St. Patrick's College
Dublin City University

Cultivating the Good of School Leadership

Purpose, Coherence and Excellence in Practice

Deirdre Keyes

Supervisor: Dr Eileen Brennan

Submitted in Partial Fulfilment of the Requirements for the Award of the Degree of Doctorate of Education

July 2015

I hereby certify that this material, which I now submit for assessment on the programme of study leading to the award of Doctorate in Education, is entirely my own work and has not been submitted for a degree to any other university. I have taken reasonable care to ensure that the work is original and does not to the best of my knowledge breach any law of copyright.

Signed: Deirdre Keyes

Date: 24/7/2015

Word Count: 54,700

DEDICATION

I dedicate this work to the memory of my parents, Gerry and Rita Keyes and also to my brother Declan, whose untimely passing during the course of this work was a source of great sadness. Nobody would have been more proud of me than you Declan.

Abstract

The primary motivation for this study has been to give consideration to a model of school leadership, which is based on the notion of 'practice' in Alasdair MacIntyre's sense of that term. The intention is to provide school leadership with a language closer to what is known about the nature and activity of the school, the actual complexity of the school leadership situation and one that would give a much needed sense of coherence to the role and relationship expectations than currently exists. Given the moral context of schools, the study also contends that what is further required of such an account is that it is ethical in its substance, with questions of value and the good to the fore. Arising from these considerations, the study directs itself towards the philosophy of Alasdair MacIntyre, in particular his account of practices, with a view to crafting a lens that could inform a possible new language for school leadership. MacIntyre's notion of practice connects well with education in a broader moral context because it emphasises the importance of ethically rich actions and notions of care and co-operation.

The study has taken account of the extensive body of literature both internationally and in the Irish context which has looked at theoretical perspectives as well as the lives and work of school leaders on the ground. Whilst there have been significant developments in the field of school leadership research, a number of challenges exist. These are primarily concerned with issues of competing purposes, a general lack of coherence with regard to practice, role and relationship expectations, as well as conflicting accounts of what makes for good leadership in a school context. Drawing on MacIntyre's theory of internal goods, the study has sought to consider how a more appropriate framework for the cultivation of the good of school leadership can be arrived at through addressing issues of purpose, coherence and excellence in practice.

Acknowledgements

I am grateful to a great many people for their contributions, support and assistance in the completion of this dissertation.

First and foremost I would like to thank Dr Eileen Brennan, St Patrick's College, who was my thesis supervisor. Her input has been invaluable, supportive and inspirational. Her clarity of thought in particular, helped me work through some very challenging and difficult literature. Thank you Eileen for all of the hard work, encouragement and enthusiasm throughout. Also, from St Patrick's, I would like to acknowledge the on-going advice and support offered by Dr Michael O' Leary throughout the course of the EdD programme. I would also like to thank Dr Catherine Furlong for directing and encouraging me towards a study of this nature. To Maria Thornbury, thank you for your support and patience in fielding all of my questions and clarifications, however small. I would like also to acknowledge and thank Anne Gallagher for her precision and patience in the proof reading of this work.

To all of my EdD colleagues from the 2010-2014 cohort I would like to say thank you for your encouragement, collegiality, support and friendship. In particular to Dervil Jordan and John Lally who were there for me during the good and difficult times.

Finally and most importantly, I wish to acknowledge and express my utmost thanks, appreciation and love to Emily and Paul for the sacrifices that they have had to make, for their support, patience and at times comfort over the duration of this project. I could not have achieved this without you.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

List of Figures

Glossary of Acronyms

BOM	Board of Management
DEIS	Delivering Education Equality in Schools
DES	Department of Education and Skills
DCYA	Department of Children and Youth Affairs
EPSEN (Act)	Education for Persons with Special Educational Needs
ETB	Education and Training Board
ETUCE	European Trade Union Committee for Education
INTO	Irish National Teachers Organisation
IPPN	Irish Primary Principals Network
MLL	Management Leadership and Learning
NAPD	National Association for Principals and Deputy Principals
NCCA	National Council for Curriculum and Assessment
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
PWC	Price Waterhouse Cooper
SSE	School Self-Evaluation
VEC	Vocational Education Committee
WSE	Whole-School Evaluation

INTRODUCTION

This study has emerged from two distinct areas of enquiry and interest. The first of these is the body of literature concerned with the moral and ethical *purpose* of school leadership; the second is the philosophy of *practice* and its possible application in a school leadership context. What is at issue for the study is how the moral or ethical purpose of school leadership can be reconciled with and inform practice on the ground, in order to provide a greater sense of coherence to the work of school leaders than is currently the case. The study will argue that it is through the articulation and elucidation of an ethically based purpose to school leadership that coherence and the pursuit of excellence in the practice of school leadership can be reached.

Context of the Research

The study's focus on moral and ethical purpose and the nature of practice is prompted by a number of considerations. Such considerations have emerged from interactions with school leaders on the ground and from engagement with school leadership literature and research both in the Irish context and internationally. To begin with, as author, working in the role of Education Officer in Dublin and Dun Laoghaire Education and Training Board involves daily contact and interaction with school leaders across a number of schools in the greater Dublin area. Such interactions have given rise to a sense that despite the vastness of research and theory in the field of school leadership, with no shortage of ideas, models and prescriptions, school leaders are struggling in their day-to-day work and practice. This struggle manifests itself in many ways; in making decisions, in trying to balance leadership and management responsibilities, in prioritising what school leaders consider important given the competing demands of a very regulated and over-bureaucratised system. For many

school leaders this has resulted in a certain disconnect with the point and purpose of their role. While observing these school leaders 'in situation' and 'in practice', the following questions became of interest: (1) What guides and informs school leaders in their practice and work? (2) How do school leaders reflect on that practice? (3) How do school leaders work best towards the good of the school and their school community given the difficult and challenging contexts in which they find themselves? And finally, (4) how do they know and feel they are doing a good job and are acknowledged as doing so?

In reviewing school leadership literature, it was evident that these issues and questions were explored in many international and national studies of significance. For example, evidence reflects a growing discontent from those in school leadership roles (Copland, 2001; Hargreaves & Fink, 2006; Mulford, 2003). Part of this discontent has been attributed to the complexity of the work of school leaders as they face many moral and practical dilemmas for which they feel ill-equipped to deal (Gronn, 2002; Gunter, 2001; Sugrue, 2004, 2005, 2006; Sugrue & Solbrieke, 2011; Starratt, 2004). Yet, despite such challenges, other evidence suggests that school leaders continue to be drawn to certain aspects of the role, in particular to the ideas of making a difference to their students' lives, promoting a strong teaching and learning community and elements of the work that involve collaboration and relationship building (Morgan & Sugrue, 2008; Mulford, 2008). The body of literature identifying these aspects of leadership is concerned with the moral dimension and moral purpose of school leadership work and practice. For example, the works of Begley (1999), Cuban (1988, 2003), Duignan (2006), Hodgkinson (1991), Sergiovanni (1996, 1999, 2007) and Starratt (1994, 2003, 2004) consider that there is a moral purpose to school life, so accordingly there is a moral purpose and dimension to school leadership. They all note a certain absence of purpose of a moral or ethical nature in many of the established school

leadership approaches and government policies, and even when present, such moral purposes tend to receive less primacy, given that government polices lean more towards models based on performativity and outcomes. As a result, school leaders are often caught between competing policy imperatives of care and well-being of young people on the one hand and outcomes of results and performativity on the other. The concern expressed in the literature is that when it comes to evaluating school leaders, little reference is made to their performance with regard to the former (Grace, 1995; Gronn, 2003; Gunter, 2001).

This observation cogently expressed the experiences of the many school leaders the author had formed allegiances with during the course of her work. Reflecting on this state of affairs, prompted a study that would visit the field of philosophy and explore what it might have to offer by way of informing and improving on the practice of school leadership. With the help of Dunne (1993, 1995, 2005) the study was drawn to the idea of 'the good' as purpose and how this could relate to and inform practice. In these works Dunne probes the idea of a 'wider sense' of purpose for practices in contemporary society. Three questions surfaced from reflections on his work which shaped the direction of the study. The first of these was the question of purpose, in particular whether there is a specific purpose or *telos,* as the good in the Aristotelian sense, to leadership arising out of the context of schools; the second was the question of how that good or *telos* might translate in practice and third was how it might be cultivated within the contemporary context of schools. With these questions in mind, the study's first objective was to set about identifying and elucidating a richer, more satisfying purpose for school leadership, as the good, than heretofore described.

Reflecting on some key writers and research was important in shaping this question. Yukl (2002), for example, has acknowledged the complexity of the concept of leadership as a

source of different, often competing, perspectives giving rise to many interpretations of purpose, as well as differing emphases placed on the nature and characteristics of the leadership role, relationships and process. This complexity is well documented within school leadership, in particular how the many school leadership models and approaches represent a diversity of purposes, policy contexts and theoretical fields. The works of Day et al. (2000, 2011), Hunt (2004) and Leithwood et al. (1999) are all significant in pointing to the situational aspect of leadership as the most important in directing its purpose, but at the same time the most contentious; important in that situation influences how all aspects of the work and practice of leadership are carried out; contentious with regard to how the core purpose or situation is actually viewed. The work of Leithwood, Jantzi and Steinbach (1999, p. 4) argues that 'outstanding leadership is exquisitely sensitive to the context in which it is exercised'. The difficulty however, as discussed by writers such as Cuban (2003), Sergiovanni (2007) and Sugrue (2005, 2009), is that there is a growing sense of divorce from the real context and circumstance of schools within many of the current school leadership models and approaches. Sergiovanni (2007) considers this disconnect to be at the core of the current difficulty, where in his view, prescribed school leadership styles, behaviours and characteristics have been developed in the absence of due consideration to the 'substance' or situational dimension. He further contends that what is ultimately needed for schools is a form of 'special leadership'. Similar views are evident in the works of Cuban (2003), Day et al. (2000), Donaldson (2006), Duignan (2006), Fullan (2003), Greenfield (1991), Hodgkinson (1991), MacBeath (2002) and Starratt (1994, 2004). They argue for a form of leadership that emerges from and is central to the real work of schools rather than forms imported from other contexts.

The questions surrounding the purpose of school leadership, in particular the search for one that is more meaningful and enriching, directed the study towards the work and philosophy of Alasdair MacIntyre. His work uses the Greek term *telos* to capture the idea of the good or a shared goal of a community or a practice, with that good giving a practice its ethical orientation or purpose. The study identified this idea of *telos* or 'the good', in particular the good of education, as perhaps having the potential to contextualise school leadership, informing a more appropriate and enriching sense of purpose. However, in taking account of the many challenges facing school leaders in their work and practice as evidenced in the research literature, the study acknowledged that arriving at a 'noble' purpose in itself would not be sufficient without paying attention to how this might translate in practice, that is, cohering with the key dimensions of leadership work but more importantly, with the potential to enhance them. In this regard, exploring any possibility for a 'special' or distinct purpose as good for school leadership would have to reflect and inform not just the moral context of schools but also the real work and practice of school leaders.

To gain a fuller understanding of the complexities of school leadership work and practice, the works of Begley (2004), Cuban (2003), Day et al. (2000), Duignan (2006), Fullan (2008), Gronn (2003), MacBeath (2002, 2005), Sergiovanni (2007), Sugrue (2009, 2011), Webb (2005) and Starratt (2002) were of relevance in helping shape this aspect of the study. They contend that many of the more dominant school leadership approaches and traditional theories do not reflect the reality and complexity of the work and challenges of schools. Sugrue (2011), for example, raises questions about school leaders and their ability to exercise judgement and be responsive to the day-to-day challenges and issues that school life presents. Begley (2004) reflects on the decision-making aspect of school leaders' practice. Gronn (2003) and MacBeath (2005) question the idea of school leadership being

divested in one role as opposed to being dispersed in many roles throughout the school. Starratt (2004) and Duignan (2006) are concerned with how school leaders become ethical in their practice and what guides them in that practice. Day et al. (2000), Fullan, (2008), MacBeath (2002) and Webb (2005) consider how the leadership for learning role expected of school leaders can be brought more to the fore. Fullan (1992, 2008) contends that whilst many of the answers to these questions could be addressed with a complete system change, this would take too long. He suggests that the focus for the present should be on how school leaders actually approach their work.

Taking on board these many ideas has provided the study with a better sense of the complexity of the role and practice of school leaders, one that the study's plan for a more inspired account will have to reflect. For such an account to be of value, addressing both the question of the good and the question of coherence with regard to the actual practice of school leaders will be to the fore. Therefore, a philosophy of practice, one that could give prominence to the moral orientation of school leadership but taking account of the complexities of school leadership work and practice arising from such a purpose, provided the second reason for the study to direct itself to Alasdair MacIntyre. In aligning the study to this practice orientation, the ideas of Dunne (2004), Hogan (2004), MacLaughlin (2004) and Higgins (2004), on how MacIntyre's ideas are applicable to practices within education are particularly illuminating. The writings of Foster (1989) and Holmes (1992) are also helpful; Foster in suggesting internal goods as a way of counteracting management science within educational administration and Holmes in putting forward MacIntyre's philosophical position of the good as a way of returning to the idea of a common school. Each of these writers has explored in different ways how the philosophy of Alasdair MacIntyre, in particular his account of practices, has the potential to provide contemporary practices with a

distinctiveness and integrity of their own, in particular where there is a sense that that distinctiveness may have become lost.

Rationale for Research

The particular challenges and problems which have prompted the study are drawn from both practical and theoretical considerations; practical in terms of school leaders feeling a sense of disconnect with their role, difficulties in making decisions, having little time for reflection as well as being pushed and pulled by competing policy directives; theoretical in terms of the many competing views of leadership purpose, the leadership role and an absence of a coherent language to guide school leadership work as well as offering a basis for reflection and evaluation on both the work and role, particularly in terms of the ethical and moral. The warrant for this study has emerged from the need to recover and bring to the fore the moral and ethical purpose of school leadership and, in articulating such a purpose, consider and elucidate how that purpose could inform a more coherent account of school leadership practice reflecting the current context of schools.

In identifying the issues surrounding the purpose and practice of school leadership, the study has selected the philosophy of Alasdair MacIntyre, his conception of the good, and his ideas on practice as having the potential to offer a vision for an alternative way that might motivate, inspire and change the daily practice of school leadership. It is his specific account of practices that the study intends to explore as an appropriate way to situate school leadership and also to set out how it might appear from within such a context in contrast to conventional understandings; that is, attempting to bring purpose and practice together in a more coherent way than heretofore. This exploration is with a view to opening up an enriched perspective and new language for school leadership, one that has moral and ethical considerations to the forefront. Such a language might serve to better guide school leaders in

their work and decision making, help them reflect and gain a better understanding of what it means to be a good leader and ultimately may contribute to their overall motivation.

Research Aims and Objectives

Drawing from these many reflections on practice, research and theory, the research carried out in this study aims to explore school leadership as a possible practice in the way that MacIntyre would intend. Its objectives are to: (1) consider and elucidate a sense of 'the good as purpose' of school leadership; (2) set out how this good might offer coherence in practice; and finally (3) give consideration to some practical ideas for the cultivation of such a good in the contemporary context of schools, with the hope of providing school leaders with a more ethical and relevant basis for guiding, judging and reflecting on their work.

Burbules and Warnick (2006, p. 498) have described this approach to philosophical enquiry as a form of 'utopian thinking', one that can help to inspire and motivate daily practice by providing a vision of the best that may be possible, even if our actual efforts can only 'approximate it'. The research strategy therefore will draw from the work of MacIntyre, Dunne and others in situating school leadership within the good of education, move on to sketch out how an account of school leadership might emerge from this sense of the good but not without reference to both its practice and cultivation in order to 'approximate' to such a vision. The research is primarily a philosophical enquiry which proposes the idea of school leadership as a practice, and works this idea through to conclusion in order to see what it might look like. As such, it is a particular form of philosophical enquiry relevant to education practice where a new perspective is brought to bear on a familiar issue and helps to generate a new vocabulary and way of thinking to improve that practice (Burbules & Warnick, 2006, p. 497).

Research Design and Strategy

Arising from the study's aim, the research design and strategy were developed to enable an exploration of school leadership and what it might look like from the perspective of MacIntyre's account of practice. In order to do this, the study had to establish a way in which Alasdair MacIntyre's account of practice could 'speak' to school leadership. To achieve this end, the study examined how school leadership is currently structured. In reviewing and drawing from a range of literature and pieces of research work, the study identified the dimensions of purpose, role, process/actions and relationships as a consistent pattern through which leadership models and approaches are typically conceptualised (Fullan, 2001; Harris, 2003b; Sergiovanni, 2007; Spillane, 2006; Yukl, 2002). It proceeded to use this as the conceptual framework to:

- Examine and report on current school leadership approaches (Chapter 1).
- Place school leadership within the Irish context and consider how both practice and policy reflect this framework (Chapter 2).
- Draw from the explorations of Chapter 1 and 2 to illustrate why it is that questions of purpose, incoherencies in practice and what it means to do well have arisen (Chapter 3).
- Explore how school leadership coheres with MacIntyre's account of practice by using the dimensions of purpose, process, role and relationships as the 'points of contact' with the core elements of MacIntyre's characterisation of practice (Chapter 4).
- Bring forward and sketch a new account of school leadership based on these dimensions and how they might look from the perspective of MacIntyre's account in contrast to how they appear within the more traditional approaches (Chapter 5).

In adopting this approach, the study was in a position to proceed in a more concrete and practical way rather than remaining in the abstract and general. This conceptual framework of purpose, process, role and relationships enabled the study to organise its literature review, compare and reflect on school leadership in the Irish context, explore MacIntyre's characterisation of practice and how it might cohere with and enhance the dimensions of school leadership and finally, illuminate and set out an alternative vision for school leadership. It also facilitated a more objective and open-ended study.

Objectivity

The study recognises the importance of retaining the author's objectivity. A number of strategies are employed to ensure this. In the first instance the study contextualises school leadership by providing a representation of a number of school leadership approaches. The school leadership approaches selected are those recognised to feature most within the school leadership literature, have a particular theoretical orientation and also have been the focus of educational research (Coleman & Earley, 2005; Ribbons & Gunter, 2002; Sugrue, 2009). In its literature review the study adopts the conceptual framework of purpose, process, role and relationships as an organising strategy to ensure balanced coverage of each in order to gain an understanding of how leadership is structured within each approach as well as gaining perspective on the issues and questions at hand.

In order to reflect as accurately as possible the account of practice of Alasdair MacIntyre, his original writings are drawn upon, in particular his characterisation of practice as outlined in *After Virtue.* To objectively reflect this account, a number of writers who have considered his work both in terms of its potential contribution and the challenges for education and teaching are sourced and referenced throughout the study. His account of

practice is not presented uncritically, with some of the challenging and controversial aspects of this account being dealt with in Chapters 4 and 5. Some of the more controversial elements are also acknowledged and critiqued, in particular his view that teaching is not a practice.

A wide range of literature, including empirical research, theoretical perspectives and policy documents are drawn upon to develop the study's central ideas. In synthesising the reflections and findings of this literature the author reports them as accurately and rigorously as possible with respect for their integrity, purpose and findings. In positing ideas, the author references the origins of such ideas and also where possible draws from existing school leadership research to connect to those ideas.

Finally, although the study sets out to advance the argument in relation to the lack of the moral and ethical within school leadership and the importance of bringing this more to the fore, it remains open to what an account of practice from this perspective might look like and how feasible a proposition this might actually be.

Outline of Study

Chapter 1 contextualises the study, offering a reflection on how both thinking and research on school leadership has evolved. It reviews the predominant approaches to school leadership, adopting an interpretive frame, developed specifically for the study, of purpose, process, roles and relationships as essential features of leadership. The interpretive frame developed in this chapter provides a lens through which the study can reflect upon and explore each approach; it is also the frame that will be used in exploring and elucidating how MacIntyre's practice theory coheres with school leadership. As this chapter progresses, it

considers the types of issues and challenges associated with each particular school leadership approach. The chapter concludes by identifying as significant the issue of lack of attention paid to considerations of a moral or ethical kind within school leadership, as it evolved from its first emergence as educational administration to its current more developed from. It also notes the difficulty in obtaining a coherent picture of the field of school leadership. Whilst there is no one favoured model of school leadership evident, the preference in policy has been towards those approaches where the emphasis is on quantifiable outcomes and performativity.

Chapter 2 describes the Irish education context from which school leadership has evolved and been influenced. It sets out how school leadership has developed from a relatively underdeveloped area to a key aspect of education policy. It highlights the key legislative and historical landmarks of this evolvement, traced through a range of policy documents and historical sources. Using a similar interpretive frame to Chapter 1, it sets out how school leadership is currently understood and experienced in terms of purpose, role, relationships and process.

Chapter 3 draws from the reflections in Chapter 1 and 2 to set out the problem and focus for the next phase of the study. Drawing from the examination of school leadership from the perspective of purpose, process, role and relationships, it sets out the central questions as differing and competing views of purpose, the lack of attention to a moral dimension, the absence of a sense of coherence of practice and finally the lack of clarity on what makes for good school leadership. It posits the philosophy of practice of Alasdair MacIntyre as the appropriate lens through which these problems can be addressed and

ultimately as the means to explore school leadership as a possible practice with a distinctiveness and sense of the good of its own.

Chapter 4 begins the journey through the key features of MacIntyre's theory, pausing and reflecting to consider possibilities for connections that might have the potential to enhance the key dimensions of school leadership. This chapter considers the social nature and complexity of MacIntyre's account of practice, its ethical context and his idea of the good, the place of internal goods as well the exigencies of role and relationship expected in his account. It also draws on the work of Dunne to set out an account of the good of education and teaching as a necessary context for school leadership. Linking the key elements of MacIntyre's theory to what is known and understood about school leadership, the chapter considers if a practice orientation in line with MacIntyre's account to be a realistic proposition. Chapter 5 considers the question of the cultivation of school leadership as a practice. It begins the process of sketching a possible new account of school leadership, the architecture of which is based on MacIntyre's conception of internal goods. It also considers the challenges this might present within the current policy context of schools. It concludes by setting out how MacIntyre's conception of a community practice can advance and cultivate such an idea. Chapter 6 summarises and concludes the study, reflecting on what has been advanced in relation to the questions of purpose and practice of school leadership.

Of note is that the development of a whole new theory of school leadership is not the study's intent; such a venture is beyond its size and scope. Its primary purpose is to give consideration to a new practice orientation for school leadership, to the possibilities and challenges that this might hold, ultimately with a view to providing a basis for much-needed reflection and professional cultivation within the actual contexts of schools and school leaders as known and experienced. From the evidence the study presents through its

reflections on a wide range of school leadership research involving school leaders themselves, such a framework for reflection and development could be something to be progressed within the context of the authors own work and could perhaps inform future models of school leadership development and cultivation.

CHAPTER 1

SETTING THE CONTEXT OF SCHOOL LEADERSHIP

Introduction

Reflecting on how both thinking and research on school leadership have evolved is important in contextualising the study. This chapter will review the evolution of school leadership, the differing ideas, positions and influences that have been brought to bear on its development, giving consideration to how school leadership is currently structured. In order to examine school leadership's current form, the study will draw from the research literature to propose a conceptual frame as an organising strategy for this review, one that will give a sense of how school leadership is typically constituted, what aspects of its current form are in need of attention as well as giving perspective to the issues at hand. In achieving this, it must be borne in mind that whilst there is much is known and understood about school leadership there is a general acknowledgement that many aspects are still to be explored and developed (Hallinger, 2003b; Heck & Hallinger, 1999).

Research efforts in recent decades have been extensive, questions in relation to sources of authority, treatments of purpose and the actual practice of school leadership have emerged as needing greater attention (Begley, 2003; Cuban, 1998, 2003, 2005; Gronn, 2003; Sergiovanni, 2007; Spillane, 2004; Starratt, 2004, 2012; Sugrue, 2009; Webb, 2005). In dealing with how the understanding of school leadership has evolved, it is of relevance that general leadership research did not begin until the twentieth century and so it is held to be a relatively new field. What is known and understood about leadership emerged from a body of research work which considered ideas around behaviours, traits, actions, interaction patterns, roles, relationships and purpose (Yukl, 2002). In time, as the field broadened out,

the importance of the leadership context emerged along with questions about the work and practice of leadership (Heifetz, 1994; Hunt, 2004). From the 1980s onwards, how such leadership ideas would apply to schools became the focus of attention in the education policy and research world (Gunter, 2001; Leithwood, Begley & Cousins, 1994).

These developments were followed by a body of literature that began to give greater consideration to questions of school leadership linked to and emerging from the core purpose and context of school (Cuban, 2003, 2005; Spillane, 2004; Fullan, 2003; Duignan, 2006; Sergiovanni, 1994, 1996; Sergiovanni & Moore, 1989; MacBeath, 2002; MacBeath & Dempster, 2009; Starratt, 1994, 1999, 2004). Whilst the impetus of much of this work came from greater consideration of the broader social, political and moral context of schools than had heretofore been acknowledged, it was also a reaction to much of the research work that had been undertaken, which was perceived to have more of an empirical and scientific overtone, to the neglect of questions of purpose and process (Begley, 2004; Day et al., 2000, 2011; Gronn, 2003; Starratt, 2012; Young & Lopez, 2005). School leadership today has grown out of and been informed by all of these developments; it is recognised as a central part of education policy and research but also as a central part of school life and school development.

Complex questions lie behind school leadership; they address the assumed merits of some of its origins, theoretical anchors and research base. Yukl's (2002) seminal work on leadership has pointed to issues of complexity in the general leadership field, namely the different and competing perspectives that have been held in relation to leadership purpose, role, as well as how interactions, processes and actions are informed and influenced. Gunter (2001) also held that exploring the field of school leadership reveals a certain complexity,

with differing ideas, positions and influences permeating the discourse. Whilst the difficulties in mapping the field have been acknowledged (Leithwood et al., 1999; Sugrue, 2009), there is an imperative to identify these differing ideas and influences, in a study such as this, in order to situate and understand what it is that motivates the research. With this in mind, this chapter will try to map a trajectory, which begins with the emergence of the idea of school leadership and ends with an account of its current more developed form; it will highlight how from the outset issues around labelling, policy borrowing and understanding have beset the field. It will then set out to consider what have been identified as the significant approaches to school leadership as it has developed, highlighting how questions of purpose, role, actions, process, relationships and interaction patterns have been dealt with. Attention will be drawn to the debates and issues surrounding these developments.

The Legacies of Governance, Headmaster and Labelling

Despite the progress made in the understanding of leadership in schools, it is still very much associated with (1) the role of headmaster or principal; (2) is often confused with management; and (3) has not yet found a consistent terminology or language (Grace, 1995; Gunter, 2001). Further, the understanding of leadership within schools has always been parallel to general education policy and in particular to issues around governance and management (Grace, 1995; Smith, 1989). Gunter (2001) notes that matters of school administration and management have always formed a central and much politicised part of general education policy. As already mentioned, there is a tradition of associating leadership with the position of headmaster or school principal. This particular tendency has as much to do with traditional governance structures, where headship was associated with control and governance (Grace, 1995), as it has to do with the slow evolution and acceptance of leadership as a process, not just a position (Gunter, 2001; Gronn, 2003). Even today, many of

the leadership models for schools hold the view that leadership is located in the principal. This is also reflected in policy. Another legacy issue concerns the aforementioned inconsistency in terminology or language. Indeed, the field has been beset with and confused by issues of labelling (Grace, 1995; Gunter, 2001; Hodgkinson, 1999; Sugrue, 2009). In different periods school leadership has been termed 'educational administration', 'education management' and finally, 'leadership'. But the meaning of the term *leadership* is itself confusing. There have been many different interpretations and labels used including *educational* leadership, leadership *for schools* and *school* leadership (Day et al., 2000; Gunter, 2001). [1] Whilst this chapter will now reflect on the various phases of its development, attempting to demonstrate how on the one hand more traditional ideas on leadership have broken up and new patterns have emerged, the enduring influences and lasting legacies of governance, management and principalship are acknowledged.

Evolving from Education Administration to Education Management to School Leadership

Although research is very limited, it is generally agreed that the era of education administration covers the period roughly from 1940 to the 1960s. This era was primarily one of a very strong *headmaster* or *headship tradition* with an emphasis on governance through local structures and the headmaster (Day et al., 2000; Grace, 1995; Gunter, 2001). In addition, such *headship* was associated with a strong moral, religious and pedagogical focus in line with a growing public interest in these issues (Grace, 1995). Characteristics of this

[1] The terms 'educational' and 'educative leadership' have taken on very distinctive meanings in recent times which will be dealt with in the next section. For the moment the term 'school leadership' will be used to denote both theory and research associated with leadership for schools.

period as documented by Grace (1995) include hierarchy and patriarchy with strong and direct governance.

The notion of education management surfaced in the 1960s, permeating discussions on the governance, management and administration of schools up until the end of the 1980s. This was an era characterised by major reforms in education, an emphasis on performing schools, nationally mandated curricula and state regulation (Gunter, 2001). In particular it was state regulation that provided much of the imperative for schools to consider issues of governance from a management perspective (Coleman & Earley, 2005). This imperative, combined with the growing popularity of management theory, which talked about performance and human resource management, led to the re-labelling of education administration work. It became education management work, where a leadership dimension was assumed. During this period appointments were to the position of head teacher or master, but they were interpreted as incorporating a leadership and management dimension (Coleman & Earley, 2005; Gunter, 2001). Management theories, techniques and functions were imported from the private sector to guide policy and practice during this era (Gunter, 2001). Leadership theories were also borrowed and this was particularly true of theories of leadership associated with change management (Coleman & Early, 2005; Grace, 1995; Gunter, 2001). The type of leadership which gained ascendancy was also one of strong, directive and charismatic behaviour associated with a role, usually the principal or head teacher (Gronn, 1999a). The terms 'management', 'manager' and 'management work' also tended to carry more prestige than leadership or administration (Grace, 1995).

Gunter (2001) describes developments during the 1980s as moving from leadership set within the context of local school governance to leadership and management in the

context of the allocation and management of resources, as well as the implementation of school reform and change. Coleman and Early (2005) suggest that management during this period was viewed as a broader concept than leadership. Leadership was viewed as a subset of management. In the period prior to this, administration was deemed to be more prestigious and more synonymous with leadership (Coleman & Earley, 2005). However, influences from this period still permeate much of education leadership policy, with leadership and management often defined in terms of one position, usually the principal, and often used interchangeably without the necessary distinctions being made (Coleman & Earley, 2005; Cuban, 1988; Hodgkinson, 1999; OECD, 2007).

The period from the 1980s to the present is considered the most significant in terms of how the term 'leadership' emerged and developed in the context of a particular body of knowledge and research associated with schools and education (Leithwood et al., 1999). Prompted by work such as that of Cuban, (1988) and Gronn, (1999a; 2003), there was a growing recognition that much of the borrowed leadership and management theories were not appropriate to education, and in particular to schools. In addition, this period marked the start of the *school effectiveness* movement, which looked at the characteristics of effective schools. Next came the *school improvement* movement, which looked at school processes in order to bring about improvement and change. These movements, although representing two different paradigms, placed school leadership and school leaders to the forefront in the achievement of their objectives (Gunter, 2001; Leithwood et al., 1999). The *effectiveness* movement looked primarily at how educational outcomes could be improved. Its interest was in the measurement and analysis of key outcomes, such as test scores and results, and the determinants of these outcomes (Teddlie & Reynolds, 2000). Research emerging from this movement identified leadership, provided by the head teacher or principal, as one of the key

factors in mediating improvements in such outcomes (Reynolds & Teddlie, 2000). *School improvement* on the other hand, although equally concerned with improvement and change, focussed not only on a wider set of school processes but also took the school context into account in its prescriptions for improvement and change. As with *school effectiveness,* research also identified leadership as one of the central processes contributing to improvement (Gunter, 2001; Stoll & Fink, 1996). In this case, however, leadership was considered to be more of a shared function rather than simply residing with the school principal (Gronn, 2000, 2003). In terms of situating the present study, it is the period from the *school effectiveness* and *school improvement movements* to today that is most relevant. It is here that the idea of leadership theories and approaches for schools first emerged, informing and giving rise to significant changes in education policy as well as prompting a considerable body of research. Attention will now be given to considerations of such approaches as have emerged in the context of schools.

Leadership for Schools – A New Era

Leithwood et al. (1999) suggest that the period of change and development from the 1980s onwards was the most significant in terms of the emergence of ideas, theories and approaches to leadership in schools. In their meta-review of the leadership literature, they conclude that a full mapping of the entire leadership field would be a considerable and challenging task. In acknowledging this, their review also puts forward what they consider to be the most important approaches necessary to capturing a sense of the field. These included instructional, transformational, distributed (or shared and participative) and moral leadership approaches. The work of Coleman and Earley (2005) and Sugrue (2009) concur with this view, holding that consideration of these approaches is necessary and apt for any leadership study. Although acknowledging that moral leadership has received less primacy within

policy and research, Leithwood et al. (1999) identify the body of leadership literature which raises questions of values, ethics and the moral dimensions of leadership for schools to be of relevance, and for this reason add moral leadership to their typology. Coleman and Earley (2005) added yet another category, teacher leadership, contending that although it is still relatively new and something of an unexplored territory; it is of significance to general developments in the field.

Whilst these combined views acknowledge the approaches of instructional, transformational, distributed, teacher and moral leadership as having primarily come from a school context, they also note other influences from fields such as psychology, social activity theory, and cognitive theory as well as moral and ethical theory. It is of note, however, that Leithwood et al. (1999) make reference to what they term, managerial leadership, reflecting the large body of literature that exists in this area and still continues to influence how leadership for schools is viewed. In this regard, they note the emergence and development of terms such as 'strategic' and 'contingent' leadership, acknowledging that the approaches to which these terms refer do not exist as singular approaches in the same way as the other approaches do. For the purpose of this part of the study however, attention will now turn to the literature and research associated with instructional, transformational, distributed, teacher and moral leadership.

Considering a Conceptual Frame

In undertaking the task of reviewing the leadership terrain and associated literature, it is acknowledged that leadership is a multi-faceted phenomenon and a source of many different and often competing perspectives. Of course, this means that there is no obvious or agreed conceptual frame by which to review it (Yukl, 2002). The same holds true for school leadership, which has been acknowledged as both challenging and difficult to handle in a

rigorous manner (Ribbons & Gunter, 2002). Whilst this may be the case, connecting the common threads and identifying the differences, however difficult, are important in coming to terms with the field, its challenges and points of tension (Ribbons & Gunter, 2002).

Despite there being no single homogeneous, universally endorsed view of leadership, most theories acknowledge and address the elements of *role*, *situation*, the leadership *process* or *actions* as well as the nature of *interactions* or *relationships* (Yukl, 2002). Although they may be characterised differently, Sergiovanni (2007) suggests situation, role, actions and relationships form the four pillars of leadership. Reviewing the general leadership literature would suggest that leadership involves taking on a role or position; that it has a core purpose or situation; it can involve actions, behaviours or tasks, and finally, it involves interactive relationships between leaders and those who follow or among a number of leaders in a shared or distributed relationship (Hodgkinson, 1999; Hunt, 2004; Spillane, 2006; Yukl, 2002). Other work from Fullan (2001) suggests a similar framework. In considering leadership for schools he suggests the need to consider three core aspects; that of purpose, relationships, which he considers incorporates the role dimension, and practice, which he views as a set of actions. Harris (2003b) in a similar vein suggests that in addition to purpose, any theory of leadership for schools needs to consider the type of leader and leader role that is envisaged, the leader-follower relationship and also the type of activity or leadership process involved.

Whilst most school leadership models reflect these various components, interpretations of each can be very diverse, with differing emphasis placed on the nature and centrality of the *role*, the type of *actions or processes* and how they are informed, the nature and types of *relationships* and *interactions* that can occur and even the particular *purpose* implied (Leithwood et al., 1999). Whilst areas of overlap exist, making clear distinctions is a

difficult task. Each approach to school leadership has developed in the context of broader organisational, educational and social goals where particular expectations at a certain time allowed for one form rather than another, or for one to dominate as an ideal until the context changed and favoured another (Leithwood et al., 1999). So, in reviewing instructional, transformational, distributed, teacher and moral leadership, how they have emerged and are situated as well as their treatment of purpose, role, relationships and process will be the general conceptual frame to be used here. It is hoped that this approach will ultimately lead to a clear elucidation of the issues which have given rise to this study.

Instructional Leadership

Origins and Development

Instructional leadership appears to be the dominant approach in school leadership policy and research work. Although first popularised in the 1980s, the evidence suggests a renewed interest in this model of school leadership (Hallinger, 2003b). The work of Bolman and Deal (1992), Coles and Southworth (2002), Hallinger (2003b, 2005), Hallinger and Heck (1999, 2002), Hallinger and Murphy (1985) sets instructional leadership's origins and purpose firmly within the school *effectiveness* movement as one of its major strands. Advocates suggest that instructional leaders focus on the core activity of the school defined as teaching and learning (Hallinger, 2005; Hallinger & Heck, 1996a, 2010; Southworth, 2002). Its specific origins are to be found in research carried out by Edmonds (1979) at elementary school level where the direct effects of the interventions of principals were seen to have a positive impact on students' achievements. The interest in instructional leadership grew as the research agenda in the area grew, linking aspects of improved teaching and learning to skilful leadership from school principals (Fullan, 1993, 2001; Hallinger, 2005;

Hallinger & Murphy, 1985; Mulford et al., 2003). As a result, in the context of the implementation of new educational reforms designed to improve the effectiveness of schools, it was considered necessary for principals to become instructional leaders (Cuban, 1988; Hallinger, 1992, 2003a; Hallinger & Heck, 1996a, 1998).

More recent developments associated with instructional leadership have seen the evolution of related terms such as 'pedagogical' or 'educational leadership'. Sergiovanni (1998, p. 44) contends that although 'educational' and 'pedagogical' leadership are often used to broadly describe leadership in education institutions, their specific origins are to be found in ideas around the development of 'enquiring communities of teachers' as 'communities of practice'. The term educative leadership has also entered the discourse. Its origins are difficult to locate. Gunter (2001) describes educative leadership as the process of connecting to others, primarily teachers, in terms of their own, the students' and the leader's learning. So although often confused and used in place of instructional leadership, these terms have their own distinct meanings.

The Leadership Process

In terms of the type of process or leadership actions envisaged, the earliest ideas from the literature described instructional leaders in terms of *characteristics* and in terms of *what they do.* For example the work of Bossert et al. (1982), Hallinger and Heck (1996a, 1996b), Hallinger and Murphy (1980, 1985), and Heck et al. (1999) described instructional leaders as strong, directive and good at turning schools around, and the tasks associated with this type of leadership as focusing on co-ordinating, controlling, supervising and developing curriculum and instruction. Further work by Leithwood, Begley and Cousins (1994) described instructional leaders as those with combined expertise and charisma, unafraid of

setting high standards and very goal-orientated. In conducting a meta-analysis of empirical work on instructional leadership, Hallinger (1992, 2003b, 2005) and Hallinger and Murphy (1985) suggested the following broad tasks as the core of its activity: defining school mission; managing the instructional programme and curriculum as well as promoting a positive school learning climate. It is important to acknowledge that in later work, Hallinger (2005) began to differentiate some of these categories into leadership and management work, defining the leadership element as the modelling of values that promote a climate of learning, and defining management as the supervision, co-ordination and monitoring functions associated with promoting such a climate.

With regard to the idea of promoting a *climate of learning*, more recent work by Leithwood and Seashore (2012) has shown that the evidence of the direct effects of instructional leadership on achievement has grown weaker. Their work concludes that activities associated with instructional leadership have more significant direct effects on teachers' working relationships than they do on student achievement. In line with this, they suggest that the work of instructional leaders should focus on the goal of student achievement, setting tasks such as keeping track of teachers' professional development needs and creating structures for teachers to collaborate in order to create an instructional ethos. With more recent developments and research associated with the *school improvement* movement, the impetus for promoting instructional leadership as a single approach to school leadership has lessened. For example, Southworth (2002) found that while principals do like to see themselves in an instructional leadership role, they do not see it as their full leadership role. In line with this, Barth (1990, 2002) has suggested that if being effective in an instructional leadership role involves motivating teachers to step out beyond the boundaries of their classrooms, there is also a transformational role.

Roles and Relationships

In terms of role, writers such as Coleman and Earley (2005), Hallinger (1992, 2005), Hallinger and Heck (1996a, 1996b), Hallinger and Murphy (1985), Leithwood and Montgomery (1982) have considered how the *school effectiveness* movement shaped the role of instructional leader, so that it came to reside primarily with the principal. Their contention is that it is not seen as a form of leadership with distributive or shared characteristics. Leithwood et al. (1999) would concur. In their view, the instructional leadership model is based on leadership being exercised through a formal role, typically that of the principal.

It is difficult to establish what kind of relational dynamic is envisaged in this model. Webb (2005) for example, considers the relationship element to be hierarchical between the principal and the teacher and thus, in her view, somewhat limited. Leithwood and Jantzi (1999) suggest that instructional leadership needs to be broadened out and explored more in the context of a wider set of relationships in the school. Although distinct from instructional leadership, and not fully developed or documented as full approaches, pedagogical, educative and educational leadership are acknowledged to have more of an interactive, relational and community element (Gunter, 2001). Davies and Davies (2005) have linked instructional leadership to teacher leadership, suggesting that teachers can become instructional leaders in their classroom context. Cuban (1988) would concur, arguing that instructional leaders are not always necessarily the principal.

Issues and Challenges

The main issue with regard to instructional leadership has been the perception of narrowness of purpose and the leadership role. On the issue of purpose, Leithwood et al. (1999) suggest that it has been considered narrow because its primary objective focuses on

the effectiveness of teachers' classroom practices with a view to achieving an outcome of increased student achievement and growth in the academic sphere only. The work of Barth (1990), Bolman and Deal (1992), Cuban (1988, 2003), Gunter (2001), Morley and Rasool (1999) suggests that it also ignores the complexity of the social, political, cultural and moral dimensions of schooling. Such concerns are expressed with regard to the school effectiveness movement, often perceived as focussing too narrowly on improved student performance without taking into account other dimensions of school and school life and the wider purposes of teaching and learning (Cuban, 1988, 2003). From the outset, Cuban (2003) argues that without this broader context of school and school purpose, instructional leadership could lead to narrow versions of leadership and leadership expectation. Leithwood and Seashore (2012) suggest that because instructional leadership has been so strongly associated with the performance standards movement, school principals are increasingly expected to improve results, given that they are being held accountable and judged in this way. On the issue of role, Hallinger (2005) and Gronn (2003) conclude that given the exclusive focus on the leadership behaviour exhibited by the principal, the approach is limited when it comes to capturing all that is involved in leadership work. In a similar vein, Hallinger's (2005) view is that the role idea associated with instructional leadership is one that emerged from research in primary schools. Adapting it to the work and position of a secondary school principal has been questioned as a result (Hallinger, 2005).

In summary, whilst instructional leadership is a model that has been developed for schools and is one that has emerged out of a particular school movement, it is held to be limited in its purpose. The model is also thought not to reflect the actual scope of the work and practice of a school leader, nor does it succeed in reflecting the full context of schools. With regard to the role aspects of work and practice, the model has focussed primarily on

describing the work, tasks and behaviour of the principal, who is seen as directive and strong. It typically assumes that the critical focus for leaders is the behaviour of teachers as they engage in activities affecting the growth of students (Leithwood et al., 1999, p. 8). The model has received primacy in education policy and it emphasises an aspect of leadership work that school leaders tend to prefer, that is work that focuses on teaching and learning. While instructional leadership has been found to be effective in terms of bringing about change associated with increased student performance, this effect is now seen as less direct (Leithwood and Seashore, 2012; Webb, 2005). It is of note that the research work of Webb (2005) whilst acknowledging the limitations of instructional leadership as an approach, does argue for a more appropriate term for school leadership, other than instructional leadership, but one that would have, at its core, the building of capacity for teaching and learning, although in a broader sense.

Transformational Leadership

Origins and Development

Suggested as the most normatively favoured in Western thinking, transformational leadership has for some time dominated the *general* leadership field (Coleman & Earley, 2005). Given this dominance, its appropriation into the school leadership field was inevitable. In examining treatments of transformational leadership, its original purpose and intended effect was that of influencing employees' motivation and commitment which would ultimately lead to significant change (Yukl, 1989). As adapted for the school context, change, reform and improvement associated with the *school improvement movement* were the primary motivations as identified in the work of Day et al. (2000), Fullan (1993, 2001), Hargreaves and Fullan (1998), Leithwood et al. (1999) and Leithwood and Jantzi (1999).

Arising from such research, transformational leadership emerged as one of the most preferred models, alongside instructional leadership, permeating the education policy texts (Gunter, 2001). However, given that its focus is on a wider range of processes associated with school improvement, many writers have suggested that it may be more relevant to the current context of schools than instructional leadership (Hallinger, 2003b; Leithwood & Jantzi, 2005).

Transformational leadership is generally described as bringing about transformed or changed behaviours and functions where the leader is central to bringing about such change (Gunter, 2001; Leithwood et al., 1999; Leithwood et al., 1994). Leadership is considered as central to that change process (Fullan, 1993, 2001, 2009; Hargreaves & Fullan, 1998), with the change most often associated with improving schools, in particular when they are deemed to be *ineffective* (Leithwood et al., 1994; Stoll & Fink, 1996). The model has a strong psychological dimension given its emphasis on concepts such as motivation and commitment (Burns, 1979, p. 26) but it also has a moral dimension (Allix, 2000; Fullan, 2003). Allix (2000, p. 9) states that 'it embraces a mutually supportive relationships of moral and motivational engagement between leaders and followers'. Fullan (2003) places its moral emphasis and purpose firmly within the context of improvements in teaching and learning.

The Leadership Process

Drawing initially on the wider transformational leadership literature, Burns' (1979) seminal work on transformational leadership has been credited with having inspired most modern interpretations of transformational leadership. For Burns (1979), there are fundamentally two basic types of leadership, that of transactional and that of transforming; transactional is based on maintaining the core work of an organisation, transformational concerns itself with higher order needs and purposes. They work in a complementary way to

stimulate improvement and change. Both are necessary to an organisation. Burns views leadership as a process through which persons, leaders, can tap into the motivations of others, followers, in order to improve the core work of an organisation or bring forward an idea or effect change. Eventually, these motivations become the goals mutually held by both leaders and followers; they become a collective purpose (Burns, 1979). Burns views the leadership process as a structure of actions that engages others, whether they are subsidiary or fellow leaders or followers, in a process of change; when followers and leader become engaged in this way changes occur in their motivations and values (Burns, 1979, p. 20). Thus, leadership becomes an influence process with leaders influencing and motivating followers to act for certain goals that represent the values and motivations of an organisation (Burns, 1979). Bass (1995) built on the work of Burns. He considered transactional leadership as the building of follower competence, whereas transformational is more about motivation and the followers need for achievement and self-actualisation, where followers move beyond self-interest to the interests of the entities to which they belong. Bass, (1995) and Bass and Avolio, (1993) considered that this could be achieved through directive, participative or authoritarian leadership approaches where charisma, inspiration, motivation and intellectual stimulation from the leader are necessary. Bennis and Nanus (1985) considered the process of transformational leadership as developing a vision for the organisation, developing commitments and trust among workers and facilitating organisational change.

Building on these contributions and positioned alongside the objectives of the school improvement movement, transformational leadership founded a whole new set of understandings of leadership in a school context (Hallinger, 2003a, 2003b). The school improvement literature and research highlighted the need for more collaborative, interactive and dynamic leadership patterns that focussed more on the leadership process (Hallinger,

2003a, 2003b; Leithwood et al., 1994; Leithwood et al., 1999). Hence, transformational leadership with its whole-organisation focus on change and achievement of purpose emerged as one of the central elements of this movement (Hallinger, 2003a, 2003b). In considering distinctive features, Day et al. (2000) suggest that they have emerged out of Burns' (1979) conceptual dichotomy of transactional and transforming. They illustrate this by summarising transformational leadership as seeking to envision and create the future by synthesising and extending the aspirations of members, creating a unity of purpose or vision for the school, and transactional as focussing more on the management of existing relationships. Hallinger (2003a, 2003b) went on to distinguish between first- and second-order effects of transformational leadership; first order being that of creating a quality curriculum and instruction, and second order as those of increasing the capacity of others in a school to produce the first order.

Leithwood and Jantzi (1999) made a significant contribution to transformational leadership when they developed the *Transformational Leadership Behaviour School Specific Instrument* to represent the factors that would best comprise and measure transformational leadership. It was based on extensive empirical review work in the field. This instrument set out three broad activities of transformational leadership, including direction setting, culture building and organisational redesign. In later work, Leithwood and Duke (1999) considered in more detail this instrument, distinguishing what they deemed to be management or transactional aspects from the transformational or leadership aspects. They described the process of transformational leadership as the building of capacity in the school community for the purpose of generating greater effort and productivity, as well as the capacity for continuous improvement.

Role and Relationships

According to Burns (1979) roles and relationships within transformational leadership are set very much within a leader-follower framework with mutual engagement towards an agreed purpose. It is based on the influence the leader exerts on the behaviour of followers. Burns (1979, p. 34) has also considered transformational leaders to be moral agents who influence followers through what he terms 'articulating or commanding compelling causes' In his original conception of transformational leadership, it was the leader who intentionally decided the values, or purpose, as the basis for this motivation (Burns, 1979, p. 36). Day et al. (2001a, 2001b) considered the importance of the leaders' own values and attitudes in the building up of trust to be an essential mediating factor in this process.

When transformational leadership was adopted for schools, the popular view was that the purposeful transformative leadership of the principal would ensure that they were the main influence (Allix, 2000; Leithwood, 1992; Leithwood & Jantzi, 1999). Later work however suggested that the principal alone does not have to provide the leadership that creates these conditions (Leithwood & Jantzi, 2000, 2005). Hallinger (2003a) considered that transformational approaches do not necessarily imply that leadership has to be located in one individual. He suggests that within transformational leadership the leader's role is about building capacity for leadership, which is distributed and dispersed through the organisation (Hallinger, 2003a). It is generally held however, that in terms of who exerts influence, it is typically those in formal leadership roles who do so, although it is not restricted to such persons (Leithwood et al., 1999). In later work, Leithwood and Jantzi (2005) determined that the political and cultural context of the school could influence how transformational leadership was practised and the extent to which it was shared and distributed.

Issues and Challenges

An issue that has arisen for transformational leadership is how success can be determined. Hallinger (2005) contends that although transformational leadership is outcome-based, its focus on improvements in areas such as school planning, culture building, collaboration, visioning and purposing, are difficult to measure. It follows that it is difficult to determine what a successful outcome might be. Its effects are certainly more difficult to measure than those of instructional leadership, whose purpose does not extend beyond fostering student achievement (Hallinger, 2005). Empirical research on its effects has only demonstrated how it has indirectly impacted on student achievement; its most positive effects are evidenced in improvements in teachers' motivations (Leithwood & Jantzi, 2005).

The general view as expressed by Leithwood and Jantzi (2005) is that the concepts associated with transformational leadership are becoming more complex. Whilst there may be general agreement on its meaning, there are many variations and interpretations in relation to the nature and number of behaviours, actions and tasks that have become associated with it, many of which have been informed by the general leadership theory and have not emerged directly out of the work and purpose of schools. Much of the more recent discourse on transformational leadership suggests that it has become over-prescriptive, setting out what leaders should do through tasks and behaviours, without adequately taking into account the nuances and complexity of particular situations that arise in schools (Gunter, 2001). The work of Allix (2000) for example, has raised questions about transformational leadership and the desirability of and the subjective assessment of the change being implemented. He has articulated a number of reservations in this regard. In examining treatments of transformational leadership, he concludes that it runs the risk of too much subjectivity on the part of one individual leader. He also considers that the leader has the monopoly on the

decisions being made in certain circumstances and also on the direction of the change being made. He describes such leaders as being the ones who have the 'moral truth' (Allix, 2000, p. 15). In his view transformational leadership is too dependent on where leaders want to go, so much so that the leader is often seen as an idol or hero to be followed (Allix, 2000, p. 16). Other work has concurred with this view (Gronn, 2003; Sugrue, 2009).

In summary, transformational leadership is a borrowed leadership theory, which measures up to many of the expectations of purpose and outcome that are central to the overall *school improvement* and change movement; it has, as a consequence, taken a firm foothold both in the school leadership literature and in the leadership policy domain. However, the success of transformational leadership is difficult to measure and hard to determine. Further, although it has a shared and distributed dimension, influence primarily resides in the principal. The building of follower capacity and motivation is central to the work and practice.

Distributed Leadership

Origins and Development

Distributed leadership, although representing a departure from what has been implicit in much of leadership theory to date, that is, a focus on typical attributes of an individual leader that are associated with a role incumbent or position (Gronn, 1999a), has not emerged as entirely new to the leadership field. As has been outlined in the previous section, transformational leadership, although having an underlying assumption that there is one main leader in each school or institution, usually presumed to be the principal, can be argued to have a distributed or shared dimension, primarily in its objective of building teacher

leadership to be distributed across the school. However, it is the work of Gronn, (2000), Mulford, (2008), Spillane, (2006) Spillane et al., (2001, 2004), Spillane and Orlina, (2005), that has had a more specific focus on the idea of leadership as fundamentally a shared activity or practice distributed throughout an organisation. Spillane's (2006) work is significant as it emphasises that distributed leadership is not a new theory in its own right but rather a lens through which leadership practice can be viewed. It is generally considered to be a practice to complement other approaches such as instructional and transformational and as such does not stand entirely independent from them. It too has emerged out of school improvement and change efforts but its focus is specifically on the leadership process; its purpose is to encourage leaders to work in more collaborative and distributed ways.

The idea of leaders working in more distributed ways has emerged from a number of perspectives. For example, Yukl (1989) and Bass (1995) describe leadership as a collective process with shared objectives. The work of Heifetz (1994) defines leadership as an activity spread across different positions in an organisation. Gunter (2001) suggests that distributed leadership has partly emerged from the literature on change and improvement in schools, and points to the building of leadership capacity in this area as the motivation for a more distributed perspective on leadership. The importance of building leadership capacity is inherent in the school improvement and change literature (Fullan, 2001; Fullan & Hargreaves, 1991; Hargreaves & Fullan, 1998). In line with this, Leithwood et al. (1999) have summarised its purpose as increasing participation in decision making, the desired outcome being the increased capacity of organisational members to respond productively to internal and external demands for change.

Whilst this perspective is generally accepted, there is also a practical imperative to distributed leadership. It has generally been acknowledged that the task of leading a school is too complex and demanding for one person (Copland, 2001; Mulford, 2008; Spillane et al., 2001, 2004). Gronn (2003) suggests that if improved schooling over time is the objective, such improvement requires the enhanced capacity not just of one person but of many. Hallinger's (2003a, 2003b) research identified that where head teachers shared leadership responsibility, they were less subject to burnout than those he refers to as *principal heroes* who confront the challenges and complexities of leadership alone. Barth (1990, 2002), in his analysis of the day-to-day running of a school, questioned the practicality of placing the burden of leading a school on one person. Harris and Lambard (2003) contend that if part of the leadership role is to develop organisational capacity then by implication leadership should be distributed.

Finally, distributed leadership has also been considered in a moral context. Sergiovanni (1992, 2007), suggests that schools as communities should promote shared decision making and democratic approaches as opposed to any kind of hierarchical control. MacBeath (2002, 2005), in considering the promotion of democracy as the school's primary purpose, suggests that the development of leadership density is key to the overall leadership function in this context. Duignan's (2006) work extends this position. In placing distributed leadership firmly within a moral and ethical context, he argues that schools need to think differently about the quality and depth of their leadership if they are to respond to the different challenges they experience. In his view, individual leadership takes a narrow view of leadership and ignores the talents and perspectives of others in the school. He also contends that sharing responsibility for decisions not only helps to generate greater ownership

of decisions taken but also reflects the diversity of schools. Therefore, for Duignan (2006), the distribution of leadership is a key step towards more ethical decision making.

It is evident from the literature reviewed that distributed leadership in the context of a school has taken on many different interpretations and as such does not stand alone from the other approaches as previously considered. It has emerged from school improvement and change efforts in a similar way to instructional and transformational, and in some writers' views also has a moral dimension. What distinguishes it is that it primarily focuses on leadership as practised, that is, how leadership is actually distributed, and as such its purpose is to bring a distributed perspective to the work of school leaders.

The Leadership Process, Roles and Relationships

In describing the leadership process of distributed leadership, Gronn (2003) summarises it as *leadership practice stretched over the school.* In his view, this can occur through sharing leadership tasks, through a division of labour and through middle management in school taking on leadership roles (Gronn, 2003). A distributed perspective as advocated by Spillane (2006) presses one to consider the enactment of leadership as potentially stretched over the practice of two or more leaders. This is referred to as leader plus, that is the leaders, their followers and the context or situation they are in (Spillane et al., 2004). It can occur through collaborative, collective or co-ordinated processes but is always linked to and emerges out of the core work of the school (Spillane et al., 2001; Spillane, 2006). Distributed leadership in Spillane's (2006) view is about the practice of leadership. His interpretation of practice is based on his exploration of patterns of activity in a number of schools, specifically how leadership practice takes shape in the interactions between leaders and followers and their situations. In his view, leadership in schools happens in everyday practices through formal routines and informal interactions – it is stretched over leaders,

followers and aspects of the situation and is generated in these interactions. The situation, in this case the school, both defines leadership practice and is defined through it (Spillane, 2006).[2]

As referenced previously, Duignan (2006) has made a significant contribution to the discourse on distributed leadership. In keeping with Spillane (2006), he suggests that distributed leadership is central to the core work of the school. However, for Duignan (2006, 2007), it also carries a moral and ethical dimension. Duignan's view is that leadership as a concept is closely linked to the concepts of community and the achievement of the common good and as such cannot exist in isolation from the building of that sense of community. He views it as a type of shared leadership arising out of the on-going processes of interaction and negotiation among all school members as they construct and reconstruct a way of working productively together (Duignan, 2006). This involves not just a process of dividing tasks; it also entails the real distribution of leadership across the whole school. Humphries' (2010) work distinguished between Spillane's and Duignan's theory; in her view, for Spillane, leaders do not always have to see eye to eye, whereas in Duignan's, they must always have a shared sense of purpose.

Issues and Challenges

Distributed leadership has not been without its critics. Mulford (2008) and Day et al. (2000, 2001a, 2001b) conclude that with its many interpretations, real distribution might not be put into effect. Spillane's (2006) research work reflects a similar position. He concludes that its implementation primarily rests on a school principal's support, conceding that as a

[2] Some theoretical anchors important to understanding these works and their conclusions as noted in Spillane et al. (2005) include: distributed cognition, social activity theory, organisational theory and the theory of work practices.

model of school leadership, it is easier to subscribe to than live by (Spillane, 2006). Spillane and Orlina (2005) in reviewing how distributed leadership has been interpreted over time, conclude that it has become many things to many people, often used as a synonym for democratic, participative and collaborative leadership. Whilst Hallinger and Heck's (2010) research into distributed leadership suggests that it does impact indirectly on school improvement through building teacher capacity, they also conclude that how it is actually practised is very difficult to determine. Grace (2002) has identified the issue of the enduring tradition of strong hierarchical leadership within schools, a tradition which in his view does not give way easily to new forms of shared, consultative and collegial leadership, particularly as it is the principal who is ultimately held accountable.

However, what is new and fresh about distributed leadership is that it places actual leadership practice at the core of its analysis. What has garnered it most attention is the recognition that school leadership can and needs to involve multiple leaders, the view being that principals given the enormity of their task cannot and ought not to go it alone (Copland, 2001). This has moral, theoretical and practical underpinnings. Studying leadership as distributed practice is challenging, as it involves unpacking the idea of distribution by exploring relations among the practice of multiple leaders, stretched over and between leaders in any given context.

Teacher Leadership

Origins and Development

There are many different interpretations and opinions of both the origins and practice of teacher leadership in schools. It is generally held that whilst drawing from elements of

both instructional and distributed leadership, much of its impetus has come from teachers wanting to take a more active role in the leadership of the school (Hallinger & Heck, 1996a; Harris, 2005a, 2005b; Sergiovanni, 1994; Mulford, 2008). Silva et al. (2000) provide a useful analysis of the way teacher leadership has evolved. They suggest that teacher leadership has occurred in three waves: the first being where teachers have been assigned formal leadership roles in the school, the second where teachers have developed as subject and instructional experts in the school, and the third where teachers have become involved in the process of organisational development and improvement. Despite different interpretations, evidence suggests that as an idea it is gaining in popularity; teachers enjoy and benefit from working together to improve their practice; they also benefit from moving out of the isolation of their role (Fullan, 1993; Harris, 2003; Spillane et al., 2001).

Teacher leadership has also been linked to elements of instructional and transformational leadership. For example, Harris (2003, 2005b) identifies aspects of distributed leadership with the collaborative leadership of teachers working together to improve classroom practice and student outcomes. Harris (2005b) has also aligned it closely with the discourse on the development of teacher professionalism and the need to enhance their instructional leadership role. She contends that teachers working as instructional leaders will ultimately contribute to school improvement and effectiveness. The strongest support for teacher leadership would appear to be from within the school effectiveness, improvement and reform literature, given that much of the research has shown that where teachers are empowered as instructional leaders, general improvements in the areas of teaching and learning have been evidenced (Fullan, 2009; Harris, 2005a, 2005b).

The Leadership Process, Roles and Relationships

Because of its relative novelty and differing interpretations, it is difficult to set out the process and the nature of the leadership role or the relationships associated with teacher leadership. In relating teacher leadership's emergence most closely to instructional leadership, Leithwood and Duke (1999, p. 47) equate it with the behaviours of teachers as they engage in activities directly affecting the growth of students. Specific empirical research on what teachers actually did when they assumed teacher leadership roles found that it varied, and was more or less specific to the school in question (Lieberman & Miller, 2004). In most cases, there was evidence to suggest that teacher leadership is positively related to changes in classroom pedagogical practice and the instructional effectiveness of teachers. Harris (2005) would concur, suggesting that teacher leadership has the most positive effect on teachers themselves. Whilst they can influence the practice of their colleagues, this too can vary in terms of situation and is difficult to ascertain. Katzenmeyer and Moller (2001, p. 17) define teacher leaders as those who are leaders within and beyond the classroom, influencing improved educational practice through contributing to a community of teacher learners and leaders. Boles and Troen (1994, p. 11) characterise this form of leadership as teachers developing expertise by working collaboratively, seeing it as a form of collective leadership. Muijs and Harris (2003) in their research identified four facets to the role of a teacher leader: a brokering role through the establishment of social linkages; a participative role through working collaboratively; a mediating role within the overall school improvement process and an interpersonal role through forging relationships and trust as part of the overall school culture. Harris' later work (2005a, 2005b) added another facet, that of action researcher in reflecting on their practice and contributing to the collaborative culture of the school.

Issues and Challenges

Although gaining in popularity and importance for the general school leadership field, there are acknowledged difficulties with the concept. The most common difficulty is that it eludes precise definition and as a result has become associated with a wide range of activities in which teachers are involved (Cuban, 2005; Harris, 2005a). It has also been linked to a variety of outcomes without much empirical research to support this (Harris, 2005). Leithwood et al. (1999) suggest that its importance can be easily asserted but not readily defined. In their review of empirical research, they explored the effects of teacher leadership on students' engagement with school. However, they found no statistically significant relationship. Silins and Mulford (2002a, 2002b) found that student outcomes are more likely to improve where leadership sources are distributed through the community. They distinguished between teachers being empowered to lead rather than been attributable to teacher leadership specifically. Harris and Muijs (2005) found an indirect relationship between teacher involvement in decision making and improved outcomes.

As a new idea, it can be concluded that teacher leadership needs more development in terms of the precise theoretical orientation as a particular model of school leadership, as opposed to being more about aspects of teacher collaboration, professional cultures and practice. It is generally assumed that there are limitations with the body of knowledge supporting this model of leadership given the complexity and diversity of the construct (Harris, 2005b).

Moral Leadership – and the Moral Dimension of Leadership

Origins and Purpose

The scope and breadth of moral leadership theory is complex and difficult to capture in a study of this size. Moral leadership theory has been developed from a number of different perspectives, including the moral and ethical practice of leadership, the moral purpose of leadership and the moral dimension of existing approaches to leadership. According to Bhindi and Duignan (1997), moral leadership places values at the heart of leadership, suggesting a type of leadership centrally concerned with ethics, morality and deciding what is significant, right and worthwhile. In this context it involves questions of purpose, practice and ultimately questions of the leadership role and its associated relationships. In reviewing the relevant literature on moral leadership, Furman (2004) suggests that much of the literature deals with questions of moral purpose, whilst a minority focuses more on questions of moral or ethical practice.

With regard to purpose, Furman (2004, p. 216), in reviewing research in the field, suggests that school administrators are very much aware of the moral aspects of their work, that is to say they practise moral leadership by relying on their core values and in addition on their commitments to particular 'ends in view', defined as moral purpose. The studies he reviews focus on ends such as social justice, equity and care as valued outcomes of leadership endeavours (Furman, 2004, p. 216). The question of valued outcomes is very much at the heart of questions of school leadership. Murphy (2007) suggests that there are three paradigms in this regard: school improvement, democratic community, and social justice, each representing a valued end or moral purpose. MacBeath (2002) and MacBeath and Dempster (2009) suggest that as schools have features that distinguish them from commercial enterprises, it is critical that the primacy of learning and the enhancing or improving of young

people's lives become central to school leadership. Fullan's (2003, 2011) work would concur, describing this purpose as every child reaching their potential.

There are many writers who advocate that school leadership's primary purpose is moral: Hodgkinson (1991), Duignan (2006), Greenfield (1991), Sergiovanni (1992), Starratt (1994, 1999, 2004) or has a moral dimension Fullan (2003, 2011), MacBeath and Dempster (2009). Their argument is that in contemporary organisational life, particularly in the context of schools, there is a need for the adoption of more ethical and moral purposes to guide leadership practice and work; they hold that moral purpose is primary and insist that school leaders must be equipped to deal with moral and ethical questions. Hodgkinson (1991) has suggested that questions of moral purpose ought to be the primary consideration in informing any kind of leadership practice and he suggests that it is only when administration is considered in a moral sense that it can be deemed to be good. Hodgkinson (1991) and Sergiovanni (1994, 2007) emphasise the moral character of education and schools; they argue that school leadership must be seen first and foremost as a moral practice. Sergiovanni (1992) and Starratt, (1999, 2003) suggest that the work of school leaders can be both intellectual and moral, but the intellectual work is located within the core work of the school which is moral.

Transformational, distributed and instructional leadership have also been linked to moral leadership in terms of having a specific moral dimension. Sergiovanni (2007) links moral leadership to transformational leadership, suggesting that it is moral purpose that makes transactional and transformational different; transactional leadership focuses on basic and largely extrinsic motives whereas transformational leadership focuses on higher order, more intrinsic and moral motives that are related to overall school purpose. Burns (1979)

argues that eventually transformative leadership becomes moral because it raises the level of human conduct and ethical aspirations of both the leader and the led. Following on from this, other work by Sergiovanni and Starratt (2002), distinguished between transactional leadership as leadership behaviour and transformative leadership as moral action. With regard to instructional leadership, Fullan and Hargeaves (1991) argue that the moral purpose of leadership is all about the improvement of teaching and learning. In relation to distributed leadership, the work of Duignan (2006) and Duignan and Bhindi (1997) have addressed both the practice and moral imperative of shared and collective decision making in the context of distributed leadership.

The Leadership Process

In general, proponents of moral leadership would consider that even though schools might share the managerial requirements of other organisations, they are unique in their purpose, so a focus on leadership personality, behaviour and styles is not enough; attention must also be given to ideas, norms, values and beliefs as well as the practice of leadership (Bhindi & Duignan, 1999; Coleman & Early, 2005; Sergiovanni, 1992, 2007). There are many views on how moral leadership is practised. Leithwood and Duke (1999) argue that values are a central part of all leadership practice and the proper foci of leadership studies should be the values held by school leaders themselves. The work by Leithwood et al. (1999) considers that moral leadership is primarily for those in formal positions that exert influence, the sources of influence being the system of moral values that guides their decision making. In their view the purpose of moral leadership is to increase sensitivity to the rightness of decisions and participation in decision making, the outcome of which are morally justified courses of action and democratic schools. They have interpreted the moral leadership process as three-fold: as it relates to how decisions are reached, what decisions are reached relating to

the moral imperative of school and schooling, and what values guide them (Leithwood et al., 1999). According to this view, a particular moral responsibility is placed on those in leadership roles.

Role and Relationships

Arising from Leithwood et al.'s (1999) consideration of moral leadership, decision making emerges as a central part of the process and practice of moral leadership. There is a body of literature that focuses on questions of decision making as central to the practice of school administration and leadership. The works of Beck (1999), Beck and Murphy (1994), Begley (1999), Begley and Johansson (2003), Greenfield and Ribbins (1993), Murphy (2007), Starratt (1994, 1999), whilst they concur that it is moral purpose that guides what decisions are reached and how they are reached, are keen to acknowledge that this is very complex terrain. Issues of which values, competing values, who decides, how decisions are reached and the subjectivity and personal values of those in leadership positions all raise complex questions in the context of moral leadership. Arising from such questions, Hodgkinson (1991) considers moral leadership to be an art in which the leader attempts to orchestrate the tensions between individual values and those intrinsic to the work of the school. He considers moral leadership as the moral orchestration of competing values by those in leadership roles.

Starratt (2004) has considered the concept of ethical leadership. His view is that ethical leadership is based on the principles, beliefs and values which inform the actions of the leader who strives to achieve a moral purpose. He suggests that the leadership role is a type of stewardship or service, one that would reject service to either subjective or other political influences. Starratt (2004) and Hodgkinson (1991) have considered the concept of

authenticity in relation to the school leadership role; their view is that school leadership is based on personal integrity, credibility and commitment to the core ethical and moral values of the school (Hodgkinson, 1991). Starratt (2004) has considered the exercise and cultivation of responsibility and authenticity both in the school leaders themselves and in the wider school as part of the school leadership role.

In moving to the types of relationships expected within moral leadership it is considered to be more of a shared and distributed practice (Bhindi & Duignan, 1997; Duignan, 2006). Moral leadership relationships and interactions are generally held to involve the development of shared meaningful relationships within organisational structures and processes connected to and supporting core significant values and core vision, that vision going beyond personal interests (Bhindi & Duignan, 1997).

Issues and Challenges

Whilst more recent reform ideas in education have placed school leadership at the centre of policy development, many writers in the field consider its general treatment with regard to values, purpose and practice in a moral or ethical sense to be somewhat neglected (Duignan, 2006; Gunter, 2001; Hodgkinson, 1991; Sergiovanni, 1992, 2007; Sergiovanni & Moore, 1989; Starratt, 2004). Moral leadership in terms of its origins or how the process is intended is not the popular articulation within policy. A significant body of literature has focussed on moral leadership and the moral dimension of leadership, in particular the lack of attention to these questions in either policy or research (Begley & Leonard, 1999; Gunter, 2001; Sergiovanni, 1996; Starratt, 2005b, 2012; Gunter, 2001). In general it is deemed to be an area for further consideration and study, in particular with regard to its practice.

Conclusion

This chapter has attempted to set out and contextualise the general field of research on school leadership. In doing so it has considered the key landmarks of its historical development and the enduring legacies of the role of principal, the management and leadership tension, school governance as well as the wider influences of school policy and reform which have created the particular context both for leadership work and for theoretical approaches to leadership. It has also reviewed the models of leadership considered most relevant for leadership in the context of schools. These included: instructional, transformational, distributed, teacher and moral leadership. In approaching this review, the study drew from the leadership literature to develop an interpretive framework of purpose, process, roles and relationships in order to map the complex and often conflicting terrain of school leadership theory and accounts. In drawing from research and the general discourse, some initial challenges and issues were then set out. In attempting to set out a conceptual map of the field, it is difficult to draw a coherent picture from the various studies and discourses referred to. This lack of coherence is evident in the many ways in which the role is interpreted, the different kinds of relational elements described, as well as the many descriptions of and prescriptions for the leadership process through tasks, actions, behaviours and practice presenting a daunting and challenging picture for those in leadership roles.

It is evident that there is no one favoured model or theory. Much has depended on school context and views of school purpose, with versions of leadership ultimately emerging from such views. Across the various approaches presented, areas of overlap as well as different and competing perspectives have been considered. The literature reviewed has demonstrated how such differences have arisen out of competing views of purpose and expected outcomes, as well as the particular theoretical anchors informing how the leadership

process, role and relationships are interpreted. In terms of the types of challenges this presents, there is a general sense that school policy and reform are directing school leadership towards outcomes and performance-based objectives as evidence of good school leadership, to the neglect of broader views of school and school purpose.

The study will now look to the Irish context of school leadership. It will trace its historical evolution, noting in particular the legacy issues of school governance and management. It will then move on to consider international influences on school leadership policy and work, drawing attention to the way it is currently understood, that is from a policy perspective. Finally it will go on to give some consideration to the views of school leaders themselves, paying particular attention to issues of purpose, coherence and how good school leadership is viewed.

CHAPTER 2

SCHOOL LEADERSHIP AND THE IRISH CONTEXT

Introduction

Having considered and reflected upon school leadership in the international context, drawing attention to how it has developed in terms of the most predominant approaches, the study will now explain school leadership within the Irish context. This chapter's objective is to arrive at an understanding of the current distinguishing features of Irish school leadership policy and practice with specific reference to how it is experienced and understood in terms of purpose, the leadership process, as well as how the school leadership role and relationship elements have developed over time. By gaining some insight into the specific context and circumstance of Irish school leadership policy and practice, our understanding of the nature of current challenges will be better informed.

The first consideration of this chapter will be school leadership's historical evolution. Historical perspectives are acknowledged as important in providing a lens through which developments in Irish education can be viewed (Drudy, 2009; Gleeson, 2006). With regard to school leadership, the OECD (2007) noted that despite all of the significant developments of the past two decades, for which Ireland was to be commended, the spill-over of certain historical legacy issues was still felt. The chapter will in the first instance reflect briefly on these legacy issues noting governance, the role of the state and the centralised system of state exams as the most significant in terms of the influences they still bring to bear on the policy-making process.

The policy-making process in Irish education is another important feature in understanding the current school leadership context. The next section of the chapter will turn its attention to some of the distinctive feature of this process. Attention will be drawn to the politicised nature of this process, the international influences such as those exerted by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), tracing these through some important pieces of legislation up until the relatively recent emergence of school leadership as a distinct area of policy. The third section will consider this recent emergence, documenting the period from 1990 to the present, in which, despite marking a period of unprecedented reform in education policy, evidence of historical factors and the politicised nature of the policy-making process still remain. Sugrue (2006, p. 182) has suggested that during this period, international social movements and European influences 'melded' into our national trajectories and became 'recast' in more local and national moulds. Inspired by Sugrue's comment, this section will consider this 'recasting' within school leadership by drawing on policy documents, national research, and historical sources. The chapter concludes by outlining possibilities and challenges, thus indicating the direction that the broader study will take.

School Leadership as it Evolved

Historical Influences

The Irish education system is considered by many writers to be distinctive in its patterns of ownership, governance and management and in particular the influence of the churches (Coolahan, 1981; Drudy, 2009; Drudy and Lynch, 1995; Rafferty, 2009). Arising from these influences, a certain conservatism and constraint in relation to policy on school governance has been documented (Coolahan, 1994; Gleeson, 2006; O' Buachalla, 1988; O'

Sullivan, 2005). Acknowledged as a much politicised process, debates on issues of structure and governance have tended to dominate the Irish educational landscape, even at the expense of issues of curriculum and pedagogy (Coolahan, 1981, 1994; Gleeson, 2006). What has emerged as a result is a much centralised system characterised by unique patterns of ownership and governance and one that is decidedly denominational (Coolahan, 1994; Gleeson, 2006; OECD, 2007, 2008).

Of relevance to school leadership is that it is set within a system of denominational stratification, varying governance structures and centralised legalisation. A significant and more complicating feature of the system is its divisions or stratifications into fee paying, voluntary secondary, community and comprehensive schools (Clancy, 1995), each of which has influenced and formed its own structures of governance and management over time (OECD, 2007)[3]. Rafferty (2009) concludes that whilst current policy making in Irish education has attempted to embrace change, it has at the same time worked to accommodate these many interests, hence their influences are still being felt with regard to school ethos and governance.

Rafferty (2009, p. 11) reminds us of the history of 'labyrinthine' connections between the Churches, the State and schooling in Ireland. She recalls the strong involvement of Catholic diocesan priests in the education, management and headship of schools for Catholic children dating back to the 1600s (Rafferty, 2009, p. 15). In O' Buachalla's (1988) view, the

[3] There are currently 3,147 primary schools in Ireland, 85% of which are owned by the Catholic Church (DES, 2014). Each has a Board of Management (BOM) with no intermediary structure. The rest are: Irish-medium; non-denominational; denominational other than Catholic. Each of the latter has their own umbrella bodies. There are a small number of interdenominational schools under the patronage of the Department of Education. There are 730 post-primary schools, with 500 privately owned, mainly by the Catholic Church. The remainder consist of community, comprehensive and Education and Training Board. There are a small number of private fee-paying schools (DES, 2014).

churches in general exerted a tight control on schooling through various structures of governance and management. He documents a history of church and state tension with regard to their respective roles in these areas (O' Buachalla, 1988). The *Stanley Letter* (DES[4], 1831) which established the legal basis for all primary schools through the setting up of the Board of Commissioners for Education provides an historical example of the issue. It attempted to set out the responsibilities of such a Board as the employment of teachers and the disbursement of school funds. This policy letter also advocated for the mixing of both Protestant and Catholic children in schools. This aspect was never really followed through as the different religious denominations continued to apply separately for their funding in order to retain their distinctive religious ethos within their schools (DES, 1931). Although such influences took root at this early stage in the history of Irish education, school ownership and patronage remains one of the most debated and contentious topics in education policy today and is an object of sustained public interest (Coolahan et al., 2012; Rafferty, 2009). The distinctive character of schools, whether faith- or non–faith based, continues to be protected in legislation. Of significance is that *The Education Act* (Government of Ireland, 1998), Section 15 (2) (B)) sets out each school's right to preserve and define its 'characteristic sprit'. Recent research has suggested that this 'spirit' or ethos is a factor in how school leaders are appointed (Grummell et al., 2009) and in how practice is constructed (Sugrue & Furlong, 2002).

[4] The Department of Education was created in 1921, and is currently known as the Department of Education and Skills. Over the years it has changed names; however the role has remained the same. It has been previously known as the Department of Education (1921-1997), the Department of Education and Science (1997–2010). For the purpose of the study reference to the Department will be as the Department of Education and Skills (DES).

Historically, how schools were managed is also of relevance. The Vocational Education Committee (VEC)[5] system, individual Church structures and umbrella groups have all provided an individual layer of management in addition to that provided by the state. For example, in 1985 there were fourteen managerial bodies functioning with four umbrella groups (O' Buachalla, 1988). They were primarily denominationally specific (O' Buachalla, 1988). The earliest and most influential of these were the Catholic Primary Managers Association (1903) and the Irish Schoolmaster's Association (1869), for primary schools, and the Catholic Headmaster's Association (1879) and the Association of Irish Headmistresses (1882) for secondary. It is worth noting that within these structures, the role of *principal*, as now understood, was primarily defined in terms of the *headmaster* or *headmistress*. They were predominantly from religious orders.

These structures remained firm until the decline of religious congregations towards the end of the 1990s. Today, although the number is fewer given the changing nature of representations of religious orders and the development of combined religious trusts, they have had a significant impact on school governance issues and issues of patronage (O' Buachalla, 1988; Coolahan, 1994; OECD, 2007). In 1972 the Joint Managerial Body (JMB) was established to represent all of the associations and to exert more leverage and influence on education. Although O' Buachalla (1988, p. 168), describes the influence of the managerial bodies as 'low level', with key matters of public policy agreed at a much higher level between the churches and the state, their importance in terms of local management and governance was significant. Their main areas of influence were curriculum, terms and conditions of teachers and head teachers as well as resourcing for their schools. There is also

[5] The *Education and Training Boards Act* (2013) made provision for the dissolution of the VECs into 16 Education and Training Boards (ETBs). It was enacted on July 1, 2013. The term ETB will hereafter be used to assume the former VEC structures and their schools.

evidence of a strong history of networking and collaboration within these groupings, primarily around issues associated with conditions of work and employment (O' Buachalla, 1988).

The existence of these structures and management layers is significant for school leadership. Although the DES took responsibility for setting out a broad range of functions for a *principal,* recruitment still rested with these management bodies, respective Boards of Management (BOMs) or ETBs. Whilst many administration functions were carried out by the principal or head, final decisions were made by a manager 'cleric' or a BOM or the ETB (Logan, 1999; McDonald, 2008). In line with the international context, the language of 'headship' was the dominant paradigm. This gradually changed to that of 'principalship', which took on an official interpretation for the first time when the functions of principal were set out by the Department of Education Circular of 1973 (DES, 06/73). In some respects, the idea or phenomenon of school leadership in Ireland, as it is understood today, has its origins at this point (Herron, 1994; Humphries, 2010; O' Hanlon, 2008). This is not to deny that the various interpretations of the role of principal as leader, manager or both evolved over time and incrementally within each of the management and governance structures but little is documented in this regard.

Another historical feature of relevance to school leadership noted by the OECD (2007) was the much centralised system of influence exerted by the Department of Education and Skills. The existence of a strong regime of accountability and control from central to school level is well documented (Gleeson, 2006). Even despite the major reforms in education of the 1990s with the intent to devolve responsibility from the DES more directly down to schools, it is contended that the state still exerts tight control on what takes place at

school level and in many instances this control has a limiting effect (Coolahan, 1994; Drudy, 2009; Gleeson, 2006). Ireland has had a long tradition of state legislation in education, particularly evidenced in a series of Acts and other directives regulating the many functions of schools. Gleeson (2006) in his analysis of Irish education's historical development outlines the state's long history of legislative and regulatory frameworks, suggesting that the DES has concerned itself 'with all things great and small' (Gleeson, 2006, p. 77). He references in particular the practice of 'circulars' at Department level which provide further more detailed regulation around key aspects of school planning, development and evaluation than that contained within the more general policy framework. One of the key recommendations from the OECD (2007) was that in order for developments within school leadership policy to take effect, a greater degree of autonomy needed to be afforded to schools and leaders.

Finally of note is the influence of the system of state exams. This system is considered to have had most impact at implementation level, in many instances restricting practice and innovation in both curriculum and teaching (Drudy, 2009; Gleeson, 2006; Skilbeck, 2004). Rafferty (2009, p. 22) suggests that this state system of exams has privileged academic education, 'casting' as she suggests 'a long shadow' over the organisation of schooling to the present day. O' Buachalla (1988) has described the Irish system of state exams as one of the more lasting of our historical legacies. Many other commentators would concur (Sugrue, 2004a; Gleeson, 2006; Drudy, 2009).

Policy Making and its Impact

In considering the current orientation of school leadership policy, it must be borne in mind that education policy making in Ireland is generally held as being a deeply contextualised process with very significant historical, political and cultural influences and

features (Gleeson, 2004; O Sullivan, 2005). In considering these features, O' Buachalla (1988) and Drudy and Lynch (1993) note that policy making in Ireland is uniquely characterised by the presence and influence of interest groups such as the Churches, employers' representatives, the teachers' unions, the educational management bodies and the parent bodies. As a result the policy-making process has not always had a good history, and has never been far from controversy (Gleeson, 2004; O' Buachalla, 1988). Curriculum development for example, although more of a marginal activity for direct state intervention, is considered somewhat of a protected territory with many vested interests (Drudy, 2009; Gleeson, 2004; Granville, 2004).

In addition to the many national influences that have been noted, it is generally acknowledged that international discourses have significantly impacted on our national system and policies (Goodson, 2004). The influences of the OECD in particular are of note (Coolahan, 1981, 1994; Drudy, 2009; Galvin, 2009; Gleeson, 2006). Of relevance also is what many writers describe as a persistent absence of philosophical perspectives on education policy (Dunne, 1995; Gleeson, 2006; Hogan, 2011; Mulcahy, 1981). O' Sullivan (2005) regards the overall policy-making process as somewhat of a protected space in this regard, with reluctance on the part of government to open it up to any real public debate or contesting viewpoints. Goodson (2004) points to the Irish policy-making process suggesting that whilst on the one hand it has attempted to respond to demands and expectation at an international level, on the other it has remained conservative depending on the internal constraints and influences brought to bear at any one time. In tracing developments in school leadership from the period of major reform of the 1990s, evidence of this type of tension can be seen in policy recommendations that have responded to international innovations and developments but are set within a restrictive legislative framework. How policy is developed and legislated for is ultimately the prerogative of Government, it is however set against the larger canvas of

European and international influence and within a complex and enduring tradition of Churches and other sectional interests (Drudy, 2009; Gleeson, 2006).

Tracing the influence from the OECD helps place Irish education and school leadership in context. For example, the Irish Government's *Investment in Education Report* (DES, 1965) was based on the work of OECD and was the foundation stone of many later developments from its publication through to the 1980s (Drudy, 2009). During this time a serious commitment to access and participation, in particular the need to address equality of educational opportunity as part of Ireland's social and economic development came to the fore within Irish education policy (Drudy, 2009; Coolahan, 1981; Gleeson, 2006; O' Sullivan, 2005). The next significant landmark was the 1991 Report *Review of National Education Policies: Ireland* (OECD, 1991), which gave the impetus for many of the changes and aspirations set out in the *White Paper* of 1995 *Charting our Education Future* (Government of Ireland, 1995), subsequently leading to the *Education Act* (1998) and *Education (Welfare) Act* (2000). These Acts still represent the current legislative framework for schools, management, teachers, school leaders as well as other partners in education. The primary focus of the changes contained in these documents was at the structural and implementation level.

It is of relevance that the OECD's (1991, p. 11) report suggested that to understand contemporary education in Ireland a recognition and understanding of its history was necessary. Its findings reflected a system that was conservative and rooted in tradition. Such a review gave rise to the publication of the *Green Paper in Education, Education for a Changing World* (Government of Ireland, 1992) as a precursor to the *National Education Convention* and its subsequent report (Coolahan, 1994). The primary purpose of these

developments was to move Irish education into a new era of partnership, decentralisation, quality assurance and accountability with improved leadership and management (Coolahan, 1994). Much of the debate involved the state's future role in the legislative and governance domains. What is interesting is that historically the state's role in education initially focussed on maintaining and establishing the Irish identity post colonialism (Drudy and Lynch, 1993). From the initial *Investment in Education Report* to the *National Education Convention* and to the current day, this has broadened out considerably. The state has positioned education within a wider context of national development policy and plans (*National Development Plans* 2000, 2006, 2011). Central to these plans are a range of social development programmes and economic recovery projections (Gleeson, 2006). These policy developments have placed education very much to the centre of government policy. The production of human capital and the promotion of social inclusion are considered to be the two most important policy texts that have translated down to schools (Coolahan, 1995; Drudy, 2009; O' Sullivan, 2005).

How this takes effect is done in a number of ways. The current national strategic framework for all government policy is *Towards 2016, Ten-Year Framework for Social Partnership* (Government of Ireland, 2012). Its overall goal is to nurture the complementary relationship between social policy and economic prosperity, placing a particular emphasis on lifelong learning, vulnerable groups and disadvantage (ibid., p. 11). The current framework replaces earlier frameworks which reflected similar priorities. Out of each framework, specific statements of strategy are set out by each individual government department. For example, the current DES *Statement of Strategy* (2011-2013, p. 2) summarises the purpose of the education system as 'to enable learners to achieve their full potential and contribute to

Ireland's economic, social and cultural development'. Other priorities of partnership, accountability and the promotion of best practice are also set out.

The legislative context to enhance and support development frameworks is traditionally set out by way of aspiration within a series of White Papers, aspects of which are then translated into specific Acts before becoming operational within a legislative context. The *White Paper on Education, Charting our Education Future* (1995), the *Education Act*, (1998) and *The Education (Welfare) Act* (2000) have set the aspirational and legislative context for the most recent development framework for schools. It is generally held that the creation of a knowledge economy and the enhancement of social cohesion, equality and diversity have been the central aspirations of the aforementioned policy frameworks (Drudy, 2009; Gleeson, 2006; O' Sullivan, 2005). They have also proposed more specific structural reform to school governance and management systems.

There are a range of additional policy and legislative documents relevant to schools. Of significance is the *National Children's Strategy, Our Children Their Lives* (Department of Children and Youth Affairs, 2000)[6] which emphasises the importance of realising all children's full potential, creating a society where all children are cherished and supported (ibid., p. 32). Particular responsibilities in relation to the protection of children arising out of this strategy are also set out for schools; these responsibilities fall to school leaders and management in particular (DCYA, 2011). Issues of protection and care for children are also legislated for in the *Education (Welfare) Act* (2000), and are set out in a specific section of the *White Paper* (DES, 1995, p. 155-158) More recently, work on issues of 'care' and 'well-

[6] Formerly known as the Department of Health and Children, changed to the Department of Children and Youth Affairs in 2011.

being' for children in post-primary schools has been undertaken by the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA) (2008). The *Education for Persons with Special Educational Needs Act* (EPSEN Act) (Government of Ireland, 2004) complements these developments but with specific application to children with special needs and their inclusion. Although many other additional policy documents are in existence, the above as listed play a central role in situating and providing an overall context for school leadership.

In summary, combining the historical legacies and the current policy context is important in situating school leadership. In particular, the issues of school governance, international influences and the role of the state, place school leadership in a complex and ever-changing context; complex given the diversity of governance structures and influences, changing given the nature and scale of policy making and reform. School leadership however, only became a distinct area of government policy from the 1990s onwards. Up until then it was generally associated with the role of head or principal (IPPN, 2014, p. 9). Prior to the 1990s, issues concerning management of schools were dealt with under what O' Buachalla (1988) describes as the structural dimension of the policy-making process. McDonald (2008, p. 29) in reviewing the historical development of school management in the Irish context, suggests that this function never really amounted to anything other than routine administration responsibilities. Even as many religious orders moved away from direct patronage and leadership roles, they have, in Coolahan's (1994) view, moved to other forms of control. More than a decade later, the OECD (2007, p. 18) held a similar position, suggesting that school ownership, governance and management were significant in terms of the type of role school leaders played. The 1990s however, were to mark a period of unprecedented change, as evidenced in the development of a raft of new polices and reforms. For school leadership, it reflects a period of multiple innovations, policy borrowing and

government intervention. The next section will consider these developments and how their influence has informed and situated the contemporary understanding of school leadership, a context that has not emerged untouched from the historical legacies as outlined.

A New Era for School Leadership

This section will now consider the overall restructuring context following the *National Education Convention* (Coolahan, 1994), its impact on the development of school leadership policy and how, combined with wider policy developments, school leadership is emerging and being experienced in terms of purpose, roles and relationships. Most commentators agree that the period from the 1990s onwards has been the most significant for Irish education, particularly for those involved in teaching, leading and managing within the system (Gleeson, 2006; Sugrue, 2006). In Sugrue's view (2006, p. 186) it was the *Green Paper, Education for a Changing World* (1992), followed by the *National Education Convention* (Coolahan, 1994), where penetration of international discourse, in particular that of the OECD, was most significant. The OECD (1991, p. 44) report on the Irish education system raised a number of issues, but called primarily for increased accountability. The response of the Irish Government was to prepare the *Green Paper* of 1992 and set up the *National Education Convention* to discuss and address the issues raised. The *National Education Convention Report* in 1994 signalled the key areas of change for schools for the next two decades; these were accountability through quality assurance and reform in relation to structures and management, issues of partnership, equality and pluralism. The priorities and aspirations for each were subsequently set out in the *White Paper, Charting our Education Future* (1995). There had been widespread consensus on the need for a radical reappraisal of traditional approaches to education policies to take account of the complexities of modern living and the extension of education to all. Schools now also cater for children from a variety of cultural and religious backgrounds. Up until the early 1990s, schools had

fairly homogeneous pupil populations (Drudy, 2009). The system was stratified along social-class lines within which there were reasonably similar pupil profiles. This has changed with a much wider variety of individual needs and backgrounds (Drudy, 2009).

The major reforms in the Irish system arose within this changing social and political context. They also reflected and were influenced by the reform agenda across Europe (OECD, 2007). Internationally, it is held that particular reforms around restructuring and management, accountability and inclusion through the development of the school as community have affected and changed traditional practices, roles and relationships within schools and their environments (Caldwell & Spinks, 1992; Leithwood et al., 1994; Murphy, 2002). Murphy (2002, p. 177) describes these as the new 'anchors' for school leadership. Such new anchors along with the recognition that the Irish system was over-centralised and that current management structures and skills were not adequate prompted much of the policy change (Coolahan, 1994). In addition, the move away from religious management combined with increased emphasis on accountability gave rise to a period of intensive restructuring, laying new ground for school leadership.

The *White Paper* (1995) set out a framework to inform educational policy and practice into the future. Whilst the State's legitimate role in education was acknowledged, it was made clear that schools could promote their own philosophical values. As previously noted, this was formalised in the *Education Act* (1998) whereby schools could set out their own 'characteristic spirit' as 'determined by the cultural, educational, moral, religious, social, linguistic and spiritual values and traditions which inform and are characteristic of the objectives and conduct of the school' (Government of Ireland, 1998, 15 (2) (b)). This was to be done collectively and in partnership with the whole school community but importantly

against a backdrop of rigorous procedures for evaluation. Also evident from the thrust of the *White Paper* (DES, 1995) was the DES's intention to devolve administration through the promotion of local management and leadership by 'radically devolving administration from the centre, introducing the best management practice at all levels of the system and strengthening policy making' (DES, 1995, p. 139). A number of measures were introduced to support this plan. Boards of Management with statutory functions were set up in each school. *The Education Act* (Section 15) set out exactly what these functions were, broadly summarised as the functions of accountability, reporting and planning but reflecting the characteristic spirit of the school.

In line with this, the role of the Principal was also set on a statutory footing in the *Education Act* (Government of Ireland, 1998).[7] Based on the responsibilities as set out in the *Act*, there were primarily two important dimensions to the role; that of leadership and management. The leadership role was set out in terms of teaching and learning whereby the principal was to assume '...responsibility in accordance with this Act for the instruction provided for students in the school and shall contribute, generally, to the education and personal development of students in the school' (Government of Ireland, 1998, Section (22)). This was to be conducted 'with the teachers' to 'promote co-operation with the community', signalling a collaborative dimension (Government of Ireland, 1998, Section (22) (1), (2)). In terms of the management function, the principal was to be responsible for the day-to-day

[7] The duties of the Principal were set out under *Circular 60/73* prior to this. In both the primary and post- primary systems, all teachers, including principals, are paid by the state but employed directly by their BOMs or intermediary structures, such as the ETBs. Each school has a principal, BOM, and deputy principal (depending on the size of the school), to include a number of posts of responsibility. In the case of primary schools, approximately two-thirds of principals have teaching duties (IPPN, 2014, p.12). This is due to their small size and teacher allocation. Principals with no teaching duties are termed 'administrative principals'. In the case of post-primary, there may be occasions when the principal is timetabled for teaching hours but there is no differentiation in terminology.

management of the school including the guidance and direction of the teachers and staff and be accountable to the BOM (Government of Ireland, 1998, Section 23 (a)). Providing leadership in relation to this function with regard to staff, students and other members through the creation of a school environment supportive of learning was also included in this section (Government of Ireland, 1998, Section 23 (a), (b)).

Influenced by the OECD (1991) report, the *White Paper* (DES, 1995, p. 162) suggested that however 'competent' the principal, he/she would not succeed without delegating to other staff in leadership roles. The Paper indicated the intention for post holders and programme co-ordinators to take on leadership for learning roles and stressed the need for a cohesive in-school management unit. It also made a recommendation for a review of existing posts to provide for teachers to take on an 'instructional leadership' role (DES, 1995, pp. 164, 167). Directives were subsequently issued to schools giving effect to a new in-school management structure for the teachers to assume responsibility for 'instructional' leadership, curriculum development, the management of staff, and academic and pastoral work (DES, Circular, 6/97, 1997). This signalled a significant change in the organisation and operating culture of schools as well as a move towards more distributed and shared responsibilities with middle management and teachers.

Commitment was also given to leadership development in the *White Paper* (DES, 1995), stating that 'by end of the decade all school Principals will have participated in, and be part of, development programmes' (DES, 1995, p. 138). These development programmes were actively followed up with the setting up of the *Leadership Development for Schools Programme* in 2002, positively supported by significant numbers in leadership posts (Morgan & Sugrue, 2008). The *White Paper* (1995, p. 185) had also contained proposals for local

education boards to support schools through the provision of 'management services'. This development did not take place and is noted as being the most contentious part of the proposed reforms (Gleeson, 2006).

It is worth noting that prior to the period of the 1990s very little was actually documented in relation to school leadership, either from a policy or research perspective. Sugrue (2003) outlines how internationally the role of school principal has moved from being predominantly administrative, prior to the 1970s, to predominantly managerial in the 1970s and 1980s, to what is currently a growing acknowledgment that it involves both leadership and managerial functions. Developments in Ireland have followed a similar pattern. *The Education Act* (Government of Ireland, 1998) set out for the first time the responsibilities of the school principal within a leadership and management frame. As a result of this legislation, school leadership has been established as a key component of the education policy framework giving formal and statutory authority to what had previously been ad hoc arrangements. It was in the *Green Paper Education for a Changing World* (DES, 1992) that the language of leadership first entered the official discourse. Since that time, it has continued to penetrate the policy texts. For example, the *DES Statement of Strategy* (2006-2011, p. 6), has as its core priorities the improvement of curriculum, teaching and learning, teacher quality, the quality of school leadership and improved accountability. A number of key policy developments reflect these priorities, in particular that of school leadership. For example, the *Whole School Evaluation* (WSE), (DES, 2011) process set up to provide for and complement the existing school evaluation procedures (DES, 2003) has a very specific focus on the quality of management and leadership which heretofore had not been a significant part of the evaluation process. The type of leadership and management proposed within the new policy framework is also very different to what had been in place previously. For example,

on the role of the principal, a significant contrast in tone exists between the provision of 1973 (DES Circular 06/73), and that of the *Education Act* (1998, Sections (22) and (23)). The former is more disciplining, controlling and supervisory, the latter more developmental and consultative, with leadership being used as a central part of the language. The language of leadership was absent heretofore.

Having set out the process through which school leadership has been established as a key component of education policy and the various policy priorities therein, how school leadership is generally understood and experienced will now be considered through the interpretive lens of purpose, process, role and relationships.

Current Understanding and Experiences of School Leadership

Purpose

How school leadership is contextualised within the broader context of education and social policy has already been given some consideration in the previous section. Underpinning this context is the fundamental issue of school purpose. The *White Paper* (DES, 1995) states that through education, Ireland can 'achieve economic prosperity, social well-being and a good quality of life within a democratically structured society' (DES, 1995, p. 13). In line with this overarching objective, schools are entitled and empowered to nurture and promote their own particular values, traditions and character (DES, 1995, p. 12). Taken uncritically, the *White Paper* appears to delineate a broad and holistic context, encompassing economic, social and personal goals in addition to those values each school deems appropriate. However, it is contended that the general emphasis of subsequent policies and directives for schools has been less attentive to the more social and personal elements,

affording greater credence to the more functionalist elements of outcomes and performativity (Drudy, 2009; Drudy & Lynch, 1993; Gleeson, 2006; Healy & Reynolds, 2008; Sugrue, 2006). Drudy (2009, pp. 49-50), reflecting on influences from the OECD, suggests that in the main it is the language of performativity, performance indicators, standards and appraisal as evidenced in their own policy texts, that have had the more significant impact in the Irish context. International perspectives would support this view (Ball, 2008).

As set out in Chapter 1, the language of performativity and outcomes is associated with the *school effectiveness* movement, a movement which has given credence to the instructional leadership model. Recourse to the language of *school effectiveness* and references to instructional leadership can be seen in the Irish policy framework from the early 1990s. For example, the *White Paper* (DES, 1995, p. 161) states that the 'achievement of school effectiveness depends crucially on the leadership offered by experienced and skilled principals supported by vice- principals and post-holders'. This in turn is linked to performativity, where the *White Paper* states that this is for the purpose of '... more effective running of schools, improving the provision of educational programmes, facilitating the identification of performance targets against which to measure the achievement of educational objectives' (DES, 1995, p. 161). Whilst certain aspects of policy acknowledge a broader, more holistic role for schools, schools and school leaders are encouraged to focus more sharply 'on outcomes and associated measures of performance and effectiveness' (ibid., p. 203).

School leadership is again situated within a *school effectiveness* frame in the *Report of the National Education Convention* (Coolahan, 1994, p. 42) which emphasises the link between positive school leadership and 'institutional effectiveness', and describes the

successful principal as someone who provides 'skilled instructional leadership, creating a supportive school climate towards maximising academic learning, establishing good systems of monitoring student performance and achievement' (Coolahan, 1994, p. 42). In reviewing the developments around the introduction of the WSE processes, Sugrue (2006) suggests that following considerable debate with the education partners, teachers and unions, the language used in the final DES guidelines softened from *school effectiveness* to *school improvement,* as is evidenced in the emphasis contained within the document on a wider set of school processes than had been originally intended (Sugrue, 2006).

More recent policies on self-evaluation for schools have looked at the effectiveness of leadership for learning in addition to the school as a learning community (DES, 2011b, Section 12, p. 22). Whilst this policy document states that it is not promoting a particular model or style, it stresses the importance of 'instructional and personal' leadership when it comes to the motivation and support of staff (DES, 2011, p. 22). As noted in Chapter 1, how the terms 'instructional leadership', 'educative leadership' and 'pedagogical leadership' have been used and exchanged within the international policy context has led to a certain lack of clarity in relation to how school leadership is ultimately situated (Sergiovanni, 1998; Webb, 2005). Although, in the Irish context, the policy framework makes it clear that within each school, it is the principal with the Board of Management and the in-school management team who are responsible for the direction of the curriculum, how this is to be achieved remains unclear. Some commentators suggest that there are limitations in terms of how the 'leadership for learning role' or 'instructional role' can be fully carried out in the Irish context, given that the system has no formal structures or arrangements in relation to teacher observation or coaching, and written examinations drive the teaching and learning process at post-primary level (Gleeson, 2004; Sugrue, 2006). In Sugrue's (2006) view, the historical

legacy of assessment is still deeply embedded in the Irish system and it is this legacy that continues to influence how school leadership is situated.

Whilst the question of school leadership purpose merits much deeper scrutiny, the evidence drawn from the policy and research available tentatively points to a 'leadership for learning' or 'instructional leadership' approach. Particular responsibilities associated with these approaches have been set out such as 'building of a learning community', to include the 'promotion of partnership and collegiality and trust' (DES, 1995, p. 140).

Process

The legislative and evaluation framework for schools also gives consideration to what leaders are expected to do. Much of what can be understood about school leadership activity can be taken from this prescriptive framework. The use of the term *prescriptive* generally assumes a leader appointed to a role with tasks prescribed (Gunter, 2001, p. 150) and is considered to be the dominant policy frame for school leadership internationally (Goodson, 2005). At one level, such prescriptions can give leadership its expression, but at another, the actual practice of leadership is known to be much more complex and diverse, extending beyond what can be set down as a prescription (Gunter, 2001; Copland, 2001).

Bearing this in mind, the functions and responsibilities of the principal, considered as a school leader, and as set out in the *Education Act* (Government of Ireland, 1998, Section (22) and (23)), are wide ranging. They range from instructional leadership to aspects of the social and personal development of young people and finally, to evaluation, reporting, financial, resource and staff management. In carrying out such duties the principal is obliged to consult with teachers and other stakeholders. Provision for a parents and students council

must also be made (Government of Ireland, 1998, Sections (26) and (27)). Additional responsibilities and functions are set out in the *Education (Welfare) Act* (2000) and the *Education for Persons with Special Educational Needs Act* (2004). More specific functions and responsibilities can be prescribed from time to time through DES circulars.

The evaluative framework for schools is set out in the WSE guidelines previously referred to (DES, 2003, 2011b). In addition to evaluating the instructional and personal leadership of staff in the school, how planning, communication, co-operation and collaboration are conducted both within school and externally are key reference points in these evaluations. Whilst the WSE processes with their emphasis on leadership have been generally received quite positively (Irish National Teachers Union (INTO), 2009; Irish Primary Principals Network (IPPN), 2006, 2014), principals have experienced a certain loss of passion for the role and have lost inner purpose, motivation and meaning; these troubling developments have been associated with the 'unleashing' of 'relentless' policies and regulations (Sugrue, 2005, p. 12). This situation mirrors the international picture where endless tasks and functions are leading to principal burnout, stress and demotivation (Copland, 2001; Gronn, 2003). Given all of the duties prescribed, the IPPN's (2002) research in the primary sector concluded that it was very difficult to set out the exact scope of the work in all of its complexities. In general, the degree of regulation and increased work load associated with new policies is deemed to be problematic; problematic in terms of burnout, recruitment and succession, reflecting very much the international and national picture (ETUCE, 2012; McDonald, 2008).

And yet school principals themselves have been able to identify some of the 'intrinsic' elements of leadership work as they see them. These elements include 'making a

difference in pupils lives', 'developing school ethos', 'work with colleagues' (Morgan & Sugrue, 2008; Price Waterhouse Cooper (PWC), 2009). These elements have also been found to be the more positive and affirming ones. The IPPN (2006) also found that school principals were keen to influence school culture and that they had a desire to become leaders of their communities, thus indicating a positive response to the 'school as community' dimension of their work. In a further study, school principals identified fostering a climate of welcome, warmth, discipline, care, collaboration, mutual support as a central part of their role, but it was noted that more time needed to be given to developing the climate for this type of work (IPPN, 2014, p. 23). The leadership for learning role has been found to be the most neglected aspect of school leaders' work, most especially at post-primary level (OECD, 2007). It is, however, one to which school principals would like to give more time (IPPN, 2002, 2006; Morgan & Sugrue, 2008; PCW, 2009). Time given to the heavy burden of management tasks has been identified as a problem in all of these studies, reflecting the international picture (Copland, 2001).

In the Irish policy context, it is difficult to disassociate the leadership functions from those of management. It is significant that the language of policy alternates between leadership and management in the same context. Whilst at one level this reflects the dual functions associated with the school principal's role, it also hints at a fundamental contradiction evident in school leadership policy and discourse internationally. The interchangeable and inconsistent use of the terms 'leadership' and 'management' in policy texts is pervasive (Coleman & Earley, 2005; Gunter, 2001). The OECD (2007, p. 18) report on leadership in Ireland, noted that, in its official documents, the DES uses the phrase 'school management' more often than the phrase 'school leadership' This has also contributed to

what has been described as role 'ambiguity' with regard to the interchange of leadership and management functions and language (IPPN, 2002; McDonald, 2008).

Role

Reflecting the international picture, the question of how the leadership role is understood in the Irish context is equally complex. Neither the *White Paper* (1995) nor the *Education Act* (1998) uses the term 'leadership' in a distributed fashion, but it could be argued that this is the intended meaning. Studies that have looked at this particular aspect of Irish educational policy documents would concur that distribution is intended as the operational paradigm (McDonald, 2008; O' Hanlon, 2008; Humphries, 2010). The move to a distributed perspective very much reflects international developments, something that has already been outlined in Chapter 1. These developments signal a move away from modes of leadership that are associated with just one person, the principal, to more distributed and collaborative forms (Gronn, 2000; Mulford, 2008; Spillane, 2006). What has informed and driven leadership in this direction is the view that enhanced leadership capacity can improve schooling over time while at the same time relieving the burden on the principal (Gronn, 2003). The latter perspective is considered to have had more influence in the Irish context (Coolahan, 1994; Herron, 1994; Humphries, 2010).

In relation to specific aspects of policy, there is frequent mention of the in-school management team and collaborative approaches within official documents. For example, arising out of the *White Paper* (DES, 1995), a new in-school management structure was proposed. This new structure was designed to create a culture of shared responsibility around key areas of pastoral and academic work (DES, Circular, 6/97, 1997). How this might be given effect in schools has been the subject of enquiry and interest. For example, from the

IPPN (2002) research, the principals surveyed saw the development of other leaders in the school as part of their instructional leadership role. Other work has signalled the sharing of responsibilities and leadership within the school community as part of the development of in-school management functions (Humphries, 2010; O' Hanlon, 2008). In many situations, however, where delegation was used to simply 'relieve' principals of administrative tasks, the leadership structure was still viewed as 'distributive', suggesting perhaps a lack of real understanding of the term (IPPN, 2003). Apart from the varying interpretations of 'distribution', this model of leadership has been found to be problematic and beneficial; problematic in terms of the low level of engagement on the part of some teachers and beneficial in terms of the delegation of tasks and relieving the burden for principals (IPPN, 2003, p. 15). Furthermore, recent research by the IPPN (2014) found that the model was working well in some schools but not in others, suggesting that perhaps it has not reached its full potential. This divergence would reflect the context internationally where distributed leadership can take many forms and receive many interpretations, from 'shared' to 'delegated', depending on the school situation (Gronn, 2003; Mulford, 2008). In line with this, the IPPN study (2003) concluded that what was required was a change of culture to facilitate any meaningful transformation towards a real distributed perspective (IPPN, 2003, p. 14). The OECD (2007) placed school type, in terms of culture and governance, as another possible inhibiting factor in the development of distributed leadership.

However, despite the increasing emphasis on collaboration and distribution, it is contended that the school principal continues, in most instances, to be the embodiment of leadership (Sugrue & Furlong, 2002; OECD, 2007, p. 18). Why this is the case is something that can be attributed to a number of factors. To begin with, it is difficult to enact real distributed leadership (Spillane, 2006). It has been found to be time-consuming and not

always understood as is intended (Humphries, 2010). In practice it can become more about spreading the burden of tasks (Ribbons & Gunter, 2002, p. 333). Also, within the Irish legislative framework for regulation and governance, the school principal remains the primary 'role' in terms of accountability. This has been found to preclude any real devolution of responsibility around certain functions (IPPN, 2002; OECD, 2007, p. 19). In addition, the functions of school principal as set out must be done 'in accordance' with and 'on behalf' of the patrons as well as 'reflecting the desires of' the parents, BOMs or trustees and also in line with the DES regulations as appropriate (Government of Ireland, 1998, Section 23 (E)). Gleeson (2006), in his analysis of the *Education Act* (1998) draws attention to the increasing levels of accountability and legislative compliance, centralised control of exams, resources and curriculum development as the overall regulatory framework for school leadership. In his view, these is a source of tension with regard to what he considers the broader 'instructional leadership' role provided for under Section (22) and the regulatory role provided for under Section (23) contained in that Act (1998). Chapter 1 has documented similar tensions internationally in relation to where state policy has positioned school leaders (Gronn, 2003; Gunter, 2001; Mulford, 2008; Spillane, 2004).

Relationships

Restructuring continues to transform the social, educational, political and economic environment both inside and outside the school (Dimmock, 1996). In relation to the culture and environment of schools internationally, there is increasing interest in and emphasis on parental and community involvement as a strategy for improving education. This is primarily because parent and community involvement have been deemed to be critical to school improvement efforts, governance and partnership (Townsend, 1994). As has been outlined in Chapter 1, critical changes are emerging in the awareness of the relationships between principals and external constituencies (Dimmock, 1996; Townsend, 1994) and internal (Day

et al., 2011; Fullan, 2001; Harris & Muijs, 2005). This is reflected within the Irish policy context. The relational element adds another very important dimension to the understanding of school leadership in the Irish context. How the school as community has been placed as a key policy paradigm further enhances the relational dimension. To complement this, the *Teaching Council Act* (2001, p. 7), in acknowledging the educational leadership role of teachers, extends their responsibility to working collaboratively with colleagues outside of the classroom. This collaboration is not just in relation to the quality of education provision but also concerns the building of collegiality in the school, with a view to developing and supporting the school as a community (2001, p. 19).

Following on from the *school as community* as a central policy feature it is apparent in the language and aspiration of a range of policy documents including: (1) the *Education Act* (1998); (2) the *White Paper* (1995) and subsequent developments, in particular the *Transition Year Guidelines* (1995); (3) *Looking at our Schools: A Guide to Self-Evaluation* (DES, 2003); (4) *A Guide to Whole School Evaluation/Management in Leadership and Learning* (DES, 2011b); and (5) *the Inclusion of Students with Special Educational Needs: Post-primary Guidelines* (DES, 2007), that this *community building* is meant to involve staff, parents, students, BOMs and other partners in the community. The building of the necessary relationships is a central feature of school leadership in this context, and is acknowledged as one of the most challenging aspects of the work but also as one of the most rewarding; it has been viewed as intrinsic to the whole process of leadership (IPPN, 2002; Morgan & Sugrue, 2008). The centrality of this aspect of leadership work is also reflected in the move towards a more inclusive learning environment and the objective of fostering 'a safe and purposeful' environment for all students (DES, 2008). It is generally acknowledged in the leadership literature that schools must be places where strong working relationships are forged

(Donaldson, 2006; Fullan, 2009; MacBeath, 2005). Considered in the Irish context, such relationships appear to be two-fold: relationships that are necessary in the sharing and distribution of leadership; and relationship building in the context of the whole school community, with a view to setting out and achieving the overall objectives of the school.

It is not easy to ascertain how school leaders relate to one another as members of a professional community. This study has not been able to identify any research on this dimension of the role of school leaders in the Irish context. Historically there have been associations and networks. More recently, we have seen the establishment of the Irish Primary Principals Network (IPPN) and the National Association for Principals and Deputy Principals (NAPD) for post-primary. Most school principals and deputies are represented through respective trade unions.

Conclusion

This chapter set out to examine the current context of school leadership in Ireland. It gave initial consideration to patterns of ownership, management, church influence and associated conservatism in the Irish education system (Coolahan, 1981; Drudy & Lynch, 1993; O' Sullivan, 2005) in an effort to describe the unique context in which a potentially distinctive Irish version of school leadership has evolved. It drew attention to international influences, various sectional interests and the role of the state, noting the impact they have had on various policy documents and the policy-making process. The chapter also underlined the fact that school leadership is central to education policy, and is considered worthy of investment and further development. It noted that school principals tend to be highly motivated and passionate about the very aspects of their role that make it central to education

policy, i.e., creating an inclusive learning environment and a sense of school as a learning environment. It also pointed out that principals strive to be exemplary leaders of learning (IPPN, 2006). Described as the more 'intrinsic' elements of the work of school leadership, the leadership for learning role, the building of community and collaborative dimensions as well as the overarching goal of making a difference to students continue to draw teachers to positions of leadership (IPPN, 2006). It has been suggested that school leaders themselves recognise the complexity of their role and have availed of opportunities for professional development and other network opportunities through various representative bodies and associations both historically and more recently through the IPPN and NAPD.

There is a rapidly changing context in Irish education, where issues of diversity, disadvantage and more recently care and well-being are very much to the fore. It is evident to those occupying leadership roles that these issues arise in a context that is ethically charged (Dempster & Berry, 2003). Schools are in positions of substantial moral responsibility in this regard. However, there is certain incongruence between this moral context and policy prescriptions for school leadership. Reflecting international thinking, as outlined in Chapter 1, the moral dimension of the work remains somewhat on the margins of policy, even though it is central to the day-to-day work of school leaders.

Research has shown that the management dimension of the role of school principal is considered the most time consuming, whereas the leadership dimension is considered the most important and rewarding (Morgan & Sugrue, 2008, p. 13). School leaders are drawn to the challenges posed by diversity, and to the ideas of care, community, collaboration and pedagogy. The realisation that the time and attention given to management limits the time and attention that principals can devote to these important challenges and ideas has given rise

to frustration and tension; frustration where principals are trying to deliver on what they see as their own aspirations for leadership (IPPN, 2002, p. 13); tension in terms of the management accountability framework (Gleeson, 2004). The language of policy, although acknowledging the centrality of leadership, is not consistent in the approaches that are advocated (OECD, 2007). This lack of coherence not only impacts on the role and work of the principal, but also on others occupying leadership positions (IPPN, 2002). This leader versus manager issue is a noted point of tension in international research, reflecting a lack of shared conceptual tools with which to understand school leadership (Day et al., 2000).

The absence of a coherent understanding of school leadership has also been identified in the international context giving rise to challenges in relation to professional development and recruitment of school leaders (Webb, 2005). This situation is mirrored in the Irish context. Grummell et al. (2009) have identified the area of recruitment of school leaders as signalling not only deeply embedded views on the nature of leadership but current misconceptions as well. The absence of any clear framework to recruit and evaluate school leaders has been identified as a point for future development (IPPN, 2002; Sugrue & Furlong, 2002). Of significance is that there is a strong signal from school principals themselves that the leadership elements of their work are the most important (IPPN, 2012). Chapter 3 will now turn to consider these issues in more detail, drawing attention to how they are reflected within the international context and to the possibility of drawing from the more positive elements of leadership work to develop a much richer and coherent orientation than currently exists.

CHAPTER 3

SCHOOL LEADERSHIP AND THE EMERGING QUESTIONS

Introduction

Drawing from the insights gained in Chapters 1 and 2, the key question of purpose within school leadership will be examined in this chapter. The chapter will link the question of purpose to the question of practice or practices. It will avail of important insights from MacIntyre's work on practice in illuminating the purpose of school leadership as a practice. The view that leadership is multi-faceted, complex and a source of many different, often competing perspectives is a familiar one (Yukl, 2002). Such a view has been reinforced by the exploration of school leadership in Chapter 1, where the study has documented how current school leadership models and approaches represent a diversity of circumstances, contexts and theoretical fields. In employing a conceptual frame of purpose, process, roles and relationships, this complexity has been set out, in particular the differing and competing views of purpose which have given rise to many different and incoherent views of practice.

The many ideas permeating the field of school leadership have also both influenced and been influenced by a wider policy context, in particular how education and schools are viewed at any given time. Chapter 1 has evidenced how the moral purpose and ethical context of schools has been less than prominent in this policy context. As Chapter 2 has indicated, there are historical, international and social forces at play in the Irish policy context, providing school leadership in Ireland with much of its current orientation, where challenges of purpose and practice are also evident. In addition, a significant body of research has shown that school leaders are very busy in their roles, not always finding the

time in their day-to-day work to reflect on what they are doing, why they are doing it or indeed whether they are doing it well.

In drawing all of these findings together it is evident that what is at issue is not just the question of competing purpose but also, (1) a lack of attention to moral purpose, (2) the absence of a coherent sense of practice, in particular how the leadership role and relational elements are viewed, with each approach as documented in Chapter 1 having its own understandings of these dimensions, and finally (3) the fact that what constitutes good leadership and doing well as a leader carry very different meanings depending on what school leadership approach is taken. Whilst the study acknowledges the merit and contributions the more established approaches have made, it equally suggests that the many questions and uncertainties around purpose, coherence in practice and what is considered to be good leadership, warrant the exploration of a different orientation.

There are certain precedents for this re-orientation. There is a growing sense that education and its practices have become subordinated to outcomes and to purposes associated with the educational reforms of the last few decades, and that little consideration has been given to the possibility that education and its practices have inherent purposes of their own (Dunne, 2004; Hogan, 2011). Hogan (2011, p. 28) identifies the imperatives of performance management, the over-emphasis on quantifiable outcomes and what he refers to as 'large-scale individualism of rewards', all leading to somewhat of an ethical vacuum. This study is interested in attempting to relate these findings to the current vacuum in school leadership development and cultivation. International research has pointed to a future where problems of school leadership retention, succession and development are likely to surface. On the one hand, evidence of work overload, stress and burnout is abundant while on the other, school

leaders are still being drawn to the role. Following Hogan and Dunne, could there be an emergent opportunity to explore school leadership as a possible practice in its own right with its own distinctive purpose, and in finding that purpose could it inform and enhance school leadership practice in a manner that is different to what is currently understood?

In order to advance this proposition, the first part of this chapter will place the questions of purpose, coherence and good more firmly within the school leadership context, drawing from both contemporary debates and the views and experiences of school leaders themselves. The next section will move on to present a case for a return to the language and perspective of practice, explaining why Alasdair MacIntyre's account and understanding of practices is the appropriate lens for the issues at hand. Chapters 4 and 5 will then explore MacIntyre's account of practice as it relates to school leadership with a view to arriving at a framework for cultivating school leadership as a practice in a manner that is more coherent with the situational context of schools. In selecting Alasdair MacIntyre, the study is aligning itself with those writers who emphasise the importance of ethically rich actions and notions of care, the good and co-operation in the area of school leadership. Acknowledged as one of the most influential philosophers of our time, MacIntyre's account of practices has a particular appeal and real application in the world of education (Dunne, 2004; Hogan, 2004; Horton & Mendus, 1994; Smith, 1989). In addition, there is a natural draw to his theory, which connects well with the role, relational and co-operative dimensions of school leadership, whilst at the same time addressing its broader moral and ethical context (Holmes, 1992; Foster, 1989).

School Leadership – Issues of Purpose, Coherence and Good

The Question of Purpose

It is noteworthy that Yukl (2002) contends that the situational aspect of leadership is both its most important aspect and its most contentious; it is important in that it influences all other aspects, affecting how leadership is carried out; it is contentious when it comes to the way in which the core purpose of the situation (or context) is viewed. Hunt (2004) has further developed this point with regard to leadership and the nature of the situation, identifying purpose as one of the most significant antecedents in mediating all aspects of leadership. There is, however, a growing sense that the school leadership field finds itself divorced from the real context and circumstance of school (Cuban, 2003; Sergiovanni, 2007; Sugrue, 2009). In terms of school leadership approaches currently in use, these writers would hold that the differences between schools and other organisations have not been adequately taken into account. Sergiovanni (2007), in considering this problem, argues that not enough attention has been paid to the question of substance or purpose of leadership appropriate and relevant to the school context. In his view, much of the thinking within the school leadership literature has overemphasised leadership styles, behaviours and characteristics at the expense of considerations of purpose. In earlier work he suggests that school leaders have been put under pressure to take on certain approaches without the necessary reflection on purpose or the context in which they find themselves (Sergiovanni, 1996, p. xiii).

There is a growing sense that the moral purpose and moral dimension of the work of school leaders has been lost sight of within the policy context; and yet it is this aspect that remains central to the day-to-day work of school leaders and ultimately to their purpose (Webb, 2005). Hodgkinson (2003, p. 223) argues for a moral or 'axiological' perspective on educational administration. In his view it is only when this perspective is taken into account

that the reality of the work of school leaders is properly reflected. His contention is that now more than ever a concern for the larger purpose of being human is needed, and this concern should form the essence of administration at school level (2003, p. 228). Begley (2003) suggests that it is only through values-informed leadership that school leaders can actually respond to the real contexts and situations within schools. Versions of leadership for schools have borrowed heavily on and emanated from the general leadership policy and theoretical frameworks commonly associated with organisations other than schools. This practice is questioned by those who suggest that the institutions of education are distinguished by their moral aspect (Hodgkinson, 1991; Sergiovanni, 1992, 2007; Starratt, 2004). These writers share common ground with those who contend that all organisations are value driven in some form or another, but that there is a distinguishing moral and ethical quality to the educational institution, which leadership literature of a general kind cannot address (Cuban, 1988; Duignan, 2006; Sergiovanni, 1992). This raises the question of how the purpose of school leadership is generally conceived. As Chapter 1 has tried to show, most approaches do not address the deeper questions of purpose and values although, as many would argue, such questions ought to be at the centre (Duignan & Mac Pherson, 1992). Campbell (1996) and Gunter, (2001) contend that within policy formulation generally, there is a reluctance to address deeper questions of purpose and as a result the orientation of school leadership policy has tended to be more technical and outcomes based.

The Question of Coherence

The debates around the purpose of school leadership remind us that there is a lack of coherence between the various policy paradigms and school leadership as it happens in practice (Gronn, 2003; Mc Cutcheon, 2009; Spillane, 2004; Spillane et al., 2001, 2004; Sugrue, 2003, 2005a). Of course, Chapter 1 has already reviewed the diverse ways in which the leadership process has been described and articulated. It tried to show that those

descriptions do not represent a unified or coherent sense of school leadership work. Further, many of the associated prescriptions say what leaders should do, without making reference to the complexity of the school context (Gunter, 2001).

Why this lack of coherence exists can be attributed to a number of factors. In the first instance, many of the influences within school leadership have come directly from the management field and as a result a lack of distinction between leadership and management often exists (Day et al., 2000; Grace, 2002). This is further compounded by the interplay between the terms leadership and management within policy and leadership texts and the lack of distinction even in day-to-day speech. For example, Hodgkinson (1999) points out how the literature sometimes treats management and leadership as two separate concepts whilst on other occasions treats management as a sub-set of leadership. In other instances managerial leadership has been considered as a leadership style in itself (Leithwood et al., 1999). Chapter 2 has documented this confusion in the Irish context, with the terms 'management' and 'leadership' often used interchangeably without any clear distinction being made. In line with Gronn, (1999a, 2003) where he considers leadership and management to be two distinct and complex action systems, each with its own implementation process, leadership needs to move away from the management field in considering its own distinctiveness. Yukl (2002), in addressing the various conceptual dilemmas and ambiguities facing the leadership field generally, considers the confusion between conceptualisations of leadership and management to be a significant problem.

Other incoherencies in the field are evident in approaches to school leadership stemming from other sectors which have not emerged from a school context, therefore not cohering very well with the work of schools. Issues of narrowness of purpose, the absence of

understanding of the real and complex work of school leaders as well as insufficient attention to moral and ethical considerations have been identified within the various approaches set out in Chapter 1. What is also of relevance is the policy context. Sugrue, (2009) outlines how the drive for educational reform has orientated school leadership towards solutions, practices and roles that are not always coherent with the reality of schools, prescribing what school leaders should do but not necessarily reflecting the way school leadership work is actually carried out.

Criticisms have also been made about enquiry into school leadership. The writings of Gronn, (1999a, 2003) and Young and Lopez, (2005) consider that school leadership research has been constrained by theoretical and methodological tools which have not taken into account the complexity of school leadership nor have they been particularly helpful in terms of understanding the work and practice of leaders. There have been some exceptions. McCutcheon's (2009) research on school leadership in an Irish primary school attempts to capture the actual practice of leadership within this context. This research points to work that remains unpredictable, requiring school leaders to make individual judgements in the complex situations they are likely to encounter. The issue for this study is to consider a possible orientation for school leadership that will take these complexities into account.

Good Practice and Doing Well

It is generally acknowledged that the question of good practice and doing well is underdeveloped in education (Carr, 2004; Noddings, 2004). This is also the case within school leadership. There is no one coherent view of what counts for good school leadership, doing well and ultimately what it means to be a good school leader. Arising out of the divergence of views on questions of purpose within school leadership, the existence of a

similar divergence on what constitutes good school leadership is inevitable. Despite the many developments in the field, Leithwood et al. (1999) acknowledge that the challenge of knowing and describing what makes for good school leadership still exists. The research field of school leadership demonstrates no shortage of empirical work on the question of effective leadership behaviours, characteristics, strategies, performances and outcomes (Gunter, 2001) but there still remains a difficulty in evaluating 'outcomes' of a qualitatively different kind. This is particularly the case if we are concerned with school leadership and school leaders within a moral or ethical context.

Many of the standardised capabilities frameworks for evaluating school leaders and their work have emerged out of an empirical research context and have been criticised with regard to their failure to reflect the actual scope and breadth of school leadership work (Gunter, 2001; Gronn, 2003) The absence of a focus on moral or ethical considerations has been noted (Hodgkinson, 1999). Part of the issue is that such frameworks tend to emerge from performance- and outcome-based criteria and purposes that have been determined and set by the particular policy context at any given time. Chapter 1 has set out the most predominant of these approaches. How a school leader might be considered to be doing well varies depending on the approach in question. As a result, there is little to help school leaders in reflecting on questions of good and doing well in a coherent and consistent manner. In Webb's (2005) view there is a significant challenge in evaluating and judging what she describes as the real work of school leaders in all of its dimensions. A number of reasons for this have been identified. Duignan and Mac Pherson (1992, p. 1) point to the distinct absence of a language of school leadership from a more ethical or moral context. With more conceptual clarity around the work and practice of school leaders, it is their view that the question of what constitutes good leadership could more easily be addressed. A second more

challenging issue is the question of how school leaders and their work can actually be evaluated, reflected upon and judged and for what purpose (Duncan & Riley, 2002, p. 66). Grace (1995) suggests that the tendency has been to focus on performance management approaches rather than considering evaluative questions in a more developmental way. School leaders are held to high standards of performance as they address all of the challenges of school improvement, change, regulation and diversity, obliging them to master many things. With so many demands, how school leaders are enabled to evaluate, reflect and improve on their work requires a rethink. The field is in need of new ways and new criteria to evaluate and also for more consideration to be given to how such evaluation can be brought to bear on questions of actual practice.

Confronting the well-documented and persistent issues surrounding purpose, coherence and what makes for good school leadership, is on the one hand a daunting challenge, but on the other, a necessary exercise. Without the appropriate philosophical reflection, the current impasse will become entrenched, and those who take on school leadership roles in the future will find themselves in difficulties and ultimately disengaged. The objective of this study is to go some way towards confronting these very challenging issues and look to a possible new way of conceptualising school leadership, one that might provide a more adequate sense of purpose, coherence and what it means to do well. How this can be addressed is the focus of the next section.

Why Practice and Alasdair MacIntyre?

According to Schwab (1969, p. 1), all fields of enquiry at some stage are subject to 'conditions of crisis' which can manifest in many ways. In drawing from what he perceives to be a crisis in curriculum development, he gives the particular examples of (1) experiences

of incoherencies and contradictions; (2) arriving at solutions not appropriate to the context; (3) incapacity to respond to a particular set of circumstances which is often coupled with a sense of growing practitioner unease and frustration, as the manifestations of this crisis. It is also his view that such situations can be more acute within a field that is relatively new, where fundamental principles may not be fully tested and challenged, with problems not really solved or even identified (Schwab, 1969, p. 1). The field of school leadership is also relatively new; it has borrowed heavily from other theoretical fields and has continued to operate on the basis of limited and often competing conceptions of what it is. For Schwab (1969) the difficulty with curriculum development work was that in borrowing heavily from other fields, inadequate forms of conceptualising and describing it emerged. In order to address this issue, he suggested a return to the philosophy of practice with a view to developing a practice-oriented account of curriculum work which would capture what it was actually like. This study holds a similar view with regard to school leadership. It advocates a return to the philosophy of practice in order to give consideration to an account of leadership emerging from the real situation and context of schools while at the same time capturing what school leadership work is actually like.

In reflecting on the school leadership literature and education in general, where similar arguments to Schwab's have been presented, a number of ideas emerge on how such an account can best be advanced. Sergiovanni (2007, p. 116) suggests that a practice perspective might serve to move leadership away from being associated with styles, positions and particular tasks and towards a more coherent sense of an activity that fits into a much-needed overall 'big idea' or context of what is best for schools. Jacobson et al. (1996), in considering questions of alternative conceptualisations to the traditional scientific and craft views of school leadership which they deem to be inadequate, also recommend a more

practice-oriented theory. Also of note is the research work that Jones carried out with a number of school principals (1987). At the start of the major change agenda in education policy where school leadership came to the fore, it was this work that suggested a new kind of conceptual map which could put the dimensions of purpose, process and role together and make sense of them. According to Jones (1987), a conceptual map of this nature would also provide a framework to illuminate, explain, legitimise and clarify what is happening as school leaders go about their work. Her contention was that if this were available to *heads* they might feel more confident and less defeated and defensive when setting about this work.

It is evident that there is a desire to bring to the fore the moral orientation of school leadership. If schools are recognised as places where issues of care, well-being and the overall development of the child are central (Adelman, 1989; Langford, 1989; Noddings, 1992, 2004) consideration of a greater sense of the good and ethical informing the purpose and practice of school leadership must be part of this project. Carr (2004) suggests that because of education's profoundly moral and normative character, it is more appropriate to define its activities as practices rooted in virtue rather than technical skills. Many of the current, generic leadership policies and frameworks as we know them do not reflect questions of moral and ethical purpose and responsibility (Begley, 1999; Hodgkinson, 1999; Sergiovanni, 2007; Starratt, 2004). In considering some of these current frameworks, Hodgkinson (1999, p. 19) identifies the need to move away from *reductio ad absurdum*, that is, reducing school leadership to endless 'tasks and anecdotes' and towards more important questions of values and judgement. In a further work he contends that an ethical perspective of this nature has the potential to bring about *praxis* in the field (Hodgkinson, 2003). In supporting this position, Begley (1999) has suggested an account of leadership that would prompt thinking in relation to larger moral and ethical issues as opposed to trying to side-step

them. He goes on to suggest a type of school leadership practice that can enable leaders respond to the real and complex issues that face them (Begley, 2003). Many of the dilemmas to which school leaders must respond are ethical in their origin, particularly as they struggle with the competing imperatives of performativity against broader issues of care, equity and inclusion (Webb, 2005). To date these latter considerations have received less attention across all aspects of policy than those of performance and outcome (Duignan, 2006; Grummell et al., 2009; Sergiovanni, 1982; Sergiovanni & Moore, 1989; MacBeath, 2002). In contending that the practice of school leadership needs to move beyond the task of 'keeping the ship afloat', Duignan (2006) and Starratt (2004) agree with the idea of 'something greater' as a core context for school leadership and suggest that perhaps this something greater might warrant a virtue ethics approach.

It is for all of these reasons that the study has directed itself towards the philosophy of Alasdair MacIntyre as the lens through which a 'big idea' or distinctiveness of purpose for school leadership can be explored, one that might best reflect the real work of school leaders in all its complexities. Some have suggested that the work of Alasdair MacIntyre provides a conception of practice which offers 'a coherent, overall, holistic vision' that is applicable to particular domains of activity within education (McLaughlin, 2004, p. 50). Hogan (2004), in agreeing with this suggestion, adds that MacIntyre's theory has the potential to inspire new ways of thinking about practices as well as raising important questions. Foster (1989) in considering how school leadership has become tied up and often confused with management science, suggests that an exploration of MacIntyre's notion of internal goods as applied to school leadership might help unravel much of the confusion associated with the leadership/management debate.

Important too, for this study, are MacIntyre's other characteristic positions on the indispensability of both intellectual and moral virtues, his critique of western modernity and its emphasis on individualism, his belief in the narrative of human life and the concept of *human flourishing*. Such positions form the overall context for his account of practices. His views on education are also very rich, affirming its moral purpose and its role in both the care and development of young people. This study is not necessarily looking to MacIntyre for answers to its questions around school leadership; it is drawn rather to the new way of looking at positions of responsibility that his theory introduces. The idea is to look at school leadership as a 'practice', in MacIntyre's sense of the term. MacIntyre's criticisms of the type of roles available, in contemporary society, resonate with some of the criticisms of current thinking in education and school leadership that we have been considering. He contends that many occupations have become overly prescriptive and technical. His concern is with an over-regulation of action, where little room is left for necessary responsiveness and judgement essential to the wider moral purpose of practices (MacIntyre, 2007).

It is important to note that the study is not looking for a great theory to transform the field. Neither is it hoping to develop a 'code of practice' or 'ethics'. Its primary intention is to inform, guide and provide a more coherent framework for development and cultivation of school leadership; one that might go some way in helping to address the current impasse. Although there are deeply embedded views of school leadership influencing who we appoint, how we evaluate and how we work (Grummell et al., 2009; Sugrue, 2005a, 2005b; Sugrue & Furlong, 2002), there is also a recognition that school leadership is centrally important to the overall success of our school system. The study contends that what is needed is a version of school leadership that can have real application in a context of care, equity and diversity as well as the enrichment of learning. It is hoped that such a version of school leadership would

enable school leaders to work and practise in the complex and demanding contexts in which they find themselves and in a way that allows them to feel positive about their practice and to understand what it means to be a good practitioner.

Conclusion

This chapter has put forward the idea of exploring a practice orientation for school leadership. In advancing this idea it has set out the precedence for such an orientation within education, in particular for activities that carry responsibility of a moral or ethical kind. In selecting the practice account of Alasdair MacIntyre, the relevance of this account to education and its associated practices has been considered. What has also drawn the study to his work are the questions of purpose, coherence and doing well; such questions within school leadership are in need of attention to which MacIntyre's account might direct us in a new and fresh way. Consonant with the leadership landscape as we know it, Chapter 4 will now consider the possibilities for school leadership as a practice in the manner that MacIntyre would intend. It will journey through the key features of MacIntyre's account of practices, pausing and reflecting as necessary to consider possibilities for connections that might have potential to enhance the various dimensions of school leadership, ultimately hoping to find in MacIntyre a new language for school leadership, the architecture of which will form the concluding part of the study.

CHAPTER 4

EXPLORING SCHOOL LEADERSHIP AS A PRACTICE

Introduction

Chapter 3 has set out the questions of purpose, coherence in practice and doing well as the key issues in need of attention within the school leadership field. It has also set out the rationale for why it is Alasdair MacIntyre's account of practice that is being proposed as the lens through which these particular questions can be addressed by enhancing the dimensions of purpose, practice, role and relationships in a new and fresh way. In order to progress this proposition, the study will now explore MacIntyre's account of practice to see how well it coheres with what is known and understood about school leadership. It will begin by exploring the key elements of MacIntyre's account of practice, moving on to how it connects to the dimensions of school leadership as proposed in the study's conceptual frame of purpose, process, role and relationship. These will be the 'points of contact' the chapter will use to advance the idea of school leadership as a practice in the way that MacIntyre would intend.

As previously discussed, Alasdair MacIntyre is important to this study to the extent that he offers a valuable account of practices. His account of how he envisages a practice in *After Virtue* (2007) is an important starting point. He describes practices as

> .....any coherent and complex form of socially established co-operative human activity through which goods internal to that form of activity are realised in the course of trying to achieve those standards of excellence which are appropriate to, and partially definitive of, that form of activity, with the result that human powers to achieve excellences and human conceptions of the ends and goods involved, are systematically extended. (MacIntyre, *After Virtue*, 2007, p. 187).

In taking MacIntyre's account of practice as the theoretical lens from which to consider school leadership, this characterisation provides a rich and illuminating overview of what a practice is, in addition to outlining its key features. To begin with, practices are complex activities with an overall sense of coherence or purpose. They are socially established and as such must in some way contribute to the good of that particular society or community. MacIntyre suggests that practices have their own internal goods which qualify them as practices. These internal goods are what make practices distinctive and are always appropriate to the nature of the practice in question. Internal goods are realised as the practitioners work to achieve excellence in the practice; this also enables them to excel as practitioners. These goods and excellences evolve over time, giving the practitioners a sense of what is involved in the practice and what is expected of them. A practice for MacIntyre is a complex activity which must in some way contribute to a sense of good or ends within a community. The key features that can be identified as part of this activity, in addition to that context of 'good' are 'internal goods', 'practitioners' and the notion of 'co-operative engagement'; these features are necessary for activities to qualify as practices.

Based on his characterisation, the examples of practices which MacIntyre includes and excludes have been the subject of some contestation and disagreement. Citing the playing of chess, architecture, farming and medicine as specific examples of practices, he excludes the activities of tic tac toe, throwing a football or bricklaying. This is because they do not meet the criterion of being complex. They could however form sub-elements of more complex practices. He also lists practices such as arts, sciences, games, politics (in the 'Aristotelian' sense), the making and sustaining of families and households, schools, clinics and local forms of political community as types of practices (2007, p. xiii). These are included on MacIntyre's list as they are essential for the building of society and community.

Remarkably, MacIntyre (2004) does not include teaching as an example of a practice, arguing that it does not have internal goods of its own. The study will address this issue in the next section.

For MacIntyre, having internal goods is a primary criterion to qualify as a practice. In *After Virtue* he uses the example of playing chess to demonstrate what he means by internal goods. The internal goods of chess are to be found in the achievement of a particular kind of 'analytical skill', 'strategic imagination' and 'competitive intensity', these are examples of its internal goods (MacIntyre, 2007, p. 188). Fuller consideration will be given to the idea of internal goods as the chapter progresses. For the moment however, with regard to the criteria of 'complex and socially established', the study considers that school leadership is sufficiently complex and important enough to school communities and society generally to satisfy these criteria.

As MacIntyre further illuminates at a later stage in *After Virtue*, his account of practice is also distinctly ethical in its formulation. In enabling practitioners in their pursuit of excellence, MacIntyre sees a central role for the virtues. He describes a virtue as 'an acquired human quality the possession and exercise of which tends to enable us to achieve those goods which are internal to practices and the lack of which effectively prevents us from achieving any such goods' (2007, p. 191). The virtues can be interpreted as the qualities of mind and character that contribute to the realisation of the goods of the practice. As Higgins (2004, p. 37) describes, they are the 'dispositions which enable practitioners to co-operate and maintain the integrity of the practice'. Virtues in practices require a commitment to standards of excellence that define those practices. Some of the examples MacIntyre

suggests as necessary to practices are those of courage, justice and honesty in addition to that of judgement (MacIntyre, 2007, pp. 191-193).

In taking MacIntyre's characterisation as the basis for the study's exploration, one cannot help but be drawn to the many possibilities that this account opens up for school leadership. MacIntyre's account offers an understanding of context as good and moral; it offers a sense of real purpose with acknowledged complexity yet coherence; and finally, it holds out the prospect of practitioners reaching excellence within their practice. Practices, like school leadership, that are being pushed and pulled by competing policy and practice perspectives, may well find the means to restoring their integrity and distinctiveness in particular with the focus that MacIntyre gives to the intrinsic or *internal goods* of practices as well as his emphasis on the virtues and ethical practice. Thus, this next section of the chapter will consider whether it makes sense to talk about school leadership as a practice and what such a description might offer by way of breaking the current impasse. It is important that such analysis takes account of the key dimensions of school leadership set out previously as purpose, process, role and relationships. With this in mind, our consideration will focus on (1) the good of education reflecting how MacIntyre situates practices and their purpose within the overall *good* of a community, (2) the type of engagement or process his account envisages in order to achieve and realise the *internal goods* of the practice (3) how he conceives the *practitioner* role and finally (4) the type of *relationships* to be formed and how such relationships are essential to the development of the practice. In working through his account in this way, how school leadership in terms of purpose, process, roles and relationships might cohere with and be enhanced by MacIntyre's account of practice will be brought into view.

The Good of Education

This section will look at Alasdair MacIntyre's account of the situation or context from which practices flow and in which they are shaped. For MacIntyre, it is the idea of the 'human good'[8] that provides practices with their context and overall sense of purpose. In the case of educational practice, the good in question is the good of education. MacIntyre's vision for education offers many rich and illuminating ideas for a conceptualization of the good of education, providing important points of connection with school leadership. However, it is important to acknowledge that his ideas on education, in particular teaching, cannot be taken up uncritically. He contends that teaching is not a practice, a view which has proved to be controversial. Some writers argue that this claim is at odds with what teachers actually do and that it fails to draw on the richness of MacIntyre's own account of education (Dunne & Hogan, 2004, p. xxii). The question of the 'good of education' is not, then, a simple matter. Its meaning will have to be made clear before any attempt is made to offer a coherent and consistent conception of school leadership, one that is firmly located in the work and activity of schools understood as teaching and learning environments. To achieve this clarity, the study will offer a brief sketch of MacIntyre's ideas on 'the ultimate human good' or more specifically those common goods without which the ultimate human good cannot be achieved (2007, p. xiv). It will also discuss his conception of education and teaching within this context. It will then draw from the work of Dunne (1995) on the good of education and MacIntyre and Dunne (2004)[9] to address the points of tension and disagreement with regard to MacIntyre's views on teaching. This will serve to illuminate the idea of the distinctive good of education, informing how school leadership might be situated

[8] In *After Virtue* (2007, p. xiv), MacIntyre refers to 'the ultimate human good', or more specifically 'those common goods without which the ultimate human good cannot be achieved'. The term 'the common good' is often used in the literature referring to this 'human good'. MacIntyre's reference is more specifically to 'a common good', or simply 'common goods'.

[9] This is a dialogue on education between Alasdair MacIntyre and Joseph Dunne first published in the *Journal of Philosophy of Education* (2002) and reprinted in *Education and Practice* (2004).

in terms of its purpose and conduct, not as a separate practice, but as an integral part of the practice of education and wider purpose of teaching and learning. It is important to recognise, that whilst there may be disagreement with certain aspects of MacIntyre's work, many writers still converge on the potential of his account of practice to uphold the integrity of education (Dunne & Hogan, 2004, p. xxiii).

MacIntyre's arguments on 'the ultimate human good' can serve as a starting point for an exploration of the good of education and its related practices. For MacIntyre, modern western society is in something of a 'predicament'; a predicament where individualist and bureaucratic modes of thinking tend to inform much of contemporary moral debate and practice (2007, p. xiii). MacIntyre has an alternative vision for society, one that is more community focused, where the central concern is with 'constructing and sustaining forms of community' directed toward a shared vision of the ' ultimate human good'[10] (MacIntyre, 2007, p. xii). Following Aristotle, MacIntyre uses the Greek term *telos*[11] to capture the 'end' towards which human ethical actions strive within particular practices. For instance the *telos* of the practice of politics, properly understood, would be well – being and justice in the community or state (polis). Acting towards this good provides the practice with a sense of 'authority' and provides a framework for its ethical orientation (Higgins, 2004), independent of individual attitudes, preferences, feelings or other motivations (MacIntyre, 2007, p. 41). In the absence of this sense of the good our ability to deal adequately with moral matters

[10] In good, the idea is that we are honest, courageous, just, etc., in order to achieve something that is good for human beings, Aristotle spent a long time trying to figure out what it is that is good, specifically for human beings. He called it ' the good life'. He also spoke about 'flourishing' (eudaimonia). This is something translated as 'happiness'. MacIntyre was very heavily influenced by Aristotle's work on the virtuous and his concept of the *good,* for human beings. Aristotle's famous book is called the Nicomachean ethics (named after Nicomachus, his son).

[11] Telos is a Greek word meaning 'end' (in the sense of purpose). The ancient Greeks thought that everything including human beings, and in Aristotle's case, individual virtuous behaviour has a telos. The end, or telos, of virtuous behaviour, is good.

becomes more difficult as there is no overall authority to guide us (MacIntyre, 2007, p. 42-43). This applies to the everyday life of persons engaged in practices because it is within practices that important moral and social questions arise (2007, p. xii)

As previously mentioned, it is this Aristotelian – MacIntyrean idea of an ultimate good or *telos*, for each particular practice that has the potential to illuminate the context for the practice of school leadership. MacIntyre (2007, p. 187) characterises practices as 'socially established' and 'co-operative' human activities that must contribute not just to the good of the individual (i.e. his or her flourishing) but also to the good of the particular community in which that individual is located and to which they, as individuals, are an integral part. By implication, school leadership cannot be viewed outside of the good of education. It must also concern itself with the good of the community (in this case, the school), as well as its individual students, teachers and all other members of that community. Practices sustain what MacIntyre (2007, p. 155-157) describes as the 'common project of the community'. The study would argue that how the good of education is conceived informs the 'common project' of the school and therefore the place of practices in that context.

In his essay, *The Idea of an Educated Public* (1987, p. 16), MacIntyre expresses his concerns in relation to contemporary education practice. He describes teachers as the 'forlorn hope' of the culture of western modernity. Such a culture, in his view, has undermined the good of education by requiring schools on the one hand to shape the young person to some social role and function, and on the other, to enable them to think for themselves, to acquire independence of mind and to be educated in the broadest sense (MacIntyre, 1987, p. 16). In a later work, *Dependent Rational Animals* (1999a, p. 89) he refines his account of education and conceives of teaching as serving the good of the student in whatever context, stating that

'all teaching requires some degree of care for the student qua student as well as for the subject matter'. Early in the new century, MacIntyre expressed the view that education has become impoverished, with schools now engaged more than ever in activities that are measured in terms of productivity (2004, p. 3). Educational progress for MacIntyre (1998, p. 105) needs to extend beyond the acquisition or passing on of specific skills to wider issues of caring for students in order to allow them to live well and participate fully in all aspects of society. For MacIntyre (1998, p. 89) it is through the activities of education, not just particular disciplines, that this can be facilitated, and therein lies the good of education.

So what roles do teachers, school leaders and others play in the activities of education? MacIntyre (2004, p. 2) suggests that the type of work teachers do serves this good (MacIntyre, 2004, p. 1-2). Although MacIntyre does not speak directly to the question of school leadership, he does state that to create the conditions for an 'educated public', a certain culture needs to be present in the system. He suggests that at one time it was the 'school master' who saw this as the purpose or *telos* of his or her activity (1987, p. 23). This suggestion is promising for school leadership's potential as a practice and would certainly cohere with the view of school leaders as culture builders (Donaldson, 2006). However, what has proved to be controversial is MacIntyre's suggestion that even within his very rich account of education and the place of teachers within that, teaching does not qualify as a practice. It does not, he maintained in his dialogue with Dunne, have its own internal goods (i.e. *telos*), but rather it is a set of skills put to the service of a variety of other practices (MacIntyre, 2004, p. 5). This issue has been taken up by a number of writers, but it is Dunne (1995, 2004) who brings it into resolve and in doing so affords a richer more illuminating account of education and practice into which accounts of teaching and school leadership (and indeed other practices within education) can be located.

It is worth noting that Dunne (2004, p. 6) finds MacIntyre's claim that teaching is not a practice somewhat 'disconcerting', given that MacIntyre (2004, p. 1) himself has described the ends of education as ultimately about the development of 'student powers', not just about a test or examination, and that it is within this context that teachers have to find their place. How the good of education is conceived is central to Dunne's argument. In Dunne's (1995, p. 72-77) view, to attend to the good of education, the teachers' role has to go beyond the teaching of particular disciplines, to the development of other capacities and virtues in their students, as well as qualities of 'appreciation' and 'receptivity' to particular subjects. He holds that a teacher who attends to the good of education is also someone who engages in an 'activity' (i.e. teaching), which defines his or her working life and involves the pursuit of standards of excellence. So, even at this general level, teaching clearly instantiates many of the key features of practice as outlined in MacIntyre's *After Virtue* (Dunne, 2004, p. 6). At a deeper level, Dunne's argument is that MacIntyre's conception of education concerns itself fundamentally with upholding the integrity and the good of teaching and learning in the current context. That context is one where education is dominated by managerialist models and viewed as an outcomes-based process. If this is to be the case, and ultimately teaching is to contribute to the idea of human flourishing and good, the 'instructional conversation' that is teaching must be taken beyond any technicist logic (Dunne, 1995, p. 79). This calls for judgement, responsiveness and the exercise of virtues where teachers become practitioners in the 'enacted story' that is teaching; the intention is that it is an 'unfolding story line', not a set piece (Dunne 1995, p. 79; 2004, p. 183). What is key, according to Dunne, is the spirit in which subjects are taught. Good teaching is never divorced from the context in which it is taking place and good teachers always concern themselves with the good of the student (Dunne, 2004, p. 4-6). It is this good that brings teaching to life in a practice context.

For Dunne (2004, p. 7) the advancement of the good of education must also be reflected in the hidden curriculum and in the creation of a certain kind of ethos in the school, so that the integrity of teaching and learning in this way is protected. Teachers also have a role here. He refers to the teacher's role in 'creating and sustaining a certain kind of ethos in the school', appealing to MacIntyre's (2007, p. 188) idea that 'making and sustaining forms of community' are types of practices. In Dunne's (2004, p. 8) view, taking on these responsibilities bears all of the hallmarks of a practice as MacIntyre would envisage. There is less tension between MacIntyre and Dunne on this issue. In fact, one could say that their ideas more or less converge when it comes to this point. Both acknowledge the importance of the co-operative and communal life of the school in which teachers must play their part. In response to Dunne, MacIntyre (2004, p. 3-4) concedes that their views on this issue are not 'poles apart', agreeing that the biggest threat to education is that it becomes something that is measured in terms of productivity; such a model loses sight of the real end of education which cannot be measured by a quantifiable evaluation of the school[12]. He suggests that a 'more Utopian' concept of school life might be a more appropriate and instructive way of evaluating it (MacIntyre, 2004, p. 13). From the perspective of both writers, attending to the good of education is necessary to the practice of education, for Dunne this includes teachers in that practice. In MacIntyre's *Prologue* to the 2007 edition (*25th anniversary*) of *After Virtue*, he includes the work of teachers among practices that sustain purposeful ethical communities (2007, p. xv).

---

[12] In commenting on an Irish Government Report where a school principal was referred to as a '*Chief Executive*', MacIntyre (2004, p. 3) suggested that within a 'productivity' context this could be an appropriate label for the role. The argument advanced is that the interpretation of the role in terms of Chief Executive emanates from the situation of productivity. Neither Dunne nor MacIntyre (2004, p. 3) would agree that this conception of the role would sit well with the true purpose or the good of education.

There are other ideas in both MacIntyre and Dunne that can help consider the question of what it might mean to say that school leadership is a practice. Fundamental to MacIntyre's (2007) conception of practice is the idea of the 'co-operative care' for common goods within the institutional location of practices. If we take the school as the location for educational practice we can say that all of those with responsibilities within the school are involved in 'co-operative care' for common goods. Indeed, in *After Virtue*, MacIntyre refers to 'the founding or carrying forward [of] a school' as an example of a 'common project of a community' towards 'some good' as the 'shared good' recognised by all of those engaged in this project (2007, p. 151). This idea mirrors the 'community building' dimension expressed as a function or task in many of the school leadership models previously outlined (MacBeath, 2005; Sergiovanni, 1994; Starratt, 1994). Dunne (1995, p. 81) highlights the central importance of those involved in educational decision making attending to the good of education and the good of teachers as practitioners (Dunne, 1995, p. 80-82). He cautions against the bureaucratic organisation of schools, where the achievement of specified outcomes are paramount, and effective management is viewed as getting teachers to maximise such outcomes (Dunne, 1995, p. 81). Education as a practice is not well provided for when teachers are isolated in their own classrooms (Dunne, 2004, p. 3). MacIntyre (2004, p. 9) concurs here, suggesting that the good of education cannot be achieved unless the school is in good order and is a place where other practices flourish. It is easy to see that this too must become part of the work of school leaders.

What the study gains from reflecting on Dunne's (1995) work and the exchange between Dunne and MacIntyre (2004), is the insight that all members of the school community, including teachers and school leaders, have a place and a role to play when it comes to the good of education. Dunne (1995, p. 68), in setting out how he conceives of the

good of education, acknowledges that many of the arguments around education have been set within a context of external rewards, which can subvert or displace the intrinsic goods of education and its practices. As Chapters 1 and 2 of the study have tried to show, the same holds true for school leadership. It too has been conceived somewhat narrowly within the policy context. Taking on the idea of the good of education, as envisaged by Dunne, should allow the study defend school leadership's integrity.

It is important to acknowledge that we are not starting from a *tabula rasa* in this regard. The works of Begley (2003), Duignan (2006), Duignan and Mac Phearson (1992), Starratt (1999, 2003, 2004, 2005b) and Sergiovanni (1996, 1999, 2007) provide a rich resource for articulating ideas of the good and the moral as they relate to school leadership. These writers have placed particular emphasis on the ideas of care, well-being, co-operation, inclusion and community building. Webb's (2005) case study data, drawn from a number of schools in the United Kingdom, whilst highlighting the influence of the standards and performativity agenda, has documented evidence of a strong moral leadership role, characterised by care and community concerns. In the Irish context, the research work carried out by Grummell et al. (2009) on the selection process for educational leaders reflects similar findings. In relation to primary and secondary schools they evidenced in many instances the protection of a 'traditional care and development logic' of education at the expense of the 'performativity demands of new managerialism'. Many studies have also reflected the centrality of school leaders' contributions to the development and creation of learning communities within the school as well as their desire to have this aspect of their work more to the fore (MacBeath, 2009; Morgan & Sugrue, 2008; Mulford, 2008; Webb, 2005). The central role school leaders play in enhancing and cultivating the quality of

educational practice and teaching within the community of the school has also been documented in both the international and Irish contexts (Fullan, 2003; Hogan et al., 2007).

To date, these ideas of care, co-operation, the communal life of the school, and the integrity of teaching and learning, have not received a strong and explicit articulation in the school leadership context. For example, Sugrue (2005b, p. 6) contends that school leaders often work from their 'lay theories' of what is good, that is from what they intuitively perceive to be good and meaningful rather than from any clear and articulated sense. Morgan and Sugrue's (2008) research in the Irish context shows that while providing care and support were the more satisfying aspects of work of the school leaders surveyed, administrative tasks and demands took up most of their time. This echoes Sugrue and Furlong's (2002) earlier work, which concluded that the current 'situational' context is not affording the opportunity for school leaders to deal with issues of a more ethical kind. As a result school leaders are becoming more focussed on immediate tasks than on questions of the good of their school, teachers and the wider school community. If, as seems to be the case, the good of education has become associated with outcomes of a more quantitative and measurable kind, the good of school leadership has had a similar fate due to the fact that it is shaped by school and education policy. This is not the kind of interpretation of the good of education that this study is arguing for, or what MacIntyre's account of practices would support. It is both timely and necessary to consider this sense of the good both as it applies to and as it situates school leadership as a practice. This is what Sergiovanni (2007, p. 47) has suggested could be referred to as the 'big idea', which is currently lacking.

The Realisation of Internal Goods

Having given consideration to the question of context and purpose, this section will now turn to the question of the type of engagement or process that is envisaged in MacIntyre's account of practice. In Chapter 1 our study has dealt with the idea of the leadership process, noting how it has been described in terms of actions, behaviours, activities and tasks and informed by cognitive, psychological and various policy and practice perspectives at various times. Alternative approaches that try to move beyond these frames of reference to more ethically and values-based accounts have also been set out. In MacIntyre's account of practice, it is internal goods that provide the frame of reference. They do this in many ways. Internal goods can be used to describe what is to be strived for in a practice, how practitioners are guided in their practice and finally how the practice is to be judged, evaluated and improved. These aspects and how they might cohere with school leadership will now be explored.

What is to be Strived For

In reflecting back on MacIntyre's (2007, p. 187) characterisation of practice, internal goods are described as 'goods internal to that form of activity...realized in the course of trying to achieve those standards of excellence which are appropriate to, and partially definitive of, that form of activity'. From this description, internal goods of a practice can be interpreted as what is to be achieved and strived for within a practice. In further illuminating the concept MacIntyre describes

> the goods internal to practices...are not the ends pursued by particular individuals on particular occasions, but the excellences specific to those particular types of practice which one achieves or fails to achieve, moves towards or fails to move towards...in virtue of the way one pursues particular ends or goals on particular occasions. (MacIntyre, 2007, p. 274).

This implies that internal goods are unique to particular practices in the pursuit of the goals or purpose of the practice. Higgins (2004) suggests that internal goods can be equated with the overall vision of what has been deemed to be worthwhile achieving in a particular practice. This suggestion would generally fit with MacIntyre's later work where he speaks of internal goods as 'finely perfected work which serves as the shared *telos* of that craft' (1990, p. 64).

In line with MacIntyre's (2007) description, internal goods can also represent excellence. In trying to 'achieve standards of excellence' appropriate to a practice, its internal goods are realised (MacIntyre, 2007, p. 187). This realisation enables practitioners to reach excellence in a practice (MacIntyre, 2007, p. 188). Excellences and internal goods are linked but they form different elements of the practice. For this purpose MacIntyre distinguishes 'ideals conceived' as the goods, and 'excellences' as ideals achieved (1990, p. 62). Despite this distinction, they are very much interlinked. Excellence is what a practice demands of its practitioners; it is all about doing well and provides the practitioner with a reason to engage in that practice. The motivation for the practitioner ought to be towards the achievement of internal goods (MacIntyre, 2007, p. 188), the achievement of which represents a 'rewarding reality' for them (MacIntyre, 1994, p. 286). In order to be excellent in a practice, the internal goods as ideals of the practice must be achieved, hence excellence is achieved. For example, if school leadership were to be taken as practice, the good of which might be defined as 'the making and sustaining of the whole school community', the internal goods are those goods that are deemed to be important and necessary in realising and enabling the achievement of that aim; excellence is when those goods have been achieved.

Internal goods are not fixed however. Part of any practice is both the achievement of internal goods but also their improvement. This is why within MacIntyre's description of

internal goods, there is the scope to improve and develop the standards of the practice. MacIntyre refers to the 'systematic extension' of goods and excellences (2007, p. 187). In the identification of internal goods, there is a distinction to be made between what is deemed to be necessary to the 'performance and product' of the practice, that is doing what is already accepted as required by the practice, and what might be necessary in terms of improving and extending this 'product or performance' (MacIntyre, 2007, pp. 189-190). Internal goods are not to be fixed for all times; to use MacIntyre's (2007, p. 188) phrase practices are *'self-transformative'*. This state of affairs provides practitioners with the opportunity to develop creative and new responses to particular situations, thus improving the standards of the practice; this too is part of the process of the practice.

If internal goods represent what is to be strived for, what is worthwhile and the reasons why we become involved in practices,[13] the first question for school leadership is whether such goods can be identified. The process of identifying 'internal goods' is something very particular to MacIntyre's account of practice. His view is that the kind of competence needed to identify and judge the goods of a practice is only to be gained by actually participating in the practice, or to be willing to learn systematically what other practitioners have to 'teach' (MacIntyre, 2007, p. 190). It is MacIntyre's contention that those who lack the relevant experience are 'incompetent thereby as judges of internal goods' (2007, p. 189), therefore the systematic engagement in a practice is important to be in a position to evaluate and judge that practice. His view would cohere with some of the more recent thinking in school leadership. Many writers would consider that school leaders have not been sufficiently involved in this type of evaluative work and that the absence of the

[13] MacIntyre (2007) also talks about the concept of external goods, that is things extrinsic to a practice that might motivate people to become involved in that practice. The question of external goods will be dealt with when considering the challenges to practice in Chapter 5.

critical accounts of school leaders' work is problematic (Gronn, 2003; Gunter 2001; Sugrue, 2009). MacIntyre's suggestion of systematic engagement of practitioners could go some way in addressing this issue.

In moving to identify internal goods, recognition of the many types of internal goods is necessary. To help in this regard, Higgins (2004) proposes a useful typology based on MacIntyre's account. Higgins (2004) contends that there are four types of internal goods; those relating to outstanding work or performance which the practitioner appreciates; those relating to being engaged in the practice which the practitioner experiences as good; those relating to the character that the practitioner displays, and finally those relating to how practitioners live their lives in the context of the good of their practice and the community of which they are part. Within this categorisation, there are goods that relate more directly to the practitioner, whilst others relate more to work and performance. If we are to begin to apply this typology to school leadership we will have to identify aspects of it that are both held to be good and experienced as good.[14] But what are these likely to be? From what we know from school leadership research, it will be important to give consideration to evidence or suggestions of goods displayed by school leaders in the course of their work and in their lives generally; of particular interest in this regard is what motivates them towards school leadership.

---

[14] It is important that the internal goods are distinguished from technical skills. For MacIntyre every practice needs technical skills because they can play a very distinctive role in the achievement of the internal goods of the practice (MacIntyre, 2007, p. 193). They too can contribute to the pursuit of excellence of the practice and they can be developed to this end. In this process they can change, become enriched and contribute to the achievement of internal goods according to the demands and ends of the practice. They too have their place in a practice, once they are considered and understood as essential to the achievement of internal goods. This reflects Dunne's (1993, p. 268) view on the potential of *techne* (as technical skill) to have moral value. For MacIntyre it is dependent on the context into which they are inserted, that is towards the achievement of the goods and excellences of the practice, not towards some other end. Any critical or evaluative question of over-prescriptiveness within a particular practice is more constructive if considered in these terms (2007, p. 274).

There are tentative suggestions of certain features as possible internal goods which can be drawn from relevant literature. Although not expressed in the language of internal goods, the reflections of our study suggest that we could begin to think about them in such a manner. For example, in the Irish context, research carried out by Morgan and Sugrue (2005, 2008) on the experiences of school principals, provides examples of things that school leaders appreciate about being engaged in the practice, things that could be termed goods. Irish school leaders identified 'giving leadership' and 'providing support' to both students and colleagues as two of the most worthwhile and fulfilling aspects of their job. In the context of principals working in disadvantaged schools, 'providing support' was the most satisfying aspect of the role. In their commentary Morgan and Sugrue note that it was the 'intrinsic' nature of the work, such as 'giving leadership', which includes the opportunity to 'affirm others' or to receive 'affirmation', that were the main features of job satisfaction (Morgan & Sugrue, 2008). MacDonald's (2008) research with school principals found that the 'collaborative' requirements of the work were the most satisfying. Earlier work from Mahon (1993, p. 127-129) identified the 'relationships with teachers', the 'success of the school' and the 'intrinsic nature' of the role to be the most satisfying. The 'collegial' community of the school was identified as a foundation for these rewards in Morgan and Sugrue's work. This 'collegiality' could be seen as a good of performance, linked to the 'creation of a community' as a possible overall good or *telos* of the practice. Also noted by Morgan and Sugrue (2008, p. 15) was that the good of 'collegiality' was valued above the outcome of examination results.

Sergiovanni (1992, 2007) contends that school leaders become involved in the leadership role for reasons other than self-interest. Again in the Irish context, research has shown that issues of prestige or remuneration, although they have played some part in

attracting school principals to leadership posts, are not the main consideration. School leaders tend to be drawn to the more intrinsic elements (OECD, 2007; Morgan & Sugrue, 2008). Such findings signal aspects of school leadership practice and work of a more 'internal' nature in the way that MacIntyre suggests. The difficulty has been that such aspects have been hard to identify in empirical research and as a result have not always received the necessary attention or been afforded the necessary priority (Hallinger & Heck, 1996a, 1996b; Leithwood et al., 1994). In MacIntyre's account of practice such types of goods form the basis of the practice and what is to be strived for and as such guide the practice. This question of guiding practice will be our next consideration.

Guiding Practice

The issue of coherence, in particular the absence of an overall authority to guide leadership work, has been identified as problematic in Chapter 3. In MacIntyre's account of practice, internal goods become that authority. If the achievement of standards of excellence through the realisation of internal goods is the objective of the practice, it is internal goods that must guide actions, decisions and how practitioners engage in the practice in striving for that excellence. Such standards of excellence, in the context of the good of the practice, have been termed 'genuine' excellences, as opposed to something an individual or institution might wish to pursue for some reason, other than what has been defined within the practice (Dunne & Pendlebury, 2003, p. 206). If one 'loses sight' of this sense of 'genuine' excellence, one ceases to be ethical in that practice, that is if one becomes concerned with other motivations (Dunne & Pendlebury, 2003, p. 206). For example, a decision or action guided by personal motivation for promotion, or for some institutional gain, but not pursued genuinely and singularly for the sake of the practice, is not a form of excellence in MacIntyre's sense.

In considering the question of what is guiding current leadership practice there are a number of important reflections at this point. MacBeath et al. (1998) have considered the extent to which school leaders need to be loyal to the authorities that manage them and tend to operate within the frames that those authorities prescribe and set out. Moos (2005), in working with a group of Irish and Danish school principals, described them as constantly negotiating between two types of 'authority', how they perceived the good of school leadership themselves and what the school authorities perceived as good. He describes the two goods as the good of 'trust' in terms of building a school community, perceived as central to what is required of them as school principals, and the good of 'regulation' as perceived by the school authorities. School leaders in many instances are somewhat resourceless when it comes to what guides them in the important decisions of their practice. The literature suggests that in many instances they draw from their intuitive sense of what pleases or displeases those higher up (Begley, 2003; Cuban, 1992), or in other cases they simply follow a 'do's and don't's' approach (McDonald, 2008). In MacIntyre's theory of practice however, intuitive, personal and prescriptive considerations are not seen as the guiding principles. The guiding authority is the overall good and internal goods as conceived for the practice.

MacIntyre also gives consideration to situations that give rise to what he terms competing goods, or the necessity to order goods (MacIntyre, 2007, pp. 202-203). They are in his view part of any practice as it unfolds, particularly practices that are located in an institutional context. This type of ordering of goods would appear to have application in the context of school leadership work. For example, Leithwood, Begley and Cousins (1994) found that school leaders encounter many different types of value conflicts each day as they go about their work but find it difficult to know what the best course of action is. Begley

(1999, p. 70), whilst acknowledging that this complexity is part of school leadership work, suggests that the real difficultly lies in what he terms the 'coherence constraint', that is, having no coherent sense of how to act and make decisions in such contexts. In further work, Begley (2003) contends that decision making will always require rejecting some course of action in favour of another. If we apply MacIntyre's idea of internal goods to school leadership work, we can re-cast Begley's more recent observations in terms of the type of decision making implied in MacIntyre's idea of 'ordering of goods', that is in terms of the ability to place the goods of the practice first when dealing with competing goods.

Research to date on how school leaders make decisions would imply that this is not the kind of approach currently used. Begley and Johansson (1998) suggest that most school administrators avoid using values as guides to practice, not so much due to their own integrity but rather as a natural outcome of the particular accountability patterns associated with school leadership; as a natural consequence they employ rational decision-making models. O' Brien et al. (2008, p. 55) have identified four ways that school leaders traditionally deal with dilemmas: the psychological; cognitive and problem solving; the political; and the ethical. However, many writers would question whether such frameworks leave school leaders in any way professionally prepared (Begley, 2003; Dempster & Berry, 2003; Richmon, 2003). In fact, MacIntyre's account of the ordering of goods is closest to the ethical approach to dealing with situations, but the particular ethic is defined through the internal goods and excellences of the practice.[15]

[15] The study acknowledges that ethical conceptual theory is vast. It is not the intention of the study to encapsulate it. Starratt (2012), for example, has given consideration to the established ethical frames of care, justice and critique as applied to decision making in school leadership.

Evaluating and Judging

Given that MacIntyre's characterisation of a practice is in the context of the pursuit of the good and having a moral purpose, the standards of excellence expected need to be partially judged against this good (MacIntyre, 2007, p. 188). There are two dimensions to such evaluation. The first relates to the general state of the practice, the second to how actual practice and the practitioner are evaluated and judged. With regard to the first question, it is MacIntyre's view that all practices go through periods of decline and difficulty. Arising from this, reflecting on the general state of the practice is necessary for its future development and cultivation. For MacIntyre, it is the language of internal goods that provides the basis for reflection and evaluation in this context. An important evaluative issue for practices is the state of their internal goods and how this might relate both to previous times and future needs and possibilities. Having a sense of where the practice has come from, in terms of its tradition and history, is an important aspect of this kind of evaluation. In MacIntyre's (2007, pp. 221-223) view, if practices are important enough to society, questions and debates of an evaluative nature will inevitably arise.

The excellences achieved in a practice at a particular point in time reflect the tradition of that practice and are an important source to be referred to in reviewing a practice (MacIntyre, 2007, pp. 221-225, 273-274). Standards of excellences develop over time; they gradually emerge from the history and tradition of each practice and come to be 'expected' from that practice (MacIntyre, 2007, p. 274). For practitioners, this means that in entering a practice, they must take these current standards into account and be prepared to be judged against them. Given that the good of the practice and its internal goods ultimately become the authority by which practitioners are guided in their actions, they also become the standards by which they are judged.

As outlined in Chapter 3, the school leadership field is in need of answers to questions of evaluation and doing well. The traditional way of looking at evaluative or practitioner competence questions in education has had little or nothing to do with internal goods. Indeed, the whole area has always been problematic and contested and difficult to set out in any coherent way (Carr, 2000, p. 91). Many gaps exist. The OECD (2007) in their Irish country report referred to the absence of a standards framework to support and evaluate school leaders. Standards and capabilities frameworks in other jurisdictions and the assumptions on which they are based have been the subject of much criticism (Evers, 1999; Gunter, 2001; Gronn, 2003). The contention has been that they are 'performance management' frameworks, rather than true evaluations of leadership in its real sense. More recently in the Irish context, Grummell et al. (2009) have questioned the kinds of standards by which we judge school leaders. Mulford's (2004) work suggests that there are more appropriate ways of evaluating what is really important and worthwhile within school leadership. Much of the work to date has focused on looking at the direct effects of the work of school principals on results and specific learning outcomes. From Mulford's perspective, the situation is more complex. For this reason he contends that research needs to reflect the complex work of the school leader within the school community towards broader pedagogical goals and goals relating to issues of justice and care. He also concludes that any effects on student learning and outcomes are primarily indirect (Mulford, 2004). Many other writers support this view, implying that it is timely to consider the need for different standards by which to judge school leaders (Duignan, 2006; Starratt, 2004). However, it is interesting to note that despite there being no current agreed way of evaluating school leaders, there is an implicit expectation and understanding that they act ethically for the good rather than the evil (Duignan & Mac Pherson, 1992, p. 22). MacIntyre's account of internal goods could be a

starting point in offering a new frame for evaluation that would cohere with such ethical expectations.

By way of summary, much of what is known and understood about the intrinsic nature of the work of school leadership coheres well with MacIntyre's idea of internal goods. Key to MacIntyre's characterisation of practice is the notion of a practice having coherence. Through an internal goods approach more coherence can be brought to the question of what is good and best to strive for, and to the question of what is involved in achieving excellence and improvement in the practice of school leadership. How MacIntyre conceives the practitioner within this process is the next point of consideration.

Practitioners

Implicit in MacIntyre's characterisation of practice in *After Virtue* (2007) is a particular conception of the role of practitioner. His is a conception that attributes agency to the practitioner in a very particular way, that is, through 'human powers' of achieving excellence in the context of the good and of the internal goods of the practice (MacIntyre, 2007, p. 187). Four avenues for reflection emerge in *After Virtue* and also in his later work *Dependent Rational Animals* (1999a). In understanding the full extent of what it means to be a practitioner, the first avenue is the concept of 'narrative unity', or as Higgins (2004) names it, the 'biographical order' of practice; the second is the practitioner as 'moral agent'; the third is the notion of the 'good' or 'competent' practitioner; and the fourth is the practitioner within the 'community of practice'. These individual ideas, their foundational assumptions, and the possibility of applying them in a school leadership context can illuminate certain dimensions of the leadership role and its various relationships. To speak about the leader as practitioner is to opt for an alternative to the more conventional approach of talking about the leadership role.

The issue of the role of school leader has received significant attention in the school leadership literature. Leadership traditionally has been constructed around a particular role or position (Yukl, 2002). Whilst the emphasis has shifted from just one role to many, some of the more fundamental difficulties and challenges attached to the school leadership role, in particular with regard to role prescription and degree of agency afforded school leaders, persist. As already mentioned, the manner in which the role has been prescribed is very much in response to particular directives and tasks as set by the changing education policy context landscape (Gunter, 2001). The school leader role has expanded and changed dramatically as a result. In Chapter 2 we noted that, in the Irish context, the *Education Act* (1998) put the role of school leader as school principal on a statutory footing, prescribing particular tasks and functions. Concern has been expressed in relation to the many role requirements of such prescriptions (MacDonald, 2008). Sugrue (2009) suggests that the role, in terms of how it is constructed, has become unsustainable for the current context. Gronn (1999a) argues that simply appointing people to 'roles' within a school does not necessarily imply that they are 'leaders'. He also identifies a certain disengagement among school leaders. He attributes much of this to the fact that the role has been prescribed, without due regard to the views and experiences of leaders, ignoring factors of 'agency' and 'context' (Gronn, 2003; Gronn & Ribbons, 1996). In considering how these issues might be addressed, Gunter (2005) suggests moving the emphasis from abstractions such as a role and the effectiveness of that role, to considerations of how professional lives actually unfold in their complexity. Hall and Southworth (1997) also contend that very little is actually known about the lives and work of those who occupy leadership positions and that knowledge of this type could present new and interesting ways of considering practice issues. This provides a helpful starting point in considering what MacIntyre has to say.

In this section the aspects of practitioner that will be dealt with are that of narrative unity, biographical order and the good practitioner. The final section of the chapter will consider the idea of community of practice as part of the relationship element of practices. MacIntyre's idea is that it is through such a community of practice that what is expected of practitioners can be developed.

Biographical Order

Central to understanding MacIntyre's conception of the practitioner is the notion of narrative unity. Narrative unity implies that central to each life is a complex narrative, a whole life into which different parts have to be integrated; the pursuit of the good at home and with family should reinforce the pursuit of the good in the workplace and vice versa; they should not be at odds with each other (MacIntyre, 2004, p. 2). Narrative unity provides coherence to practices enabling practitioners to feel at home in the practices of which they are a part (MacIntyre, 1999a, p. 66). The virtues as qualities necessary to achieve the goods internal to practices are also considered as qualities important to the good of a whole life (MacIntyre, 2007, p. 273). In the context of narrative unity, this cannot be at odds with how practitioners see themselves as persons. What is good for an individual in their own practice and their own life ought not to be in conflict with what is good for him or her generally (1999a, p. 66). This unfolds throughout the whole life-history of the practitioner, not separate from it.

There are a number of perspectives on how narrative unity can be interpreted and applied in the context of current practices. McLaughlin (2004, p. 53) suggests that the concept of narrative unity implies the 'self-involving' of the practitioner in the practice. Dunne's (2004) and Hogan's (2004) treatments of this concept in the context of teaching and the life of a teacher provide a useful illustration. Although teaching and school leadership are

quite distinctive, some useful analogies can be drawn, without undermining our argument for school leadership as a practice. Dunne (2004, p. 6) suggests that teaching is an 'office' that can define a person's working life. The working life of a teacher does more than contribute to the development of individual subjects; it also contributes to the care of the students, viewed as an important part of the overall good of the broader community (Dunne, 2004, p. 172). Hogan (2004, p. 23) sees teaching as linked to how someone 'ought ' to live their lives, pointing to the qualitative difference between being a skilled and competent teacher and being a teacher in the sense of having a distinctive way of being human and having the 'enduring responsibilities' that are associated with that (Hogan, 2004, p. 20).

The question arises as to whether considerations of self-involving are relevant for those within the practice of school leadership. The available literature may help us to answer this question. In Starratt's work on ethical leadership, he identifies 'presence' as essential for the school principal. He describes this presence as 'a full awareness of the self and others' through 'being close, being toward, and being for' (Starratt, 2004, p. 104). In line with this, Morgan and Sugrue (2008) identified 'having energy and enthusiasm' as necessary for the intrinsic elements of the work of a school principal. These were found to be important factors in achieving satisfaction and success in the role. Sugrue (2005a, p. 162) contends that much of the current administrative work of school leaders has led to a 'balkanisation' of the self. He has interpreted this as a separation of 'passion' from 'purpose'. In a number of portraits of school principals he goes on to demonstrate how aspects of character, in particular passion, are brought to the role in order to energise and shape it. The dimensions of the role where passion was evident were particular to how school leaders 'work with young people' and their 'feel for the community' of the school. He concludes by contending that it is this 'passion that sustains the substantial self' in the practice of school leadership

(Sugrue, 2005a, p. 162). In other research on identity construction, Sugrue and Furlong (2002) have examined what school principals bring to their work. Life history and personal identity emerge as significant. These examples suggest that there may be a 'biographical order' to school leadership just as MacIntyre intends of practices. Duignan (2006, p. 33) suggests that in the work of school leadership there is a kind of emotional self-involving. He considers this self-involving as an integral part not only of being effective as a school leader but also as being credible. It is essential, he thinks, that school leaders are seen as credible. Duignan and Bhindi (1997, p. 196) have emphasised the need for leaders to 'recognise their true selves' in their practice and in developing relationships within that practice.

In accepting McIntyre's theory of practice, an understanding of the place of that practice in the practitioner's life is therefore necessary. Despite the notion of practices 'as a way of life' not being the popular discourse in education, where the focus has been typically on concepts such as vocation, job or profession (Hogan, 2004, p. 19), evidence suggests that many school leaders already think of their work as part of a 'distinctive way of being human'.

Moral Agents

Whilst becoming a practitioner in a practice is rewarding, it is equally demanding. In addition to 'self-involving', practitioners are required to become educated 'moral agents' or at least aspire to be so (MacIntyre, 2007, p. 149). This can only happen if the practitioners subject their own preferences, attitudes and tastes to the standards that define the practice. This is ultimately what defines competence in a practice. The kind of 'competence' that MacIntyre has in mind is a 'competence' to rule out all subjective and emotive analysis of judgement (MacIntyre, 1999a). Dunne and Hogan (2004, p. xiii) interpret this competence as twofold; that is, 'disciplining' oneself with regard to the ends of the practice and also with regard to one's desires for the external goods of the practice. This would concur with

Starratt's (2004) notion of 'servant leadership', which is subordinating oneself to the achievement of the overall vision for the school.

As already noted, MacIntyre describes one aspect of competence as being able to 'organise and order' the goods of the practice. It is the practitioners who have this responsibility, and as such they become moral agents. To be such a moral agent is to act in line with the goods of the practice. The acquisition, learning and application of virtues such as courage, trust and judgement are necessary requirements (MacIntyre, 2007). MacIntyre also suggests that at times a practitioner may need to take some 'self-endangering risks' in order to remain true to the genuine goods and excellences of the practice, placing the virtue of courage at the centre of such dilemmas (2007, pp. 191-192). The development of and support to the values aspect of leadership work has been limited. Begley (1999, p. 8) argues that the absence of moral considerations in leadership development work suggests an assumption of 'all honourable men working towards the common good'. Sergiovanni (1996) suggests that leaders need to be enabled to practise in an exemplary way; such is the function of an account of practice. In MacIntyre's account he identifies the potential of the virtues to become the kinds of professional values necessary to guide school leadership as a valued social practice, and as such virtues need to become part of leadership development work.

To a certain extent there has been a 'tacit' acknowledgment of certain moral or virtuous elements within school leadership. For example, school principals in the Irish context have been associated, over the years, with the virtue of trust or trustworthiness. This was particularly the case with the absence of Boards of Management up until the mid-1970s (MacDonald, 2008). In considering the daily work of a group of school leaders, the work of Moos (2005) would concur that 'trust' was central to how the role was perceived. Other

work such as that of Sugrue (2005a, 2005b) evidenced the need for 'risk taking' and 'courage'.

Reaching Excellence

So far we have seen the rewards and demands that being a practitioner can present. The coming together of all of these aspects will contribute to practitioner excellence, that is, that practitioners develop 'well' through (1) realising and extending the goods and standards of practice or craft, (2) developing as human beings and (3) developing as moral agents (MacIntyre, 1990, 2007; Higgins, 2004). The responsibility is also with the practitioner to think in relation to acting virtuously to put order on the various goods by way of resolving any tensions that might arise (MacIntyre, 1990, 2007). The term 'good practitioner' needs to be seen in the context of being virtuous, or excellent within a practice. It is different from good in the sense of 'effective', i.e. the way professional skills are expected to be (MacIntyre, 2007, p. 205). Within this account of practice, the good practitioner is the one who acts virtuously or well in the context of the good of the practice, integral to the good of the community or overall good (MacIntyre, 2007, p. 205).

In considering the question of the good practitioner in line with MacIntyre's account, Higgins (2004, pp. 42-43) summarises three ways in which practitioners might develop to overcome any inadequacies. The first is how they develop in terms of judgement; the second is how they can learn to display excellence, and finally how they develop in terms of the shape of their own lives and moral development. He contends that such a framework might help practitioners also to answer the question of why they wish to be in a particular practice. However, excellence in practice is not something practitioners can achieve on their own; their relationship within the community where the practice is located and their

relationship with other practitioners is central. Such engagement is a requirement of being in a practice, to which we will now turn as the concluding part of this chapter.

Relationships and the Community

For MacIntyre, the notion of engagement in a practice is socially central. No element of the practice can be developed without this type of engagement; the cultivation of the practice is dependent on it. There are a number of levels to this, which carry responsibilities for practitioners. The first level is that of a responsibility towards the shared vision of the good of the practice. MacIntyre disapproves of 'individual characters' who are 'isolated and self-absorbed' and act without this vision or shared purpose (2007, p. 228). In the leadership context, an individual of this type is often referred to as the 'heroic' leader. For MacIntyre, such a leader would be a 'character type' for whom there is no frame of reference beyond their own appeal and authority. The sense of good of a practice can only be defined by entering into a shared relationship with those who constitute one's community, that is with those who share a vision and understanding of the good (2007, p. 258). The concept of 'shared relationships' resonates well with notions of shared leadership and leadership models advocating a 'shared' sense of purpose or vision. The collaborative dimension of the school leader's role is also recognised as a key function (Gronn, 2000, 2003; Harris, 2005a; MacBeath, 2005; Spillane, 2006).

In acknowledging leadership as a shared and collective endeavour, there is another level of responsibility that is implied. This level of responsibility is associated with the nature and type of relationships and interactions involved. Here the study can be informed by MacIntyre's conception of a community of practice. This community of practice could be

those in leadership roles within the school,[16] or alternatively, as part of an outside professional community of school leadership practitioners. The centrality of a practice as a 'co-operative human activity' informs the types of relationships that are formed within these communities. For MacIntyre, the competence of the practitioner can be learned in two ways; by the experience of participating in the practice but also by co-operating and learning from other practitioners. This is not something that is optional; practitioners must be prepared to work within a community of practitioners because such a community forms another source of authority for the practice (MacIntyre, 2007, p. 190). To begin with, such communities provide the social relationships necessary for individuals to become independent practical reasoners through engagement and reflection with each other (MacIntyre, 1999a, p. 83). Certain kinds of social relationships are needed to foster the ability to evaluate, modify, reject, imagine alternative futures and pursue the goods that are required, both generally and within practices.

Practitioners also contribute to and benefit from such relationships, defined as 'networks of giving and receiving' (MacIntyre, 1999a, p. 99). To be in a community of practice, a practitioner must separate themselves from their own personal desires, not to act just to please but to act to achieve the good. This kind of co-operative engagement will enable individuals to learn from others, particularly in terms of how they judge them to be doing well or otherwise. This implies that the practitioners will have to be prepared to be

[16] Some writers have taken issue with the claim that it is only the practitioners who are fit to judge (Hager, 2011). This objection is based on the belief that there can be others who, through related experiences or appreciation of a practice, might effectively be in a position to judge. Hager contends that given there is a diversity of roles within certain practices, a community of practice should by implication be as broad. The school leadership literature more recently has moved away from considerations of the school leader as located in one position. Changes in the Irish policy context also reflect this with leadership roles being extended across the community of the school to include teachers, post holders and Boards of Management. In considering school leadership as a practice, identifying who the community of practitioners is/are will be a central part of the evaluation process of the practice.

accountable to the authority of the community of practice and reflect on their errors in the light of this authority. The authority of the community of practice needs to be valued and accepted; practitioners must be prepared to do this (MacIntyre, 1999a). For school leadership, whatever the location of the community of practice, either within the school or as part of a professional community external to the school, there are implications for the nature of the relationships and interactions within that community. It must also be a community from which the practitioner will benefit. There are some communities of practice that can be destructive or negative (MacIntyre, 1999, p. 102). Examples of such negative communities that practitioners need to be mindful of are often those emanating from institutions, or those that exist simply to give expression to certain established hierarchies. If the practitioner is to learn and develop from the community of practice, then it too must be genuine and authentic. Such a genuine community occurs:

> when some local community embodying networks of giving and receiving is in good order, it is generally and characteristically because its judgments, standards, relationships and institutions have periodically been the subject of communal debate and enquiry and have taken their present form in part as a result of such debate and enquiry. (MacIntyre, 1999a, p. 157).

Practitioners must learn to subordinate themselves, not just to the best standards achieved so far by the practice, but in their relationship to their fellow practitioners and to the goods and standards as defined by that community (McLaughlin, 2004). It is necessary for all practitioners to work together to pursue the ends of the practice and it is this pursuit that defines the relationship with other practitioners and is the basis for the formation of a community of practice. Such a working together for the good of the practice defines the conduct within a community of practice and the basis on which the practitioners relate to and co-operate with each other. For example, MacIntyre (2007, p. 192) suggests certain standards of truthfulness, trust, courage and judgement as essential to such conduct within a

community of practice. Dunne and Pendlebury (2003, p. 204) describe MacIntyre's notion of a community of practice as 'intrinsically ethical', with the exercise of virtues central in this regard. They describe this as 'authentic' practice (2003, pp. 206-207), where authenticity itself is a particular virtue to be developed. To achieve this, Dunne and Pendlebury (2003) consider that it is the virtues of character and of intellect that practitioners need to develop. Nussbaum's (2001) work suggests the need for practitioners to be both emotional and imaginative within their communities. In summary, a community of practice in the MacIntyre sense involves genuine moral commitments both to the community and to the practice. This commitment involves giving and receiving, shared deliberation and critical enquiry within that community.

This aspect of MacIntyre's theory is closest to those models of school leadership which have emphasised more shared and distributed approaches across schools. Spillane (2006) for example, in referring to the distribution of leadership, refers not just to the practice of the principal, as one practitioner, but to the relationships formed by the principal and ultimately how leadership is practised by all in leadership roles. The idea of the moral dimension of such communities is also not unfamiliar to school leadership. The work of Donaldson (2006), Fullan (2011), Gunter (2005), Hodgkinson (1991), Sergiovanni (2007), emphasise the centrality of trust, openness and affirmation within collaborative approaches. Within the context of MacIntyre's theory however, the grounds on which these relationships and interactions take place is quite specific, that is, in the context of the school seen as a community and in the context of the good of the practice. There is also much to be explored and offered in terms of a possible professional community of school leader practitioners. Gunter (2005) and Sergiovanni (2001) both contend that the basis on which such a

community is built and the connections that determine the nature of the relationships within it ought to underpin more authentic versions of distributed leadership in schools.

Conclusion

This chapter set out to explore, through the lens of Alasdair MacIntyre's account of practices, both the connections and the possibilities for school leadership as a practice. In attempting to elucidate the most salient features of MacIntyre's characterisation, attention has been drawn to the key features of (1) the good as a context for practices, specifically the good of education as a context for school leadership, (2) internal goods as the authority to inform, guide and evaluate practices, (3) the expectations of practitioner engagement and finally (4) the relationships involved in practices as shared social endeavours and as complex and ethically orientated activities. The potential for school leadership to be considered in this way has been advanced by drawing on a range of sources, both theoretical and empirical. Connections and possibilities for school leadership have tentatively been drawn, with a particular view to the key dimensions of purpose, process, role and relationships, many aspects of which cohere with and can be enhanced by MacIntyre's account. What is in the study's favour is that school leaders already have a sense of and are drawn to intrinsic and internal aspects of the role. If internal goods are the primary criteria for practices, the study will now move to advance the notion of school leadership as a practice through more detailed consideration of a possible new language of internal goods.

CHAPTER 5

CULTIVATING THE GOOD OF SCHOOL LEADERSHIP

Introduction

Arising from the exploration in Chapter 4, it is clear that the application of MacIntyre's idea of a practice to enhance the dimensions of school leadership and provide it with a richer and more coherent sense of purpose, whilst presenting a realistic proposition, cannot progress without some understanding of school leadership's internal goods. In order to advance the notion of school leadership as a practice with internal goods, this chapter will address the question of a more enriching sense of purpose as good for school leadership and how this enriched purpose as good might provide coherence to the practice and process of leadership, to school leaders as practitioners as well as to the relationships within the community of the school. Drawing from existing research in the school leadership field, this final stage of the study will attempt to bring forward and sketch out the idea of school leadership as a practice with internal goods, how such an approach might be cultivated, as well as reflecting on the challenges that might be involved.

MacIntyre, in referring to goods as standards of achievement, suggests that 'every craft is informed by some conception of a finely perfected work which serves as the shared telos *(as good)* of that craft' (1990, p. 64). This 'finely perfected work' has two parts, that is perfection or excellence in the 'performance or product' of the practice and excellence in terms of what is required of the practitioner. In the last chapter we talked about the place of the good and internal goods in MacIntyre's account of practices, and we looked to the work of Morgan, Sugrue, and others for research findings that might inform a new account of school leadership. In reviewing such work we are reminded that a sense of the good has not

been completely abandoned in the school leadership field, but rather, as Hogan (2004, p. 28) suggests in relation to the good of education, it has been 'relegated'. The task now is to consider how the good might be brought to the fore and cultivated in a school leadership context. As it stands, much of the research into school leadership is valuable, but we think that it can be translated into a new language, thus opening up exciting possibilities in informing the process, practice, role and relationship expectations of school leadership in a way that provides clarity and coherence to questions of purpose, good and excellence (Figure 1). The study will now begin to focus on the advancement and cultivation of internal goods as a new la nguage and account of school leadership as a practice, one that is more coherent with the current context of schools and set within an overall context of the good of education as outlined in chapter 4. As already mentioned, the study is not in search of a grand new theory but is seeking to find a new way of looking at the various dimensions of school leadership in order to provide the work and mission of school leaders with an orientation that is more coherent, relevant, compelling and achievable than heretofore.

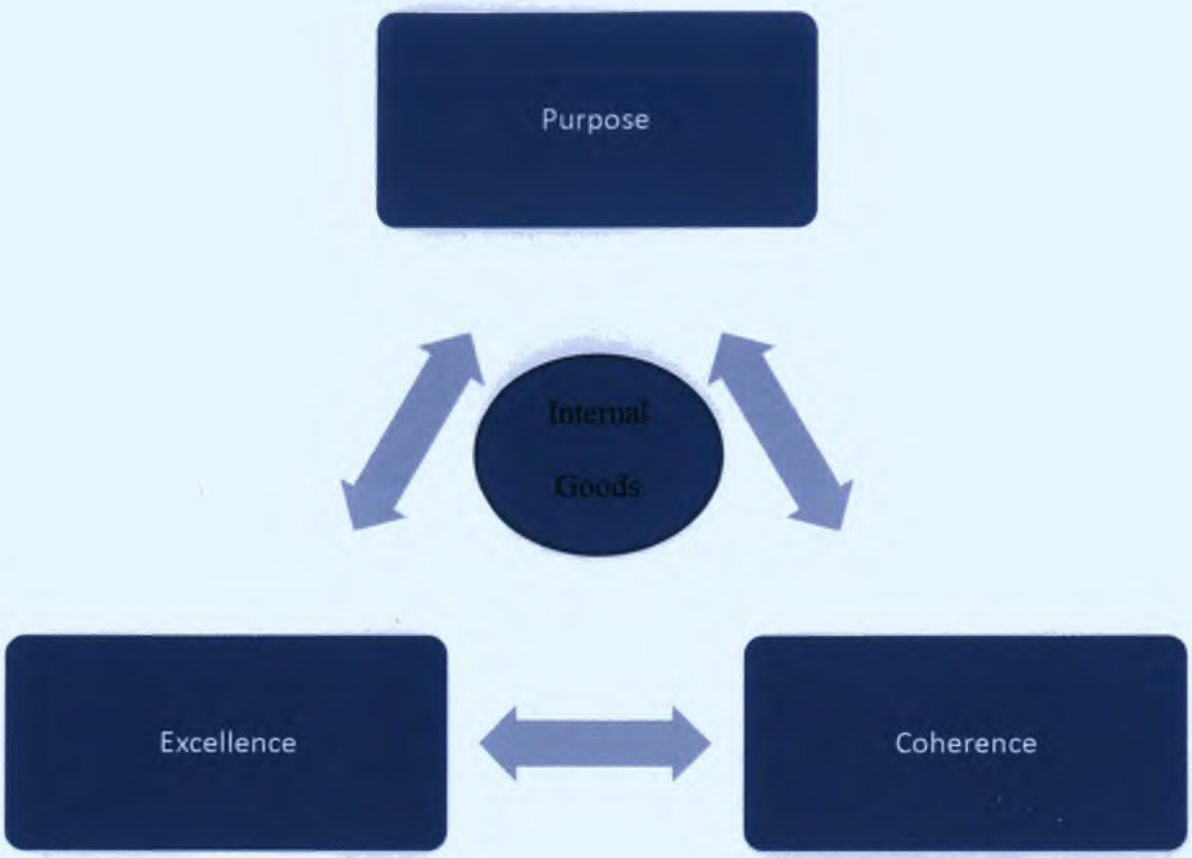

Figure 1. The good of school leadership informing purpose, coherence and excellence in practice.

Drawing from the study thus far, there are a number of issues to be acknowledged at this juncture. The first is with regard to the identification of internal goods. Chapter 4 has described how, in setting out to consider the question of the internal goods of school leadership, the testimony of school leaders is essential. MacIntyre holds that this is one of two ways to gain access to internal goods. Internal goods are not system developed; proper elucidation involves practitioners (MacIntyre, 2007). Whilst it is outside the size and scope of the study to engage school leaders in the way we would like to engage them, it is possible to reconstruct their perspective on the internal goods of school leadership by drawing on insights yielded from a range of sources, both theoretical and empirical. This is MacIntyre's

(2007, p. 190) second way of gaining access, that is 'learning systematically what other practitioners have to teach'.

Secondly, the study must acknowledge that there is a significant amount of philosophical debate around the interpretation and application of the idea of internal goods, in particular around the central notions of the good and the common good or *telos*, the full treatment of which is outside the scope of this study. McLaughlin (2004, p. 56), for example, suggests that if one takes on the notion of the good as *telos* in order to situate practices, one must accept that it is multi-dimensional, in part 'in-articulable and opaque' and at times challenging. It is these multi-dimensional features of *telos* that constitute the complexity of the practice, and in McLaughlin's view highlight why virtues are required. To reflect McLaughlin's view, the study, in 'taking on' the idea of internal goods, will draw attention both to the possibilities for school leadership and to some of the issues and challenges that have to be faced. The final issue to be drawn from the study thus far is MacIntyre's idea of engagement in a practice as socially central. We have seen from Chapter 4 that there is an obligation on practitioners to be part of a community of practice, this is part of the cultivation and development of a practice and how competence as excellence is ultimately learned. Arising from this, how a community of practice as MacIntyre would intend can form the basis for the cultivation of school leadership as a practice will form the conclusion of the chapter.

To achieve this end, the chapter will progress in the following way. Beginning with the question of the good and internal goods, the first section will draw upon the available literature in the school leadership field, the discourse on practice, and the literature dealing with the ethical and community dimensions of schools and leadership. The main purpose is

to situate school leadership in this context and understand how a distinctive internal goods orientation might be brought into view. The next section will consider the challenges to be faced in bringing such an orientation into view. The final section will consider how a community of practice could provide the context to develop and cultivate this new orientation.

The Good of School Leadership

It is internal goods that give practices their substance. They are unspecifiable apart from that practice, recognisable and assessable only through the experience of participating in the practice, or from learning what other practitioners have to teach us (MacIntyre, 2007). They can act as points of reference for the practice in terms of what is being strived for, what it means to be good and excellent and what draws school leaders to the practice. As set out in Chapter 4, Dunne (2004, p. 183), in considering the internal goods of teaching, uses the analogy of an 'enacted story' to describe it as an activity. The analogy of the 'enacted story' is used by Dunne to reflect its complexity and dynamic character as a practice endeavour. He sees teaching as an activity that is constantly unfolding, conditioned by many complexities described as 'incidents and episodes' that have to be worked through. For Dunne, the work of teaching reflects an unfolding storyline, the elements of which are important and necessary to understand. Noddings (2004), in a similar vein, talks about reflecting on the reality of practice as perhaps a way of arriving at its essence. In line with both Dunne's and Noddings' thinking, reflecting on what is known about the reality or enacted story of school leadership represents a good starting point. To advance our inquiry, what has to be captured is the reality and complexity of the leadership situation in schools, in particular how it unfolds in practice as experienced by school leaders themselves. Secondly, what have to be taken into account are the intrinsic aspects of school leadership that draw school leaders to the work. In referring to what draws teachers to teaching, Hogan, (2004, p. 29) describes these as aspects

'worthy of their sense of occupational commitment'. Dunne uses the term 'essence' of a practice and, although acknowledging the complexity of arriving at such an essence in the case of teaching, given that it occurs in many different situations, contexts, levels and subjects, contends that there is a sense of sharing in a common practice of teaching (Dunne, 2004, pp. 182-184). The question, to which the study will now turn, is whether the same can be held for school leadership.

School leadership has been shown to be a dynamic and complex activity. Many writers have emphasised the importance of its relational element, reflected in the work with the whole school community of learners, teachers, parents, and governors as well as the outside community (Cuban, 1992; Fullan, 2001; Gronn, 1999; Harris, 2005; Sergiovanni, 1994, 1996; Starratt, 2003, 2004; Spillane, 2004, 2006b). A school community cannot be imagined without leadership. Much of its essence rests in bringing this community together, in its responsiveness to situations that arise within this community and in its collaborative and relational dimension (Barth, 2002; Harris, 2005a; Spillane, 2006). Although not to the fore in education policy, the importance of the collaborative dimension has been evidenced in international research (Mulford et al., 2004; Mulford, 2008). In many instances this evidence suggests the 'collaborative' and 'community' dimensions are the very things that draw school leaders to the role and are considered by them as an intrinsic part of their work and practice (Mulford, 2004, 2008; Webb, 2005). Research with school leaders in the Irish context has highlighted relationship building with teachers, other staff, students and parents as one of the key elements of their work (Morgan & Sugrue, 2008). In addition, these are the elements that they tend to enjoy the most.

MacIntyre's (1994, 2007) work offers some insight into how these ideas could be brought to life in a practice context. Within these works he considers as examples of practices activities whose essence focuses on school and community building in ways similar to the Aristotelian idea of a *polis*. MacIntyre sees communities as small-scale and local forms of association; building such communities is in his view a form of practice (1994, p. 288). In later work he goes on to give schools as an example of places where such type of community exists (1999a). In building such types of community he talks about 'bringing the community through a process of shared rational deliberation to a common mind'; he also emphasises 'affording opportunities for deliberation' and 'procedures of decision making' that are 'generally acceptable' (MacIntyre, 1999a, p. 129). In terms of the necessary conditions for such a community to thrive, and for such a community to achieve what is good and best, he talks about the need for 'conversational justice' the creation of 'conditions of truth', and 'involving all in the decision making process' (1999a, pp. 110- 111). He stresses the importance of including those with the lesser voice (1999a, pp. 106-107). In terms of the necessary virtues needed to create and sustain this kind of community, he suggests 'practical reasoning' and 'good judgement' as well as the virtue of 'caring' in order to bring all in the community to such a point (1999a).

As part of the 'practice of making and sustaining the communal life of the school' MacIntyre (2004, p. 8) the notions of building the community, ensuring the care and well-being of those in the community, creating the conditions for teaching and learning to flourish, building relationships through collaboration and participation are all already recognised as tasks that are performed by school leaders. The literature on schools as communities can be shown to lend additional support to this suggestion. Strike (2003, p. 74) for example, considers that schools as communities need to be rooted in a common vision of human

flourishing and that this is the basis for the various roles and practices within the school community. Arising from this, the promotion of co-operative (as opposed to competitive) relationships within the school is needed to achieve what he terms the 'shared educational project' (2003, p. 73). Strike (2003) goes on to suggest that the community, in this case the school, needs to produce cohesiveness and coherence to arrive at this point and that this is achieved through shared co-operative processes. Chapters 1 and 2 have considered how such activity and work are viewed as part of the role and work of school leaders, both in terms of policy and practice expectations. Although receiving less primacy than outcomes of performativity, ideas of community building and collaboration have permeated through certain literature. For example, Sergiovanni (1992, p. 82) has talked about collegiality as a professional virtue in school leadership. In his view, promoting such collegiality in the school community needs to become one of the central tasks of leadership. Schools in his view need to be considered more as communities where such collegiality and relationship building become central. In further work he suggests that morally based leadership transforms schools from ordinary organisations into communities (Sergiovanni, 2007, p. 38). Beck (1994) suggests that the type of school leadership needed is one that emphasises relationships, encourages collaboration and promotes a sense of belonging. Starratt (1994, 2004, 2005b) in referring to schools as communities, considers that the 'administering' of that community is one of the primary goals of leadership in schools. Other work has argued that attention needs to be given to the relationship aspects of all involved in the school community in order for schools to work as centres of well-being, teaching and learning; this responsibility lies with the school leaders (Barth, 2002; Geruluk, 2005; Greenfield & Ribbons, 1993; Hodgkinson, 1999; MacBeath, 2005; Starratt, 2004, 2005b).

By way of summary, in taking the idea of 'community building', but more specifically 'the making and sustaining of a learning and caring community' as the possible good of school leadership within an overall context of the good of education and human flourishing, the kind of community to be built would be one that is both caring and learning, where relationships are built on co-operation towards that end, not on competition.[17] Such a proposition could form the essence of school leadership in a practice context. The next question to consider is the criteria for determining whether school leadership practice is meeting or achieving its end. Phrased in MacIntyrean language, such a question is about the internal goods of school leadership considered as the excellences to be achieved in order to arrive at the good of school leadership (Figures 2 and 3). Referring back to Chapter 4, where MacIntyre's conception of internal goods was dealt with in detail, reference was made to Higgins' (2004) typology of internal goods as a useful framework for understanding the range and complexity of this concept. Higgins suggests that there are four types of internal goods; those relating to (1) outstanding work or performance; (2) being engaged in a practice; (3) the character of the practitioner; and (4) how practitioners generally lives their lives. Taking Higgins' framework, the study will now engage with the question of the internal goods that might flow from the essence of school leadership as described above, commencing with possible goods of work or performance.

[17] The study does note this suggestion at this point is tentative, also acknowledging that the discourse on school as community is extensive with differing versions of community, for example those with a particular religious ethos etc. It also acknowledges that MacIntyre comes from a communitarian perspective where his view of community is also quite particular.

Figure 2. Internal goods informing what is to be strived for and how excellence is achieved.

Figure 3: The good of school leadership as *making and sustaining a learning and caring community* informing the internal goods of work, performance and the practitioner.

Internal Goods of Work or Performance

At the outset, it needs to be borne in mind that although internal goods have to be judged by practitioners as something worthwhile having, achieving, attending to or participating in, this is not their sole purpose. Higgins (2004) reminds us that internal goods are not just abstract ideas which are simply worthwhile; their purpose is to achieve what has been determined as good and excellent for the practice. Following Higgins, the study will draw on existing school leadership literature that resonates with the idea of school leadership's essence as 'the making and sustaining of a learning and caring community' and features that might cohere with the realisation of that caring and learning community. For

example, in relation to features that could be described as internal goods of work, Beatty and Brew (2004) in exploring the idea of emotional engagement of school leaders have identified relationship building, provision of professional support, and building collaborative capacity as important and necessary to building a learning community. In their view school leaders need to be more emotionally self-involved in these aspects of their work in order to be more authentic (Beatty & Brew, 2004, p. 351). Webb's (2005, p. 86-88) case study with a number of primary school principals suggests that school leaders' work needs to focus on 'building capacity for a learning community' and a 'collaborative' school ethos. She considers these features as 'internal' to the school as they are not externally motivated. School leaders' work and practice in her view must create the necessary conditions to release the intellectual capacity of those in the school community. She also emphasises the notion of well-being. McLaughlin (2005, p. 306) considers a school where 'teachers thrive' to be a good outcome of the work of school leaders. Both Webb (2005) and McLaughlin (2005) consider that much of this type of support and development work with teachers is very much unexplored territory but something that must be prioritised within school leaders' work. Within the practice of school leadership the idea of 'teachers thriving' could represent something to be strived for.

Many of these dimensions of practice are not entirely new. For example, the work of Fullan (2001, 2003), Gronn, (1999), Leithwood et al. (1999) highlight how it is generally accepted that school leaders are required to be consummate relationship builders. The difference is in conceiving them as goods, as opposed to tasks, or behaviours. Striving for internal goods is not about responding to external pressure or doing things for the sake of it, it is about doing them because this is what the practice is about and what the practice demands. Goldring and O' Sullivan, (1996, p. 197) suggest that in the context of building and fostering

a school community, school leaders can no longer serve as mere 'gate keepers' who attempt to limit parental, teacher and community involvement. They contend that it is essential that school leaders create the structures for genuine involvement. The objective must be to foster a broader community context than simply that within the school. To this end, school leaders must apply 'skilled negotiation', in order to build the necessary relationships with parents and others in the wider community (Goldring & O' Sullivan, 1996, p. 196-198). This 'skilled negotiation' could be deemed another good of performance towards real participation and collaboration. It is not about responding simply to demands for participation.

Research has shown how formal roles and hierarchical structures can place constraints on the genuine exchange of education ideas. In carrying out a small ethnographic study, Bogotch and Roy (1997) looked at and considered school leaders' interactions within the school community. They concluded that in moving towards a genuine learning and caring community, school leaders need to facilitate genuine exchange. The type and nature of interactions developed could also become a good of performance by which school leadership practice can be judged. The development of such interactions and the creation of the structures to facilitate this would have to go beyond a rational process to a practice endeavour involving collaboration and negotiation among and with members of the school community (Goldring & O' Sullivan, 1996; Leonard, 1999; Starratt 1999, 2003).

Strike (2000, p. 639) has also given consideration to features that might be central to the creation of learning communities. Without naming them as 'internal goods' he refers to 'reciprocity', 'collegiality', 'friendship' and 'dialogue'. If these are deemed to be goods of school leadership practice, school leaders will be required to demonstrate and facilitate them. They could also be considered required virtues or virtues to be learned. Other but related

research has identified 'shared enjoyment', and 'belonging' as essential characteristics of the work of school leaders in building a school community (Mulford, 2004, p. 632). These could also be seen as internal goods or excellences by which the practice of school leadership could be judged. Other features which emerged from Mulford's research which could be considered in terms of goods of work and performance are 'promoting and sharing best teaching and learning practice', 'creating a climate of support and positive relationships' and 'addressing student care and support needs' (2004, p. 635).

In line with this, Starratt's (1999, p 32-33, 2004, p. 3-5) work identifies three important things in terms of 'serving' or 'administering' the school community. The first of these is 'presence' in the community. This presence is deemed important to the working out of very basic moral values of trust, fairness, respect and loyalty. The second is that of 'taking risks'. He suggests that in creating a morally fulfilling environment and culture of community, belief in the talents and goodness of every member of the community is required. At times this may involve taking a risk in supporting that belief. Starratt (1999, p. 33, 2004, p. 6) emphasises 'responsibility', that is the responsibility to engage people in this way, this is because he sees the work of school leaders as being ' humanely significant' contributing to greater and more significant ends and as such appreciating the more intrinsic rewards of this work. In his view, this responsibility has two sides; that of respecting current practice and work that is good, while at the same time being responsive to new demands and new needs. This echoes MacIntyre's view that excelling in the practice of school leadership is not just about achieving what the current standards determine as excellent, it is also about going beyond those standards. Finally, in Starratt's (2005a) view, although school principals as leaders have a major role in moving staff towards this type of consensual community life, they must equally cultivate other leaders in the community. He provides examples of the

virtues necessary for achieving this type of consensual community, citing both trust and courage. In this instance however, trust and courage could also be considered as goods internal to the practice of school leadership, both representing goods of performance and of the character of the practitioner.

Whilst this section has considered some possible internal goods of work and performance it is not an exhaustive or complete list. If we take from Higgins (2004, p. 41) that 'inside each practice is a distinctive vision for what it is worthwhile to achieve', we would have to say that the literature gives the following examples of what is worthwhile achieving in school leadership: relationship building, building of collaborative capacity, developing learning and professional communities, fostering genuine participative processes, reciprocity, collegiality, dialogue, enjoyment, belonging, engagement and presence. Taken together these terms and phrases form a possible new language of school leadership (see Figure 4). We believe that this language has the potential to provide a sense of purpose, coherence and all that is necessary for achieving excellence in school leadership. This is ultimately how the practice of school leadership might be judged. In the next section we will discuss the internal goods that apply to the practitioner as opposed to the practice.

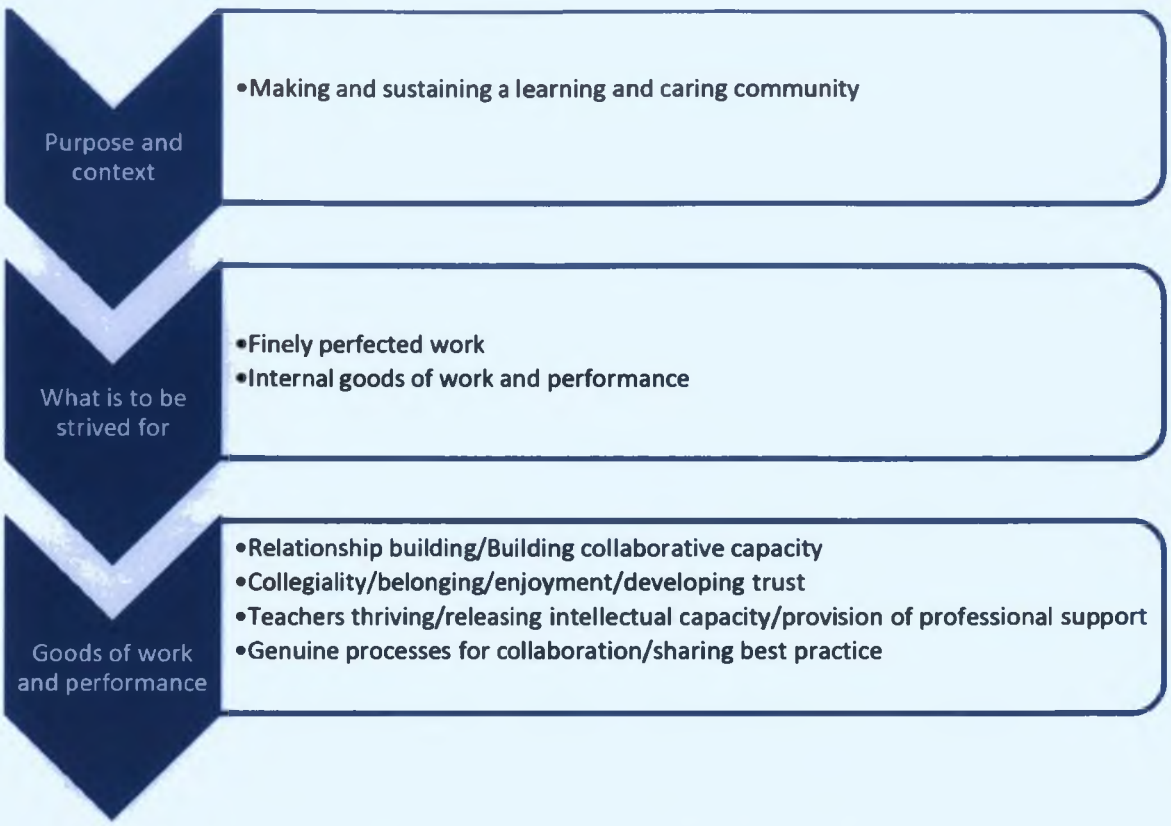

Figure 4: School leadership and its internal goods of work and performance.

Goods of the Practitioner

Returning to Higgins' (2004, p. 42) typology, there are three sub-types of internal goods located in practitioners: those associated with the nature and type of engagement, the character of the practitioner and finally how practitioners live their lives. As a starting point Higgins (2004, p. 44) suggests some good reflective questions for practitioners which are useful for our analysis. The first question focuses on the kind of person the practitioner, in this case, the school leader needs to become (character); the second involves identifying what is worth striving for and makes for excellence, meaningfulness and richness (engagement), and finally the third question asks about connections with the school leader's life taken as a whole (narrative unity).

In terms of the kind of person the school leader needs to become, MacIntyre (1990, p. 62) has summarised this as having to 'overcome inadequacies of desire, taste, habit and judgment'. Higgins (2004, p. 42) suggests that it is about being excellent at doing, seeing, feeling or figuring out. This is not simply in relation to work, performance or the application of skills; it also applies to character and virtue. As outlined in Chapter 4, it is not what is required to be effective, but what is required to be excellent. For example, with regard to feeling, MacIntyre would see this as the living out of the life of a good leader, that is, it means something to be a school leader and being a school leader provides the necessary resources to shape other aspects of one's life. A practice requires the self-involving of the practitioner if they are to fully excel, it is therefore an internal good associated with the engagement of the practitioner and one in terms of which they can be judged as good or excellent. Research with school leaders has shown that it is an activity that lends itself to self-involving. Within this practice frame it becomes a necessary requirement in order to excel at the practice. Chapter 4 has demonstrated how school leaders are generally self-involved in most aspects of their work and practice. It is not just a job; it means something to them to be a school leader.

With regard to 'figuring out', there are many dimensions to this given the current challenges and dilemmas with which school leaders are faced. For example, Dimmick (1996, p. 140) argues that school leaders are being presented with deep and enduring tensions arising out of the inconsistencies and contradictions inherent in current education policies. He further contends that however complex they are, they form an interesting and intrinsic part of the work. In his view, they can only be dealt with once the nature of the dilemma is understood (Dimmick, 1996, p. 141). This coheres with MacIntyre's view of the complexity of practices. In Chapter 4, the study touched on dealing with practice dilemmas where

figuring out is about the ordering of goods and the negotiation of internal and external goods. In the first instance the practitioner must know and understand what the internal goods are, that is, what they are striving for. It is part of the role of the practitioner to make more compatible the commitment to internal goods and the external demands and pressures. Without the language of internal goods, decision making in the ethical context of schools becomes more challenging. For example, if the drive for results, considered as some of the external goods of the institution, threatened to compromise the work of school leaders in the creation and sustaining of learning communities, school leaders would have to make these competing ideas compatible in some way, thus maintaining the good of the practice. The development of a 'learning and caring community' is for the good and flourishing of all in the school, its main objective is not a performance or results-driven end. This does not mean that results and performance have to be ignored; they are simply not set out as internal goods of school leadership practice. In this context, the primary focus of the school leader could be the thriving and support of teachers or the development of communities of learning. While this might give rise to improved results, this is not the primary objective of the practice. Such examples of 'making compatible' will be necessary to maintain the good of the practice of school leadership within the policy context of schools, and ultimately this is the responsibility of the school leader as the practitioner.

It may also become necessary at times for school leaders to order the internal goods of work or performance, not necessarily as a response to external demands, but as part of the actual practice of leadership. For example on an occasion where a safe community might have to be prioritised over participation in the community, such a situation would require the ordering of internal goods. To be in a position to do this, the school leader must apply the relevant virtues. In MacIntyre's (2007) account of practices, two categorisations of virtue are

essential: intellectual virtues such as judgement and virtues related to character such as courage and honesty. Their application is a necessary part of engaging in the practice. For example, excelling at school leadership will mean on occasion having to be both courageous and exhibiting good judgement in order to figure out and order goods. This will involve the setting aside of some goods over others and having the necessary courage to do so (MacIntyre, 1994, 2007). This is why virtues such as courage are necessary to school leadership. The reason being that internal goods must be given greater priority than external ones as it is upon the former that the practice will be sustained for the future (MacIntyre, 1994, p. 285). The study has tried to show how school leaders are currently placed in the institutional role of school principal, where expectations are primarily focused on institutional goals. The evidence suggests that such expectations can put pressure on school leaders to act or make decisions that do not promote the internal goods of the practice. However, when school leaders are seen as practitioners, they are thought to be responsible for adhering to the goods of the practice, hence they are required to have both courage and good judgement. This idea is not completely new. Duignan and Collins (2003, p. 286-288) have in fact suggested being courageous as a type of competence necessary to school leaders as they face the many front-line challenges that confront them. Leithwood et al. (1994, p. 103) consider the question of type of school leadership for future schools. In consulting with school principals from across a range of school types, Leithwood et al. (1994, p. 103.) have identified 'courage' as necessary to deal with what they perceive as ever-increasing complexity.

In looking at judgement more closely there are a number of things to consider. For MacIntyre (1999a, p. 83), to become a practical reasoner, one must develop the ability to evaluate, modify, and reject certain reasons for action. The point of practical reasoning is to

be able to act not just to please but to achieve what is good and best (1999a, p. 84). It also involves recognising, in one's practice, what goods are at stake, threatened or need to be set aside or prioritised (1999a, p. 92). Further, practical reasoning involves discovering the salient features of a situation and the virtues that might be needed to respond to that situation, examples of which are risk-taking, courage, justice and honesty. MacIntyre (1999a, 2007) considers this to be an ethically rich practical wisdom, an excellence both to be acquired and to be applied as good judgement within practices. Practical wisdom derives from the Aristotelian term *phronesis,* meaning a type of deliberation through critical reflection resulting in action (Dunne, 2005a, p. 382). Describing *phronesis* as *nuanced judgment,* Dunne (2005a) considers it to be an internal good or desired outcome of a practice. As a virtue, it becomes central to the practice of school leadership as something to be developed and achieved on the part of the school leader. Holmes (1992) has considered good judgment to be a prerequisite of being a school leader and a basis upon which they are appointed to the role. In expanding on the idea of judgement, Bottery (1992), Campbell (1996) and Hodgkinson (1999), expand on how they see it in the context of school leaders' work. They conclude that it involves being genuinely engaged in a situation, not observing it from afar. This approach will enable school leaders to reflect on what a particular circumstance is asking of them. This suggestion would reflect Starratt's (2004, p. 49) requirement of the school leader in terms of presence, that is 'not standing above' the situation, or Dunne's (2005a, p. 376) 'context sensitive' judgement. McCutcheon's (2009) biographical case study of his own school leadership practice highlights the centrality of good judgement in bringing the concept of the common good to fruition in the challenging environment of a multicultural school. He also considers it a necessary requirement if one is to become a good principal in this situation. The choice must be made in the first instance between personal interests, on the one hand, and the common good and the good of the practice, on the other. Because of

this, greater emphasis needs to be put on the character of the school leader (McCutcheon, 2009). Much of the discourse on practical wisdom also emphasises related notions of situational alertness, appreciation and flexible judgement (Carr, 2005; Dunne, 1993) as well as *insight* to meet the particularity of each action and situation. Dunne and Pendlebury (2003) suggest that such insight must be permeated by a sense of internal goods and this is how coherence in the practice is achieved.

In taking on the language of internal goods, what coherence ultimately means is that the practitioner is being virtuous in relation to the practice. MacIntyre's general context for practices, already referred to in Chapter 4, is important for understanding this point; to excel or be ethical is not simply a matter of being virtuous, it is about being virtuous in relation to the practice. Virtues for MacIntyre have a context – in this instance it is practice. His argument is that the commonplace usage of virtue is too indeterminate to guide actions in practice; reference must also be made to internal goods. There are two reasons for this. To begin with, if school leaders do not have a clear sense of internal goods to guide them they may find themselves without resources when confronting certain dilemmas and predicaments (MacIntyre, 2007). Also, if a school leader is being simply courageous, without reference to the good of the practice and without reference to the realisation of the internal goods, MacIntyre would see him or her as conforming to a type, namely, 'heroism'. Holmes (1992, p. 426) considers that there is a need for a 'founding meaning of good in upholding judgements' in school administration; he contends that MacIntyre's idea of internal goods could provide that founding meaning. It is the view of the study that it is in this manner that more coherence can be brought to the practice of school leadership, in particular when it comes to the decision-making process.

This leads to the question of the type of engagement that would cohere with the idea of school leadership as a practice. As noted in Chapter 4, being virtuous in the context of the internal goods of the practice is what constitutes being ethical. There is already some relevant literature to draw from that would reflect this position. Campbell (1996, 2000, 2003), based on research work with both teachers and school principals, considers the question of an ethical frame of reference which might underpin practices in an educational context. With regard to school administrators/leaders and decision making, she emphasises the importance of cultivation of character and judgement and more personal engagement in order to become more effective as moral agents. In striving for schools where the objective is the creation of both a learning and caring environment, the virtues she envisages in the realisation of these objectives are courage, truth, justice and compassion. Her view would cohere with MacIntyre in that these virtues are 'not just for the sake of it', they must relate to practice.

Another virtue associated with school leadership has been that of trust. The work of Bottery (2003), Duignan and Bhindi (1997) and Gunter (2005) have suggested trust and being trustworthy as central to the relationship-building elements of school administration. Bottery (2003) argues that this cannot just be *general* trust, but practice trust. He also distinguishes between 'trust' associated with the role or position of school leader and the trust that needs to be developed and built in the context of delivering what is important to the practice (Bottery, 2003, p. 252). Trust in his view is not just something nurtured for its own sake. Duignan and Bhindi (1997) would concur. Their view is that both trust and honesty must be connected to something. Gunter (2005), in considering the importance of the distribution of leadership in building a learning community, highlights the centrality of trust. Moos (2005), in his work with Irish and Danish school principals also considered the various forms of trust. He

identified being trustworthy as central to the building of a community in a school. School leaders have to work, then, on 'being ethical' and developing the necessary virtues of character and judgement. Higgins (2004, p. 40) as previously referred to, suggests that virtues are better described as dispositions to do the right thing or the qualities needed to sustain the goods of practices. Much of school leadership literature would concur. Although not explicitly set out in the language of internal goods, the kinds of virtues as set out could be considered as such.

The final element of internal goods is the one that links to the practitioner's life as a whole. Hogan (2004) and Higgins (2004) have considered this point in detail. They suggest that being engaged in a practice is not just a job or indeed a vocation but a distinct way of being human. By implication, how school leaders practise leadership in their schools is connected to how they should live their lives. To be a practitioner in the MacIntyrean sense is to be fully engaged in the practice. Carr (2004) in considering this conception of practice for education and teaching suggests that this is the most challenging aspect of MacIntyre's account and expectation of practitioners. What is involved is character development in the direction of what he describes as a 'moral agent'; there can be no exceptions (Carr, 2004, p. 106). In becoming this 'moral agent' practitioners must become more honest, courageous, self-controlled, just and caring both in their lives generally but also in the realisation of goods internal to practices (Carr, 2004, p. 111). In his view, this is needed so that their conduct is both 'refined' and 'enhanced' in the complex contexts in which they find themselves. Dunne (2004, p. 177) suggests that this sense eventually becomes almost instinctive, that is, knowing what it feels like to be good. Gronn (2011, p. 89) in looking at what he deems to be intrinsic to school leadership, considers the practice to be about the ability to combine both risk and trust to the complexity of the school leadership situation.

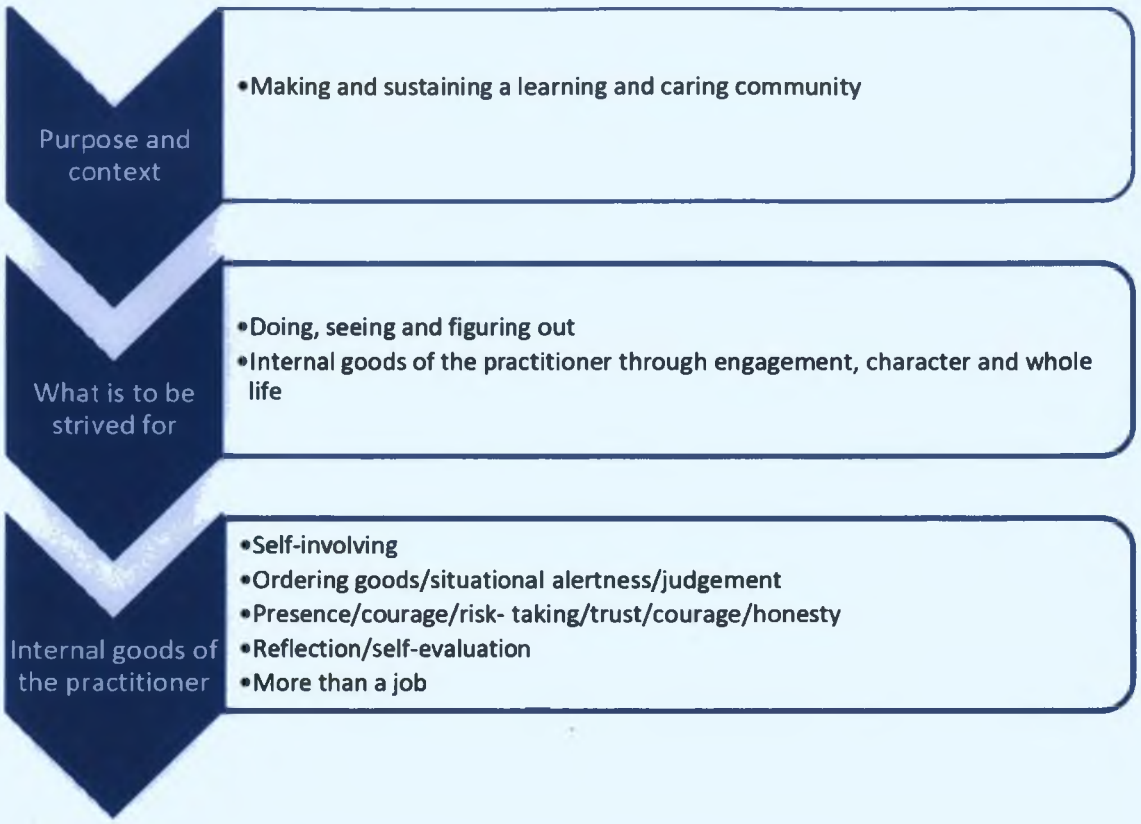

Figure 5: School leadership and the internal goods of the practitioner.

At this point it is worth reflecting back on what exactly is being proposed. This section of the study turned its attention to applying MacIntyre's notion of practice to school leadership. It explored some of the essentials of a school leadership practice, namely, that of the good and internal goods of work and performance as well as the practitioner dimensions of school leadership. Unable to engage with school leaders themselves due to the limitations of the study, the idea of school leadership as a practice was constructed by drawing on school leadership, school community and practice literature as well as some of MacIntyre's own ideas. Having sketched out the possibilities in bringing internal goods to the fore within a school leadership context, the study will now draw its attention to challenges that might be encountered.

The Challenges

Drawing from insights yielded from the study so far, in particular the context in which school leadership is currently located as set out in Chapters 1 and 2, the study has identified three challenges to be encountered in considering our advancement of school leadership as a practice. These challenges include the idea of practices as self-contained, the institutional location of practices and finally the idea of the common good in a context of pluralism and diversity.

Internal Goods and Self-Contained Practices

In order to understand the full extent of the question of practices presenting as 'self-contained' activities, that is, existing for the purpose of realising their internal goods, it is necessary to return to an aspect of MacIntyre's work previously referred to in Chapter 4; these are external goods. With regard to external goods, central to MacIntyre's (2007) conception of internal goods is that they are to be distinguished from goods that may be externally and contingently related to it. This implies that the activities school leaders engage in and the manner in which they engage in those activities serve the good of the practice, contributing to the common good and good of the community in which it is situated. External goods are a second type of good associated with practices. They too are to be gained by participating in the practice. Some examples MacIntyre gives associated with the practice of playing chess are, 'prestige', 'status' and 'money' (2007, p. 188). He explains that while these could be gained from the practice of playing chess, they could equally be attached to other practices. External goods can be achieved, then, in other ways, not just by engaging in one particular practice. MacIntyre notes that people have to compete for external goods, the outcome of which is the achievement of that good. Conversely, with internal goods, they are the outcome of the competition to excel in the practice, which is done for the

good of the whole community, not just one individual (MacIntyre, 2007, p. 190). It is through the presence of their internal goods that MacIntyre (1994) describes practices as self-contained, that is they exist for the purpose of achieving those goods and are judged against them. In this context practices could be termed 'self-contained' – the issue for this study then, is how and can school leadership exist as a self-contained practice?

In considering the point of 'self-contained' practices, Miller (1994) argues that there are practices that exist to serve purposes beyond themselves that ought to be judged by their success in achieving that point or purpose, not just in relation to the internal excellences of the practice itself. Miller (1994, P. 250) is referring specifically to what he terms 'purposive' or 'social practices'. Defining purposive practices as 'forms of human activity which, although having internal standards of excellences, serve broader social ends and are therefore open to critical review in the light of those ends', Miller (1994, p. 254) argues that a distinction between different types of practices needs to be made on this basis. He gives the particular examples of chess and medicine, medicine as purposive, chess as self-contained. He also adds that having an external 'social purpose' is also a legitimate basis for determining a 'good' practitioner. He proposes that practices that are considered self-contained could be judged from the inside, but purposive ought to be critically assessed from the outside. In following this line of argument, Hager (2011) contends that the difficulty lies in MacIntyre's limited examples of 'external goods'. External goods such as money, prestige and power ought not, in his view, fit into the same category as the external goods of certain social practices which may serve a wider purpose. MacIntyre (1994, pp. 284-286), addresses Miller's argument directly. He argues that all practices will lose their sense of being a practice if they become simply about 'external goods', whatever those goods might be. This is particularly the case during challenging times for a practice, when the drive for some

external good becomes greater than, or is pursued at the expense of, its internal goods and excellences. MacIntyre (1994) uses the example of a fishing crew during lean times becoming only about profit rather than the excellences of the craft. The questions now are, does this issue have application for the advancement of school leadership as a practice and what kind of difficulty does it present?

Our review of literature in Chapter 1 tried to show how school leadership has been viewed, in particular how both policy and practice implications have been informed by the expectations of particular outcomes drawn from the school effectiveness and school improvement movements. Chapter 2 outlined similar expectations of performance and results from within the Irish context. These considerations could qualify as 'external' goods or at least 'external' from Miller's and Hager's perspective. If such positions were accepted, they could then constitute a legitimate way to judge the practice of school leadership. Several studies have attempted to demonstrate how leadership has mediated the achievement of such performance outcomes and been judged and evaluated accordingly (Hallinger, 2005; Hallinger & Heck, 1999; Mulford & Silins, 2004). Although limited in their findings, the evidence suggests that there are growing 'external' demands of this nature on school leaders. In advancing our proposition for practice and school leadership, does conceiving it as a self-contained practice become problematic?

The study would contend that although school leadership may mediate other outcomes, they cannot be its overall purpose or good as they are 'external'. The study would also contend that the types of processes and goods that have been identified as more intrinsic to the practice of school leadership are worthwhile in themselves and necessary to both sustain and inform the overall good of the school, in particular the good of facilitating

'teachers to thrive' as well as a number of other related goods. Finally, the study would contend that claims made about the direct relationship between school leadership and results are tenuous. For example, Mulford's (2008) synthesis of findings from case studies across a number of schools, suggests that school leaders improve teaching and learning only indirectly, but most powerfully through their influence on aspects of their work such as staff motivation and community building. In the application of MacIntyre's account of practice, it is these aspects, or goods, internal to the practice of leadership, that must be prioritised over other kinds of outcomes. It is interesting to note that Spillane's (2006) work suggests that leadership can occur without any clear evidence of outcome but is evident through other types of actions and activities related more to the actual process of leadership.

The objective therefore is about preserving the integrity of school leadership and its' intrinsic processes and goods as valuable in their own right. Would such a focus on internal goods be contentious in the current policy context? Writers who have considered this contend that it does not have to be an impossible proposition. For example, Cuban (1988) and Sergiovanni (2007) suggest that internal and external considerations in school leadership do not always have to be mutually exclusive and perhaps they both can be achieved without compromise. Dunne (2004, p. 172) describes this as the ability of a practice to do service to other things without having to negate service to the pursuit of internal goods. Noddings (2004, p. 168) equates internal goods with the 'distinctive criteria for excellence', whilst they may contribute to the achievement of certain ends, the important thing is that they are considered as ends in themselves. She gives the example of care and trust in the context of teaching. In her view they are ends in themselves, 'not simply means to achieve various learnings' (ibid., p. 168). What is important about internal goods is how they enhance a practice; for any activity describing itself as a practice with internal goods, it is Noddings'

contention that there is much to be gained for that activity. Echoing this, Dunne (2004, p. 18) suggests that the real challenge for practices is that they are properly understood and carried on. This study would suggest that the 'gains' for school leadership in being conceived through the language of internal goods is that it avoids becoming totally bound up with and judged in terms of the achievement of other things like test scores. Although there need to be distinctive criteria for assessing good and excellent school leadership, these criteria, though different from external goods, do not have to be at odds with them.

The Institutional Context of School

An issue related to external demands and goods is the institutional context in which practices find themselves. Institutions are, for MacIntyre, the social bearers of practices (2007, p. 194). Institutions, such as the school and the practices located within it, including school leadership, are in a double relationship. The state of the institution affects the practice and how practitioners conduct their practices. This can be in a positive way, in terms of sustaining them, or negatively by impeding their development. The natural social bearer of the practice of school leadership is the institution of the school. As the research presented in Chapter 2 has shown, the types of relationship and influences which different types of school bring to bear on aspects of school leadership is considerable (Grummell et al., 2009; Sugrue and Furlong, 2002). In line with international research, conceptions of good or effective schools can be a source of tension for those in leadership positions (Cuban, 2003; Mulford, 2004, 2008). In understanding the source of this tension, MacIntyre's language of internal and external goods provides an important and useful framework. Although practices cannot survive without an institution, they can have different priorities and ends in mind from time to time (MacIntyre, 2007, p. 194). It is MacIntyre's contention that institutions are both characteristically and necessarily concerned with the 'external' goods of practices. This is the case because their primary objective is to sustain themselves as institutions and the

practices they bear. In addition, they are very often structured in relation to external goods such as power, status and economic gain. In this regard, they too have to sustain themselves and by implication the external goods become their priority. The prioritisation of external goods can create a tension between a practice and its institution. This is because the practice's internal goods can become vulnerable to the 'acquisitiveness' of the institution in its pursuit of external goods (MacIntyre, 2007, p. 194). The ideals and creativity of the practice are always vulnerable in this situation. MacIntyre gives a specific example of 'co-operative care' as an internal good that could become vulnerable to 'competitiveness' for external goods (2007, p. 194), creating a situation where a practice finds it difficult to maintain its integrity. The tension between practices and their institutions is not to be underestimated, because in MacIntyre's view 'the distortions and illusions within practices of which they need to be cured are of course both real and recurrent' (1994, p. 289). It is important for the practice community to reflect on this and make such 'distortions' explicit. MacIntyre suggests that the language of internal goods and excellences can provide the conceptual resources for such self-reflection.

Whilst framing these tensions in the language of internal goods and external goods is useful, the challenge in putting forward a conception of school leadership from an internal goods perspective is not to be underestimated. Dunne (2004) raises the critical question of whether practices properly conceived are simply seen as 'separate games played in their own right'. MacIntyre contends that this type of challenge highlights the important role the virtues could play. Through the cultivation of virtues such as justice, courage and truthfulness, practitioners may be better enabled to resist the potential pressures and tensions posed by the demands of some institutions (2007, p. 194). Recent work by Gronn, (2011) and Sugrue (2011) considers the virtues of risk taking, trust and courage as necessary for

school leaders in such a tight context of institutional regulation. MacIntyre's overall view is that there is a certain legitimacy and realism in the contestability between institutions and their practices. It is inevitably part of the nature of the relationship between the two and belongs to the nature of institutions themselves (MacIntyre, 1973). The beliefs and concepts which inform particular institutions or practices may form a relatively homogenous and consistent set, or they may form a relatively diverse and conflicting set. The implication is that, at one level, there can be consistency, homogeneity and agreement but, at another level, conflicts or inconsistencies.

In reviewing the relationship between practices and institutions as well as practices and external goods, the level and nature of this relationship will have to inform any evaluative questions on how the practice, its members and the institutions are working together. Indeed, more evaluative and reflective work on these issues becomes part of the practice of school leadership, affording school leaders the opportunity to consider and appraise internal goods and other demands. In engaging in such reflection school leaders are also better placed to consider whether tensions that arise for them are arising from institutional and external demands or from their own practice. In reflecting on the concept of the common good and human flourishing as applied to schools, Strike (2003, p. 81) is careful to point out that it cannot be about 'romanticising' the idea; schools must have a distinctive vision but with public regulation.

Diversity and Pluralism

Having considered the possible appeal of a MacIntyrean account of practice within the current policy context of outcomes and performativity and within the context of the institutional dimension of schools, another question that emerges is the possible appeal of such a practice within the context of an increasingly diverse and pluralist society. Practices

have their own sense of the good, which emerges out of the communities of which they are part; and in contemporary Ireland that community context is increasingly diverse and pluralist. As MacIntyre remarks, practices are 'socially established' (MacIntyre, 2007, p. 187). What this implies is that the good of school leadership cannot exist outside of what is considered the common good and independently of the way education and schools are perceived by society at any given time. This is the start of the narrative of practices as MacIntyre sees it. Whatever meaning is attributed to education within the community, school leadership must be located within that as we are relying on it as the 'ultimate' source of authority (Bottery, 1992, p. 186). The question is whether or not this presents a challenge for practices that emerge in a society that comprises many different and divergent groups.

Dunne (1995a, p. 17) and McLaughlin (2004, p. 57) acknowledge the difficulty in attempting to articulate both the good of education and the common good in an increasingly pluralist democracy. This is because the idea of a 'common' or' human' good, understood by MacIntyre (2007, p. xii) as human flourishing, can mean different things for different cultures, religions and philosophies. Nussbaum (2001, p. xxxi) recognises that in a pluralist society, the inevitability of such differences has to be recognised. Regarding the good of education, many writers agree that achieving consensus is now more difficult than ever, and this is why value dilemmas occur for school leaders all of the time (Begley & Johansson, 2003). How MacIntyre deals with the questions of plurality is a source of disagreement. For example, Katayma (2004) suggests that he recognises the existence of a plural society in the recognition of 'rival and incompatible' traditions. Others would contend that at times he is both vague and contentious on these issues (Horton & Mendus, 1994). For the purpose of our study however, what is at issue is how the idea of a common good, or common goods is relevant for contemporary society and the diversity and plurality of schools.

Whilst acknowledging that the sources of contrasting educational perspectives are varied, there is also the view that there may be more common ground that generally realised on this issue (McLaughlin, 2004). Katayma (2004, p. 66) contends that there is 'prima facie evidence' of a desire to return to some sense of a common good. To fulfil this desire, it will have to be acknowledged that while schools are characterised by pluralism – where diverse groups exist together and are valued – it is important to promote cohesion amongst these groups and this involves taking on the shared values of the school community (Katayma, 2004, p. 67). Even though there may be disagreement on certain moral issues, there is common ground to be found (2004, p. 68). Grace (2002, p. 182) in looking at leadership in a Catholic school context, contends that there is a renewed interest in notions of a common good and human flourishing.

Holmes (1992) presents an interesting and relevant perspective on our question. To begin with, he contends that what is missing in the modern day administrator is 'a necessary and grounded belief in virtue' (Holmes, 1992, p. 430). His view is that there would be a general appreciation of MacIntyre's account of practice within schools. In suggesting this, he raises a number of important questions as to its general applicability in the current context of diversity, secularism, erosion of community and increasing emphasis on skills testing and results, particularly within the 'public' and 'common'[18] school sector. He suggests that, although we are in a period of pluralism and individual choice, we are also in a time where school ethos, climate and sense of community are becoming increasingly important (Holmes, 1992, p. 432). Arising from this, he questions why schools are tending to shy away from notions of the common good and flourishing as part of their mission and vision. He also

[18] Holmes (1992, p. 43) makes the distinction between public, that is publicly funded, and common or community schools, and also independent or faith-based schools. He suggests that common schools are losing favour with the increased expansion of schools within the public sector and the expansion of independent schools.

wonders why it has to be a problematic area for them. In supporting some of his argument, he draws from research which points to the successes of schools that are more intense than others in representing their 'doctrine'. With this in mind he suggests that the idea of developing a MacIntyre-like school 'appears less ridiculous' (Holmes, 1992, p. 434). He argues that perhaps we ought not to consider all schools in line with the common good, but particular types of schools. In his view, these could be the most popular schools, schools of choice. Regardless of school type, that is academic or vocational, they each could be built on the premise of shared values and purpose, as good, among teachers, students, parents and administrators (Holmes, 1992, p. 434).

Although the study is not necessarily aligning itself to all of Holmes' thinking, it does represent a perspective on how schools that build on the idea of the common good fit within contemporary society. What is more significant is how he views school leadership in such a context. Not only will this context inform how school leadership is to be practised, but this type of context will ultimately change and be dependent on that practice. He suggests that such a school would develop as a type of 'consensual community' (Holmes, 1992, p. 434). In line with this, he recommends that school principals be selected on the basis of wise judgment, education and moral integrity. He thinks that school principals should be responsible for setting high but realistic expectations for all members of the school community and for maintaining a trusting environment based on shared fundamental values.

In dealing with the issue of plurality and the common good in education, Katayma (2004, p. 73) also emphasises how the conduct of the practices and practitioners are important. Educational practitioners, in her view, need to gain the confidence of the community in order to cultivate commonly agreed goods. Such cultivation will also involve

development of the virtues, in particular courage. In dealing with diversity, school leaders need to be courageous in throwing issues open to negotiation in ways that include the whole community (Starratt, 2004). Hogan's (2011) work considers the question of a universally defensible ethics of education practice; the significance of such an account is that it represents the embodiment of pedagogical practices, allowing for a wide plurality of teachers' views but at the same time arising from a 'defensible conduct' of education practice (Hogan, 2011, p. 35). Following Hogan, we believe that situating school leadership as a practice within a context of pluralism and diversity will have to be done within a 'defensible idea of a good education', which as Hogan argues is a view generated by the school community and not something imposed on it. As McLaughlin (2004) suggests, the idea of a good education is something that has to be constructed and sustained, co-operatively and collaboratively within a community of practitioners.[19] Drawing from an analogy used by Dunne (2005a, p. 385), implicit in this construction is the understanding that the school leader is 'purposeful' but aware of the 'prevailing conditions'. Strike (2003, p. 81) makes the important distinction between a vision that is shared and a 'dogma' that is imposed. Schools, in his view, need a sense of deeper meaning but it is how they go about discovering it that is important.

Having given consideration to how school leadership might be conceived as a practice in the MacIntyrean sense, with attention being paid to some of the challenges to be confronted, the chapter so far has tried to make a case for an alternative account of school leadership that is both relevant and necessary to the current context of schools. It has consciously employed the language of internal goods when discussing the context and

[19] McLaughlin (2004) also puts forward the idea of multiple communities of practice. He is referring to teachers and how diversity could be reflected in such an approach.

purpose of school leadership, a preferred manner of viewing school leaders as well as the nature of the school leadership process and its associated relationships. Key to these relationships is MacIntyre's idea of a community of practice. Not only is there an obligation on practitioners to become part of such a community, such a community also becomes a source of authority for the practice; it is through this community of practice that internal goods are developed, reflected upon, improved and changed. This final element in the cultivation of school leadership as a practice will now be addressed.

Cultivating the Good of School Leadership

If the idea of the good is to be cultivated in schools, school leaders will have to engage in a community of practice. McLaughlin (2004. p. 54), in comparing MacIntyre's idea of a community of practice to that of Wenger,[20] reminds us that a MacIntyrean practice is not a lower-level, detached form of practice. It requires practitioners to self-reflect but also to evaluate as a community. In MacIntyre's (1999a) own view, the sense of the practice is one which the members self-consciously share and this can result in a shared ethos of practice. Hallinger's (2003, 2010) work has identified the need for a 'shared ethos' amongst school leaders that would help them to work together as a community. Evidence from the Irish context shows a strong history of associations and networks (O' Buachalla, 1988; Mac Donald, 2008; Morgan & Sugrue, 2008). However, their focus has not necessarily been on practice considerations.

---

[20] Etienne Wenger has developed an alternative account of a community of practice which has emerged from the tradition of situated cognition which emphasises the social character of such communities. Many writers have applied his concept to teaching, although he does not draw any examples from the field of education in his work. McLaughlin, (2004, p. 49) considers his ideas around a community of practice to be quite different to MacIntyre's, in particular its ethical emphasis.

McLaughlin (2004, p. 59), in addressing the question of a framework for cultivating and developing communities of practice, suggests that many of the existing efforts to develop such frameworks have 'merely bolted on elements of work and practice without doing justice to a more integrated conception of practice reflecting the *telos* of the activity, the nature of its internal goods and the sort of qualities seen to be desirable for the practitioner'. We believe that by adopting MacIntyre's account of practice we will avoid the charge of merely 'bolting' on elements of this type to the notion of school leadership. Higgins (2004) suggests that a practice envisaged along MacIntyrean lines represents a complex architecture that has to be built around the various dimensions of internal goods.

Drawing from what has been elucidated so far, it is the study's view that there are three dimensions to progressing MacIntyre's idea of a community of practice through a focus on internal goods necessary for the cultivation of school leadership as a practice. In taking this approach, the study has drawn from what has been set out in Chapter 4 in relation to internal goods; that is (1) how they can be used to describe what is to be strived for, implying a level of analysis; (2) how they guide and inform practice, implying a practitioner development role, and finally, (3) how they form the standards by which the practice and practitioners are to be judged, implying an evaluative role. The cultivation of the practice of school leadership within a community of practice will therefore have many dimensions. Firstly, practitioners must arrive at and articulate a collective understanding of the good of school leadership and what is required in order to achieve this good. This dimension will involve an analysis of both the good of school leadership and its internal goods. Secondly, the means to achieving these goods must also be considered. This will involve the further development of the practice and its practitioners. Finally, there will have to be some kind of reflection on the achievement of these goods. Such reflection will involve evaluation with a

view to continued improvement of the practice. To summarise, the cultivation of the good of school leadership will involve analytical, developmental and evaluative dimensions; the analytical providing a sense of purpose, the developmental informing the practice, roles and relational elements in a coherent manner, and the evaluative promoting progress and excellence of practice. Although set out in this way, it represents a cyclical and on-going process of sharing and reflecting in line with MacIntyre's idea of 'a network of giving and receiving' (Figure 6).

Figure 6: Cultivating purpose, coherence and excellence through a community of practice.

Analysis of Purpose

This dimension involves very analytical work for school leaders, with many things to consider and questions to discuss (Higgins, 2004). The first level of analysis is to consider how to situate school leadership, its purpose or good, and how such a purpose can best be articulated within a community of school leaders. This purpose must be situated within the idea of the common good and how school leaders conceive of such a context as applied to

education; this is about setting out for what school leadership it is typically wanted. Discovering what this is will not be straightforward; we should also remember that it is the aim to serve the good that will structure its activities, internal goods and the types of standards expected (Higgins, 2004, pp. 42-42). Noddings (2004) agrees that we need to think about the internal goods and what it is they are derived from. As practitioners analysing the question of internal goods, school leaders will have to work through a number of different levels. As already noted there are the internal goods of the performance and of the product of the practice as well as internal goods related to the conduct, engagement and character of the practitioner (Higgins, 2004). In addition, the virtues in the sense of the internal goods needed to sustain this type of practice must form part of their analysis. Other issues worthy of consideration are what it means to 'do well' and what in the view of school leaders is their vision for complete excellence (Higgins, 2004, p. 42). Answering these questions will involve reflecting on the kinds of criteria by which school leaders could be assessed. Such criterion ought to be based on their determination of the good and goods both internal and external of the practice and how these might be a source of tension. There is a responsibility on school leaders to reflect on standards that have been realised and expected to date and on the way school leadership has been shaped and reshaped over time.

Development and Coherence

In reflecting on the school leadership literature, the study has pointed to a lack of attention to the actual practice and work of school leaders. Chapter 3 suggested that this lack has contributed to many of the incoherencies between expectations of school leadership policy and the actual practice on the ground. Questions around the actual practice, work, relational and role elements of school leadership must be consciously and collectively worked out and considered; they cannot be left to chance. MacIntyre believes that his account of practices enables such development through the discovery of new and revised sets of means,

that is, how school leaders actually go about their practice in achieving the ideals of internal goods (MacIntyre, 2007). This discovery will involve school leaders sharing information on the situations of judgement that present themselves, how they go about these practical endeavours, the challenges they experience and how they work through them. How and what particular virtues were exercised or needed must form part of this reflection and analysis. Chapter 5 has described how this type of reflection can support the development of school leaders as practical reasoners. It is only through reflecting on actual practice and learning from other school leaders (as practitioners) that a full understanding of the discharge of school leadership roles and functions can be realised (MacIntyre, 1999a, p. 89). It must be remembered that MacIntyre (1999b) cautions against agreeing on virtues at a simple rhetorical level; they must be situated in a practice. Engaging with other school leaders has the potential to inform how judgements can be revised or rejected, how institutional challenges can be dealt with, and ultimately how subordination to the good of the practice can be developed. This process should enable school leaders to move away from their 'lay theories' and other more subjective forms of reasoning, thereby cultivating the practice of virtues in situation (MacIntyre, 1999a, 2007a). Katayama's (2004, p. 61) work supports this contention, suggesting that it is through this type of habituation and reflective practice that cultivation of the necessary character and intellectual virtues can occur.

Finally, Chapters 1 and 2 have outlined the constantly evolving and dynamic nature of school leadership. Engaging in development work of this nature becomes part of the enduring responsibilities of being a practitioner. It also sustains the practice. This is because such reflective work involves looking at what might be hindering the practice of school leadership in the realisation of its internal goods or what kinds of incoherencies exist between expectations of role and relationships. School leaders, in considering these questions, can

reflect on whether such hindrances are a result of outside factors such as economic or bureaucratic constraints, or whether they relate to their performance or engagement as practitioners. Arising from this, how virtues like justice, honesty and courage are put into practice in particular contexts could be agreed among the community of practitioners themselves. Nussbaum, (2001, p. xxxi) and McLaughlin (2004, p. 57) suggest that this kind of development and reflective work among a community of practitioners has the potential for a shared ethos or ethic of practice to emerge. This implies the necessity for an appropriate form of social engagement, either at school level or across a number of schools, with those in leadership roles. For MacIntyre 'it is a familiar truth that one can only think for oneself if one does not think by oneself' (MacIntyre, 1987, p. 24), suggesting for school leaders a type of learning community systematically engaged in questions of practice to both develop and correct itself. The idea of practices as self-correcting emerges from the final frame for cultivation, specifically the evaluative and transformative dimensions.

Evaluation towards Excellence

Some key aspects of MacIntyre's account will set the evaluative dimension in context. The first point to recall is that internal goods are not static; new goods are devised and revised continually (MacIntyre, 2007). Secondly, it is the practitioners who have the responsibility for transforming the practice; this is part of the responsibility of being engaged in a practice (MacIntyre, 2007). Higgins (2004, p. 40) describes this as 'ethical progress' or the 'generativity' power of practices. MacIntyre (2007) contends that this type of reflection can enable an understanding of whether a practice is in a state of decline or progress (2007, p. 197). Reflecting on internal goods thus becomes the basis for self-evaluation with reference to the achievement and realisation of these goods, but also with regard to striving for excellence and improvement; it becomes a cyclical process of devising and revising internal goods, developing them in practice and reflecting on that practice. Frazer and Lucy (1994,

pp. 269-270) have developed the term 'evaluative teleology' to describe this process. It is their view that standards of excellence can be the objective criteria for judging if one is doing the practice 'right'. They also stress however that there is room for individual creativity and innovation. They describe this as 'pushing the boundaries forward, for doing better than any other practitioner has dreamed of'. This, we believe, is what MacIntyre (2007, p. 197) intends in the self-transformative element of practices.

In summarising what is being proposed in this section in relation to how school leadership can be cultivated, the study is suggesting that such cultivation must involve school leaders in an on-going process of analysis, development, reflection, evaluation and improvement.

Conclusion

The chapter set out to consider how school leadership as a practice could be advanced and cultivated. To start with it offered a possible sketch of such a practice. In constructing this account, MacIntyre's account of practice, in particular internal goods provided the basis for our new framework. The key ideas that were taken and adapted were: (1) Internal goods as emerging and flowing from the overall sense of the good of a practice can inform school leadership's sense of purpose, provide it with coherence in practice and with a sense of what is deemed to be good and excellent in that practice; (2) Internal goods as the central tenets of practice set out what is to be strived for and what is to be determined as good and excellent from a work, performance and practitioner perspective; (3) Reflecting on internal goods to bring the distinctiveness of a practice into view. Drawing from a range of sources, an initial sketching of school leadership as a practice was undertaken. This is not to suggest such a sketch is final. Whilst much is already present in what is known and understood about school

leadership, and terms like 'internal goods' already feature in the discourse, much deeper scrutiny and engagement of school leaders with these questions is necessary to bring it to greater fruition. However, the study would contend that although tentative at this point, this initial sketching presents as a very plausible proposition. Reflecting through this framework and language could direct a fuller characterisation of school leadership as a practice.

What is also required is a shift in thinking of significance, both from school leaders themselves, policy makers and those involved in research. Hogan (2004, p. 28) has described a shift to this type of practice for any activity in education as a much 'larger undertaking'; involving for him a move from the 'ordinary' to this type of 'larger' proposition. The challenges are not to be underestimated. In reflecting back on some of these challenges presented in Chapters 1, 2 and 3, the next section of this chapter identified three main questions to be considered at this point, these were: the question of school leadership as a self-contained practice; the institutional location of school leadership; the idea of the common good as a basis for school leadership as a practice in the contemporary context of pluralism and diversity. In moving school leaders themselves to this way of conceiving their work and practice, the final section of the chapter considered the role of a community of practice as a necessary and expected part of both the cultivation of the goods of work and performance and the development of school leaders themselves. Having arrived at this point, the final chapter will conclude the study, reflecting on the journey travelled and how this new account can contribute to and enhance continued work in the field of school leadership and address some of the questions identified in the introductory part of the study.

CHAPTER 6

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

The study commenced with an analysis of how school leadership has evolved both internationally and in the Irish context. Chapter 1 set out the complexity of the field, the differing ideas, positions and influences that have informed current conceptions of school leadership, highlighting how issues of labelling, policy borrowing and varying understandings have beset it. Of particular relevance are the legacies of governance, the headmaster or principal tradition, as well as the strong association with management in contributing to many of school leadership's incoherencies. Documenting its evolution, the study has found that the period from the 1980s onwards has been the most significant from a policy and research perspective. This period represented a new era for school leadership, during which time the approaches of instructional, transformational, distributed, moral, and teacher leadership emerged as being the most dominant. The study proposed an analytical frame for the purposes of considering these approaches, their differing and competing views of purpose, role, relationships and the nature of interactions. It then documented the various views and evaluations of school leadership. It noted that the most favoured approaches within current policy are those that place an emphasis on performativity and outcomes or indeed any elements of leadership work that can be quantified. It underscored the fact that the approaches that are less favoured are those that pay attention to outcomes and purpose of a moral or ethical kind.

Chapter 2 set about looking at the evolution of school leadership in the Irish context. In line with the international picture, Irish researchers tend to contextualise school leadership in terms of the wider socio-political landscape. The chapter noted that for much of its history

school leadership in Ireland has been characterised by distinctive patterns of governance, church influences and associated conservatism. More recently, government policy has cast aside many of these influences in favour of demands and expectations coming from Europe, but also and perhaps more particularly from the OECD. But even as the Irish State recast school leadership in response to the expectations of these international bodies, it retained centralised control of the education system. The period from the 1990s onwards has been one of unprecedented change in education. Changes in the expectations regarding school leaders have been driven primarily by this major restructuring agenda. On the one hand, more is expected of school leaders in terms of accountability, regulation, and quality control, while on the other new ideas around schools as communities, new types of relationships and partnerships and a new agenda for school leadership policy and practice have surfaced. Although it was a challenging exercise, the study tried to offer an account of the current situation of school leadership by drawing from the policy texts and from research work done with school leaders themselves. The study acknowledged that there is a paucity of relevant texts and research. It was able, nonetheless, to document evidence of the prescriptive nature of many school leadership approaches, confusion within policy and practice regarding leadership and management functions and a tendency to assign the role of school leader primarily to the principal. However, the study also identified a number of issues of a more positive nature. In Ireland, school leadership is recognised as a central part of education policy, school life, and the policy objective of building schools as learning communities. School leaders in Ireland demonstrate motivation and passion for their work, identifying the more intrinsic elements of their work as the most rewarding; these include its relational and collaborative elements and also the opportunity to contribute to the development of students. But worryingly, school leaders in Ireland also report fears of burnout, lack of time for what is considered to be core leadership work, frustration due to the overemphasis policy places on

performativity and outcomes at the expense of attending to the ethically charged and complex situation of schools. Given that all of these issues are reflected in the international context, Chapter 2 made the suggestion that new and fresh thinking was required in the area of school leadership.

Chapter 3 set about addressing the question of a possible new account of school leadership. In drawing from the ideas and arguments presented in Chapters 1 and 2, three main issues central to the task were identified. These included issues around purpose, coherence and what it means to be a 'good' school leader or 'to do well' in the practice of school leadership. Whilst acknowledging the merit of some of the approaches considered in Chapters 1 and 2 and the significant contributions they have made to the school leadership field, this chapter considered the particular question of ethical or moral purpose and practice to have been somewhat less to the fore within these developments. In further considering this question, the idea of a practice perspective was mooted. This chapter argued for the particular account of practice developed by Alasdair MacIntyre as a possible way of bringing forward a greater sense of purpose to school leadership, as being more relevant to the ethically charged context and work of schools, and perhaps as being a perspective that could address what it means to be a good school leader in a more consistent and meaningful way. This chapter also considered the views of writers whose thinking would cohere with this proposition; that MacIntyre's account of practice has real application and potential for the world of education, offering its practices a distinctiveness of their own.

Chapter 4 explored the possibilities of conceiving school leadership as a practice; it also offered suggestions as to how the various dimensions of school leadership might appear when re-conceived as elements of a practice It began by discussing the appeal of

MacIntyre's account of practice, his characteristic positions and the way he contextualises practices. His views on education were also set out; views which reflected well with the idea of good and moral within school leadership. The chapter then gave consideration to a number of questions; how MacIntyre situates practices and their purpose within the overall context of the common good; the nature of the engagement he expects and what informs and guides that engagement; how he conceives of practitioners, and finally the types of relationships he envisages between practitioners as a practice community as well as within the community at large. In working through these questions and making tentative connections to the dimensions of purpose, process, roles and relationships within school leadership, the chapter arrived at the conclusion that conceiving school leadership as a form of practice is something that is very realistic and fruitful. It is realistic in terms of satisfying the primary criteria for a MacIntyrean practice, that is having its own internal goods and a distinctiveness of its own; and it is fruitful to the extent that these internal goods and this distinctiveness hold out the prospect of a new account of school leadership that will give it a greater sense of purpose and coherence as well as an understanding of what it is to be good.

Chapter 5 set about the task of enumerating the possibilities and challenges of assuming an internal goods orientation in the context of schools as they are currently constituted, with a view to the advancement and cultivation of school leadership as a practice. To begin with, the importance of the input of school leaders was acknowledged. However, it was also acknowledged that it was one of the limitations of this study not to have had an opportunity to include material of this type. In order to compensate for this, it was explained that the study had drawn on research involving school leaders as well as literature that had considered the application of ideas related to the good and internal goods of school leadership and education more generally, with particular reference to literature on schools as

communities. The study found material in that research and in that literature which it considered relevant to the idea of school leadership as a practice, material that could provide school leadership with a sense of greater purpose from which its internal goods might flow, thus providing coherence to the essentials of role, actions, and relationships. The study also felt that a sense of good and excellence could emerge from this sense of greater purpose. It tentatively proposed that the good of school leadership was 'building a learning and caring community'.

To consider the question of internal goods, a typology of internal goods was proposed. It included goods of product, of work and performance as well as those of the practitioner, which as the study noted are related to character or virtue, engagement in the practice and the manner in which practitioners live their lives generally. The kinds of internal goods reflected upon were those of relationship building, building of collaborative capacity, developing learning and professional communities, fostering genuine processes, enjoyment, belonging and presence. Also considered were the virtues essential to such a practice. They are the virtues of courage, trust, presence, appreciation and flexible judgement. The capacity for and expectation of practical reasoning and self-involving were also identified as being essential for school leaders, as were honesty, truthfulness and fairness. Beyond that, the study gave some consideration to the possibility of transforming these goods into standards for judging how the practice is doing. In this connection Chapter 5 set out a number of challenges to be confronted. These challenges included the institutional location of school leadership, the challenges of being a self-contained practice, and the idea of the 'common' good in the current context of diversity and pluralism. It concluded by exploring the question of the necessary cultivation of the good of school leadership. It argued that this cultivation must be done with school leaders themselves considered as a community of practitioners, and

that the necessary framework must involve a level of analysis, development, reflection and evaluation and self-transformation for the practice.

Conclusion

The ideas for how a practice perspective on school leadership might be advanced and cultivated have been drawn from material covered throughout the study, in particular the key elements of MacIntyre's practice account. The study has acknowledged throughout that conceiving school leadership as a practice is an enormously challenging project. There are many questions still to be answered and many points warranting further scrutiny. Whilst many of MacIntyre's views have been considered controversial, it is his account of practices that forms the primary basis for our study, contending that within this account of practice, school leadership can address fundamental questions of purpose, coherence and excellence through the language of internal goods. The study has attempted this by exploring the essentials of MacIntyre's account of practice, identifying where the points of tension and coherence lie. Arising from this analysis, it has set out some ideas on how such a practice account could be advanced within the current context of schools. Acknowledging that a study of this size can only set out such ideas in a very tentative way, it is the firm belief of the author that the start of such a project can be achieved through working with school leaders as small communities of practice, cultivating a new language and orientation in the manner suggested. Such an account might also address the particular concerns identified in the introductory part of the study. These included: (1) what guides and informs school leaders' work and practice?; (2) how can school leaders reflect on their practice and confront the particular challenges and tensions they face in attempting to achieve what they perceive as the good of their practice?; and ultimately (3) how will they know they are doing a good job?

It is the conclusion of the study that MacIntyre's account of practice will be both relevant and fruitful within the Irish context, in particular in the way it can address these questions at a time when school leaders are in search of a new way. It is well documented that the field needs more of a shared ethos as a sense of purpose, providing it with a practice essence from which it's various dimensions can flow. The study is hopeful that the alternative orientation presented might begin to provide school leadership with distinctiveness, as the good, of its own, and ultimately, through proper cultivation and engagement of practitioners, bring a greater sense of purpose, coherence and excellence to its practice.

References

Adelman, C. (1989). The Practical Ethic takes Priority over Methodology. In W. Carr (Ed.), *Quality in Teaching, Arguments for a Reflective Profession* (pp. 173-183). London: The Falmer Press.

Allix, W. M. (2000). Transformational leadership; Democratic or Despot? *Educational Management and Administration,* 28 (1), 7-20.

Ball, S. J. (2008). *Politics and Policy Making in Education.* London: Routledge.

Barth, R. (1990). *Improving Schools from Within.* San Francisco: Jossey Bass.

Barth, R. (2002). The Culture Builder. *Educational Leadership,* 59 (8), 6-11.

Bass, R. (1985). *Leadership and Performance beyond Expectations.* New York: The Free Press.

Bass, B. M. (1995). Theory of Transformational Leadership Redux. *The Leadership Quarterly,* 6 (4), 463-478.

Bass, B. M., & Avolio, B. J. (1993). Transformational Leadership, A Response to Critiques. In M. Chemers & R. Ayman (Eds.), *Leadership Theory and Research: Perspectives and Directions.* San Diego: Academic Press.

Bass. B. M., & Avolio, B. J. (1994). *Improving Organisational Effectiveness Through Transformational Leadership.* Thousand Oaks: Sage.

Beatty, B. (2005) Emotional leadership. In B. Davies (Ed.), *The Essentials of School Leadership* (1st ed.) (pp. 122-144). London: Sage

Beatty, R. B., & Brew. R. C. (2007). Trusting Relationships and Emotional Epistemologies; A Foundational Leadership Issue. *School Leadership and Management,* 4 (3), 329-356.

Beck, C., & Murphy, J. (1994). *Ethics in Educational Leadership Programs.* Thousand Oaks: Corwin Press.

Beck, C. (1999). Values, Leadership and School Renewal. In P. Begley & P.E. Leonard (Eds.), *The Values of Educational Administration* (pp. 223-245). London: The Falmer Press.

Begley, P. T. (1999). Academic and Practitioners Perspectives' on Values. In P. T. Begley & P. E. Leonard (Eds.), *The Values of Educational Administration* (pp. 51-69). London: The Falmer Press.

Begley, P. T. (2003). The Pursuit of Authentic School Leadership Practices. In P. T. Begley & O. Johansson (Eds.), *The Ethical Dimensions of School Leadership* (pp. 1-11). Dordrecht: Kluwer Academic Publishers.

Begley, P. T. (2004). Understanding and Responding Ethically to the Dilemmas of School Based Leadership. *International Studies in Educational Administration,* 32 (2), 1- 3.

Begley, P. T. & Johansson, O. (1998). The Values of School Administration: Preferences, Ethics and Conflicts. *The Journal of School Leadership,* 8 (4), 399-422.

Begley, P. T., & Johansson, O. (Eds.). (2003). *The Ethical Dimensions of School Leadership.* Dordrecht: Kluwer Academic Publishers.

Begley, P. T., & Leonard, P. (Eds.), (1999). *The Values of Educational Administration.* London: The Falmer Press.

Bennis, W., & Nanus, B. (1985). *Leaders.* New York: Harper and Row.

Bhindi, N., & Duignan, P. (1997). Leadership for a New Century, Authenticity, Intentionality, Spirituality and Sensibility. *Educational Management & Administration,* 25 (2), 117-132.

Bogotch, I. E., & Roy, C. B. (1997). The Context of Partial Truths: An Analysis of Principal's Discourse. *Journal of Educational Administration,* 35 (3), 234-256.

Boles, L., & Troen, V. (1994). *Teacher Leadership in a Professional Development School.* Paper Presented at the AERA Conference, New Orleans.

Bolman, L., & Deal, T. (1992). *Reframing Organisations.* San Francisco: Jossey Bass.

Bossert, S., Dwyer, D., Rowan, B., & Lee, G. (1982). The Instructional Management Role of the Principal. *Educational Administration Quarterly,* 18 (3), 34-64.

Bottery, M. (1992). *The Ethics of Educational Management. Personal, Social and Political Perspectives on School Organisation.* London: Continuum International Publishing Group.

Bottery, M. (2003). The Management and Mismanagement of Trust. *Educational Management and Administration,* 31 (3), 245-261.

Burbules, N. C., and Warnick, B. R. (2006). Philosophical Enquiry. In J. L. Green, G. Camilli, & P. B. Elmore (Eds.), *Handbook of Complementary Methods in Education Research* (pp. 489-502). London: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates Publishers.

Burns, J. M. (1979). *Leadership.* Harper Row: New York.

Caldwell, B. J., & Spinks, J. M. (1992). *Leading the Self-Managing School.* Oxon: Routledge.

Campbell, E. (1996). Suspended Morality and the Denial of Ethics; How Value Relativism Muddles the Distinction between Right and Wrong in Administrative Decisions. In S. Jacobson, E. Hickcox, & R. Stevenson (Eds.), *School Administration: Persistent Dilemmas in Preparation and Practice* (pp. 63-74). Westport C.T.: Praeger.

Campbell, E. (2000). Professional Ethics in Teaching; Towards the Development of a Code of Practice. *Cambridge Journal of Education,* 30 (2), 203-221.

Campbell, E. (2003). Let Right be Done: Trying to Put Ethical Standards into Practice. In P. T. Begley & O. Johansson (Eds.), *The Ethical Dimensions of School Leadership.* (pp.107-125). Dordrecht: Kluwer Academic Publishers.

Carr, D. (2000). *Professionalism and Ethics in Teaching.* London/New York: Routledge.

Carr, D. (2004). Rival conceptions of Practice in Education and Teaching. In Dunne, J. & Hogan. *Education and Practice, Upholding the Integrity of Teaching and Learning.* Oxford: Blackwell.

Carr, D. (2005). Personal and Interpersonal Relationships in Education and Teaching; A Virtue Ethical Perspective. *British Journal of Educational Studies,* 53 (3), 255-271.

Chapman, J. (Ed.) (1995). *Creating and Managing the Democratic School.* Bristol: The Falmer Press.

Clancy, P. (1995). Education in the Republic of Ireland: The Project of Modernity? In P. Clancy, S. Drudy, K. Lynch, & L. O'Dowd (Eds.), *Irish Society: Sociological Perspectives* (pp. 467- 494). Dublin: Institute of Public Administration.

Coleman, M., & Earley, P. (2005). *Leadership and Management in Education: Cultures, Change and Context.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Coles, M. J., & Southworth, G. (Eds.). (2005). *Developing Leadership, Creating the School of Tomorrow.* Maidenhead: McGraw Hill.

Coolahan, J. (1981). *Irish Education: Its History and Structure.* Dublin: Institute of Public Administration.

Coolahan, J. (1994). *The Report of the National Education Convention.* Dublin: National Education Convention Secretariat/The Stationery Office.

Coolahan, J., Hussey, C., & Kilfeather, F. (2012). *Report of the Forum's Advisory Group; The Forum on Patronage and Pluralism in the Primary Sector.* Dublin: The Stationery Office.

Copland, M. A. (2001). The Myth of the Super Principal. *Phi Delta Kappan,* 82 (7), 528-533.

Cuban, L. (1988). *The Managerial Imperative and the Practice of Leadership in Schools. Albany,* New York: State University of New York Press.

Cuban, L. (1992). Managing Dilemmas while Building Professional Communities. *Educational Researcher,* 21 (1), 4-11.

Cuban, L, (1996). Reforming the Practice of Educational Administration through Managing Dilemmas. In S. Jacobson. E. Hickcox & R. Stevenson (Eds.), *School Administration: Persistent Dilemmas in Preparation and Practice* (pp. 3-17). Westport C.T.: Praeger.

Cuban L. (2003). *Why is it so Hard to Get Good Schools?* New York: Teachers College Press.

Cuban, L. (2005). *Discussion of 5 Papers on Leadership.* Paper presented at the AERA Conference, April 12th, Montreal.

Davies, B., & Davies, B.J. (2005). Strategic Leadership. In B. Davies (Ed.), *The Essentials of School Leadership*. London: Sage

Davies, B. (Ed.). (2005). *The Essentials of School Leadership*. London: Sage.

Davies, B., & Davies, B. J. (2005). *Strategic Leadership Reconsidered.* Paper presented at the AERA Conference, April 12th, Montreal.

Day, C., Harris, A., Hadfield, M., Tolley, H., & Beresford, J. (2000). *Leading Schools in Times of Change.* Maidenhead, Berkshire: Open University Press.

Day, C., Harris, A., & Hadfield, M. (2001a). Challenging the Orthodoxy of Effective School Leadership. *International Journal of Leadership in Education,* 4 (1), 39-56.

Day, D., Sammons, P., Leithwood, K., Hopkins D., Quing Gu., Brown, E., & Ahtaridou, E. (2011). *Successful School Leadership. Linking Learning and Achievement.* Maidenhead, Berkshire: Open University Press.

Dempster, N., & Berry, V. (2003). Blindfolded in a Minefield; Principal Ethical Decision-Making. *Cambridge Journal of Education,* 33 (3), 457-477.

Department of Education and Skills. (1965). *Investment in Education.* Report of The Survey Team Appointed by the Minister of Education. Dublin: The Stationery Office.

Department of Children and Youth Affairs. (2000). *National Children's Strategy. Our Children, Their Lives.* Dublin: The Stationery Office.

Department of Children and Youth Affairs. (2011). *Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children.* Dublin: The Stationery Office.

Department of Education and Skills Circulars.
http://www.education.ie/servlit/blobservlet/des_circular_listing.htm

Department of Education and Skills. (1881). *The Stanley Letter.* Dublin: The Stationery Office.

Department of Education and Skills. (1999). *Report of the Working Group on the Role of the Primary School Principal.* Dublin: The Stationery Office.

Department of Education and Skills. (2003). *Looking at Our School: an Aid to Self-evaluation in Second-Level Schools.* Dublin: Inspectorate, Department of Education and Science.

Department of Education and Skills. (2005). *DEIS: Delivering Equality of Opportunity in Schools*. Available at: http://www.education.ie/servlet/blobservlet/deis_index.html.

Department of Education and Skills. (2006a). *A Guide to Whole-School Evaluation in Post-Primary Schools.* Dublin: Inspectorate, Department of Education and Science.

Department of Education and Skills. (2006b). *Statement of Strategy, 2006-2011.* Dublin: Stationery Office.

Department of Education and Skills. (2007). *Guidelines for the Inclusion of Students with Special Education Needs.* Dublin: Stationery Office.

Department of Education and Skills. (2008). *Development of an Intercultural Education Strategy*. Paper presented at a consultation process for the development of an intercultural education strategy. Dublin: The Stationery Office.

Department of Education and Skills. (2011a). *Statement of Strategy,* 2011-2014. Dublin: The Stationery Office.

Department of Education and Skills. (2011b). *Whole-School Evaluation - Management in Leadership and Learning Guidelines for Post-Primary Schools.* Dublin: The Stationery Office.

Department of Education and Skills. (2013). *Whole-School Evaluation Guidelines for Post-Primary Schools*. Dublin: The Stationery Office.

Department of Education and Skills. (2011). *A Guide to School Self-Evaluation.* Dublin: Stationery Office.

Department of Education and Skills. (2014). *Statistical Report 2012/13.* Available at: http://www.education.ie/servlet/blobservlet/desStatistics13_Edsys.htm

Dimmock, C. (1996). Dilemmas for School Leaders and Administrators in Restructuring. In K. Leithwood, J. Chapman, D. Corson, P. Hallinger, & A. Hart (Eds.), *International Handbook of Educational Leadership and Administration* (pp. 135-170). Dordrecht: Kluwer Academic Publishers.

Donaldson, G. A. (2006). *Cultivating Leadership in Schools: Connecting People, Purpose, and Practice* (2nd ed.). New York: College Press.

Drudy, S. (1991). Developments in the Sociology of Education in Ireland 1966-1991. *Irish Journal of Sociology,* 1, 107-127.

Drudy, S., & Lynch, K. (1993). *Schools and Society in Ireland.* Dublin: Gill and MacMillan.

Drudy, S. (2009). *Education in Ireland, Challenge and Change*. Dublin: Gill and Macmillan.

Duignan, P. (2006). *Educational Leadership: Key Challenges and Ethical Tensions.* Cambridge: University Press.

Duignan, P.A., & MacPherson, R. J. S. (1992). *Educative Leadership: A Practical Theory for New Administrators and Managers.* London/Washington: The Falmer Press.

Duignan, P.A., & Bhindi, C. (1997). Authenticity in Leadership: An Emerging Perspective. *Journal of Educational Administration,* 35 (3), 195-209.

Duignan, P., & Collins, V. (2003). Leadership Challenges and Ethical Dilemmas in Front Line Organisations. In W. Bennett, S, Crawford & M. Cartwright (Eds.), *Effective Educational Leadership* (pp. 281-94). London: Sage.

Duncan, D. J., & Riley, D. (Eds.). (2002). *Leadership in Catholic Education, Hope for the Future.* London: Harper Collins.

Dunne, J. (1993). *Back to the Rough Ground: Practical Judgement and the Lure of Technique.* Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press.

Dunne, J. (1995). What is the Good of Education? In P. Hogan (Ed.), Partnership and the Benefit of Learning (pp. 62-81). Maynooth: Maynooth Educational Studies Association of Ireland.

Dunne, J. (2004). Arguing for teaching as a practice: A reply to Alasdair MacIntyre. In J. Dunne & P. Hogan (Eds.), *Education and Practice: Upholding the Integrity of Teaching and Learning.* Oxford: Blackwell.

Dunne, J. (2005). An Intricate Fabric: Understanding the Rationality of Practice. *Pedagogy, Culture and Society. A Journal of Education Discussion and Debate,* 13 (3), 367-390.

Dunne. J., & Hogan, P. (Eds.). (2004). *Education and Practice: Upholding the Integrity of Teaching and Learning.* Oxford: Blackwell.

Dunne, J., & Pendlebury, S. (2003). Practical wisdom. In N. Blake, P. Smeyers, R. Smith & P. Standish (Eds.), *The Blackwell Guide to the Philosophy of Education* (pp. 194-213). Oxford: Blackwell Publishers.

Edmonds, R. (1979). Effective School for the Urban Poor. *Educational Leadership*, 37, 15-24.

ETUCE (European Trade Union Committee for Education). (2012). *School Leadership in Europe. Issues, Challenges and Opportunities.* Brussels: ETUCE.

Evers, C. W. (1999). Complexity, Context and Ethical Leadership. In P. Begley & P. E. Leonard (Eds.), *The Values of Educational Administration* (pp. 70-81). London: The Falmer Press.

Foster, W. (1989). Towards a Critical Practice of Leadership. In J. Smyth (Ed.), *Critical Perspectives on Education Leadership* (pp. 39-62). London: The Falmer Press.

Fullan, M. (1993). *Change Forces: Probing the Depths of Education Reform.* London: The Falmer Press.

Fullan, M. (2001). *Leading in a Culture of Change.* San Francisco: Jossey Bass.

Fullan, M. (2003). *The Moral Imperative of School Leadership.* California: Corwin Press.

Fullan M. (2007). *The New Meaning of Educational Change* (4th ed.). London: Routledge.

Fullan M. (2008). *What's worth fighting for in Headship?* (2nd ed.). Maidenhead, Berkshire: Open University Press.

Fullan M. (2009). *The Challenge of Change, Start School Improvement Now* (2nd ed.). California: Corwin Press.

Fullan, M. (2011). *The Moral Imperative Realised.* California: Corwin Press.

Fullan, M., & Hargreaves, A. (1991). *What's worth fighting for?* London: Teachers College Press.

Furman, C. G. (2004). The Ethic of Community. *Journal of Educational Administration*, 42 (2), 215-235.

Galvin C. (2009). Public Policy Making: The Emerging Policy Making Modality and its Challenge for Education Policy Research in Ireland. In S. Drudy, *Education in Ireland, Challenge and Change* (pp. 253-268). Dublin: Gill and Macmillan.

Gereluk, D. (2005). Communities in a Changing Educational Environment. *British Journal of Educational Studies,* 53 (March, 2005), 4-18.

Gleeson J. (2006). *Curriculum in Context. Partnership, Power and Praxis in Ireland.* Bern: Peter Lang Publishing.

Gleeson, J. (2004). Cultural and Political Contexts of Irish Post-Primary Curriculum: Influences, Interests and Issues. In C. Sugrue (Ed.), *Ideology and Curriculum: Irish Experiences, International Perspectives.* Dublin: Liffey Press.

Goldring, E. B., & Sullivan, A. V. (1996). Beyond the Boundaries: Principals, Parents and Communities. Shaping the School Environment. In K. Leithwood, J. Chapman, D. Corson, P. Hallinger and A. Hart (Eds.), *International Handbook of Educational Leadership and Administration* (pp. 195-222). Dordrecht: Kluwer Academic Press.

Goodson, I. F. (2004). Change Processes and Historical Periods, an International Perspective. In C. Sugrue (Ed.), *Curriculum and Ideology. Irish Experiences, International Perspectives* (pp. 19-35). Dublin: Liffey Press.

Government of Ireland. (1992). *Education for a Changing World: Green Paper on Education.* Dublin: The Stationery Office.

Government of Ireland. (1995). *Charting our Education Future: White Paper on Education.* Dublin: The Stationery Office.

Government of Ireland. (1998). *Education Act.* Dublin: The Stationery Office.

Government of Ireland. (2001). *Teaching Council Act.* Dublin: The Stationery Office.

Government of Ireland. (2004). *Education for Persons with Special Educational Needs Act.* Dublin: The Stationery Office.

Government of Ireland. (2012). *Towards 2016; Ten-Year Framework for Social Partnership.* Dublin: The Stationery Office.

Government of Ireland, (2013). *Education and Training Boards Act.* Dublin: The Stationery Office.

Grace, G. (1995). *School Leadership, Beyond Education Management.* London: The Falmer Press.

Grace, G. (2002). *Catholic Schools, Mission, Markets and Morality.* London: The Falmer Press.

Granville, G. (2004). Politics and Partnership in Curriculum Planning in Ireland. In C. Sugrue (Ed.), *Curriculum and Ideology. Irish Experiences, International Perspectives* (pp. 76-101). Dublin: Liffey Press.

Greenfield, T. (1991). Foreward. In C. Hodgkinson, *Educational Leadership, the Moral Imperative.* New York: Albany.

Greenfield, T., & Ribbins, P. (1993). *Greenfield on Educational Administration: Towards a Human Science.* London/New York: Routledge.

Greenleaf, R. K. (1996). *On Becoming a Servant Leader.* San Francisco: Jossey Bass.

Gronn, P. (1999a). *The Making of Educational Leaders.* London: Cassell.

Gronn, P. (1999b). Leadership from a Distance: Institutionalising Values and Forming Character at Timbertop. In P. Begley & P.E. Leonard (Eds.), *The Values of Educational Administration* (pp.140-167). London: The Falmer Press.

Gronn, P. (2000). Distributed Properties - A New Architecture for Leadership. *Educational Management and Administration,* 28 (3), 317-338.

Gronn, P. (2003). *The New Work of Educational Leaders: Changing Leadership Practice in an Era of School Reform.* London: Paul Chapman.

Gronn, P. (2011). Risk, Trust and Leadership. In C. Sugrue & T. D. Solbrekke (Eds.), *Professional Responsibility, New Horizons of Practice* (pp. 89-102). London: Routledge.

Gronn, P., & Ribbons, P. (1996). Leaders in Context: Post-Positivist Approaches to Understanding Educational Leadership. *Education Administration Quarterly,* 32 (2) 452- 473.

Grummell, B., Devine, D., & Lynch, K. (2009). Appointing Senior Managers in Education: Homosociability, Local Logics and Authenticity in the Selection Process, *BELMAS,* 37 (3), 329-349.

Gunter, H. M. (2001). *Leaders and Leadership in Education.* London: Paul Chapman.

Gunter, H. M. (2005). *Leading Teachers.* London: Continuum.

Hager, P. (2011). Refurbishing Alasdair MacIntyre's Account of Practice. *Journal of Philosophy of Education,* 45 (3), 545-561.

Hall, V., & Southworth, J. (1997). *Headship, School Leadership and Management.* 17 (2), 151-170.

Hallinger, P. (1992). School Leadership Developments: Evaluating a Decade of Reform. *Education and Urban Society,* 24 (3), 300-316.

Hallinger, P. (2003a). Leading Educational Change: Reflections on the Practice of Instructional and Transformational Leadership. *Cambridge Journal of Education,* 33 (3), 329-351.

Hallinger, P. (2003b). Two Decades of Ferment in School Leadership Development in Retrospect: 1980-2000. In P. Hallinger (Ed.), *Reshaping the Landscape of School Leadership Development: A Global Perspective.* Netherlands: Swets and Zeitlinger.

Hallinger, P. (2005). *Instructional Leadership: How has the Model Evolved and What have we Learned*? Paper presented at the AERA Conference, April 12th, Montreal.

Hallinger, P. (2010). Leadership for Learning: Does Collaborative Leadership make a difference in School Improvement? *Educational Management Administration and Leadership*, 38 (8), 654-678.

Hallinger, P., & Heck, R. (1996a). The Principal's Role in School Effectiveness: An Assessment of Methodological Progress, 1980-1995. In K. Leithwood, J. Chapman, D. Corson, P. Hallinger and A. Hart (Eds.), *International Handbook of Educational Leadership and Administration* (pp. 723-783). Dordrecht: Kluwer Academic Publishers.

Hallinger, P., & Heck, R. (1996b). Reassessing the Principal's Role in School Effectiveness: A Review of Empirical Research, 1980-1995. *Educational Administration Quarterly*, 32 (1), 5-44.

Hallinger, P. & Heck, R. (1998). Exploring the Principal's Contribution to School Effectiveness. *School Effectiveness and School Improvement*, (9), 157-91.

Hallinger, P., & Heck, R. (1999). Can Leadership Enhance School Effectiveness? In T. Bush, L. Bell, R, Bolam, R. Glatter & P. Ribbons (Eds.), *Refining Educational Management: Policy, Practice and Research.* London: Paul Chapman.

Hallinger, P., & Heck, R. (2002).What Do You Call People with Vision? The Role of Vision and Goals in School Leadership and Improvement. In K. Leithwood & P. Hallinger (Eds.), *Second International Handbook of Educational Leadership and Administration* (pp. 9-41). Dordrecht: Kluwer Academic Publishers.

Hallinger, P., & Heck, R. (2010). Collaborative Leadership and School Improvement: Understanding the Impact on School Capacity and Student Learning. *School Leadership and Management*, 30 (2), 95-110.

Hallinger, P., & Murphy, J. (1980). The Social Context of Effective Schools. *American Journal of Education*, 94 (3), 328-355.

Hallinger, P., & Murphy, J. (1985). Assessing the Instructional Leadership Behaviour of Principals. *Elementary School Journal*, 86 (2), 217-248.

Hargreaves, A., & Fink, D. (2006). *Sustainable Leadership*. San Francisco: Jossey Bass.

Hargreaves, A., & Fullan, M. (1998). *What's Worth Fighting for Out There?* London: Teachers College Press.

Harris, A. (2003). Teacher Leadership: A New Orthodoxy. In B. Davies & J. W. Burnham (Eds), *The Handbook of Educational Leadership and Management.* London: Pearson Press.

Harris, A. (2005a). Distributed Leadership. In B. Davies (Ed.), *The Essentials of School Leadership* (pp. 160-172). London: Sage.

Harris, A. (2005b). *Teacher Leadership: More than just a feel good factor?* Paper presented at the AERA Conference, April 12th, Montreal.

Harris, A., & Lambard, L. (2003). *Building Leadership Capacity for School Improvement.* Buckingham: Open University Press.

Harris, A., & Muijs, D. (2005). *Improving Schools through Teacher Leadership.* Maidenhead, Berkshire: Open University Press.

Hay Group Management Consultants. (2003). *Defining the Role of the Primary Principal in Ireland.* Cork: IPPN.

Healy, S., & Reynolds, R. (2008). *Making Choices, Choosing Futures; A Question of Paradigms.* Dublin: CORI Publications.

Heck, R., & Hallinger, P. (1999). Conceptual Models, Methodology and Methods for Studying School Leadership. In J. Murphy & K. Seashore Louis (Eds.), *The 2nd Handbook of Research in Educational Administration.* San Francisco: McCutchen.

Heifetz, R. A. (1994). *Leadership Without Easy Answers.* Cambridge, MA.: The Belknap Press of Harvard University.

Higgins, C. (2004). MacIntyre's Moral Theory and the Possibility of an Aretaic Ethics of Teaching. In J. Dunne & P. Hogan, *Education and Practice: Upholding the Integrity of Teaching and Learning.* Oxford: Blackwell.

Hodgkinson, C. (1991). *Educational Leadership, the Moral Art.* Albany: State University of New York Press.

Hodgkinson, C. (1999). The Triumph of the Will; An Exploration of Certain Fundamental Problematics in Administrative Philosophy. In P. Begley & P.E. Leonard (Eds.), *The Values of Education Administration* (pp. 6-21). London: The Falmer Press.

Hodgkinson, C. (2003). Tomorrow, and Tomorrow and Tomorrow; A Post-modern Purview. In P. T. Begley & O. Johansson (Eds.), *The Ethics of Educational Administration* (pp. 221-231). Dordrecht: Kluwer Academic Publishers.

Hogan, P. (2004). Teaching and Learning as a Way of Life. In J. Dunne, & P. Hogan (Eds.), *Education and Practice: Upholding the Integrity of Teaching and Learning.* Oxford: Blackwell.

Hogan, P. (2011). The Ethical Orientations of Education as a Practice in its own Right. *Ethics and Education,* 6 (1), 27-40.

Holmes, M. (1992). The Revival of School Administration: Alasdair MacIntyre in the Aftermath of the Common School. *Canadian Journal of Education,* 17 (4), 422-436.

Horton, J., & Mendus, S. (Eds.). (1994). *After MacIntyre: Critical Perspectives on the Work of Alasdair MacIntyre.* Cambridge: Polity Press.

Humphries, E. (2010). *Distributed Leadership and its Impact on Teaching and Learning.* (Unpublished Doctoral Thesis in Education), NUI Maynooth.

Hunt, J. G. (2004). What is leadership? In J. Antonakis, A.T. Cianciolo, & R. J. Sternberg (Eds.), *The Nature of Leadership.* Sage: California.

Inspectorate of the Department of Education and Skills. (2011). *School Self-Evaluation for Post-Primary Schools; Inspectorate Guidelines.* Available from www.education/gov.ie

IPPN (Irish Primary Principals Network). (2002). *Defining the Role of the Primary Principal in Ireland; Report of the Hay Group.* Cork: IPPN.

IPPN. (2003). *In-School Management, A Critical Review, 1997-2993.* Cork: IPPN.

IPPN. (2006). *Investing in School Leadership; a Review and Analysis of the Factors Contributing to the Recruitment and Retention Crisis in Primary School Principalship.* Cork: IPPN.

IPPN. (2014). *Priorities for Principal Teachers in Clear Focus.* Cork: IPPN.

INTO (Irish National Teachers Organisation). (2009). *A Guide to Whole School-Evaluation.* Dublin: INTO Education Committee.

Jacobson, S., Hickcox, E., & Stevenson, N. (1996). (Eds.). *School Administration: Persistent Dilemmas in Preparation and Practice.* Westport C.T.: Praeger.

Jones, A. (1987). *Leadership for Tomorrow's Schools.* Oxford: Basil Blackwell.

Katayama, K. (2004). Is the Virtues Approach to Moral Education Viable in a Plural Society? In J. Dunne & P. Hogan, *Education and Practice: Upholding the Integrity of Teaching and Learning.* Oxford: Blackwell.

Katzenmeyer, M., & Moller, G. (2001). *Awakening the Sleeping Giant. Helping Teachers Develop as Leaders* (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks: Corwin Press.

Langford, G. (1989). Teaching and the Idea of a Social Practice. In W. Carr (Ed.), *Quality in Teaching: Arguments for a Reflective Profession* (pp. 21- 29). Lewes: The Falmer Press.

Leithwood, K. (1992). The Move toward Transformational Leadership. *Educational Leadership,* 49 (5), 8-13.

Leithwood, K., Begley, P. T., & Cousins, J. B. (1994). *Developing Expert Leadership for Future Schools.* London: The Falmer Press.

Leithwood, K., & Duke, D. (1999). A Century's Quest to Understand School Leadership. In J. Murphy & K. Seashore Louis (Eds.), *Handbook of Research on Educational Administration* (pp. 45-72). San Francisco: Jossey Bass.

Leithwood, K., & Jantzi, D. (1999). Transformational Leadership Effects: A Replication. *School Effectiveness and School Improvement,* 4 (10), 451-479.

Leithwood, K., & Jantzi, D. (2000). Principal and Teacher Leaders' Effects, a Replication? *School Leadership and Management,* 20 (4), 415-432.

Leithwood, K., & Jantzi, D. (2005). *A Review of Transformational School Leadership Research*. Paper presented at the AERA Conference, April 12th, Montreal.

Leithwood, K., Jantzi, D., & Steinbach, R. (1999). *Changing Leadership for Changing Times*. Buckingham: Open University Press.

Leithwood, K., & Montgomery, D. (1982). The Role of the Elementary Principal in Programme Improvement. *Review of Educational Administration Quarterly*, 34 (2), 243-276.

Leithwood, L., & Seashore, L. K. (2012). *Linking Leadership to Student Learning*. San Francisco: Jossey Bass.

Leonard, P. E. (1999). Future Directions for the Study of Values and Educational Leadership. In P. Begley & P. E. Leonard (Eds.), *The Values of Educational Administration* (pp. 246-253). London: The Falmer Press.

Lieberman, A., & Miller, L. (2004). *Teacher Leadership*. San Francisco: Jossey Bass.

Logan, J. (1999). *Teachers Union: The TUI and its forerunners in Irish Education. 1899-1994*. Dublin: Farmer.

MacBeath, J. (1998). *Effective School Leadership*. London: Paul Chapman.

MacBeath, J. (2002). *Leadership for Learning*. Paper presented at the 15th International Congress for School Effectiveness and Improvement, Copenhagen, January 3rd – 6th, 2002.

MacBeath, J. (2005). Leadership as Distributed: A Matter of Practice. *School Leadership and Management*, 25 (4), 349-366.

MacBeath, J., & Dempster, M. (2009). *Connecting Leadership and Learning: Principles for Practice*. Paper presented at the AERA Conference, April 12th, Montreal.

MacIntyre, A. C. (1973). The Essential Contestability of Some Social Concepts. *Ethics*, 84 (1), 1-9.

MacIntyre, A. C. (1987). The Idea of an Educated Public. In G. Haydon (Ed.), *Education and Values: The Richard Peters Lectures* (pp. 15-36). London: University of London Institute of Education.

MacIntyre, A. C. (1988). *Whose Justice? Which Rationality.* London: Duckworth.

MacIntyre, A. C. (1990). *Three Rival Versions of Moral Inquiry*. London: Duckworth.

MacIntyre, A. C. (1994). A Partial Response to my Critics. In. J. Horten & S. Mendus (Eds.), *After MacIntyre: Critical Perspectives on the Work of Alasdair MacIntyre* (pp. 283-304). Cambridge: Polity Press.

MacIntyre, A. C. (1998). Aquinas's Critique of Education: Against his Own Age, Against Ours. In A. O. Rorty (Ed.), *Philosophers on Education* (pp. 118-131). London: Routledge.

MacIntyre, A. C. (1999a). *Dependent Rational Animals: Why Human Beings Need the Virtues.* London: Duckworth.

MacIntyre, A. C. (1999b). How to Seem Virtuous without Actually Being So (first published in 1991). In J. M. Halstead & T. H. McLaughlin (Eds.), *Education in Morality.* London: Routledge.

MacIntyre, A., & Dunne, J. (2004). Alasdair MacIntyre on Education: In Dialogue with Joseph Dunne. In J. Dunne & P. Hogan, *Education and Practice: Upholding the Integrity of Teaching and Learning.* Oxford: Blackwell.

MacIntyre, A. C. (2007). *After Virtue* (3rd ed., first published in 1981). London: Bloomsbury.

McCutcheon, F. (2009). *One Year in the Rough Ground of Practice: Phronesis as a Mode of Educational Leadership in a Multi-Cultural Primary School.* (Unpublished EdD Thesis), Drumcondra, St Patricks College.

McDonald, V. (2008). Leadership Issues for Principal Teachers. *Oideas,* 53, 27-41.

McLaughlin, T. (2004). Teaching as a Practice and a Community of Practice: the Limits of Commonality and the Demands of Diversity. In J. Dunne & P. Hogan, *Education and Practice: Upholding the Integrity of Teaching and Learning.* Oxford: Blackwell.

McLaughlin, T. (2005). The Educative Importance of Ethos. *British Journal of Educational Studies,* 53 (3), 306-325.

Mahon, D. (1993). The Job Satisfaction of Primary School Principals, *Irish Education Studies,* 12, 106-129.

Miller, D. (1994). Virtues, Practices and Justice. In J. Horton & S. Mendus (Eds.), *After MacIntyre: Critical Perspectives on the Work of Alasdair MacIntyre* (pp. 245-264). Cambridge: Polity Press.

Moos, L. (2005). Regulation and Trust: Negotiating Relationships. In C. Sugrue (Ed.), *Passionate Principalship: Learning from the Life Histories of School Leaders.* London: Routledge.

Morgan, M., & Sugrue, C. (2005). *Evaluation of the MISNEACH Programme.* Ennis: Clare Education Centre.

Morgan, M., & Sugrue, C. (2008). Leadership Issues for Principal Teachers. *Oideas,* 53 (Spring), 27-41.

Morley, L., & Rasool. N. (1999). *School Effectiveness: Fracturing the Discourse.* London: The Falmer Press.

Mulcahey, D. G. (1981). *Curriculum and Policy in Irish Post-Primary Education.* Dublin: Institute of Public Administration.

Muijs, D., & Harris, A. (2003). Teacher Leadership: Improvement through Empowerment. *Educational Management and Administration,* 31 (4), 437-449.

Mulford, B. (2004). Congruence between the Democratic Purposes of Schools and School Principal Training in Australia. *Journal of Educational Administration,* 42 (6), 625-639.

Mulford, B. (2008). The Leadership Challenge: Improving Learning in Schools, *Australian Education Review,* Australian Council for Education Research.

Mulford, W., Silins, H., & Leithwood, K. (2003). Educational Leadership for Organisational Learning and Improved Student Outcomes. *Cambridge Journal of Education,* 33 (2), 175-195.

Murphy, D. (2007). *Professional School Leadership - Dealing with Dilemmas.* Edinburgh: Dunedin Academic Press Ltd.

Murphy, D. (2002). Reculturing the Profession of Educational Leadership: New Blueprints. *Educational Administration Quarterly,* 38, 172-191.

National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA). (2008). *Well-Being and Post-Primary Schooling. A Review of Literature and Research.* Dublin: NCCA.

Noddings, N. (1992). *The Challenge to Care in Schools: An Alternative Approach to Education.* New York: Teachers College Press.

Noddings, N. (2004). Is Teaching a Practice? In J. Dunne & P. Hogan, *Education and Practice: Upholding the Integrity of Teaching and Learning.* Oxford: Blackwell.

Noel, J. (1999). On the Varieties of Phronesis. *Educational Philosophy and Theory,* 31 (3), 273-289.

Nussbaum, M. C. (2001). *The Fragility of Goodness: Luck and Ethics in Greek Tragedy and Philosophy* (first published in 1986, updated edition). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

O' Buachalla, S. (1988). *Education Policy in Twentieth Century Ireland.* Dublin: Wolfhound Press.

O' Brien, J., Murphy, D., & Draper, J. (2008). *School Leadership; Policy and Practice in Education* (2nd ed.). Edinburgh: Dunedin Academic Press.

O' Hanlon, M. (2008). Leadership through the In-school Management Structure. *Oideas,* Spring, 41-57.

O' Sullivan, D. (2005). *Cultural Politics and Irish Education since the 1950s: Policy Paradigms and Power.* Dublin: Institute of Public Administration.

OECD. (1991). *Review of National Education Policies for Ireland.* Paris: OECD.

OECD. (2007). *School Leadership. Country Background Report. Ireland.* Paris: OECD.

OECD. (2008). *Improving School Leadership in OECD Countries. Volume 1: Policy and Practice*. Paris: OECD.

PCW (Price, Waterhouse Cooper). (2009). *School Leadership Matters: An Empirical Assessment of the Attractiveness of Principalship in the North and South of Ireland.* Dublin: PCW.

Rafferty, D. (2009). The Legacy of Legislation and the Pragmatics of Policy: Historical Perspectives on Schooling for Irish Children. In S. Drudy (Ed.), *Education in Ireland, Challenge and Change* (pp. 9-24). Dublin: Gill and MacMillan.

Reynolds, D., & Teddlie, C. (2000). The Processes of School Effectiveness. In C. Teddlie & D. Reynolds (Eds.), *The International Handbook of School Effectiveness Research.* London: The Falmer Press.

Ribbins, P., & Gunter, H. (2002). Mapping Leadership Studies in Education: Towards a Typology of Knowledge Domains. *Educational Management Administration & Leadership. BELMAS*, 30 (4), 359-385.

Richmon, M. J. (2003). Persistent Difficulties with Values in Educational Administration: Mapping the Terrain. In P. T. Begley & O. Johansson (Eds.), *The Ethical Dimensions of School Leadership* (pp. 33- 47). Dordrecht: Kluwer Academic Publishers.

Schwab, J. T. (1969). The Practical: A Language for Curriculum. *The School Review,* 78 (1), 1-23.

Sergiovanni, T. J. (1992). *Moral Leadership: Getting to the Heart of School Improvement.* San Francisco: Jossey Bass.

Sergiovanni, T. J. (1994). *Building Community in Schools.* San Francisco: Jossey Bass.

Sergiovanni, T. J. (1996). *Leadership for the school house, How is it different? Why is it important?* San Francisco: Jossey Bass.

Sergiovanni, T. J. (1998). Leadership as Pedagogy: Capital Development and School Effectiveness. *International Journal of Leadership in Education*, 1, 37-46.

Sergiovanni, T. J. (1999). *The Life World of Leadership, Creating Culture, Community and Personal Meaning in our Schools.* San Francisco: Jossey Bass.

Sergiovanni, T. J. (2001). *Leadership: What's in it for schools?* London/New York: Routledge Falmer Press.

Sergiovanni, T. J. (2007). *Rethinking Leadership - A Collection of Articles.* California: Corwin Press.

Sergiovanni, T. J., & Moore, J. H. (1989). *Schooling for Tomorrow: Directing Reforms to Issues that Count.* Boston: Allyn & Bacon.

Sergiovanni, T. J., & Starratt, R. S. (2002). Sources of Authority in Supervisory Leadership. In T. J. Sergiovanni & R. J. Starratt (Eds.), *Supervision a Redefinition* (7th ed.) (pp. 26-4). Boston: Mc Graw Hill.

Shapiro, J. P., & Stefkovich, J.A. (2001). *Ethical Leadership and Decision Making in Education: Applying Theoretical Perspectives to Complex Dilemmas* (3rd ed.). New York/London: Routledge.

Silins, H., & Mulford, D. (2002a). Leadership and School Results, in K. Leithwood, P. Hallinger (Eds.). 2nd *International Handbook of Educational Leadership and Administration.* p 561-612. Dordrecht: Kluwer Academic Publishers.

Silins, H., & Mulford, D. (2002b). Schools as Learning Organisations. The Case for System, Teacher and Student Learning, *The Journal of Educational Administration,* 40 (5), 425-446.

Silva, D., Gimbert, D., & Nolan, J. (2000). Sliding the Doors: Locking and Unlocking Possibilities for Teacher Leadership. *Teachers College Record,* 102 (a), 779-804.

Skilbeck, M. (2004). Towards a Curriculum for Lifelong Learning. In S. Sugrue (Ed.), *Curriculum and Ideology* (pp. 35-67). Dublin: Liffey Press.

Smith, R. (1999). Paths of Judgement: The Revival of Practical Wisdom. *Educational Philosophy and Theory,* 31 (3), 327-339.

Smyth, J. (1989). *Critical Perspectives on Education Leadership.* London: The Falmer Press.

Smyth, E. (1999). *Do Schools Differ?* Dublin: Oak Tree Press.

Southworth, G. (2002). Instructional Leadership in Schools: Reflections and Empirical Evidence. *School Leadership and Management,* 22 (1), 73-92.

Spillane, J. P. (2004). *The Practice of Leadership - Standards Deviation - How Schools Misundersand Educational Policy.* Cambridge, MA.: Harvard University Press.

Spillane, J. P. (2006). *Distributed Leadership.* San Francisco: Jossey Bass.

Spillane, P., Halverson, R., & Diamond, J. B. (2001). Investigating School Leadership Practice, A Distributed Perspective. *Educational Researcher,* 30 (3), 23-28.

Spillane, P., Halverson, R., & Diamond, J. B. (2004). Towards a Theory of School Leadership Practice: Implications of a Distributed Perspective. *Journal of Curriculum Studies* 36 (1), 3-34.

Spillane, J., & Orlina, E. C. (2005). *Investigating Leadership Practice: Exploring the Entailments of taking a Distributed Perspective.* Paper presented at the AERA Conference, April 12th, Montreal.

Starratt, R. J. (1993). *The Drama of Leadership.* London: The Falmer Press.

Starratt, R. J. (1994). *Building an Ethical School. A Practical Response to the Moral Crisis in Schools.* London: The Falmer Press.

Starratt, R. J. (1999). Moral Dimensions of Leadership. In P. Begley & P. E. Cousins (Eds.), *The Values of Educational Administration,* 22-35. London: The Falmer Press.

Starratt, R. J. (2003). *Centering Education Administration: Cultivating Meaning, Community and Responsibility.* Mahwah, NJ.: Erlbaum.

Starratt, R. J. (2004). *Ethical Leadership.* San Francisco: Jossey Bass.

Starratt, R. J. (2005a). Ethical Leadership. In B. Davies (Ed.), *The Essentials of School Leadership* (pp. 44-61). London: SAGE.

Starratt, R. J. (2005b). Cultivating the Moral Character of Learning and Teaching: a Neglected Dimension of Educational Leadership. *School Leadership and Management,* 24 (4), 399-411.

Starratt, R. J. (2012). *Cultivating an Ethical School.* New York: Routledge.

Stoll, L. (2009). Capacity Building for School Improvement or Creating Capacity for Learning: A Changing Landscape. *Journal of Education Change,* 10, 115-127.

Stoll, L., & Fink, D. (1996). *Changing Our Schools: Linking School Effectiveness and School Improvement.* New York: Open University Press.

Strike, K. A. (2000). Schools as Communities; Four Metaphors, Three Models and a Dilemma or two. *Journal of Philosophy of Education,* 34 (4), 617-642.

Strike, K. A. (2003). Community, Coherence and Inclusiveness. In P. Begley & O. Johansson (Eds.), *The Ethical Dimensions of School Leadership* (pp 69-87). Dordrecht: Kluwer Academic Publishers.

Sugrue, C. (2003). Principals' Professional Development: Realities, Perspectives and Possibilities. *Oideas,* 50, 8-39.

Sugrue, C. (Ed.). (2004a). *Ideology and Curriculum: Irish Experiences, International Perspectives.* Dublin: Liffey Press.

Sugrue, C. (2004b). Whose Curriculum is it Anyway? Power, Politics and Possibilities in the Construction of the Revised Primary Curriculum. In C. Sugrue (Ed.), *Ideology and Curriculum: Irish Experiences, International Perspectives.* Dublin: Liffey Press.

Sugrue, C. (Ed.). (2005a). *Passionate Principalship, Learning from the Life Histories of School Leaders.* London/New York: Routledge.

Sugrue, C. (2005b). Putting 'real life' into School Leadership: Connecting Leadership, Identities and Life History. In C. Sugrue (Ed.), *Passionate Principalship* (pp. 3-26). London/ New York: Routledge.

Sugrue, C. (2006). A Critical Appraisal of the Impact of International Agencies on Education Reforms and Teachers' Lives. The Case of Ireland. *European Educational Research Journal,* 5 (3), 181-194.

Sugrue, C. (2009). From Heroes and Heroines to Hermaphrodites: Emasculation or Emancipation of School Leaders and Leadership. *School Leadership and Management,* 29 (4), 353-367.

Sugrue, C. (2011). Leadership: Professional Responsible Rule Bending and Breaking. In C. Sugrue & T. D. Solbrekke (Eds.), *Professional Responsibility. New Horizons of Practice* (pp. 127-144). London: Routledge.

Sugrue, C., & Furlong, C. (2002). The Cosmologies of Irish Primary Principals' Identities: Between the Modern and the Postmodern? *International Journal of Leadership in Education,* 5 (3), 189-210.

Sugrue, C., & Solbrekke, T. D. (Eds.) (2011). *Professional Responsibility. New Horizons of Praxis.* London: Routledge.

Teddlie, C., & Reynolds, D. (2000). *The International Handbook of School Effectiveness Research.* London: The Falmer Press.

Townsend, T. (1994). *Effective School for the Community: Core-Plus Education.* London: Routledge.

Webb, R. (2005). Leading Teaching and Learning in the Primary School. From 'Educative Leadership' to 'Pedagogical Leadership'. *Educational Management Administration and Leadership,* 33 (1), 69-91.

Young, D., & Lopez, G. R. (2005). The Unintended Consequences of a Standardized Knowledge Base in Advancing Educational Leadership Preparation. In W. F. English & G. E. Anderson (Eds.), *The Sage International Handbook of Educational Leadership* (pp. 337-362). New York: Sage.

Yukl, G. (1989). *Leadership in Organisations* (2nd ed.). New Jersey: Prentice Hall.

Yukl, G. (2001). *Leadership in Organisations* (5th ed.). New Jersey: Prentice Hall.