that are not explicit or consciously held.

(Leavy et al 2007: 1220)

I believe that the metaphors used in the interviews were socially and contextually dependent. If I repeated the interview after the opening of the Academies for example, individual teachers might well have found different metaphorical concepts to shape their talk about their lives in schools. It is also important to emphasise that individual teachers rarely confined themselves to one specific metaphorical concept throughout their interview. Rather they drew on a range to convey their experiences of teaching in challenging schools. This range of metaphorical concepts drawn upon by individuals is summarised in Table 4 below.

I was able to produce the table of metaphorical clusters because, whilst this represents individual and differing perspectives within each of the clusters, there is enough shared understanding to be able to talk within a conceptual metaphorical cluster and for it to have relevance when talking

about the world of teaching in challenging schools. This is the third of Tonnies' values of gemeinschaft 'shared values' and builds on the locational and relational ties discussed in earlier chapters.

Table 4: Range of metaphorical clusters

		FAMILY MEMBER			TRAVELLER			GAME PLAYER					CHAMPION	
		Nurturing Parent	Strict Parent	Child	Passenger	Guide	Border Crosser	Lone Hero/ Adventurer	Tactician	Juggler	Team Player	Coach	Cheerleader	Protector
B.L.S.	Dean						X				X			
B.L.S.	Isabel								X		X		X	
B.L.S.	Kathryn	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
B.L.S.	Liz	X	X						X		X	X		
B.L.S.	Marilyn		X								X			X
B.L.S.	Stewart						X		X		X		X	

		FAMILY MEMBER			TRAVELLER			GAME PLAYER					CHAMPION	
		Nurturing Parent	Strict Parent	Child	Passenger	Guide	Border Crosser	Lone Hero/ Adventurer	Tactician	Juggler	Team Player	Coach	Cheerleader	Protector
J.M.	Ava								X	X	X	X		
J.M.	Frank							X	X					
J.M.	Gary		X									X		
J.M.	Grant	X									X	X		
J.M.	Greg				X				X		X			
J.M.	James				X				X				X	
J.M.	Lauren	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
J.M.	Laurence	X				X				X				X

		FAMILY MEMBER			TRAVELLER			GAME PLAYER					CHAMPION	
		Nurturing Parent	Strict Parent	Child	Passenger	Guide	Border Crosser	Lone Hero/ Adventurer	Tactician	Juggler	Team Player	Coach	Cheerleader	Protector
T.T.	Cliff					X				X				
T.T.	Grace								X		X	X		
T.T.	Howard				X									
T.T.	Joan	X	X									X		
T.T.	Judy			X										
T.T.	Mick					X			X			X		

Lauren, Kathryn – no evidence within interview of conceptual mapping used during the interview so impossible to generate metaphors

There were a few interviews that were inconclusive because the content of the participant's discourse was much more literal than metaphorical. One teacher, Kathryn came to me after she had been sent a transcript of her interview to apologise for the lack of detail as, she explained, she often dried up in interview situations and was not very good at thinking on her feet. The table also demonstrates that rather than working within one metaphorical cluster, most individuals draw on different metaphorical concepts when describing their experiences.

Lakoff and Johnson argue that 'how we think metaphorically matters' (2003: 243). Their approach is based on the assumption that because 'we reason in terms of metaphor, the metaphors we use determine a great deal about how we live our lives (ibid: 244). The metaphors that the teachers use therefore can be said to determine how they have lived their lives in (and out of) school. From this re-analysis of the data, it appears that individual teachers draw on one or more of a type of metaphorical concept when describing their experiences in schools. There are some commonalities in these metaphorical concepts and these have been clustered together in this analysis with some 'types' or characteristics emerging from these clusters.

By deconstructing the metaphors that underpin their talk about teaching, it is possible to understand more about the ways in which the teachers in this study have formed their professional identities and how these have evolved in response to internal and external factors. The first cluster of metaphorical concept involves metaphors that associate teaching with game-playing: TEACHING AS A GAME. Oxford et al examined the metaphor of teacher as competitor (1998). The findings of my own study are similar to Oxford et al's; some of the participants in this study are competitive either as individuals who set themselves challenges and appear to thrive on

the 'adrenalin rush' of being *lone warriors* in these contexts, whilst others compete as part of a team. The analysis of the metaphors within this cluster suggests some teachers use this metaphor to emphasise the collegial element of teaching, of working alongside a group of tightly-knit colleagues. This invites comparisons with Tonnies' concept of *gemeinschaft*, where the community shares values and often unites against a common enemy. The metaphorical use of the term 'common enemy' draws on the entailment of war being a metaphor for sport or game (Chapanga asserts that 'metaphors of war conceptualise most kinds of sport' (2004: 66)). This 'common enemy' often manifests itself as an externally driven force, such as the mechanism of special measures.

The second cluster involves metaphors where teachers appear to conceptualise their roles being champions for their students, who are typically portrayed as underdogs. The categories of *teacher as cheerleader* and *teacher as protector* are similar to Oxford et al's 'teacher as scaffolder' and 'teacher as nurturer' (1998: 27-40). Oxford et al note that teachers using this type of conceptual mapping usually subscribe to the learner centred growth model of teaching with 'obvious concern for the welfare of every student, along with devoted sharing and facilitation' (1998: 40). Teachers using this metaphor to conceptualise their role in their students' lives in this way can at times portray themselves as crucial to these students; as Ava says '*I'm there flying the flag for the underdogs really and for those who don't achieve*'. Perhaps this sense of indispensability has helped them to stick with the school despite enormous pressures and challenges.

The third cluster draws most consciously on the work of Lakoff and Johnson (2003) and Lakoff (2004) who describe two family models which underlie

thinking about (western) government policy. These are conceptualised along lines of moral values where their Strict Father (in Lakoff and Johnson's analysis, this metaphor of the parent is always conceptualised as male) has the moral authority to set values and rules for the family members to follow and those who transgress are dealt with severely. The strict father model is contrasted with the Nurturing Parent model whose moral values are embodied by notions of responsibility and empathy. The nurturing parenting model is based on protection and trust. Within this cohort of teachers it seems that the two extremes of parenting are embodied by Grant and Joan and the differing ways in which they conceptualise the world of teaching. Both are motivated by wanting to do what is best for their charges but they have differing conceptions of what the best is. Joan in her strict parent role does not question the authority of top down initiatives and directives and seeks to re-enforce these, whilst the nurturing parent embodied by Grant does question the dominant ideology on the behalf of his charges. Other teachers drift into one or other of the parenting metaphors in their interviews. In contrast, Judy views the world from the perspective of a child-like victim who appears to need protection. However there are examples in her interview when she appears to be acting in a deliberately child-like manner where she is expecting those in charge to act like disciplinarians asserting their authority. What is clear from Judy's conceptualisation is that she believes she lacks agency and she blames others for the situations she finds herself in.

The final cluster draws on examples from the data where teachers have used the metaphor of *teacher as traveller* to conceptualise their experiences. This metaphor also resonates with the work of Lakoff and Johnson (2003) who discuss various ways on which the journey schema can be applied to express experiences such as LOVE IS A JOURNEY (2003:

44) and ARGUMENT IS A JOURNEY (2003: 99). Clark and Cunningham explain why the journey metaphor has resonance for so many:

It is commonly believed in Western cultures that we should have a purpose in life and act so as to achieve this purpose. Conceptualised as a journey, the person is a traveller with a life plan that serves as an itinerary to be followed to achieve one's goals/ destinations.

(Clark and Cunningham 2006: 272-273)

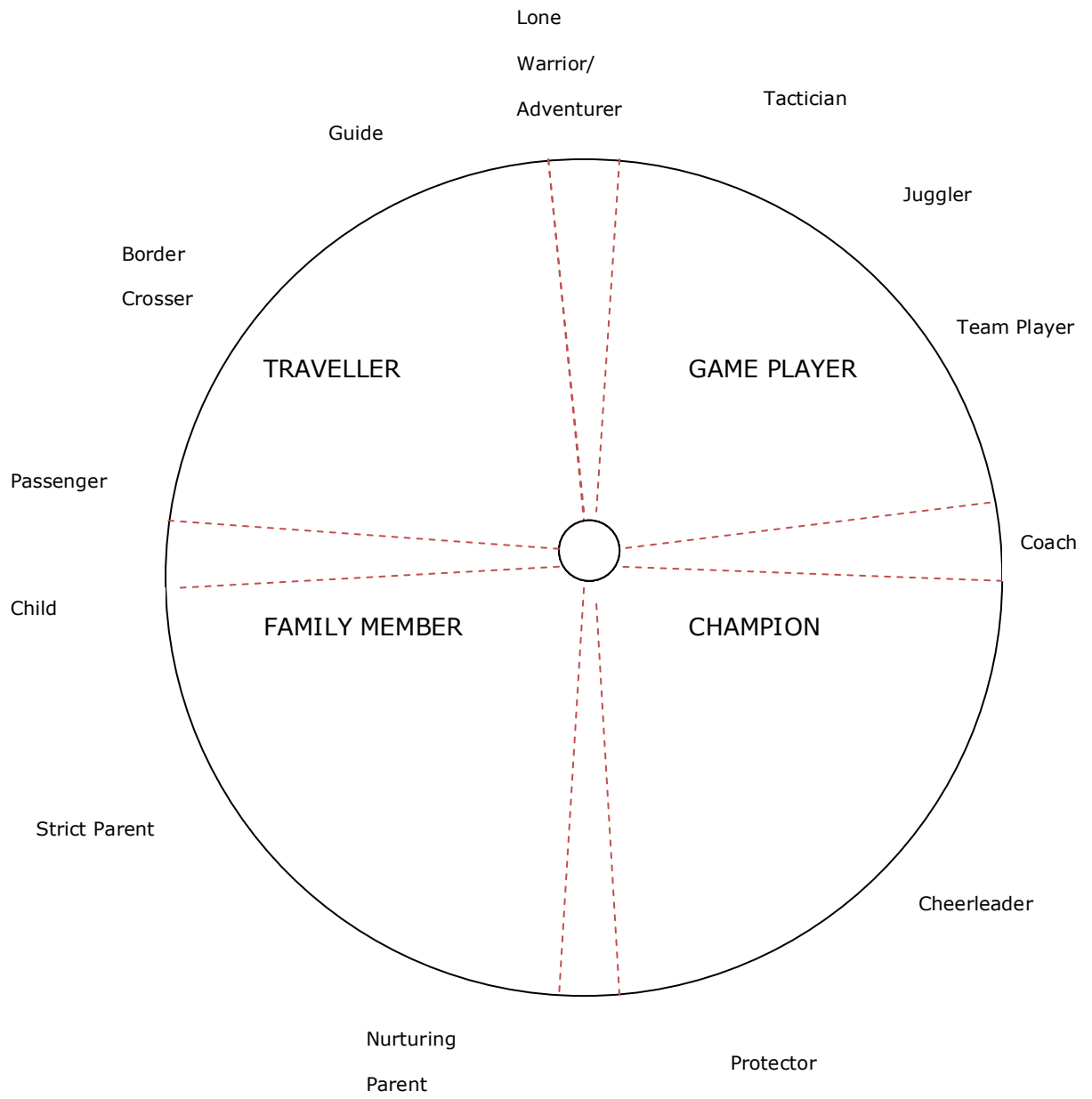
Teachers in these interviews have conceptualised this journey in different ways. Howard is a *passenger* on the journey and has no agency to control the route and the itinerary, whereas others are able to follow their own paths and *guide* others towards the right path too. The final category is that of *border crosser* who takes advantage of opportunities to drift beyond the oft-travelled path and take detours whilst still retaining some sense of agency.

Despite the teachers having a shared history of relationships, sharing common experiences and critical incidents such as being placed in Special Measures, different individuals draw on different conceptual systems to think about and cope with these situations. In addition individual teachers do not always confine themselves to one kind of cluster. They can slip between the clusters. Interestingly, Howard (*the passenger*) and Judy (*the child-victim*) are more or less consistent to one conceptual metaphor throughout their interview which perhaps may signal that agency is linked with the ability to choose between different metaphorical concepts to better understand and rationalise experiences.

6.7 Conclusion

During the process of data analysis for this chapter there were many examples of metaphors or metaphorical entailments that could be placed into more than one cluster. For examples the categories of *lone warrior* and a possible entailment of *adventurer/explorer* from '*teacher as traveller*' were blurred. The categories of *coach* and *cheerleader* were not always distinct as were those of *protector* and *nurturing parent*. Through the analysis I began to think about the characteristics or dispositions of individuals and as a result of this process, I have been able to create a heuristic which I have tried to convey in the wheel diagram below. The purpose of the wheel diagram is to demonstrate that an individual can move between different conceptual metaphors and that some of these metaphors are closely aligned with each other.

Figure 1: Wheel of metaphorical concepts



This examination of individual's rationalisations of their experiences, and the metaphors inherent within these, offers further help in reaching an understanding of the identities of the teachers in this study:

Our identities, overdetermined by time, place, and sociality, are lived through the discourses or knowledge we employ to make sense of who we are, who we are not, and who we can become.

(Britzman 1993: 27)

It may be that the type of metaphors that the teachers live by helps to make sense of 'who we can become' (ibid) if external pressures or tensions mean that we need to find coping strategies.

Externally imposed pressures on teachers are often measures of performativity such as Ofsted inspections and league tables that are gesellschaft like pressures. Some of the teachers use the game-metaphor to demonstrate their agency so that conceptualising teaching as a game allows them to take control and recognise how to develop strategies to win and survive within this game. Ball refers to the ability of some teachers to play the game as a means of surviving inspections as 'cynical compliance ...a fabrication' (Ball 2003: 222). Ball writes about the 'costs' to the teacher's self when they do so as their identity is 'called into question' (ibid: 222). Teachers in this study who talk openly about playing the game, such as Frank, appear to retain a sense of agency in the process and I would argue that the ability to conceptualise in this way counters Ball's notion of the 'alienation of self', as they seem more able to provide 'a rationale for practice, account of themselves in terms of a relationship to the meaningfulness of what they do' (ibid: 222) than teachers who conceptualise their experiences as a *passenger* might be able to.

This reading of identity is based upon my own analysis of the metaphors that were used in the interviews and it must be remembered that this concept of identity is not frozen in time (Britzman 1993): identity formation is a fluid process. If identity is not a fixed notion *and* if we can choose to alter our metaphorical conceptualisations of the way we experience the world, then the heuristic inherent in the wheel diagram might be of some use when thinking about ways of supporting teachers facing change and challenges (and ultimately might help with issues associated with retention). The heuristic offers dimensions of identity which people inhabit more or less of at different points in their lives.

Teachers can choose to change the metaphors they live and teach by because:

we have some cognitive flexibility if we become aware of them. Rather than being enslaved by our unconscious conceptual systems, awareness can give us freedom to reprioritise our metaphors and consider things in a new way.

(Clark and Cunningham 2006: 277)

Identity is not a fixed notion, we can choose to experience a paradigm shift and change/ shift our identity.

while metaphors are not right or wrong, they do carry with them a world view of who we are and hope to be. The choice is ours and we can think of no more important one.

(Clark and Cunningham 2006: 288)

The analysis of the metaphors within this chapter offers a different way of viewing the strategies or 'mind-sets' of teachers who choose to commit to working in challenging schools. If teachers were made more explicitly

aware of the choices they already make, and the alternative choices that they could make, metaphors could potentially help individuals to view their experiences differently and ultimately help them to become more resilient in the face of adversity. Choosing a different metaphor on the wheel could, it can be argued, help a teacher thinking of leaving the profession conceptualise their work in a different way and perhaps help them to stay.

Chapter 7: Conclusion

7.1 Introduction

The rationale for this study was to answer the research question: what can we learn about teacher retention from the experiences of long-serving teachers in challenging schools? The motivation for the work came from my own experience of working in such a school within a school staff that was characterised by longevity and stability. My experience of this research has led me to conclude that there is indeed much to be learnt about the issue of teacher retention within challenging contexts from those teachers who are sometimes considered anomalous, in that they have stayed in the schools for the greater part of their career. Their experiences speak to policy-makers, to educational researchers and to those considering entering the profession.

This is small study which deals with a specific socio-political context. It would be unrealistic to make claims for generalisability from the findings. The stories told are representative of the views of the participants at the time of the data collection. They might well have different stories to tell if I were to re-visit them. During the course of the research, I made decisions about how to analyse the data; these decisions have had a consequential impact upon the conclusions drawn below. For example, the data could have been analysed to see if there were gender or class issues that had a contribution to make to the debate about teacher retention. Despite these limitations, I believe that the interviews have yielded a deep, emotive and complex data set and have given privileged access to the realities of lives lived in challenging schools. They offer a lens to understand more about what motivated these long-serving teachers to stay in the profession.

The main recommendations are discussed in depth in this chapter and are summarised below:

- There is a need to challenge and change the dominant discourses around 'challenging' schools and 'disadvantaged' communities.
- Committing to and feeling part of a community helps retention, and policy needs to recognise and reward this commitment.
- Teachers play a pivotal role in the relationships between schools and communities and this role needs to be recognised and supported.
- Models of continued professional development need to evolve to incorporate teachers engaged with ongoing research based on better understandings of local communities' 'funds of knowledge' (Gonzalez, Moll and Amanti 2005).
- There is not one standardised way of experiencing the profession. Individual strengths and commitments need to be recognised and valued.

7.2 Naming the world differently: changing the discourse

The literature reviewed in chapter two makes it evident that there are particular issues associated with retaining teachers in 'challenging' schools and that these are compounded by the fact that portrayals of teachers who have worked in challenging or 'failing' schools are usually negative ones. The literature review highlighted the ways in which the construction of economic metaphors to structure schooling and teachers' professional lives might be linked to retention (Sachs 2003; Ball 2003). Apple discusses the

impact of these discourses of economics and accountability in relation to schools and schooling and calls for a collective attempt to challenge the dominant discourses, to 'name the world differently', and in so doing 'assert the possibility that it could be different' (1996: 21). This study has attempted to do that by turning to the experiences of a group of long-serving teachers who have stayed in these schools and to ask them to 'name the world' of teaching in such schools.

Whilst it is not possible to over generalise from the findings in this study, there are ways in which the research can talk to policy makers. In the review of the literature, I mention that within the United Kingdom, the professional teaching standards are set out in a key text entitled 'Why sit still in your career?' (TDA 2007). This reference to *sitting still* has interesting resonance with the long-serving teachers in this study who it could be argued have chosen to do exactly that. Sitting still has negative connotations in the governmental policy discourse of professionalism. The analyses of the data presented in chapters four to six offer an alternative to the reductive view of teachers who did stay still and whose working lives were experienced as counter-hegemonic responses to the dominant discourse which promotes and valorises constant movement and rapid change. In this current discourse of deficit models of passivity and complacency, the active decisions, made by teachers in this study, to become part of a community are devalued. Valuing such 'reservoirs of experience' (HMSO 2004: 39) could go some way to helping with recruitment and retention in schools facing challenging circumstances.

The problems of retaining 'effective' teachers in challenging schools has been addressed by an initiative to use financial incentives, namely the 'golden handcuff' strategy (Cabinet Office 2009), to retain teachers in

challenging schools. This document explains that 'effective' teachers can be 'deterred by the real or perceived challenges of working in schools with high numbers of disadvantaged children' (Cabinet Office 2009: 52).

The analysis of the interview data suggests that for this group of teachers, their work and contact with 'disadvantaged' children has not deterred them. Over time, they have formed relationships with different groups and these relational ties are not hierarchical. Strong attachments are made to students and to their families, to colleagues and their families, and to individuals and their families within the wider community. Their sense of loyalty and belonging has been strengthened by such relational ties; the school has become an extended family which incorporates 'multiple reference groups' (Little and McLaughlin 1993). These relational ties have been the source of or reservoirs of resilience that have helped individuals to stay rooted within the workplace as they feel an attachment to their '*community of kin*' (Tonnies 2001: 27). Rather than problematising the children as 'disadvantaged', the interview discourse of teachers working in such communities reflects an understanding of context. I believe that there must be ways in which the policy discourse of 'disadvantage' could evolve to incorporate positive recognition and affirmation of the differences in lives lived beyond the school gates.

The stories from the teachers in my study thus produced a very different picture of lives lived in challenging schools. Far from being attracted by the 'golden handcuff', their motivations were principled and based on strongly held values. These findings query policy which seeks to retain good teachers in such schools through appealing to their perceived financial self interest. This is particularly important in the current context where teacher stability within challenging schools is a key issue. The research also

demonstrates the value in listening to the voices of long-serving teachers whose narratives of community may be of more interest and relevance to prospective teachers than the prospect of handcuffs, golden or not.

The research also redresses some of the negative representations of urban schools serving areas of social and economic deprivation. The school improvement discourses are about schools being rewarded for surmounting their context, by raising attainment. The voices in this study have been articulating different ways of recognising and working with school contexts where increased attainment for the students is a welcome outcome but not as an end in itself. Dean, Marilyn, and Isabel painted detailed pictures of the ways in which they believe extra-curricular activities enriched the life experiences of their students, whilst Grace and Stewart discussed ways in which increased pressures for teachers to improve student performance in tests are having detrimental effects on the students they teach. These voices run counter to the dominant discourses and to overwhelmingly negative media depictions of communities and schools facing challenging circumstances. As the analysis presented in chapter five shows, the teachers in this study viewed the children, the families and the communities with deep-rooted affection. This is a similar observation to that of Day, in a study of 'outstanding' leaders of urban schools, which was that a common factor amongst his head teachers was 'a passion for education, for pupils and for the communities in which they worked' (2007: 59).

Indeed without this sense of attachment and loyalty to these communities, it is hard to see how the long-serving teachers could have chosen to continue to work in environments which have to counter so much negativity, and within circumstances which can be hugely stressful because

of the constant surveillance technologies monitoring the work of schools. Thomson, in her study of texts produced by the National College for School Leadership about leadership in challenging schools, found that there was a lack of recognition of the realities of work in such contexts:

the work on school facing challenging circumstances is part of a large policy discourse which demonizes inner urban children, families and neighborhoods while individualizing their behaviors and needs and ignoring their strengths and assets.

(Thomson 2007: 1070)

The discourse of school improvement, which is centrally mandated, serves to pass responsibility for 'progress' to the schools themselves; the schools are then measured against centrally prescribed instrumental outcomes such as lower exclusion rates and higher test results. This works to disadvantage already disadvantaged schools and creates an ethos of individualism where a school is in competition with other schools. The structures limit the ways in which these schools can communicate their work in what Bellah et al call the 'first language', (Bellah Madson, Sullivan, Swidler and Tipton 1985). Bellah et al use the concept of 'first' and 'second' languages to explore how individuals live in modern society. Within this paradigm, the first language is that of 'the self-reliant individual' and it is this that is, according to Bellah et al, promoted as the way to succeed in modern (American) society. The second languages are those of 'tradition and commitment in communities of memory' (1985: 154).

This 'first language' of performance outcomes has limited semantics for expressing the positive things that the schools are doing within the community, such as the pastoral work (typified in Marilyn and Grace's

interviews) or the strategies they are involved in to engage with the community (as Dean's interview testifies). Within the 'first language', these intrinsic values are silenced by the vocabulary of instrumental achievements. When these instrumental outcomes are measured against other schools serving different, (for example, middle-class) types of community, they are heard not only by the wide audience of the education authorities and the policy makers but also by prospective parents and the media, who then receive (and then, in the case of the media, promulgate) messages of failure rather than of success. The interview data, on the other hand, which draw on Bellah et al's 'second language', are full of stories of love and celebration of the students and an affiliation which has been born of prolonged contact and familiarity with the specific communities served by the schools.

Whilst the dominant discourses of school improvement and performativity could be said to reward those schools and individual teachers who live within the first language, the interview stories suggest that these long-serving teachers have found strength in placing this first language within the context of the second. For as Bellah et al suggest, 'even those most exclusively caught in the first language seem to be yearning for something more'. (1985: 155).

In Foucauldian terms, knowledge is constituted in and through discourse (Foucault 1972). I would argue that the dominant discourses are not fixed and can be countered. One way of challenging the dominant discourses and offering alternatives is by recognising what else 'challenging schools' can do with their relationships with 'disadvantaged' students and their communities.

7.3 Every community matters

Throughout the process of carrying out this study, a picture has emerged of the ways in which the cohort of long-serving teachers I studied has felt part of a community which corresponds to Tonnies' depiction of the *gemeinschaft*. The stories and experiences of these teachers demonstrate the ways in which they have had to hold on to the qualities of *gemeinschaft* in a context in which externally imposed controls and constraints have introduced *gesellschaft* mechanisms. For Tonnies, *gemeinschaft* is dependent upon locational ties, relational ties and ties of shared values. The emergence of 'locational' and 'relational ties' as an important theme within the interview conversations encouraged me to consider how Tonnies' model of community could help explain why these long-serving teachers had stayed.

In describing the pull of locational ties, Tonnies proposes that a relationship exists between inhabiting a shared place and being driven by a shared purpose. According to Tonnies:

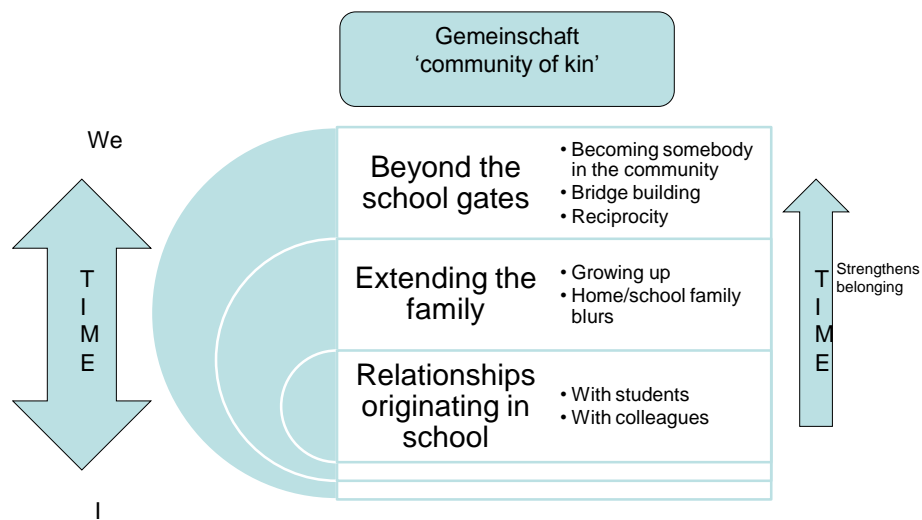
Community of place is what holds life together on a physical level, just as community of spirit is the binding link on the level of conscious thought.

(2001: 27)

The analysis of the themes emerging from the data which could be grouped under the macro-theme of locational ties emphasised the importance to this group of teachers of expressing powerful feelings of attachment, and belonging to their (work-) place. This analysis of the data gave credence to Tonnies' proposition that a 'community of spirit' grows from feeling part of a 'community of place' and these two aspects of community, in the sense

of gemeinschaft, appear to be powerful means for engendering commitment and loyalty. This is further compounded by inhabiting that community of place with people who could be considered to be part of an extended family or a 'community of kin'. In Figure 2 below, I have attempted to represent how, as time moves on, the different layers of relational ties help individuals feel the pull of gemeinschaft ties which help them to feel they belong to a community. Over time as the relationships deepen, this moves the individual from a sense of the 'I' to the 'sedimentation of the we' (Butler 1993: 105). The relationships are non-hierarchical but they centre on the teacher and begin in the work-place.

Figure 2: Diagram of relational ties



This proposition that the teachers stayed because they felt strong, relational, even family-like, ties is not intended to paint a rose-tinted picture of a group of teachers who lived convivially in one work-space

throughout the period of their career. Rather, the stories recognise that inhabiting the work space with the same group of people has been the cause of conflict and problems for some teachers at various times in their history, as James' difficult relationship with his former headteacher demonstrates. This confirms what Tonnies says about the realities of living and working in proximity to 'kin'; he emphasises that at times 'these relationships are the most difficult to preserve and the most susceptible to disturbances – such as disputes and quarrel, which will happen in all group life' (2002: 44). However what binds them is 'memory' which 'creates gratitude and faithfulness' and 'manifest[s] itself in mutual trust and belief' (2002: 44). It is the fact that these relationships have grown organically and have developed in the space over time that allows this to happen. So for Tonnies, community in the *gemeinschaft* sense of the term 'means genuine, enduring life together' as opposed to *gesellschaft* which is 'transient and superficial' (2001: 19).

However Tonnies' original theories were about rural communities, and the threat to them by the urban society, rather than about modern schools. I believe though that the concepts of *gemeinschaft* and *gesellschaft* are useful metaphors for trying to understand teachers' lives lived in particular 'disadvantaged' school communities whose existence has been put under pressure by uniform mechanisms such as league tables, inspection regimes and the ultimate threat of closure. It would be unrealistic to propose that the three schools in this study are wholly *gemeinschaft*. There are elements of *gesellschaft* which have to be part of any community or organisation in today's society. There is, I believe, a continuum between the two extremes, and the teachers in this study have been able to benefit from *gemeinschaft* characteristics within their school communities which have counter-balanced some of the *gesellschaft*-like pressures imposed on

them and their schools. By contrast, in schools where the teachers have not been able to resist the pressures of the external mechanisms, they are, according to Harris, 'divested of their human qualities and treated as if they were a collective 'It'' (Harris 2007: 22).

Therefore, following Merz and Furman, it is unrealistic to propose that schools should be set up to be completely gemeinschaft-like in character. The very act of making such a proposal is a gesellschaft-one. However, it is still important to find ways of valuing schools and communities where gemeinschaft qualities do exist and to try and communicate this to beginning teachers and to policy makers. For as Merz and Furman state:

we can't have a life or a school, that is only Gemeinschaft today, our modern society simply will not tolerate it. Neither can we have a life or a school that is only Gesellschaft, because human nature will not tolerate it.

(Merz and Furman 1997: 98)

A possible answer to the question, what can we learn about retention in challenging schools from these long-serving teachers, therefore, seems to lie in the concept of community. Through time, through shared experiences of suffering and of joys, the teachers have evolved organically into a model of community that is predominantly gemeinschaft in character and these gemeinschaft characteristics have enabled them to manage the gesellschaft pressures inflicted upon them and in so doing commit to schools and offer stability to areas of disadvantage.

The study suggests that these teachers have stayed because they have been able to find what Strike describes as the 'goods' of community which are 'a sense of belonging, loyalty, trust and mutual attachment and

concern' (Strike 2000: 619). The work therefore sits alongside studies which have called for policy-makers to find ways of valorising these 'goods', to find a voice for celebrating commitment and loyalty and which recognises that achieving these 'goods' is a long-term strategy rather than a quick fix easily measurable solution.

7.4 Teachers as the key to school-community partnerships

There have been many attempts by governments to offer concepts of partnership and community as possible solutions to a range of problems inside and outside schools, including 'educational improvement partnerships' and 'extended schools'. Within England a formalised strategy for utilising schools to create community cohesion began in the 1980s when parent-governors took on an increasingly important role in decision-making at school level. At the same time, schools began appealing to their local communities as parents could exercise choice over decisions about schooling for their children.

Robin Alexander carried out a large-scale comparison of society and schools across five nations (India, France, USA, Russia and England) and found that within schools in England there was a limited sense of community outside school (2000). This was despite a number of initiatives aimed at creating partnerships between homes, communities and schools at the turn of the century. Alexander criticised the 'rhetoric' of partnership, claiming that there was instead an atmosphere of 'consumerism in its most hostile and combative form' as parents became accustomed to an education system predicated on values of 'marketization':

if primary schools during the 1960s, the 1970s and the 1980s could be criticised for operating on the basis of a deficit model of the home,

parents at the turn of the century were being encouraged to take a deficit view of the school - guilty of the charge of incompetence until proved innocent.

(Alexander 2000: 235)

At the same time, educational researchers across the western world were concurring with the observations of Lankshear and Knobel:

school learning is at odds with authentic ways of learning to be in the world, and with social practice beyond the school gates.

(Lankshear and Knobel 2003:31)

Niesz suggested that the combination of teaching within a context of 'high-stakes testing' and increased pressure to appeal to parents as consumers had led to teachers feeling that schools were becoming increasingly distanced from both the needs of their students and the teachers (2010). She reflected that there was no opportunity for professional dialogue, that schools that are under pressure to be perceived as 'successful' have no time to engage or debate issues, they have to implement whatever initiative has been directed at them and be seen to meet targets. As Isabel in my study observed, there is the danger that the gulf between students, teachers and communities is widening rather than that they are becoming drawn together in partnership.

Despite this, the study of the long-serving teachers in these schools has found that community does matter; community within and beyond the school gates. The long serving teachers are the pivotal agents in these relationships and may offer a more realistic key to what partnerships between schools and communities could look like.

The idea that teachers could hold the key to partnerships between schools and communities is not new. In 1983, Shirley Brice-Heath suggested that more informed understanding of the lives lived outside schools by teachers would be beneficial to lives experienced inside the classroom. Following her own longitudinal ethnographic study of the communities of Trackton and Roadville in south east United States of America, she proposed that teachers of children from these communities become learners by undertaking ethnographic studies of the communities. One of the teachers who took part in the study observed that:

the needs are many, the motivation is amazing; and the goal of learning from the students is for us to know what they have, not to tell us what they lack.

(Brice-Heath 1983: 314)

As the teachers grew in confidence and learned to believe that their students could learn and that they could learn from their students, they encouraged students to undertake ethnographic studies of their own. Brice-Heath found that a consequence of these ethnographic studies led to a sense of increased trust between the communities (of Trackton and Roadville) and the schools.

This approach countered the deficit models of students and communities in areas of socio-economic deprivation, focussing instead on the community assets, or shared 'funds of knowledge' (Gonzalez, Moll and Amanti 2005). In Moll and his colleagues' work, the term 'funds of knowledge' refers to the range of localised knowledge systems that members of the community draw upon in a complex web of information exchange systems across deep social networks, for example, religious observations, culinary practices, economical transactions and cross-border experiences. Gonzalez, Moll and

Amanti argue that the students in their study were engaging with a wide range of learning experiences within 'thick' multiple relationships, but that these learning experiences were not recognised in formal education systems symbolised by schools.

Gonzalez and her colleagues argue that by striving to understand the ways in which 'the practices of households are theorized, we as educators can come to deeper understandings of the complexities of students' lives' (Gonzalez et al 2005: 21). Recognising these 'funds of knowledge' requires teachers to re-evaluate their understandings of what the children in the school can do; in the Gonzalez et al study, they identified non-traditional mathematics, science, literacy, and challenged notions of deficient and impoverished cultures and practices in their local communities. The teachers spent time in the homes and families of their students and, in a reciprocal arrangement, the members of the students' communities spent time in the classrooms. An integral aspect of the exchange of 'funds of knowledge' is 'confianza' which means mutual trust or reciprocity. The teachers found that by engaging with the students and their communities in this way, they also entered into a relationship of 'confianza' with the community. Moll, Amanti, Neff and Gonzalez explain that the 'reciprocal practices establish serious obligations based on the assumption of *confianza* (mutual trust), which is re-established or confirmed with each exchange and leads to the development of long-term relationships' (2005: 74). Amanti explains that these 'long-term bonds' are vital because relationships are key to learning:

you can know the academic standards inside and out, and write the most creative lesson plans, but if positive, affirming, and mutually respectful relationships are not the norm in our classrooms, no learning

will take place. Even academic knowledge must be distributed through social relations.

(2005: 140)

The data from my study suggests that over time many of the long serving teachers have established 'positive, affirming, and mutually respectful relationships' with their students and in some cases with members of their family too. They have in many cases the foundations of 'mutual trust' that would make an exchange of funds of knowledge between school and the local community a realistic possibility. As well as reducing the gap between school learning and learning outside the school gates, exchanges of this sort could inform changes to curriculum and pedagogy that might challenge the deficit stereotypes of the students and their communities.

As the teachers in Moll and Gonzalez's projects became more familiar with the funds of knowledge outside the school gates, their understanding of their professional identity was challenged as they were forced to question, and in some cases, redefine their beliefs and values both about education and about their students. Moll refers to this process as the 'internalization of perspective' (Moll 2005: 282). Underpinning the analytical chapters of my study has been an interest in the role of teacher identity. From this analysis has emerged a concept of identity that is not fixed but is closely bound up with place and context. My research has led me to the conclusion that teachers' notions of their professional identity are bound up within the context of the places in which they teach. This has been an attempt to answer Elbaz-Luwisch's call for research in to the importance of 'a sense of the teacher teaching in a *place*' (2004: 388, original emphasis). Such overt attention to the importance of place and identity formation could have beneficial implications for the communities served by the schools, as well

as for the teachers' professional formation and development. This is especially important in communities which have struggled to communicate their specific histories, values and strengths. In the disadvantaged communities served by the schools, there has been a tendency to view the schools as representations of *gesellschaft* (as Liz and Dean's comments evidence). Mutual respect between schools and communities and exchange of 'funds of knowledge' help to foster place-identification from within and without the school and contribute towards achieving the 'goods' of community (Strike 2000).

7.5 Teachers as researchers

This thesis has demonstrated that the teachers in the three schools have developed, over time, strong relational ties and attachments to their workplace and in many cases a sense of 'confianza' with their communities. I would argue that these emotional ties have helped with retention in the schools. Because of these existing ties and their standing in the communities, the teachers could act as brokers to help create research projects which aim to find out more about what the 'funds of knowledge' are within their local communities. By finding ways of valuing the funds of knowledge within these communities, such work would help to counter deficit images of the school and the community and help to change the discourse surrounding these contexts. This is not an easy or a superficial task since it challenges hierarchies of received knowledge. As Thomson and Hall point out:

The object is *also* to change what counts as important knowledge so that the dominant forms of knowledge are decentred and more inclusive models of knowing - and being - are recognised and taught to all.

(2008: 89)

I suggest that there should be a change in the expectations of continuing professional development (CPD) for teachers. This should be less performance-based and instead move towards teachers engaging in long-term projects with an ongoing focus on community. This marks a shift from 'top-down' to 'bottom-up' models of CPD which are truly reflective and responsive to the needs of the local (and/or school) community. Such a model of CPD would not be finite, it might well take the form of 'narrative learning' (Goodson, Biesta, Tedder and Adair 2010). The interviews in this study have been snapshots of a type of narrative learning which could be even more fruitful if extended over time. According to Goodson et al, 'narrative learning' gives individuals the opportunity to learn 'from the narrative', to learn 'in the act of narration' and 'in the ongoing construction of a life story' (2010: 127). Teachers engaged in a long-term project of CPD which looks at their understanding of local communities will inevitably also be engaging in important self and professional identity work, which will support them in developing individual agency alongside a strong sense of engagement. This seems very likely to contribute to retention within the profession.

I believe that the voices and experiences of the long-serving teachers in this study offer evidence of ways in which the difficulties of attracting new entrants to work in 'challenging' schools can be addressed. Working alongside experienced teachers through the early years of teaching, and engaging with them in debates about the complex nature of the work,

going beyond the prescribed standards and taking into account local community contexts would, I believe, strengthen commitment and help beginner teachers to feel part not only of a teaching community but also of the local community. This could take the form of Masters work, if this mentoring model within the school was married with theoretical work, in partnership with a higher education institution, which examined sociological and educational studies of context.

As the concept of community continues to evolve there will be further opportunities for teachers to engage with educational research. The communities they work in are not bounded and are continually changing. By this I mean that local contexts are susceptible to change as migration and economic trends develop. In addition, young people within these places are becoming increasingly more likely to view virtual 'places' as sites in which to 'negotiate their sense of self and community' (Stevenson 2008: 355). As they do so, their funds of knowledge will expand further and teachers will need to work closely with them to help them to remain engaged with schools and perhaps with their 'real' communities.

7.6 Agency, metaphors and retention

The metaphors that the teachers in this study draw upon indicate the ways in which they have enacted a sense of individual freedom. They are also illustrative of the ways in which some seem to have more agency and control over their experiences than others. The analysis presented in chapter six offers an account of the ways in which teachers conceptualise their experience through the metaphors they employ and live by (Lakoff and Johnson 2003). The heuristic offered in the wheel diagram at the end of chapter six shows the ways in which individual teachers can move

between and across different conceptual metaphors and that some of these metaphors overlap.

I have argued that these conceptual mappings are not fixed and that individuals can alter their metaphorical conceptualisations of the ways in which they live and experience their work in schools and in their communities. Some of the participants, deliberately or otherwise, utilised metaphors which gave them agency and, I would suggest, helped them to develop ways of coping with the *gesellschaft*-like pressures. I have followed Britzman in her conceptualisation of identity as not being fixed or frozen in time (1993) to propose that the heuristic could be used to offer alternative ways of viewing professional identity within the teaching profession, and that this could be particularly useful for working with beginner teachers or for those working to champion teachers working in schools which are constructed as 'failing'.

The long-serving teachers in my study are atypical in their choice to stay in 'challenging schools'. The analysis has shown that through their careers, these teachers have been able to draw on different conceptual metaphors to help them understand their experience and it is suggested that if the data generation had taken place at another time in their careers, the choice of conceptual metaphors might have been different. Equally, it is not outside the realms of possibility to suggest that if the teachers were re-interviewed after the Academies had been opened, that they might well be drawing on different conceptual metaphors to construct this new episode in their life-histories. Indeed there is anecdotal evidence to suggest that some of the teachers in the study decided not to make the move to work in the new structure.

However, some did stay on and worked in the new Academies. Howard, for example, stayed on and took on a new role working with beginner teachers on the graduate teacher training programme. This role gave him a fresh perspective and had the effect of offering him the opportunity to draw on different conceptual metaphors. In my follow-up conversations with Howard, he seemed to have shifted from being a 'passenger' to being a 'guide' and appeared to have stronger motivations to stay in teaching whereas before he was looking for early retirement.

7.7 Schools as communities of individuals

Whilst they do express ideas and values of belonging to a community of shared ideas, the teachers in this study are not a homogenous group.

In Gemeinschaft they stay together in spite of everything that separates them; in Gesellschaft they remain separate in spite of everything that unites them.

(Tonnies 2001: 52)

Tonnies explains that the pressures of living within 'continuous proximity and frequency of contact' have to 'be counter-balanced by a high degree of individual freedom' (2001: 29-30).

It was important to the teachers in this study to be individuals whilst at the same time feeling part of a community. Individuals are needed for communities to flourish and there is strong anecdotal evidence to suggest that those communities which are perceived by outsiders to be challenging need the individuals, the, at times, maverick characters to keep the community alive and strong. If the group is made up of a body of people all

demonstrating common characteristics, and becoming an obedient, standardised but homogenised whole then I would argue that in times of conflict there would be no inner reserves to draw upon. The interview data collected for this study contains examples of individual teachers who at one time or another recall doing something different to the norm or working to overcome an individual challenge. For example, Laurence, Judy and Ava recall ways in which they had to deal with personal problems and how the support received from their school community strengthened their feelings of attachment to their work-place. Grant and Frank discuss the ways in which their approach to work-place challenges was individualistic and perhaps contrary to what they would have been advised to do professionally. In very different ways, Liz, Joan and James talk about the ways in which they responded to the acts of surveillance during various inspections. These individual stories, over time, become part of a shared memory and help to strengthen ties to a particular community. According to Goodson et al:

Stories have the potential to provide our lives with continuity, vivacity and endurance. They can create a past of which we have memories and a future about which we can have hopes and fears and can thus bring about a sense of the present in which our lives are lived.

(Goodson et al 2010: 1)

Bellah et al (1985) write about how important it is to exist in a 'community of memory' which is 'one that does not forget the past', where in order to keep the past alive in the present 'a community is involved in retelling its story, its constitutive narrative, and in so doing, it offers examples of the men and the women who have embodied and exemplified the meaning of the community', the narratives should incorporate stories of 'shared

suffering' and in so doing, 'the communities of memory that tie us to the past also turn us towards the future as communities of hope' (1985: 153).

Whilst the long-serving teachers in this study appear to have had the pull of *gemeinschaft* to keep them rooted in the schools, there will have been others who have been pulled by *gesellschaft* to keep moving and changing schools and roles as they progress through their career. It has not been the intention of this work to prioritise one 'type' over the other. In fact, I believe that there is a place for both in today's schools. Schools need people who are able to respond to instrumental pressures if the schools are to survive. There needs to be a recognition that the profession is not homogenous and that, alongside these long-serving teachers, there are teachers who view the profession as part of a portfolio career (Handy 1994). This recognition might also help with retention. If those who choose to leave the profession are made to feel that they can come back and be welcomed and mentored by those who have stayed, then attrition rates may begin to stabilise. Those who come back would benefit from the experience of those who have stayed and those who have stayed would benefit from the fresh perspective of those who have returned.

I believe that there should be different ways of viewing the profession and that, just as there are different routes in to the profession, there are different routes for living within the profession. All should have equal value and should be recognised in the discourses around teaching. A teaching profession that was constructed along such lines, where individual life-paths were encouraged and where trust was endemic, might lead to teachers achieving what Aristotle described as 'human flourishing'

(Younkins 2003). For the long-serving teachers in this study, flourishing would incorporate notions of the 'goods' of community outlined above.

Teachers are likely to want to stay in a profession where the long-term goal is the pursuit of human flourishing.

Appendix A

PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM

Project title A Study of the Working Lives of Long-Serving Teachers in Inner-City Schools

Researcher's name Jo McIntyre **Supervisor's name** Christine Hall

- I have read the Participant Information Sheet and the nature and purpose of the research project has been explained to me. I understand and agree to take part.
- I understand the purpose of the research project and my involvement in it.
- I understand that I may withdraw from the research project at any stage and that this will not affect my status now or in the future.
- I understand that while information gained during the study may be published, I will not be identified and my personal results will remain confidential.
- I understand that I will be recorded during the interview.
- I understand that data will be stored on audio tapes, and hard and electronic copies of transcriptions will be kept on the researcher's computer and in her desk and only be accessible to the researcher. Anonymised extracts will be analysed and may form part of the thesis.
- I understand that I may contact the researcher or supervisor if I require further information about the research, and that I may contact the Research Ethics Coordinator of the School of Education, University of Nottingham, if I wish to make a complaint relating to my involvement in the research.

Signed (Research Participant)

Print name

Date

Contact details

Researcher: *Jo McIntyre* (txjm10@nottingham.ac.uk)

Supervisor: Christine.Hall@nottingham.ac.uk; School of Education Research Ethics Coordinator: andrew.hobson@nottingham.ac.uk

Appendix B

Interview Schedule

1. Can you tell me a little about yourself? How long have you been at (name of school)? What is your current position within the school?
2. Tell me about your initial appointment to the school? What drew you to apply for a post here? What were your first impressions? Tell me a bit about what the school was like then.
3. How has your job changed since your initial appointment? In your time here what have been the main things you have done and why?
4. How long have you worked here? What are your memories of the school and teaching over this time? Tell me about some of the highs and lows of your time here.
5. What do you think you have gained from working in the inner-city? Why do you think you chose to stay committed to the inner-city?
6. Is the school similar to previous ones you have taught in? Tell me more about this.
7. Can you try and sum up what (Name of School) means/ symbolises to you?
8. What for you is the point of education?
9. How do you respond to the plans for the proposed changes to the school? How do these plans make you feel on a personal level as well as a professional level?
10. Tell me about some of the other major changes you have experienced in your career (prompt: distinguish between imposed change and self-initiated change). What were your reactions to some of these? What did you do? How did you cope/deal with it? (prompt: how did these have an impact upon you, professionally and personally? Again - What did you do? How did you cope/deal with it?)
11. Can you remember any specific policies or directives designed to bring about improvements for children such as those in this school? Were any of these successful in your opinion? Why? What did you do? How did you cope/deal with it? (prompt: how did these have an impact upon you, professionally and personally? Again - What did you do? How did you cope/deal with it?)
12. I'm trying to get a picture of the working lives of teachers who have committed themselves to working in the inner-city and of how they have understood the waves of policy change. Is there anything else I should have asked you to get a clearer picture of this from your experience?

Appendix C

Interview with Laurence

(preamble before recording about my school and Laurence's day)

JM:

How long have you been here and what is your current position within the school?

L:

I was thinking the other day of writing a book and the title would have been 'Joseph Moore School: My part in its downfall' I'm a Spike Milligan fan! I came the year that it went comprehensive; I came in 1974 so I have worked here for 33 years now I just started as a Mathematician within a year or so had got a promotion to Head of Year and then a little while later I got promotion to Head of Department alongside Head of Year and then I was Senior Teacher where I was head of Lower School so I rose quite quickly to a level of incompetence (laughs) and remained there with changes in management of the school and whatever I changed from somebody who had been at the forefront I tended to get as often happens when new management comes in pushed aside so I have got a lesser role now than I had 20 odd years ago

JM:

So what is your official title now, your official role?

L:

Oh I am second in the Maths department and I am the Year 9 achievement coordinator

JM:

Is that new speak for head of year?

L:

The only reason I took it on because I have applied for jobs over the years and not got them and I have a fair amount of you know well they came to ask me would I do the job and it wouldn't affect me in any way if I said no. So I made it quite clear that having many years ago been a head of year I didn't want to spend my time sorting out other people's problems I quite like the idea of supporting students through to help them succeed rather than doing other people's discipline problems so I made it quite clear that if I was to do the job it would be along the lines of you know I wasn't a head of year I was an achievement coordinator and I have managed to stick to that I have been quite determined not to be picking up kids that are just discipline problems and I have been trying to work on that now whether management are happy with what I have done or not is another matter but I have felt that I have been reasonably true to what I said I was going to do

JM:

And how long have you been doing that?

LI:

Since September

JM:

Ok so its fairly new then?

L:

Yes

JM:

So when you initially applied to the school, what drew you to apply here can you remember?

L::

Well the way they did it in those days was you could apply to the pool so I applied to [Name of city] as an authority and we applied here because my wife's parents lived in [Name of city] or just outside [Name of city] so we thought it would be a reasonable place to work and we both got jobs in the pool and I ended up here

JM:

Ok and what were your initial impressions of the school can you remember?

L:

Yes it was really quite strange because you'd got the... as I came here they had changed it so the first year was the first year of the comprehensive intake and the remaining years including the sixth form were of the grammar school intake however having said that there had been plans afoot for a while so it had been a bit of a dumping ground for the county to put in kids that they couldn't fit anywhere else and I would say especially in year 2 and 3 what would now be years 8 and 9 that there were three forms of entry and the C form was nowhere near grammar school standard it was an all boys school up to that point a lot of bright individual lads I was amazed how concerned some of the experienced teachers were you know what it was going to be like in a comprehensive school teaching girls teaching people who haven't got that ...and it was an interesting sort of stage there must have been about five or six of us who came in at the same sort of time so it was just interesting really a mixture of an old grammar school and youngsters coming through

JM:

How long did the sixth form stay open?

L:

Well I think they had to offer a sixth form to those students who had come when it was still a grammar school but as the numbers dwindled I think it closed a couple of years early

JM:

Did that have a knock on effect on some of the staffing here because

people presumably wanted to teach A level?

L:

There were...I didn't, it didn't come across my consciousness that people might have been thinking along that line there was a group of staff that had been here for 25-30 years who were solid and they had no intention of moving or going anywhere else because it was all they had done there were younger people that were coming through and thinking about it some of those moved on but it's a strange sort of school it's the kind of school where people either move on after two years or stay for a long time

JM:

You have given me a little potted history of your career so what have been the main things you have done here and can you think back to why you did them?

L:

Like anybody you come into a place and you are newly married and you are wanting to move forward you will take anything that is offered to you and that's what I think teachers do there is this thing to get on, I have never had aspirations to be a headteacher I think it's a very difficult job I think when opportunities presented themselves I took them and in a lot of cases it was the head of year job that I was asked if I would do back in the days when that was the case, head of department's job you know and it was suggested that I should apply for that it was open for interview for people outside the school whatever and the same with the senior teacher's job you know if you are in the school and you are doing a job and you feel that there is something else that comes along that you feel you can do and it just feels like a natural progression and that's what it was I have never planned out or mapped out anything or whatever I mean by nature I tend to fall into things rather than have a 5 year or 7 year plan and it was just like now I do tell people on a regular basis that really although it's worked alright for me I've had a few difficult years towards the end but it's worked alright for me and I don't think really I'd be wanting to change it very much but it's not an ideal scenario you do not want to be spending a lot of time I realised a fairly long time ago that once I'd got the head of maths and the head of year that I was really in a very poor position to be transferred anywhere else or to get an appointment anywhere else because at the sort of level that I would be going for at deputy head they would be looking for people with experience of three or four different types of schools and what I have done by taking on promotion in the same school is actually limited my chances but by the time I had got through there you had got a group of people you were friends with and your whole life outside school is moving on and before you know it you've made your mistakes and you can't do anything about it

JM:

Your whole teaching career has been at Joseph Moore?

L:

(Nods)

JM:

Ok in that time you have built up some strong memories good and bad, could you tell me about some of the highs?

L:

Its strange that I suppose that last year when we actually got 70% L5 or above on the Sats and the GCSE results that was kind of really, really good its just little individual things its when you see people afterwards or I reckon I could well be about 4 or 5 years off teaching the grandchildren of people that I taught when they were eleven and its when you see people come back and its when you see people as parents and they've got the respect for you and they've got fond memories of the school and things like that its just the whole thing about being a part of a school that went through a really bad spell where it got a lot of criticism from outside the area for a long time but there were still an awful lot of people that remained and had confidence in the school and would send their children there because they had been there and I think there has always been that under-riding thing of pulling together of the staff, the staff has always been through the worse times even if there has been an odd spat with one another you always present a united front to anybody that comes in and the kids are a little bit that way as well and its just that sense of belonging over the time that are the highest points.

The lowest points are you know kind of my personal career where you know you've been moved on you've been overlooked for promotions or not even for promotions the jobs that you know very well that you can do but because people want to change it and move forward and do different things then they want different faces in management teams and I can rationalise that and understand it and it would be alright if they did it to somebody else but when they do it to you, you know and it is very demotivating, deskilling you know I went through a very bad period kind of five or six years ago to the point where I lost a lot of confidence in my own ability but sort of came through that and

JM:

How did you come through that?

L:

(pause) I think it was just a rationalisation of the fact that I had to work you know and I'm very fortunate in that they were paying me a senior teacher wage and you know I had applied for certain jobs and jobs that I had been doing and didn't get them and at the end of the day I thought well you have done everything that you can do you just go in and do your job and you kind of work with the people that you get on with and do that and support them the best you can and you know you just go through that and it really is the rationalisation that it was wasted energy getting upset at people you know and I was finding with my career that you are getting towards your 50s or near enough within touching distance the chances of me going anywhere are slim I remember having a conversation with somebody and they were saying that having been in a place and doing what you have done you go to another school and it would be even worse

and it got to the point then where we just (pause) the head of department now I get on well with and it was actually him that helped me through it and to be honest with you he has threatened to pack up and go somewhere else and if he had left I think I would have found it very difficult and I would have become very isolated or whatever but its strange you know kind of it was a really eerie sensation because as a senior teacher you come across people who are going through difficult spells and you know all the answers because you have been talking them through it but when you come to be in the same situation yourself you know all the rationale you know all the reasons you know all what we should be doing but it doesn't make any difference and it is a very difficult time and I would think that a lot of people go through it, kind of good support from home, having interests outside of school I tend to find the ones that really crack up are the people that haven't got interests out of school as well and I go off playing football or cricket or whatever it is and know quite a few people outside of teaching so that when you went out to a dinner party or something like that you didn't end up just talking about teaching you know you got a chance to get away from it. But it is difficult and you know mine was the fact that I felt deskilled because I had been knocked back don the pecking order I mean I know people who have suffered just because it has come to that crisis in their life you know what are they doing? Where are they going? And you know 10 or 15 years stretching ahead of people can be an absolute nightmare

JM:

When was that?

L:

I mean I came to a point where... if we go back through the heads, we've got Grant now it was (name) before that before that we had a gentleman well (name) and the one before him now when he came was when things seemed to change for me greatly and it might sound a little bit bitter and twisted but I think there was a deputy that came in with the head and they wanted their team around them and whether they felt because you know I had got a lot of friends on the staff and whatever whether they felt that they wanted to do it differently and I can sit back and I can rationalise the fact that you are coming into a new place you have been charged with changing the thing moving it forward and if you are just sticking with the same people who have been doing it before it can be the same mistakes or whatever so I can rationalise it but when its happening to you its not that easy to do. So basically it came to a change of management and having been quite a stable senior management team for a long time it suddenly started swapping every couple of years

JM:

And that's destabilising for the staff?

L:

Well this was about the same time that we got in Serious Weaknesses and Special concerns so you've got all the pressures and everything on you

you've got people trying to drag the school down you're trying to do your best and it was all about that sort of time

JM:

What do you think you have gained from working in the inner-city?

L:

I'm a working-class lad from Manchester I've got no airs or graces but I think what its done is given me a great reality on life you know and it certainly broadens your horizons when you hear what some of the kids have to put up with in their life it gives you a better perspective on life you know you hear politicians spout off about certain things and you can say well you've got no idea of the reality of life and also the optimism that it gives you where people come back to see you, I was on duty the other day and a lad came in and it must have been about 4 or 5 years ago when he left and he had been and got his college qualifications and so on and he had been picked up by a multinational and given 15 grand to have a year off and do that because when he comes back he is going to be on a really high level and you kind of feel that you've had some sort of hand in somebody moving forward greatly and you've proven that the opportunity is there for everybody and people regularly hear these kind of success stories of people you know we've just got a PGCE student that is here who I taught 30 odd years ago and he's come into teaching late because its something he wants to do but he's made a success of his life he wasn't really anything brilliant when he was at school he was a quiet timid sort of lad but we gave him the grounding that if he wanted to he could succeed and there's lots of people like that and its this whole thing that you have given youngsters in difficult circumstances and not everybody has taken them and not everybody is a raving success story but you see people who have just quietly got on with it and made quite reasonable success of their lives they've had children and the children are fairly solid reasonable sort of children and you can tell that they come from a good caring home and not all the time are you going to get people at the top I think its this idea that you are trying to produce solid citizens just people who can actually play a useful part in society and we see these on a regular basis its just that sort of thing and we're perpetuating the idea that people from any sort of background can make it

JM:

Is that one of the rewards of teaching do you think?

L:

Yes, I think it is its this thing about seeing somebody five or ten years down the line and having been here for as long as I have there's 5000 or 6000 people who've been through your hands so to speak because every now and then you meet one and they speak fondly of you and of the school then obviously you've had some sort of influence on them on how they've thought and gone on and that's very gratifying

JM:

Would you say you were committed to inner-city education?

L:

Its strange because I don't know whether its been lazy or getting into a situation where kind of things have come to you fairly easily though I worked very hard you know and I think I was justly rewarded for the efforts that I put in and I feel that I did a good job I don't think I have made a decision or promise to myself that I would work in a city school you know I got into a city school it worked for me I got promotion when I was young I got to the point where I realised I wasn't going to get in anywhere else I suppose I could have taken a drop in pay and gone but people are always very suspicious when you do that but being a mathematician I probably could have got a job somewhere else but its just been the sort of thing where I have stayed so its like a comfortable pair of shoes you fit in it and it seems right and you just continue to do it

JM:

Can you try and sum up what Joseph Moore means to you? Or symbolises?

L:

I've actually spent more waking hours in this place than anything else, something happened a few months ago which just summed it up I'd had a thing after school an evening thing it may have been a year 7 open evening or something like that and my wife suddenly appears at the door of the staffroom and we are shepherded down here and we sit down in this room (gestures to this room) and she tells me that she has got cancer and you juts thing you know typical you find out in school you know and everything has gone really well and its all been sorted and whatever but its just you know that you feel that's typical of your life one of the most serious bits of information that you are here and its while you are sitting in the interview room in the school and its just and its things like family you know kind of you can call it as much as you want but don't let anybody else call it you know. And it is lifelong friends one of my best friends out of school used to teach here and moved on somewhere else and has now retired and I've got friends dotted all over the place that I've taught with from here and there is a tremendous bond and the people have made it so its just working in (pause) the staff have been the same the staff have been tremendous and there has never been this people in it for themselves its always been people that have tried that have tended to disappear. But it's a tremendous feeling of deja-vu you see all these youngsters coming through and telling you everything new that they have been doing that you did twenty odd years ago but having been in that same situation myself you know having risen very quickly and got two or three positions of responsibility and seeing in the faces of people I was talking to who had been in the job for 30 odd years and I think that has helped me an awful lot in helping me dealing with people and stopped me getting annoyed and upset at people because take me back 30 years and I was in exactly the same position as these people and it gives you a greater understanding of what has gone on and of how those people must have felt at the time and it was even worse for them because they were a grammar school and had all these devils you know being brought into the school but it helps to be

able to just think back and before you start having a go think you were one of those people and you've been there and done it all and what have you and you just like to smile at these people when they go on about kind of how hard they are working and things like that and you know been there done that kind of thing so its interesting coming back and the whole thing coming back full circle as it is

JM:

What for you is the point of education?

L:

Its really, really very strange I spent years and years clinging to the thing and whether it was the rationalisation that the school results weren't very good that the main point of education is to equip young people with the skills that they need to get on in life you then go through what must be the best part of 8 years maybe even more in Serious Weaknesses and Special Concerns and you can tell that the only thing that they are interested in is the results when the kids leave school and in the last 3 or 4 years I have changed my teaching style I'm a lot more driven by exam results than I have ever been but I can actually see that the kids get better results but whether they are better mathematicians or not is another thing and its this thing where because it has got us put of Special Measures because it has got us to being a good school because it has got us as a department being noticed for the right reasons as opposed to the wrong reasons you kind of go along with it but really I think that I still find it very difficult to rationalise and its somewhere in the middle. The real start of the school's decline in my opinion was when Ofsted started and we were doing a good job for the kids we had and those who wanted to progress could get on and those that weren't particularly academic we used to occupy but I felt gave them a real good understanding of what was required to be part of a team to be part of a community and most of them I think went on to be successful in what they wanted to do but it was not on the Ofsted scheme of things and so we went from that to being all we were worried about was exam results and in the process in the transfer from one to the other the kids felt that we weren't interested in them and it went to a point where it was near anarchy at one point you know because we were trying to do things that were foreign to us because it really wasn't what we were used to the kids didn't respond to it you know and we had people telling us yes it was the right thing to do and clearly it wasn't but we have come round now after a period of time probably to get the balance sort of right but as somebody in an inner-city school the biggest problem is that you fall between two stools you know that of being a social worker and that of being a teacher and for 40 or so percent you can't do the two jobs for them because they need more of you as a social worker or they need more of you as a teacher and I just feel that you fall between the two stools you know a lot of the kids that we have got their biggest sense of security is what they get at school and I don't know if I can rationalise the fact with myself or whatever but sometimes the kids kick off with us because they need to and it's the only place that they can do it and feel safe you know

its their one chance of getting the attention off somebody that is not going to smack them or hit them or you know fall out greatly with them and lets face it everybody as they are growing up needs to kick off some time or other there is very few people who don't and in inner-city places it is more than others and I think that what we have done is give the opportunity in a fairly safe and secure environment to test the limits to do this that or the other but to do that in a situation where they are safe.

And if I look back at the biggest success of the school then its that we have been in a very difficult community and we have actually taken some very damaged young people and sent them out the other end being able to cope, we've had our share of failures as everybody will do, but kind of if you look at the school and especially in the first 15 or 20 years that I was in the school and we went through that patch and we are getting back again and I was talking to somebody this morning about the fact that we were victims of our own success at one point because it wasn't the first thing that we would do if kids misbehaved is throw them out or exclude them and I think social services had dealings with us and they thought that we dealt with situations well and were kind of a caring school and this that and the other and so what happened was if any kids were having problems elsewhere they were getting sent here and so the pool of awkward children that you had to deal with grew and grew and so we got to a point where we couldn't physically deal with it and we are in the same situation now with students with English as an additional language we are getting a lot of Eastern Europeans who are coming into the school with no English because they tend to do well and they tend to settle and they tend to not have the problems and their attendance is good but all that happens is that you then put yourself into a situation where you are stretching the resources far too much and its like anything in government if something is good well you pile it on and you pile it on and then hen its broke kind of it's the establishment's fault its not their fault for doing it you know and that's what happened then we hit Special Measures and all sorts of things you know

JM:

How do you respond to the plans for the proposed changes to the school? How do these plans make you feel on a personal level as well as a professional level?

L:

On a personal level I was going to leave, retiring at 55 so I was going to go in June 2008 its changing a bit now because what it is it may give me some bargaining power to enhance my pension if I was to stay on for the extra year listening to what the union people were saying but I will not go to the new school so really its not affecting me I have not got agitated about it the only thing that really, really annoys me is they have got a superb opportunity to set up something that is really good for a place like Avondale for a false economy they are going to spoil it

JM:

How?

L:

Joseph Moore and what used to be (name of school) now (current name of school) have been arch enemies since I came its never been anything you know this year there was a bit of trouble for two or three nights and there's never been anything serious in all the time that I have been here but there will be at football matches and things like that there has always been tension why they did not look to open a new school with a year 7 and run these two schools down and then you've got the opportunity to build a new school and go take it through you've got the ethos in the school you can set the right sort of standards that you want with people that are young enough to mould you are going to put kids together now who have got exactly their own ideas of how they should do things and what they should do and I just think its going to be very, very difficult I like the idea of it being an academy I like the idea of it being vocationally based I think that's right for this sort of area to get them engaged and I think the idea of something new the sponsors that we have got are good and the basics of it the idea of them putting up a new a school in Avondale is fine I am happy with that I just feel that it's a false economy because they will have to continue throwing money at it for some time whereas they can say it cost us an extra three or four million pounds but then you've got a really super school when its finished and you would end up with something that is really, really good so I feel that they have missed a trick

JM:

Tell me about some of the other major changes you have experienced in your time in teaching

L:

The national curriculum is one you know kind of a paper chasing exercise

JM:

How did you cope with it?

L:

To be honest with you I have tended to go my own sweet way whatever I have done I have adapted and adopted and the whole thing was it wasn't a huge deal different to what we were already doing the syllabus is a syllabus we got to the point where all this ticking of boxes really never got to a stage where it came to fruition and there was never a way in which it should be done so kind of we as a school never got round to it you know we were moving towards it and looking at this and trialling this and that but we never got to the point where and as a cynic now I would say a lot of these new initiatives just let them ride themselves out and you will come back to things that when I came in 30 years ago and people were hanging their hats on this latest idea and so that was one. I think I have already mentioned the biggest thing was Ofsted and as a school going into Serious Weaknesses and Special Measures you know there was a real feeling of people of the whole thing not being fair you know and it was the Serious Weaknesses that got us into Special Measures you k now it was a series of

things there you can't actually say that in a school in an area like this you can be compared with [Name of neighbouring] School and they were coming in with the same criteria for both schools there was no you go to a school and you get a feel for it and they say they took that into account but they never do you know its got to be measurable you can't measure things like that and I just feel that there was a lot of schools I think it put education back because of the way it was done. I have got no problem with being monitored if its done in a sympathetic constructive critical way but when people come into you and say well that's not good enough and you say well why not and they say you as a school have got to sort it out for yourself and they wouldn't be willing to give you any sort of things there's a lot off the record and you've got to the stupid point where as a department we were criticised for being too text-based so we went away from the text-based and two years later they were saying well you need to have a text. They would contradict each other and that was obviously one of the things that the reasons why they wouldn't put anything down on paper because different people would come in and view it in a different way and you'd get the situation where you know...

JM:

How does it affect the way you work when you are going through Serious Weaknesses and Measures?

L:

You live in...it is the most stressful time and this was all part and parcel of when by the very nature of it the governors were looking were looking to change it looking to change management and whatever because the management system had got into Measures so they were getting different people in and do this but you... it was so strange because when we were going through Measures they would come every time and apart from the first time they would say this is good that is good but we are not going to take you out of Measures we have been into classrooms and there are people chewing and we have been into classrooms and there are people with coats on and the bloke said I am going down the corridor and people are not holding doors open for me and these were the ridiculous things that were coming through I mean there obviously wasn't enough lessons that were satisfactory but there was a good smattering of good lessons and satisfactory lessons and what was being picked out were these sorts of things that really rile you but people would come in from the Authority we would get consultants in and they used to say yes you are not a bad school but consistently Ofsted would come in and say you are rubbish you are rubbish that's the only conclusion you can draw from being in Special Measures you are rubbish you are rubbish you are rubbish.

They changed the team they changed the lead inspector and when you know the lead inspector changed instead of having you know a 90 minute de-briefing it was something like 10 minutes and you could assume you were coming out of Measures and then people started saying good things about us and then within 18 months we're a good school and its this whole

difference it becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy if people tell you you are poor and you are bad and you are not doing this that or the other then that is how you will perform if people consistently tell you you are good and you are working well and you are doing a good job then you will rise to that sort of level and they send all this sort of information about how you should deal with students how you should be positive and totally contradict it in their dealing with you you know kind of left hand right hand you know this thing where within days or even on the same day they say they are going to look at behaviour and discipline in schools and at the same time they put out this thing with terms and conditions and responsibilities teaching and learning points you know that nobody will be paid for looking after the kids! And in most schools that's what keeps the lid on things you know they are saying they are really going to concentrate on that and the same day they are saying that they are taking the thing out with no idea of putting anything back in its just wondrous that people feel they have got that...

I mean I feel that they have got that there are people in my position who have gone through the system who will take early retirement in two or three years whenever it comes and then that will be it, you know 30 or 35 years of experience in an inner-city school will just go and I think you've only got a shelf life of one or two years afterwards but there should be people like myself should be made use of you know I've got a he bug bear about careers' guidance in universities at the moment because both of my lads have been through it and come out the other end with not the faintest idea of what they are going to do and our friends that are in similar positions at least 70% of the kids come out with nowhere to go and no idea of what to do. You are just failing society by giving people all these ideas, you know you read now that you are going to be 58% better off in your life if you go to university and get a degree but unless they actually do something for the people that are at university you know and actually give them some idea I've got no problem with gap years I've got no problem with people taking two or three years out its far harder for them than it ever was for me you know kind of having to pass each semester and do this that or the other but if you consider now from the age of about 8 they are tested and the biggest gap they get is you know between KS2 and KS3 you know when they've got AS levels and whatever there's no wonder there's a burn-out rate when they are 21 and they want to have time off and whatever I have no problem with that but it wants to be planned and there's loads of things in education that if you just talked to people who have been through there and as I say I wouldn't expect it to be more than one or two years because once you get out you very quickly forget what its like but there is a huge wastage of talent , ability, of understanding you know of what makes schools tick but these people have not got the faintest idea about you know and well I feel we could save them millions just by having a kind of I don't like the word focus group but by having something like that of people to talk to who have recently come out of the profession that you just have on some sort of minor retainer where you can just go through and think well we are thinking of doing this what are your

impressions? You know have you got any ideas about that? Chew over it and in a week's time we will go over it again and its ever so logical but now the moment you walk out of the school your years of experience don't count for anything and that's just stupid I know an awful lot more people that have just got so much common sense about it and I'm not just talking about saying h I am brilliant I have just got a lot of experience and you're far better if people utilise that, pay you your pension and a bit on top

JM:

The academy policy is aimed at raising achievement in inner-cities, there have been lots of policies aimed at doing this. Can you remember any specific policies or directives designed to bring about improvements for children such as those in this school?

L:

There are so many of them they have become a blur

JM:

Have any of them worked in your opinion?

L:

(pause) it comes back to what we said there that none of these come without valid points but they are rushed and they are not given enough time you know and something will come in with a grain of a good idea in there that could be nurtured and could be made to work but they've pushed it and people have got to do it and people have had to implement it without wanting to and feel that there is no ownership of them but again I have this idea of having to sit down and read them and I think we just rush them a lot of these things are really rushed and then if they haven't worked in year you know then nobody then monitors them you know its like the numeracy strategy, the literacy strategy you know you get those things and they are the thing and inset day after inset day and this is going to work and that's going to work and you've got to have a policy on this for the school and you can see the point you can see the logic behind it literacy, numeracy and then nobody then starts to monitor it and it just disappears and then there's another one that comes in or they will re-visit it after a while, well it was English across the curriculum and then you do the literacy policy and then it comes out again as something else and it'll be the same thing but this is what I mean there is not enough thought that goes into the actual implementation of it and the follow-up of it giving it time to come through and ok it might take a year or so to get it finally nailed down but its all this if its not in and working within six months then its failed and its stupid and all of these things have got basis in good ideas there's not enough thought goes into it there's not enough experienced teachers (pause) the advisory people how many of them have gone into it because they can't cope into school and you know those are the people who come into schools and tell you what to do that's not the case with everybody but I think 60% of people find their way in their because they

can't hack it and the other percent well you have got some visionaries who think that they can move it on

JM:

When you think back on this raft of changes that you have dealt with, what did you practically do when the changes came in and how did you cope?

L:

You don't do everything you pick up what you think is a good idea you take out the bits that you think will work and you apply those and its all this time about training and taking on new ideas I find it amazing that they can say that as students there is an optimum time for learning and what they do then is they will introduce the initiatives at the twilight session and you know you are not thinking straight and I love the twilight sessions because it gives me days off but Inset days at the end of term you can write off or at the beginning of the term you know it doesn't seem to be the right sort of thing I think the whole thing about Inservice has got to be re-thought and I think people see it as a bind. We've all met teachers, and you might be one of them and I apologise if you are, you know that are really enthusiastic about anything new that comes along you know and are willing to embrace everything and then there's 80% of teachers who have been teaching for say 5 years if anything new comes along you know there's a certain resistance against that and you are pushing against that and the harder the authority or the government push people push against it and they don't sort of grasp that what you want is some sort of system where people have got to digest the information because you go on courses and you get the feeling that people have got to have all the boxes ticked and then kind of you know and then you get people coming into to watch your lessons and they say 'have you tried having more discussion?' and I say 'yes but I need to get evidence' 'but why do you need to get evidence?' 'Because people like you come round and say what evidence have you got?' and they are then contradicting each other and I find my best lessons are when people have got chance to sit and talk and mull over ideas and whatever and if they've got to write a bit of paper at the end of it they don't want to and things like that. So coming back to the question, how have I coped, the attitude I have towards it is if I ignore it for long enough it will go away and nobody is going to come up and start smacking me and threatening me and every so often I will pick something up and its almost like second nature you sit down there and you are listening and you think that sounds like a good idea and next time you are planning a lesson on something that that's involved you incorporate it but there's no kind of big thing there that you've got to do and I think that's the way that people work

JM:

I'm trying to get a picture of the working lives of teachers who have committed themselves to working in the inner-city and of how they have understood the waves of policy change. Is there anything else I should have asked you to get a clearer picture of this from your experience?

L:

The only one thing is that I think and I find that and there are probably other walks of life that are the same when you are dealing with people yourself if you are dealing with very young people its this thing about not enough is made of what is going on with teachers' lives they are not seen as individuals as a whole person kind of...we are actually very good at this school I was going through his thing with my wife when she was diagnosed with cancer and these two or three weeks when you are in utter turmoil and she goes and has an operation and things like that and you know they were very good with me any time I needed to go they let me but there are schools that are not like that. We as a school because I've moved on a bit its not the way I spend my social life now, but when you go out with a group of people drinking, swearing, work hard-play hard, that isn't my style so I don't do it any more but you know I used to do when I was younger but there is always a strong staff bond here where people have done that but I don't think that... I think that it might be worth looking at how people feel that the school treat them as an individual as a person and do they feel valued and whether this us against the rest of the world attitude that a lot of typical inner-city schools have is a thing that helps them to succeed and the fact that they sometimes feel that they are part of a family and partners know other partners and they meet socially and so if you go through a bad spell people will kind of ease off a bit and take that time there and I think that if there is that, and Graham is very good at that here and most people have been over the years and it is amazing how that I repaid over the years three or fourfold you know if people kind of look after you when you are down then when you come back you feel as if you owe them something and I think that has always been one of the things about the school here, it'll be interesting to see if other people in the school find it the same way and if other city schools find it the same way and if it is in other establishments, you get the thing now with the 100 days don't you where people get warning letters after 15 days and it's a matter of how its done, I was dealing with people who were off and you know kind of I phoned them up and if the letter had gone before I had realised then I tried to explain to them that the authority have got power of care over them, no a duty of care not power of care and they have got a duty to make sure that you are being properly looked after and one of the things that they should be doing is making sure that you are being treated properly, now when a lot of people get these letters they see it as being checked on and there's that sort of way of doing it and its amazing how devastating that can be and its amazing the number of people who get those letters who leave the school very shortly afterwards or come back with a 'I'm not bothered' attitude and I think that that's probably the thing in inner-city schools 'we are all in it together and we are all part of one big family and you know if you are going through a bad patch then we'll look after you'

JM:

Yes I recognise that

L
Yes

JM:
Thank you very much for your time

L: No problem

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