

Overcoming the 'invisible child': The management of a pastoral care system in  
independent schools

by

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## ABSTRACT

The study was aimed at establishing an effective pastoral care management system for independent schools. It developed out of the concern for the many children who pass through schools without having any form of meaningful discussion with an adult member of the school, thus the concept "the invisible child". All students attend school for the academic education it provides. But for many there is more to school than what goes on in the classroom. However many will not have their broader education developed, their social, emotional and personal development will be ignored or overlooked. With higher incidence of divorce and other family trauma, students need to be mentally at ease if they are to get the most out of their classroom activities. Their social, emotional and personal life needs to be in order to allow their mind to focus on the academic pursuits offered in class.

The research design and method involved the qualitative approach and the case study. Qualitative research was used, as it was best suited to the emotive nature of the student's experiences. The research focused on a case study, namely an independent school. Data was collected through a literature study and personal interviews with students. The data was analysed to identify common themes and categories. Two main themes emerged from the interview data: the Tutor and the Tutor Group. Combining these with the literature, four main categories emerged. They are: the goals of the pastoral care policy, the aims and organisation of the house, the house/tutor period and its objectives, and the role of the house tutor and housemaster. Within these categories important concepts such as communication, clear role definition and personal contact were common threads. St John's College has a system of house division in the school and so the findings and recommendations relate to this type of division of a school.

The goals of the pastoral care management system were important as they determine the direction and commitment of the school to pastoral care. The aims and organisation of the houses would determine the successful division

of the school into smaller parts thus ensuring continued personal contact between student and teacher. The tutor/house period is critical to the success of the contact between student and tutor and this time forms the corner stone of the schools commitment to pastoral care. Finally the role of the house tutor and housemaster is important to the entire management system as they are the people who have to implement the system. If their role is not clearly defined and carried out in a satisfactory manner then the entire pastoral care system will be doomed to failure.

The study has highlighted these areas as those which, if well managed, can lead to a successful pastoral care management system thus, overcoming the invisible child.



## OPSOMMING

Die studie is daarop gerig om 'n effektiewe pastorale- of voogonderwyserstelsel vir onafhanklike skole op te stel. Dit het ontwikkel uit die besorgdheid vir die talle kinders wat hul hele skoolloopbaan deurgaans sonder om ooit in 'n enkele betekenisvolle bespreking met 'n volwasse personeelid betrokke te wees. Hierdie toedrag van sake het gelei tot die konsep van die "onsigbare kind". Alle leerlinge woon skool by vir die akademiese opvoeding wat dit voorsien, maar vir baie kinders is daar veel meer verbode aan skoolgaan as bloot dit wat in die klaskamer aangaan. 'n Groot aantal leerlinge sal nie 'n breër opvoeding ontwikkel nie: hul sosiale, emosionele en persoonlike ontwikkeling sal geïgnoreer of oor die hoof gesien word. Met die hedendaagse groeiende egskeidingsyfer en ander gesins- en familieverwante trauma's, is dit moeilik vir leerlinge om geestelik op hul gemak te wees, met die gevolge dat hulle onmoontlik die meeste uit hul klasaktiwiteite kan kry. 'n Leerling se sosiale, emosionele en persoonlike lewens moet in orde wees om sy brein die geleentheid te bied om te fokus op die akademiese belange wat in die klaskamer gebied word.

Die navorsingsontwerp en -metodiek het die kwalitatiewe benadering en 'n gevalstudie behels. Kwalitatiewe navorsing is gebruik, aangesien dit die emotiewe aard van die leerling se ondervinding die beste gepas het. Die navorsing het gefokus op 'n gevalstudie, naamlik 'n onafhanklike skool. Data is versamel deur 'n literatuurstudie en persoonlike onderhoudsdata met leerlinge. Die data is geanaliseer om gemene temas en kategorieë te identifiseer. Twee hoofgedagtes het opgeduik vanuit die onderhoudsdata: die Voogonderwyser en die Vooggroep. Deur die twee te kombineer met die literatuur, het vier hoofkategorieë te voorskyn gekom. Hulle is: die doelstellings van die pastorale sorg beleid, die mikpunte en organisasie van die sporthuis, die sporthuis/voogperiode en sy doelwitte en die rol van die voogonderwyser en huisvader. Binne hierdie kategorieë is belangrike konsepte soos kommunikasie, duidelike rolbepalings en persoonlike kontak gevind om gemene verskynsels te wees. St. John's College het 'n stelsel waardeur die

skool in sporthuise verdeel is en dus is die bevindings en aanbevelings pertinent gerig op 'n skool van soortgelyke aard.

Die doelstellings van die voogstelsel is belangrik aangesien hulle die rigting en die graad van die skool se verbinding tot die konsep van pastorale sorg bepaal. Die mikpunte en organisasie van die sporthuise sou die suksesvolle indeling van die skool in kleiner gehele bepaal wat dan volgehoue persoonlike kontak tussen leerling en onderwyser verseker. Die sporthuis/voogperiode is van kritiese belang vir die suksesvolle kontak tussen die leerling en sy voogonderwyser, en hierdie tyd saam vorm die hoeksteen van die skool se toewydingaan pastorale sorg. Laastens is die rol van die voogonderwyser en die huisvader belangrik vir die hele skoolbestuurstelsel aangesien hulle die mense is wat die stelsel moet implimenteer. As hulle rolle nie duidelik gedefinieer is en uitgevoer word in 'n bevredigende manier nie, dan is die hele pastorale sorg stelsel bestem om uit te loop op 'n mislukking.

Die studie het hierdie areas geïdentifiseer as die wat kan lei tot 'n suksesvolle pastorale sorg stelsel, indien hulle goed beheer word, wat dan lei tot 'n uitskakeling van die sogenaamde "onsigbare kind".

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

	<b>Page No</b>
Abstract	i
Opsomming	iii
Chapter 1	
Introduction, Aims and Research Methodology	
1.1 Introduction	1
1.2 Statement of the research problem	3
1.3 Aims of the research	3
1.4 Research design and method	4
1.4.1 Research approach	4
1.4.1.1 Case study	5
1.4.2 Data collection	5
1.4.2.1 Literature study	5
1.4.2.2 Interviews	6
1.4.3 Data analysis	7
1.5 Demarcation of research	7
1.6 Clarification of concepts	7
1.6.1 Pastoral care	7
1.6.2 The house system	8
1.6.3 Tutor groups	8
1.6.4 Invisible child	8
1.7 Division of chapters	8
1.8 Conclusion	9
Chapter 2	
Literature Review	
2.1 Introduction	11
2.2 Pastoral care	11
2.2.1 The adolescent student	12

2.3	The meaning of pastoral care	15
2.4	The purpose of pastoral care	18
2.5	Tutoring and pastoral care	22
2.6	The features of a pastoral care management system	25
2.7	The goals of a pastoral care management system	30
2.8	Structures for administration	33
2.9	Conclusion	37

## Chapter 3

### Research Design and Methods

3.1	Introduction	40
3.2	Research design and methodology	40
3.2.1	Qualitative research	40
3.2.2	Case study	41
3.2.3	Data collection	42
3.2.3.1	Setting	42
3.2.3.2	The interview process	43
3.2.3.3	Recording	44
3.2.4	Data analysis	45
3.3	Reliability and Validity	47
3.4	Ethical considerations	48
3.5	Conclusion	48

## Chapter 4

### Discussion on Research Findings

4.1	Introduction	50
4.2	Pastoral care at St John's College	50
4.3	The tutor	51
4.3.1	The role of the tutor	51
4.3.2	The personality of the tutor	53
4.3.3	The availability and confidentiality of the tutor	54
4.4	The tutor group	57
4.4.1	The group makeup	58

4.4.2	The structure of time and the program	60
4.4.3	The group discussion vs the personal interview	62
4.5	Summary	66
4.6	Conclusion	67
Chapter 5		
Summary and Conclusion		
5.1	Introduction	70
5.2	Overview	70
5.3	Key findings	71
5.3.1	The goals of the pastoral care policy	71
5.3.2	The aims and organisation of the house	73
5.3.3	The house/tutor period and its objectives	74
5.3.4	The role of the house tutor and housemaster	75
5.4	Recommendations	77
5.4.1	The pastoral care policy	77
5.4.2	The aims and organisation of the house	78
5.4.2.1	Aims	78
5.4.2.2	Organisation	79
5.4.3	The house/tutor period	80
5.4.4	The role of the house tutor and housemaster	81
5.4.4.1	The tutor	81
5.4.4.2	The housemaster	82
5.5	Recommendations for Further Research	84
5.6	Conclusion	84
Bibliography		87



# CHAPTER 1

## INTRODUCTION, AIMS AND RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

### 1.1 INTRODUCTION

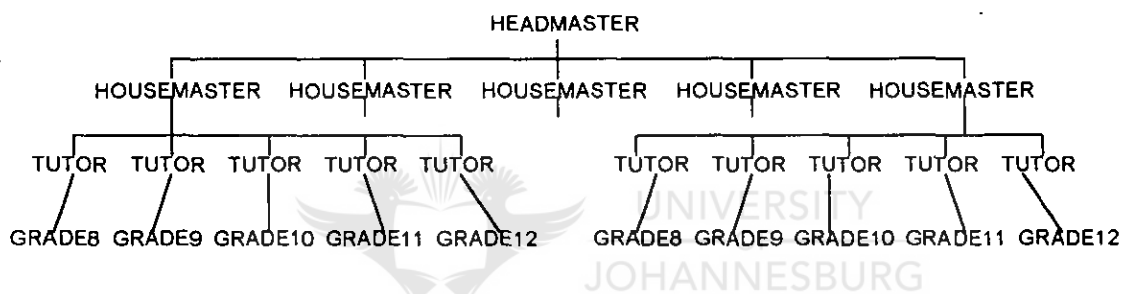
An important function of the education process is to guide the social development of children while at school. However, the majority of children slip by unnoticed in their individual capacity; they are merely part of a group. According to Tim Brighouse, Chief Education Officer in the city of Birmingham, (2000:25) "many secondary school children can go through a term or more without having a serious conversation with a teacher about their progress". School administrators often spend more time on a small percentage of the students - the top achievers and the ones in trouble. It is the vast majority of students, the average achievers and the ones who never get into trouble, that usually pass by unnoticed. As part of their education, someone should be reaching out to them individually to help develop their broader educational growth. Purposeful strategies must be developed to give every child an opportunity to communicate with, and develop a worthwhile relationship with an adult member of the school staff (Brighouse, 2000:25).

A system of pastoral care is one such strategy that enhances teacher-student communication. A distinctly British concept, pastoral care "offers support for the learning, behaviour and welfare of all pupils, and addresses the particular difficulties some individual pupils may be experiencing" (Best, 1995:5). Many frameworks are in existence of how to administer an effective pastoral care system, but all are striving for the same goal, namely to provide a caring environment for their students to maximise educational growth. As Saint Aloysius College put it, "pastoral care is our expression of concern for the total development of each student" (Saint Aloysius College: Pastoral Care; January 26, 2001).

St John's College is an independent school where young boys have been educated for over 100 years. As part of the education process the school has

developed a system of pastoral care to attend to the students' broader education outside of formal lessons. The College is divided into 7 houses, each with a housemaster in charge and a number of house tutors to assist him. Every student on entering the College is placed in a house and therefore has two adult members of staff with whom he has regular individual contact - the housemaster and the house tutor, much like Canberra Girls Grammar School who follow a similar system (Canberra Girls' Grammar School: House System and Pastoral Care; January 26, 2001). The housemaster forms a link between the Headmaster and the students, and the house tutor forms a link between the housemaster and the students (Figure 1).

Figure 1: Student and Staff Communication



Each house has a certain amount of autonomy and the housemaster is at liberty to run the house in whatever manner he wishes, as long as it does not go against the policies and principles of the College. In looking after the welfare of the boys in the house, the housemaster is concerned with nearly every aspect of their development: mental, physical and emotional. Traditionally tutors are assigned to form groups of about 22 boys, with which they meet, as a group, once a week to discuss any aspects of their life, both at school and away from it. Group discussion is encouraged, led by the tutor covering a variety of life issues – such as sex, drugs and alcohol. These discussions are led by the tutor according to a program drawn up by the particular housemaster of that group (Laing, 2000:29).

In spite of this pastoral care system, it was alarming to note how many students were still not being reached out to. A student could fail every test in

a particular subject and it was only noted at the end of the term, after nine weeks of school, that this was a pattern throughout six of his eight subjects (Student A). A boy's family was in turmoil as his parents were undergoing a separation and his grandfather passed away, yet nobody in the school was aware of this (Student B). In 1998/99 two boys (Student C and Student D) committed suicide within 12 months of each other and nobody was aware of the problems or difficulties that led to them ending their lives. Clearly a system was in place but it was not working. Therefore, to reduce such incidents and to ensure all students have access to pastoral care, it is important for all schools to develop effective and appropriate structures. The purpose of this study is to establish how a well-managed pastoral care system can be structured and implemented to counter the anonymity that many students experience in a large secondary school (St Joseph's College, Gregory Terrace: Pastoral Care; January 29, 2001).

## **1.2 STATEMENT OF THE RESEARCH PROBLEM**

In many schools the traditional program provides for pastoral care in form groups led by the class teacher and head of form, or form tutor and head of house. Students in this system of tutoring were placed in horizontal groups with group discussion being led by the adult. However, this system is proving to be inadequate for meeting students' individual pastoral care needs. The research question is thus as follows:

What is the structure of an effective pastoral care program and how should such a program be managed in order for it to be successfully implemented?

## **1.3 AIMS OF THE RESEARCH**

The general aim of this research is to investigate a system of pastoral care in independent secondary schools, which recognises the individuality of each child.

In order to achieve this, the specific aims of this mini-dissertation are to:

- a) explain what is meant by pastoral care;
- b) discuss the purpose of a pastoral care program;
- c) discuss the features of a pastoral care program;
- d) investigate the existing pastoral care program at St John's College; and
- e) provide a framework for the implementation of a successful pastoral care program in independent schools.

#### **1.4 RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHOD**

The research design and method involves the qualitative approach and the case study. This way the study is confined to a demarcated area and uses a method for data gathering that enables the researcher to understand the emotions, feelings and experiences of participants on pastoral care.

##### **1.4.1 Research approach**

In this study a qualitative approach to research (Creswell, 1994:2) is used to gain an in-depth understanding of pastoral care. This social emotive nature is emphasised by Patton (1990:94) who states that, "qualitative methods are ways of finding out what people do, know, think and feel by observing, interviewing, and analysing documents". The qualitative approach is chosen because of its inductive method of observing phenomena and drawing conclusions thereafter (Myburgh & Strauss: 1999:2).

The study is exploratory, descriptive and explanatory in nature giving rise to the use of this approach. It also gives insight to the need for an effective and well-managed pastoral care program. Being concerned with the student's experiences, the qualitative approach is most suitable because of the emotive nature of pastoral care (Mouton, 1996:38). As Best and Lang (1994:5) put it: "education is concerned with the affective, the moral and the political as much as with the cognitive".

#### 1.4.1.1 *Case Study*

The case study is a type of qualitative research. This approach is best suited to this research as it focuses on the case under study, the pastoral care program at St John's College. Smith in Merriam (1998:27) describes the case study as a "bounded system", meaning that the study is limited to a specific entity, in this case St John's College. Miles and Huberman (1994:25) see the case study as "a phenomenon of some sort occurring in a bounded context". The idea of a boundary provides a limiting edge to the research and defines clearly that which is under study. The use of the case study allows for a very focused look at the problems and difficulties of the pastoral care management system and ways to improve it.

#### 1.4.2 Data Collection

Data collection is not only the collection of data, but also the creation of data (De Villiers, 2001:178). Data has been collected using a literature study and structured and unstructured group interviews. The interviews have provided the basis for gathering the information of what is happening at St John's College while the literature provided an insight into systems of pastoral care in other parts of the world. The interview process has been the main source of data-rich material.

##### 1.4.2.1 *Literature study*

A literature study was made of pastoral care in education, the house system and tutor/mentor-ship programs in independent schools. It examines the role pastoral care has to play in the student's holistic education. A literature study forms an essential component of this study as it is "the main access point or gateway to the relevant body of knowledge" (Mouton, 1996:121). This helps in ensuring that the pastoral care program design will effectively meet the individual student's needs. The literature study includes relevant data obtained from books, journals and the Internet. Books were used to gather

information by the experts in the field of pastoral care; journals were used for up to date and current issues in pastoral care. The Internet was used to find out what other schools around the world are doing with regard to pastoral care in order to learn more about international best practice. There is a social trend toward better pastoral care internationally and so it is of importance to one school what another school is doing. Best practice from around the world will allow a pastoral care management system to best suite the needs of students from all over the world.

Unfortunately the researcher found it difficult to consult a wide variety of authors on the subject of pastoral care in education. A review of the literature reveals that there is little written on this subject and that the research and literature that is available has been written by the same few people. Therefore, the researcher has had to rely on the same few authors and sources. These same few authors wrote the majority of books available, or were the editors of books containing chapters written by other writers. Journal articles were difficult to come by, as the subject of pastoral care is not one that is widely written about. Much of the material was more directed toward guidance programs and not toward the actual management system needed to run the program. This lack of sources makes this research more worthwhile as it will now contribute to the shortage of material on the topic and thus help to increase available material.

#### 1.4.2.2 *Interviews*

Unstructured and structured interviews were held with student groups to gain insight into their personal perceptions about pastoral care and the system in place to facilitate it. The use of unstructured and open-ended interviews allows for flexibility in the direction of the interview, giving better insight into the student's views (Mouton, 1996:108). The structured interviews used questions obtained from the literature and from the unstructured interviews. The personal experiences of the students are vital to the successful implementation and management of the pastoral care program.

### 1.4.3 Data analysis

The data was analysed using Tesch's 8 steps (Creswell, 1994:155) of analysis. The data was collected using taped interviews that in turn was transcribed for analysis. The process of analysis requires data to be coded and clustered to identify relevant themes, patterns and categories that in turn are interpreted (Myburgh & Strauss, 1999:41). A detailed description of the process of data analysis is provided in chapter three.

## 1.5 DEMARCATION OF RESEARCH

The research on pastoral care and tutorship was conducted at St John's College, Houghton, Johannesburg.

## 1.6 CLARIFICATION OF CONCEPTS

Four concepts relating to a pastoral care management system are clarified at this stage and they are: pastoral care; the house system; tutor groups and the invisible child. This clarification helps to put them into context and eliminate ambiguity and confusion.

### 1.6.1 Pastoral Care

The origin of the concept in education is said to date back to when "most institutionalised education was provided through church schools ... a natural enough extension of its clerical context" (Best, 1995:4). The use of the phrase 'pastoral care' is contentious and Dooley (1980) and Hughes (1980) object to its use in the educational context (Best, 1995:4). However Her Majesty's Inspectorate in 1989 declared it to be "concerned with promoting pupils' personal and social development and fostering positive attitudes" (Best, 1995:5).

### 1.6.2 The house system

This refers to the bureaucratic structure of status positions and role definitions by which the student body is divided into more manageable parts. It is the structure the school has devised to implement and carry out the system of caring and nurturing. In a similar way to which subjects are separated under a Head of Department, with specialist teachers, houses have housemasters and tutors (Best, 1995:6).

### 1.6.3 Tutor groups

The groups that houses are further divided into under the guidance of a tutor. These groups can range from 10 to 23 students.

### 1.6.4 Invisible child

The majority of students who slip by unnoticed by the pastoral care system because they are average achievers.

## 1.7 DIVISION OF CHAPTERS

Chapter one provides an introduction to the background of the research problem. It outlines the structures within which the research will take place. It gives the aims of the research and the methodology that was used to process the data. A brief clarification of the important concepts is given as well as the area to which the research will be limited.

Chapter two contains the data collected from a literature study of books, journals and the Internet. The focus of this study is on pastoral care in private education, the concepts pastoral care and tutorship, and structures for administering the pastoral care program. The rationale for administering pastoral care in schools is born out of the general concern in schools for the complete well-being of the students. Young, as quoted in Lang (1995:267),



said "the primary goal of pastoral care is to facilitate development in three areas of the student's life: educational, vocational and personal social". It is a process whereby students are developed in all spheres of their life, not just their academic development.

Chapter three provides an in-depth description of the research design and methodology for the collection and analysing of the data obtained from St John's College.

Chapter four will bring together the information from the literature study and the analysed data collected from the interviews. This will be correlated and the findings will be reported following a joint analysis of the existing literature and the data.

Chapter five is the conclusion where the findings will be summarised and recommendations will be made.

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## **1.8 CONCLUSION**



One of the current problems associated with the pastoral care management system at St John's is that the main focus is on the group and having a group identity, but very little is known about the individual. Boys who do not excel or who are not naughty are often not noticed. They simply pass along from one day to the next without ever having a meaningful conversation with a teacher about their progress (Brighouse, 2000:25). In modern society this communication is fast becoming an essential part of every good school. A pro-active school listens to students, parents and staff; the emphasis is on listening and communication (Lodge, 1995:23).

One of the goals of any good pastoral care management system should be "to provide a point of personal contact with every pupil" (Lodge, 1995:21). In this way communication is established for each and every child in the school with a significant adult. The importance of this contact extends further into the

whole school as vital information could assist a student in all aspects of his schooling. The role of the tutor or form teacher becomes increasingly important as peer pressure increases.

The societal pressures on children to perform at school and to fit in are greater than ever before. More and more problems are developing at schools; drugs, bullying, and sexual orientation are some areas where things can go wrong. Pastoral care is a whole school issue, it is not the responsibility of a few who may be in so called positions of authority. In fact "the role of all teachers is vital because personal and social development and responsibility are intrinsic to the nature of education. It is something from which no teacher can opt out" (Lodge, 1995:33).

In this chapter the background to the problem and orientation of pastoral care was provided. The research problem was stated along with the research question, research aims and research methodology. The demarcation of the research was outlined and certain key concepts were clarified. A brief outline of the following chapters in this research project was also discussed. In the next chapter an in-depth literature study of the key concepts, namely pastoral care in education; the concepts pastoral care and tutorship; and structures for administering pastoral care will be examined.

## **CHAPTER 2**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

#### **2.1 INTRODUCTION**

Brenda Hopper (1995:98) said, "it is important not to lose sight of the fact that a group is a collection of individuals, and that as individuals they have their own needs, desires, aspirations and anxieties". In most situations in which the adolescent finds himself or herself today, the individual is under enormous pressure from peers to be part of the group.

The societal pressures on adolescents today are growing exponentially. Racism, alcohol, drugs, bullying and sexuality are just a few areas where things can go wrong. No school can afford to bury its head in the sand and hope that these issues will go away. The first step towards developing a pastoral care program is an "acknowledgement that pupils [are] experiencing the effects of rapid social change and that schools [have] a clear role in meeting the welfare needs of these young people" (McLaughlin, 1995:61).

In today's society even children coming from affluent families suffer from spiritual and emotional deprivation. It has also become easy to count the children who have performed well at school but failed miserably in life. "In some measure, all children are at risk in a society such as ours" (Joyner, 1999:281). This chapter argues that an effective pastoral care system is a necessary management structure in a secondary school to deal with the challenges facing adolescents. It will also help provide justification for identifying the individual child within the group and helping him/her to shape and develop their individual personality.

#### **2.2 PASTORAL CARE**

In his book, *The Boys of Westonbury*, Rev Adams (Adams, s.n.) describes the passage of two young adolescents as they enter and pass through an English

Public school in the 1850's, a time when society saw education in a very different light. They were allocated to a 'House' and had a Housemaster and tutor who were there to help them when they needed it. Times were hard and much of the discipline in the school was decided upon and administered by the senior boys or 'Monitors' as they were called. The story details the rise of a bully to the position of Monitor and how his abuse of power led to his downfall. Of interest to this research is the closing pages of the narrative where the Headmaster of Westonbury comes to realise that boys cannot be left to get on with things by themselves. The success of their schooling is determined by their state of well being at school, their mental stability, their sound judgement based on their experiences and the peace of mind to concentrate and focus on their work. He concludes by identifying the young boys' need for greater guidance and input from adults to ensure that they complete their schooling in a successful fashion.

Today students are still faced with emotional and social stresses that should be addressed in order to reduce the difficulties they may have when encountering academic stresses. This ties in with Best, Lang, Lodge and Watkins (1995:297) who conclude that "children are likely to achieve more in the conventional curriculum if they are valued and cared for, and if the impediments to learning posed by social, emotional and personal problems are cleared out of the way". The pastoral care management system is a commitment by the school to help students come to terms with their social, emotional and personal problems. It is the strategy employed to remove or at least relieve some of the obstacles put in the way of learning at this developmental stage in the life of the adolescent.

### 2.2.1 The adolescent student

Dacey (1979:27) gives a definition of the adolescent as "any person, usually between the ages of 11 and 19, who has clearly started the search for personal identity". Gilmore (1979:116) repeats the emphasis on identity when he offers three central concepts to adolescence: identity, competence and

exploration. The well-known child researcher Piaget proposed four stages of intellectual development which children must pass through on their way to becoming an adult, namely, the Sensory Motor Period, the Preoperational Period, the Period of Concrete Operations and Period of Formal Operations (Stages of Intellectual Development In Children and Teenagers, November 2, 2001). In the secondary school we are most interested in the adolescent stage, ages 13 – 18, that occurs during the Period of Formal Operations. According to Piaget (Thomas, 1991:151), it is during adolescence that the typical child starts to see problems and their conditions based on past, present and future experiences, and to make logical decisions as a result of this. It is during this development stage that adolescents are capable of making their own decisions, of independent thinking. This period of time, 13 – 18, is also seen to reflect an increase in the disturbance of the self-image (Conger, 1975:325). Lindsay (1983:108) supports this concept of change and adds that adolescence is not just a time of change but also that it is “normal for adolescents to have problems”. With this stage being situated next to the adult stage (over 18 yrs) adolescents must start to think about the future and their time after school. “One of the first things they must do is to start making their own decisions” (Adolescent Stages of Development; October 28, 2001). By the end of the Formal-operations period “the youth is capable of all forms of logic that the adult commands” (Thomas, 1991:151). They are able to “formulate hypotheses and systematically test them to arrive at an answer to a problem” (Stages of Intellectual Development In Children and Teenagers, November 2, 2001).

For many adolescents, experimentation becomes their way of testing adult situations and finding out answers. “Secondary school experience provides important support and enhancement for adolescent development” (Berkovitz, 1980:70). Schools need to take measures to address these new thought processes and experiences that the students are passing through. Processes or changes that will also involve changing relationships, coping with loss, divorce, depression and violence to name but a few (Adolescent Stages of Development; October 28, 2001). “Teachers, therefore, must be in a position

to judge what are problems which require action, and what are best left alone” (Lindsay, 1983:108).

It is during these adolescent years that the students in our schools are most vulnerable to external pressures, and the threat of making the wrong life decision is at its peak. It is for this reason that greater attention should be given to the emotional and social position of the students. Pollack (1998:9) strongly suggests that schools give an end of term report that “covers not only their academic progress and classroom conduct but also their social life”. He continues by saying that, “by keeping an eye on a boy’s social adjustment, schools are much better able to stay in touch with a boy’s genuine emotional experience” (Pollack, 1998:9). Jones (1984:115) found in her experience of counselling adolescents, that “applied common sense based on respect for the individual concerned, perhaps even a simple practical suggestion, was often all that was needed”. Earlier it was stated that schools could not afford to look the other way when emotions became charged. Emotions play an important role, if not a vital role, in the growing stages experienced by adolescents.

Pastoral care in secondary schools is justified as an important part of an effective school. It becomes a means of assisting adolescent growth in secondary school children in its broader sense, a whole educational experience. “Pastoral care must be seen as promoting order by its humanistic regard for the ‘whole person’ as a citizen in the community of the school” (Best, 1994:20). This focus on the whole child goes a long way to promoting and strengthening the school as a caring community where education “is the intentional promotion of individual development” (Best, Lang, Lodge & Watkins, 1995:289). An effective, well managed pastoral care system will ensure that proactive measures are in place to assist students when they experience some of the difficulties common to adolescents.

### 2.3 THE MEANING OF PASTORAL CARE

The origin of the concept 'pastoral care' in education is said to date back to when "most institutionalised education was provided through church schools ... a natural enough extension of its clerical context" (Best, 1995:4). Today the concept is loosely used to refer to the affective side of education. In some countries it is incorporated as a formal part of the curriculum by education authorities, while in other countries, schools who see it as important will incorporate it into their timetable (Best, 1995:5). During the 1960's and 1970's education was identified with schooling but not necessarily seen as the same thing (Lang, 1994:5). Education is no longer only concerned with the cognitive, it has become concerned with the affective, moral and political "as much as with the cognitive" (Lang, 1994:5). This implies a form of holistic education and an acceptance that "in addition to basic subject matter the school also [has] a responsibility for other aspects of the child's life" (Shaw, 1973:25). Pastoral care is an opportunity to engage the 'other aspects' of the child's life, the affective domain. David and Cowley (1980:vii) are of the opinion that schools should be helping more with the "personal and affective side of life". The role of the school has developed to offer an education for the type of society students will meet when they leave school.

The National Association of Pastoral Care in Education (NAPCE) is an organisation based in the United Kingdom to further the importance of pastoral care in education. The NAPCE interprets the term 'pastoral care' as "the umbrella concept referring to the multifarious activities which teachers and others perform as that part of their role concerned especially with the welfare and personal development of children" (McLaughlin, 2001:i). This implies a form of total welfare of the student. Total welfare can be further described as "to develop his talents to the full; to learn the basis of understanding himself, his family, his community and the world; and to do all this while developing respect for the beliefs, characters and talents of others" (Marland, 1974:8). Marland (1989:15) defines pastoral care as "personal,

educational and vocational guidance". Thus the focus is on total personal development, the further and enhanced development of the individual.

Daws (quoted in Clemett and Pearce, 1986:7) states that pastoral care "is a long and complex tradition, whereby teachers have seen, or have been expected to see, their role as comprising two main responsibilities: 'to "teach" their subject and to "care" for the welfare of their pupils as individuals". Again the emphasis and meaning of pastoral care falls into the realm of whole child development and at an individual level.

In 1989 Her Majesty's Inspectorate (HMI) (Best & Lang, 1994:6) gave one of the most comprehensive definitions of pastoral care:

In detail, pastoral care is concerned with promoting pupils' personal and social development and fostering positive attitudes: through the quality of teaching and learning; through the nature of relationships amongst pupils, teachers and adults other than teachers; through arrangements for monitoring pupils' overall progress, academic, personal and social; through specific pastoral structures and support systems; and through extracurricular activities and the school ethos. Pastoral care, accordingly, should help a school to articulate its values, involve all teachers and help pupils to achieve success. In such a context it offers support for the learning, behaviour and welfare of all pupils, and addresses the particular difficulties some individual children may be experiencing.

This definition clearly outlines the role of the school in the provision of pastoral care, and the need for a caring environment to exist. Of importance is the emphasis placed upon relationships, the pastoral structures and support systems, extra curricular activities and the particular difficulties of individual children.

HMI identifies the importance of relationships between the various functions within the school and the role a successful pastoral care management system



can play. The importance of relationships in school and society is stressed by David and Cowley (1980:36) who see society as “a maze of interpersonal relationships” consisting of the people we know and meet. The focus on pastoral structures and extra curricular activities, as a means for achieving a caring environment, is part of the whole development process a caring environment is striving to do. Blackburn (1983:75) highlights the need of some students to use their extra curricular activities as their comfort zone for opening up and sharing with others. The pastoral structures within the school must accommodate these activities where possible and provide the necessary opportunities for students “to talk about their achievements beyond the central work of the school’s curriculum” (Blackburn, 1983:75). In keeping with the aim of this mini-dissertation, HMI highlights the individual student and his particular difficulties. This emphasises the need to know each student on an individual basis in order to be proactive in dealing with problems. Two types of problems exist and these are both important – those students who are a problem to the school and those who, while being no problem to the school, have problems of their own (Blackburn, 1983:75). The underlying message provided by this definition, remains the need to focus on the individual for care offered through the pastoral care management system.

Lodge (1995:32) goes further to highlight the importance of identifying the individual needs of students and the provision of this information to allow the teaching to support and provide the necessary guidance to the students. This support by the teaching is reflected through the pastoral care program being set up as “an expression of the commitment of a school and of its teachers first and foremost to the welfare of its children” (Best, Ribbins, Jarvis & Oddy, 1983:253). The pastoral care program becomes a system designed to “strengthen and develop those skills and relationships within the school network, so that every member of the school can develop as an individual, and experience a sense of belonging to a caring community” (O’Connor & Paterson, 1995:126).

The pastoral care management system is designed to be a set of activities “to improve the human condition, an enterprise in which we engage for the *good of the individual*” (Best, Ribbins, Jarvis & Oddy, 1983:269). Sadly, in many schools the management system designed for pastoral care and intended to promote effective learning has become a means of identifying students who are already lost to the system. The main focus is on the students who have already started to fail. “To reduce pastoral care to a routine managerial or corrective reaction to unanalysed and decontextualised ‘incidents’ is neither to diagnose their causes nor to produce a developmental, proactive or preventative environment” (Best, 1995:18). Pastoral care means caring, and to develop a caring environment requires a commitment to education in a broader sense. The broader sense being the development and betterment of human beings.

The proponents of pastoral care all agree that it should be a pro-active activity attempting to prevent undesirable situations from emerging. ‘To care’ is a verb, and so pastoral care is something we do, it is not the structure for caring. Schools have a responsibility to the individual students and therefore a structure for caring is essential. “What is clear, however, is the need for any structure for the administration of pastoral care to be organised with this purpose, rather than administrative convenience, being paramount” (Martin, 1994:151). The purpose of pastoral care remains to oversee the personal development of the individual students. “Personal development is not just developing personally, but developing the person – and that is the very core of pastoral care” (Marland & Rogers, 1997:15).

## **2.4 THE PURPOSE OF PASTORAL CARE**

The purpose of pastoral care is to “facilitate learning and to help pupils in their personal development” (David & Cowley, 1980:26). Pastoral care is dedicated to the personal development of the individual. It is concerned with the “educational, vocational and personal social” development of young students (Lang, 1995:266). Smart of HMI, in David and Cowley (1980:26),

goes further to say that the purpose of pastoral care is evident in the expression of the school's continued concern for the individual through his development of integrity and welfare; his development of personality and talents; and "its readiness to support him at all times and especially when his work is adversely affected by personal or domestic circumstances". An underlying principle for the purpose of pastoral care is the recognition of each student as a "person whose individual happiness and personal integrity" are enhanced by the school being more active in the non-academic curriculum (Best, Ribbins, Jarvis & Oddy, 1983:273).

The focus is clearly on the individual and how he/she is an integral part of the societal group. Thus the concept of community is also an important aspect of pastoral care: "pastoral care has a tremendous role to play in the promotion and strengthening of the school as a community" (Best, 1994:20). This means that the school must be alert and sensitive to the needs of the children. It cannot be critical and must make allowances based on this understanding, and acceptance of the environment within which it operates. All this will help to create a friendly and co-operative community for students, parents and teachers (Marland, 1974:226).

Not only does the individual student develop through pastoral care as described above, but he/she also develops his/her ability to interact with the group, even more so if the tutor group is divided vertically across forms. This is evident through discussion of their own experiences and those of others. In this way the students are able to take better control of their own actions and behaviour (Hopper, 1995:101). These actions and behaviours, along with their academic progress, will form personal profiles of their effort and achievement. These records of progress are crucial to help the student. A comprehensive system must be in place by the school to ensure that effective assistance is offered to students (Lodge, 1995:22). The pastoral care management system can be an excellent way of gathering and maintaining this information. With this being an important goal of the pastoral care system it will ensure that "proper reviewing procedures are built in" to help individual

students (Munby, 1995:144). The pastoral care system must at all times be working for the benefit of the students. Sklare (1997:112) had this to say about the purpose of pastoral care: "as long as students can be helped to identify what they want to achieve, regardless of the nature of the difficulty, pastoral care can work".

A key aspect of the purpose of pastoral care is the home-school link. This relationship is becoming vital to the success of the student. Since the Crowther Report, of 1959/60 in England, it has become clearer and clearer that factors from outside of the classroom are having an increasing impact on the happenings inside the classroom (Marland, 1974:7). When home and school have a healthy working relationship, the pupil has a far better chance of success, the family is more content, and the teachers will enjoy greater professional satisfaction in the classroom environment (Marland & Rogers, 1997:83). The effective functioning of the student, parent and teacher relationship is vital to the success of the student and the community. "It is a waste of time to fuss about what we think children should learn if we do not understand how to organise a system of pupil-teacher relationships which is productive of our intended learnings" (Morell in Marland, 1974:5). The system referred to by Morell here is the pastoral care management system of the school.

The pastoral care management system has in the past been seen as an administrative tool for managing a large pupil body. The house structures designed and implemented in the late fifties and early sixties were "concerned with the management of large numbers of young people, the collection, recording and dissemination of a great deal of information and with control, discipline and punishment of difficult and disruptive students" (NAPCE in Lang, 1995:274). This all encompassing nature of pastoral care has slowly been eroded away and much of the pastoral concerns have fallen by the way side. Many schools today have neglected the importance of pastoral care and focused solely on the academic achievement of the students. "If educators confine their attention to the intellectual developments of their pupils, they will

find that their failure to regard the whole personality vitiates even their attempts of intellectual learning" (Nash in Ong & Chia, 1994:99). Teachers will dispute their dual role as part of their educational work, but society is "increasingly seeing both roles as part of the function of any institution dealing with young adults" (David & Cowley, 1980:36). To disregard this dual role is to abdicate from the true educator role that should exist within an educational community (David & Cowley, 1980:37). This again emphasises the importance of a good pastoral care management system to ensure that the students are being wholly educated.

It is clear that a sound pastoral care management system can go a long way to ensure that students are being educated beyond the curriculum and that their "educational, vocational and personal social" (Lang, 1995:266) development is being looked after. The purpose of pastoral care is thus to ensure that personal development is monitored in a structured manner and that the interests of the students are being looked after beyond their academic achievement. An integral part of the pastoral care management system is the evaluation of the system. David Martin conducted an evaluation of pastoral care in Independent Schools in Australia and the following two responses were returned on two questionnaires. They encapsulate the purpose of pastoral care and provide motivation for its continued role in schools and the importance it has.

I would say that 'pastoral care' is a very strong element of this school. Almost every teacher would know very personally the sixteen/seventeen students for whom he/she is responsible and would take a caring and concerned interest in her and her development in all facets of her life – spiritually, physically, academically, what other strengths she may have.... Obviously it is on-going and there is much that can still be done. However, what is achieved is quite remarkable (Martin, 1994:151).

The secret of a good school is to have a successful and well-balanced pastoral care programme (Martin, 1994:151).

The pastoral care management system must retain at all times the purpose of clearing up the smaller problems and relieving the pressures of the bigger problems where necessary. A climate of help and discussion will go a long way to alleviate some of the student's deep-rooted problems affecting their performance in the classroom.

## **2.5 TUTORING AND PASTORAL CARE**

Tutoring is an important component of pastoral care. It is the process through which the tutor establishes the relationship with the tutee. This relationship is developed through continued tutoring and both tutor and tutee are able to develop an understanding that goes beyond teacher/pupil and enters the realm of trusted confidant.

On the subject of tutoring, Marland and Rogers (1997:1) state that "a tutor is a teacher whose subject is the pupil herself". This confirms the importance of the role the tutor has to play in the pastoral care management system. Schools can be off-putting and at times intimidating to parents, despite their efforts to be an open community. However, a familiar face can overcome this. Both parties have the best interests of the child at heart and thus open communication is essential (Lodge, 1995:22). Pastoral care can provide that familiar face in the form of a tutor or form teacher.

The form tutor is at the center of the pastoral care management system. They are there to provide "grassroots level care" (Best, Ribbins, Jarvis & Oddy, 1983:41). Because of varying qualities of teacher and their personal belief in tutoring it may be necessary to make tutorship a prestigious position with rigorous selection and high standards expected. Limiting the responsibility to a select few means larger groups, using all staff means smaller groups but less effective tutoring for some pupils (David & Cowley, 1980:31). It is not enough to rely on goodwill, dedication, hard work, personality and so on. Relationships are encouraged or inhibited by the institutionalised structure.

To be a good tutor implies a desire to know the child and his background and family history. It also implies "a respect for the child as he *is* and not as we would like him to be" (Marland, 1974:19). What is wanted of the form teacher is to be a sympathetic and tolerant advisor with a personal interest in each of his students (Marland, 1974:80). "A school creates good tutors by the degree they are taken into its confidence, and the degree of responsibility they are given" (Marland, 1974:76).

The role of the class teacher or tutor is vital to the program and can determine the degree of success or failure. They provide the point of reference where the child can get assistance with the changes and developments within which they need to function. More often than not the class teacher or tutor will also be a subject teacher in the school. Sadly in many instances teachers have, on the whole, regarded their subject teaching as more important than their pastoral tutoring. In 1989 HMI (Lodge, 1995:26), in a report on pastoral care in secondary schools, declared that:

The more schools are able to promote pastoral care through the curriculum, the more efficient and effective they are likely to be. Of course, if this is so, there will be no place for teachers who claim they are only interested in subjects, not young people or vice versa.

Clearly this report felt that a teacher's role was automatically that of a caring tutor and there was little reason to separate subject teacher and tutor roles. However, the tutor who is forced to fill both roles can feel at a loss in their position as tutor. When they are the subject teacher they have their specialist training behind them, but when tutoring they have little training and little more specific knowledge than that possessed by the student (Marland & Rogers, 1997:10). Many of these teachers feel unqualified in the application of pastoral care and find it difficult to accept wider responsibility for the children. These teachers need to be encouraged and trained to be 'complete' teachers.

The Anglo-Chinese School in Singapore introduced a pastoral care system in 1988 and defined the role of the tutor as a mixture of:

Tutor, mentor, moral educator, friend, role model, adult figure, confidant, guide, facilitator, encourager, supporter and helper. Staff members generally wish to get to know students as individuals to help them develop their potential and to encourage the development of self-esteem and self-awareness. The need to guide pupils in the academic, social, emotional and spiritual aspects of their lives is seen as essential (Ong & Chia, 1994:90).

This very direct definition proposes that a tutor be more than a subject teacher within the school. It is describing a person who is able to understand and feel for the students they are responsible for. A weakness of any system using tutors in the manner described above will be "that its success or failure is essentially based on the strength or otherwise of the staff operating in the system" (Best, Ribbins, Jarvis & Oddy, 1983:45). A weak tutor will not always be aware of the problems among the children.

Best, Ribbins, Jarvis and Oddy (1983:41) propose six key areas for the successful functioning of a tutor. They are identifying problems, resolving problems, enabling problem solving, collective or corporate activities, routine administration, and socialisation. In order to be successful at all they go further to propose that the tutor be expected to be receptive to students or parents who bring problems. They must consult and seek assistance from or refer problems to the counsellor or Housemaster. In order to assist with this the tutor must check attendance and punctuality and keep records of those students known to have problems. They must be active in the creation of social relationships and a warm and reasonably intimate environment where the student is secure in their confidence. Ultimately getting to know the students and problem solving are the core duties of the tutor.

The tutor is the key to the success of any pastoral care system and the strength of the system lies in the weakest tutor. Through the tutor's guidance



the growing student is better able to make school relate and find conditions of success. The tutor's offer of security and confidentiality enables growth, stimulates investigation, encourages self-esteem, develops judgement and creates a sense of coherence and security. "If there were no tutors in a school there would be no 'home' for a pupil to go to when he or she needed it" (Marland & Rogers, 1997:3). It is the tutor who brings the wide spectrum of knowledge of the individual student and the various activities of the school together in the most positive way possible.

Pastoral care is about relationships, in particular, relationships between students and teachers. These relationships go beyond the superficial interest in the day to day feelings and well being of the student. They are deeper and more meaningful and are individually directed, instead of collectively at a group. In his research of primary schools in Europe, Kopmels is quoted in Lang (1994:30) as saying, a tutor is "somebody whom you care for, who is interested in you (not only for your new jumper), who is open about him/herself, who has an identity of his/her own". The pastoral care giver has a very important role to play in the individual personal development of the student.

## **2.6 THE FEATURES OF A PASTORAL CARE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM**

At the core of a pastoral care system is the division of the school into more manageable parts. Whether this division takes place in form groups with class teachers and heads of year, or in house groups with tutors and housemasters, some form of administrative division is imperative. Either way pastoral care is a whole school function. At the centre of this is the class teacher or tutor who must operate at the chalk-face of pastoral care.

For the class teacher or tutor to be able to perform the service of pastoral care giver, some key elements or features of the pastoral care program must be in place. They are

- co-ordination;

- good communication;
- teamwork;
- clear procedure (structure);
- integration of approaches; and
- shared understanding (Lodge, 1995:26).

However, before any of these features can be acted upon a sound pastoral policy must be settled on. The pastoral policy will contain the background and need for the policy; the goals of the school; the structures, roles, tasks, curriculum and casework procedures; and arrangements for monitoring and reviewing the policy.

The important structures for effective **co-ordination** and good communication are monitoring, evaluation and decision-making. Monitoring includes the gathering of student information and examining it for any patterns. Evaluating means comparing actual and intended outcomes, while decision-making will be the planned changes based on the results of the monitoring and evaluating phases (Lodge, 1995:28). One of the great challenges of a pastoral structure is to ensure that it is working in conjunction with the academic structure and not against it. This co-ordinated effort is vital for the success of the individual child and the success of the school (Best, Ribbins, Jarvis & Oddy, 1983: 269).

**Good communication** is vital to ensure the effective co-ordination of the planned changes, and here an efficient hierarchical structure will lend itself to this. On communication Marland (1974:19) felt strongly that "a really successful pastoral system will depend on the channels of communication being kept well open, with a constant information flow being directed to where the information will be most useful". Constant review of the student's progress and the dissemination of this information to the relevant people within the school structure will ensure that the correct action is taken. Marland and Rogers (1997:105) identified degrees of communication in "merely informing, informing and suggesting simple action, consulting, and referring". To ensure clear communication channels and the correct degree of communication, post holders must have a clear job description, "one that sets out the main purpose

of the post, the main tasks and responsibilities, the resources available to support the post, the skills required to carry it out and how the post relates to others in the structure” (Lodge, 1995:32).

**Teamwork** is a vital element of pastoral care. “Increasingly schools are involving staff in consultation and decision-making processes” (Blackburn, 1983:12). To this end all staff are involved in the life of the student, be it academic or pastoral. One person must not gather the information about a student and then retain it. The information is not for the sole use of that one person. In order to have a better understanding of a student and allow teaching to respond, support and guide the student, a team of people is needed. Together they can work effectively for the benefit of the student “fostering a caring and orderly environment” (Lodge, 1995:32). Blackburn (1983:6) supports Lodge by adding that “instead of looking for separate parts that have made up a pupil’s experience in school there has been a concentration on the total learning experience of the pupil and a search for coherence”. This coherence can only be achieved through teamwork.

The pastoral care **procedures** will be different to the academic procedures and in many instances this has led to confusion. A divided school is only doomed to disaster as there will exist no co-ordinated effort (Best, Ribbins, Jarvis & Oddy, 1983:261). By having a clearly defined structure within the school, responsibilities are allocated, differences in responsibility are described, and links between people are indicated. The division of the student body becomes a key element in determining the structure for pastoral and academic structures (Maher & Best, 1985:52). It is clear that structures must operate within schools in order to achieve some of the pastoral goals. These structures must promote co-ordination and the flow of information. In order to provide the best for the students, schools must ensure that the right teams and individual leaders have the information to be able to “adapt teaching, promote assessment of pupils progress and provide feedback” (Lodge, 1995:32). In this way a school can become more responsive if the information is collected and passed on to the right people.

When **integrating the task**, pastoral care is the responsibility of the whole school and not just those in pastoral positions. Information about a student must come from all sources and it is the job of the class teacher or tutor to process this information and then redistribute it to the relevant people for action. Clemett and Pearce (1986:16) echo this integration in the following extract:

Pastoral care is effective when everyone in the school community knows, and feels secure in the knowledge, that as valued members of that community they can participate in giving and receiving encouragement, guidance and support.

This helps to clarify the need for the whole school approach to pastoral care, and the importance of relationships throughout the school community.

The **shared understanding** of pastoral care is not about the structure in place for dividing the students into more manageable groups; it is about the individual students and their relationships. Every teacher in the school has an important role to play in this gathering of information, "the role of all teachers is vital because personal and social development and responsibility are intrinsic to the nature of education. It is something from which no teacher can opt out" (Lodge, 1995:33). Hamblim (1993:1) supported this when referring to counselling skills. "Counselling skills are vital, but they are an integral part of many roles". Here the importance of every teacher being able to offer some form of expertise in a counselling role is emphasised.

With all teachers involved in the pastoral care program of the school a whole school approach is achieved. It does not have to be something that a few people are trying to co-ordinate while pulling in different directions. The concepts of co-ordination, communication and teamwork are highlighted by Best, Ribbins, Jarvis and Oddy (1983:136), "rather than providing a net through which no problem would fall, problems could get lost in the grey area where everyone thought someone else was attending to it". A poor pastoral care system would fall into this trap. The structure must be in place for

effective pastoral care. The division of the school allows for smaller class groups or tutor groups to be administered by a larger number of people. With the smaller number of students it becomes easier for class teachers or tutors to be proactive in their care and less reactive to situations which have already developed. "Pastoral care must be seen as promoting order by its humanistic regard for the 'whole person' as a citizen in the community of the school. It must not be restricted to 'emotional first aid' nor be exclusively a control mechanism" (Best, 1994:20).

To help pastoral care fill a proactive role it must be afforded a proportionate amount of time to ensure that the job can be done properly. It must be important enough to be time tabled with as much time as possible. In David Martin's (1994:144) survey of Independent Schools in Australia, he found that 75 minutes was the average amount of time afforded pastoral care activities per week. He goes further on to say that in many schools his follow up survey revealed that they had increased the amount of time given to pastoral care activities. However, the most frequently mentioned problem of pastoral care is the insufficient time allocated to staff for this purpose (Martin, 1994:150).

Lang (1994:31) remains of the opinion that "pastoral care continues to be seen as an allocation of time, rather than as a total school educational ideal capable of creating optimal learning conditions for each individual student". Allied with this notion is the erosion of pastoral care time for administrative, academic, cultural and sporting duties. An important feature of the pastoral care program will always be the time afforded the individual student. Pastoral care is about taking time to listen to the individual needs of the students and making informed and valued decisions based on the discussion (see para 4.3.3.3). If this time is given away to other activities, the staff will no longer see the value of the exercise and the students will no longer see it as an important time where somebody actually cares about them. Inter-house competitions appear to be the most guilty at eroding away pastoral care time as David Martin found in his survey of Independent Schools in Australia. "Time for pastoral care can also be lost through the necessity to organise

competitive activities. It is clear from the survey, that schools see this aspect as important, but the program has to be carefully co-ordinated to ensure that such activities remain means to an end rather than becoming the end itself" (Martin, 1994:150).

Pastoral care is more than a management system for big schools. It is a proactive way of effectively guiding the personal development of the students in the school. It is a whole school commitment to education in its broader sense. Education "must begin from a commitment to meeting the developmental needs of the individual" (Best, Lang, Lodge & Watkins, 1995:288). In a survey conducted in Britain in 1990 by HMI, they found that clarity and precision, evidence of a coherent underlying policy, an integrated approach and evidence of a link between intentions and practice, were important features of a pastoral care management system (McLaughlin, 1994:72).

## **2.7 THE GOALS OF A PASTORAL CARE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM**

In the 19<sup>th</sup> century teachers taught many subjects to their pupils and so came to know them well. Most primary and pre-primary schools still operate like that today with a caring class teacher teaching the same class most things. With much more specialist teaching taking place in secondary schools continuous daily contact is less frequent. This emphasises the difficulties of providing effective personal, educational and vocational guidance to large numbers of pupils (Clemett & Pearce, 1986:7).

Within the curriculum it thus becomes important to identify the goals of a good pastoral care system. All subject teachers are part of the system in one way or another. Their role, either directly as a tutor or indirectly as a subject teacher, is to ensure the whole development of the individual. A good pastoral care system will have pre-defined goals, one which is identified as being "to facilitate development in three areas of the student's life: educational, vocational and personal social" (Lang, 1995:266). Within these

three areas individual students are made up of a number of inner-selves, namely physical, social or moral, sexual, intellectual, spiritual, vocational and emotional selves. "To fail to meet the needs of the individual in any of these 'selves' is by implication to fail to contribute to the development of the whole person" (Best; Lang; Lodge & Watkins, 1995:290). A sound pastoral care system will ensure that the way the school is divided up will allow each boy or girl to "relate personally to an individual class teacher or tutor who is responsible for overseeing his or her overall progress" (Lodge, 1995:28).

In 1974 Marland published the first major work on pastoral care (Clemett & Pearce, 1986:10). In this work he suggested six aims relating to a school's pastoral work:

- (i) to assist the individual to enrich his or her personal life;
  - (ii) to help prepare the young person for educational choice;
  - (iii) to offer guidance or counselling, helping young people to make their own decisions – by question and focus, and by information, where appropriate;
  - (iv) to support the "subject" teaching;
  - (v) to assist the individual to develop his or her own life-style and to respect that of others; and
  - (vi) to maintain an orderly atmosphere in which all of this is possible
- (Clemett & Pearce, 1986:10).

In line with this research these aims highlight the importance of an effective pastoral care management system in the secondary school to provide the necessary support for the challenges facing adolescents. The aims are proactive in their nature and focus on the individual student and his or her personal development.

Later in 1986 the NAPCE proposed the following as the goals of a good pastoral care management system:

1. to provide a point of personal contact with every pupil;
2. to provide a point of personal contact with parents;

3. to monitor pupil progress across the curriculum;
4. to provide support and guidance for pupil achievement;
5. to encourage a caring and orderly environment;
6. to promote a school that meets pupils' needs;
7. to provide colleagues with information to adapt teaching;
8. to engage wider networks as appropriate (Lodge, 1995:21).

A closer look at these eight goals reveals the key features schools should have in place to manage their pastoral care program effectively.

*To provide a point of personal contact with every pupil*

The role of the tutor is to provide the point of reference where the child can get assistance with the changes and developments within which they need to function.

*To provide a point of personal contact with parents*

Schools can be off-putting and at times intimidating to parents. However a familiar face can overcome this. Both parties have the best interests of the child at heart and therefore open communication is essential.

*To monitor pupil progress across the curriculum*

Records of progress are crucial to help the student. A comprehensive system must be in place in the school to ensure that effective assistance is offered to students.

*To provide support and guidance for pupil achievement*

Pastoral care goes beyond getting to know the students and their parents. It must help students to get the most out of their school and themselves.

*To encourage a caring and orderly environment*

There is a corporate responsibility to maintain order and discipline within the school. It cannot be left up to a few discipline specialists. A whole school approach is required of all students and all teachers.



*To promote a school which meets pupils' needs*

A proactive school listens to students, parents and staff. The emphasis is on listening and communication. The staff are also alerted to the needs of the students.

*To provide colleagues with information to adapt teaching*

It is important to share the information about students' needs with all necessary staff. There is a corporate responsibility to students resulting in a co-ordinated series of actions.

*To engage wider networks as appropriate*

It is important to bring in the help of outsiders where needed to work with the students.

These eight goals of the NAPCE provide the basic features of a pastoral care management system. They give the direction the system should be taking and the basic underlying principles of pastoral care. Any school pastoral care policy should have these goals set out as the fundamental beliefs for which they stand.

When drawing up pastoral goals school leaders must be mindful of the people working at the ground level within the program. Much time will be spent on administration and the tutor's frustration will be picked up by the tutees. The chores take over the program and tutoring becomes a bore. Often the boring administration tasks come from the top down and the tutees and tutors become disillusioned with the entire purpose of the pastoral program. The pastoral goals must allow the tutors to get on with the job of tutoring, developing relationships and establishing trust.

## **2.8 STRUCTURES FOR ADMINISTRATION**

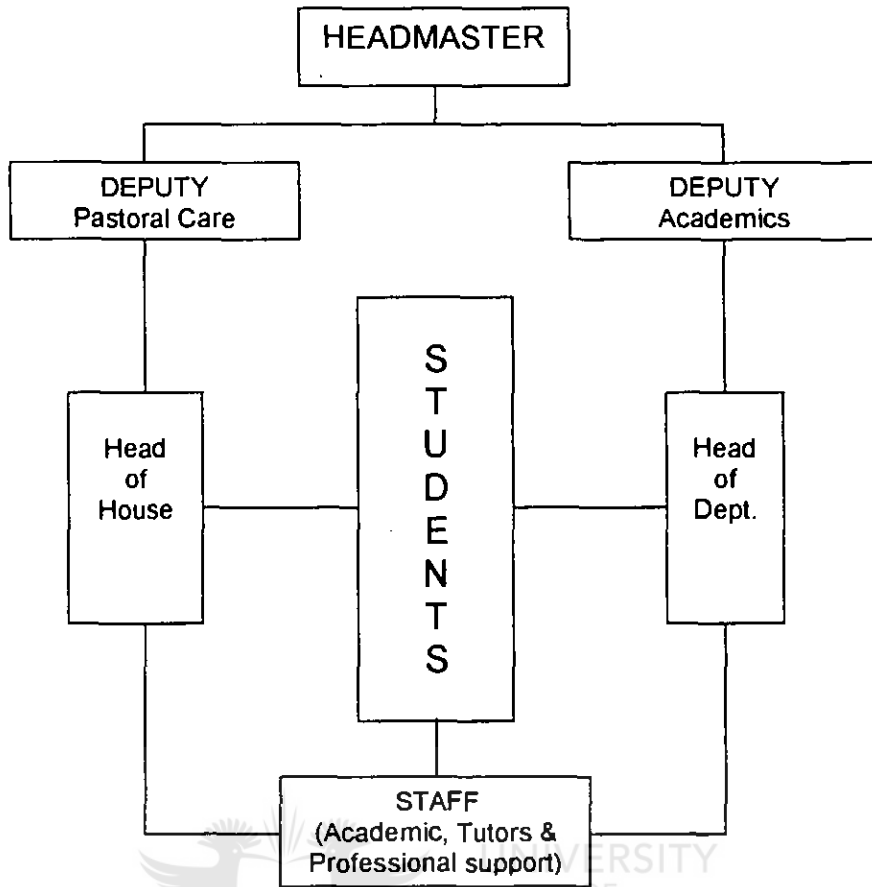
Pastoral care systems must know clearly what they are trying to do, and why. They must attempt to bridge the gap in existence between student and school.

In essence the students are at the centre of the school dynamic and the focus of all the school does.

In defining a structure for pastoral care there are different ways to do this. As discussed, the division of the school into smaller parts is a desirable feature as discussed in paragraph 2.6.1. This can be done in form groups with further division into form classes with a class teacher looking after the class. Alternatively, the school can be divided into houses across the forms with further tutor groups being created in each house with a tutor looking after the group. These two divisions appear to be the most popular but others include dividing a secondary school into junior and senior parts or a very common structure in the United Kingdom is the creation of junior, middle and senior schools within one school. For the purpose of this research the focus will be on the use of house divisions for dividing up the school. It is with this in mind that the following hierarchical structure for a school is used (see fig 2).



FIGURE 2: Central student structure



Of importance in this figure is to note the central position of the students surrounded by the various staff in their multiple roles. When a new student enters the school he or she is placed in a House and thus also a tutor-group. This results in there being two members of staff directly responsible for that student's well being from the first day. The house structure must recognise the need of the students for "a satisfactory self-picture" and so structure its program to achieve this end. Where the house achieves this it will receive a much greater degree of co-operation.

With the students at the center of the figure, the whole child is the focus and pastoral care becomes a concern of the whole school. "Tutoring and guidance, in one form or another, inside the classroom and out, have become the responsibility of the majority of staff and not just of those in pastoral positions" (Griffiths, 1995:76). Giving greater emphasis to this is the notion

that “general pastoral care is one aspect of a school’s work that cannot be allocated as a responsibility to one area, set of lessons or group of teachers and pupils: it pervades all we do” (Clemett & Pearce, 1986:16). The whole child approach develops ways and means of assessing the individual progress of each child within the big picture of education, beyond the curriculum. Early heads and planners saw their problem as one of finding ways in the larger school of ‘preserving’ the social life and individual care often offered in smaller schools. Their efforts resulted in a system that was more ambitious, more detailed, and more personal and thus more caring than ever before (Marland, 1974:6).

Of a more practical nature is the division of the school into houses which is often termed a vertical division, as the houses cut across forms (Best, Ribbins, Jarvis & Oddy, 1983:37). Houses are optimised at about 75 – 80 students per house. Within each house then is the option to create tutor groups by form or by further vertical division. These groups are optimised at 15 – 20 students per group. The tutor and the housemaster are then charged with the personal welfare of the students as described already. They are also able to call on the services of other professionals within the school like the school nurse and trained counsellor/psychologist. The counsellor must be viewed as an addition to the pastoral system and not as a separate person working on the outside. They form an important link between tutor and student, to help both tutor and student with genuine problems. “The counsellor’s liaison with house staff was part of a role most staff saw to be an extremely important one in the pastoral system” (Best, Ribbins, Jarvis & Oddy, 1983:41). The good tutor is not the one who is able to handle everything on their own, but the one who is able to use the housemaster and professional service staff in an effective manner to assist with the process of tutoring.

In order to assist tutors with the collection of information about students a tutor period, of minimum 40 minutes per week, must be timetabled for group discussion relating to issues affecting the students. Further to this the tutor

formally schedules one personal interview with each student per term. "As a workable routine, the tutor should have one scheduled interview with each of her tutees in a quiet, private and comfortable room once a term, with further opportunities for similar interviews as required" (Marland & Rogers, 1997:106). This means that the tutor now has two opportunities to gather first hand information about the students, personally one-on-one and in a group situation.

The concern of the tutor remains that of the tutor group, and through this group the individual tutees. Neither whole group tutoring or one-to-one discussion can complete the task alone, to the point where the pastoral care of the corridor becomes equally important. The snatched conversations in the corridor while passing, on the side of the sports field or wherever, becomes an integral part of the data gathering tutors must do to gain the whole picture.

The pattern described will depend on the willingness of the teachers to become involved with students who display a variety of moods and behaviours, as a result of interaction between the forces at home, school, parents, other students and teachers. The success of the pastoral care management system will rest with the administrative structure within which it operates. A system bogged down in administration will not afford enough time for getting to know the students, and one which does not provide sufficient time for getting to the students is doomed to fail from the outset. The tutors must be positive in their approach in order for the pupils to see the benefit of it. Pastoral care must be seen to be an important part of the school curriculum to ensure success.

## **2.9 CONCLUSION**

It is evident that pastoral care is the responsibility of all schools in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Society is placing a far greater responsibility on the school to ensure that personal social development is addressed. Schools and education departments all over the world have developed a variety of pastoral care

systems providing a "hierarchy of staff responsible for the guidance, well-being and discipline of the students" (Arnott, 1994:66). It is also evident that the staff Arnott refers to comprise all the staff in the school. There is a definite move toward pastoral care being a whole school process, not just the responsibility of those in a particular pastoral care position.

Ultimately school size and class size makes little difference to academic achievement. Even the buildings have little role to play, but "they should look as though somebody cares" (Fenwick & Smith, 1993:149). Current systems of school division, be it by form or by house, are in place for student management as a group, rather than a means for developing individual contact by teachers/tutors with the individuals in the group. Further to this, many systems are becoming, or have become, systems of "surveillance and behaviour control" (Best, 1994:20). Persons in charge of forms and housemasters are a professional group of behaviour technicians. They are not performing a guiding role, but instead become reactive figures whose focus is constantly on managing the next disciplinary problem or poor academic performance, with a very small percentage of the student body. By ensuring that pastoral care is happening throughout the school and at all times, students have a greater sense of well being at school, it is a security for them. In their conclusion Best, Lang, Lodge and Watkins (1995:297) conclude that "children are likely to achieve more in the conventional curriculum if they are valued and cared for, and if the impediments to learning posed by social, emotional and personal problems are cleared out of the way".

The emphasis in society today rests with the need to individualise. To identify the individual within the crowd, to prevent the individual from becoming lost in the crowd, that is to say invisible. This has forced schools to question and re-examine teacher-student relationships. It is important to remember that the final pastoral care system will emerge out of a need to address various problems, problems that may be universal, but which may also be uniquely local to the school. The success of the system will depend on the ability of the system to involve all children. This in turn will depend on the resources

available to the system, mainly time and human resources. Somewhere there must be the right teacher for every child in the school and so availability of staff is vital. This availability to children must be in a non-stress situation where the teacher does not have his or her authoritarian posture (Marland, 1974:15-17).

The importance of successful pastoral care is clear. Education is a moral matter and thus provision of well-developed citizens for the country's future is paramount. Societal pressure is at its highest and it is up to education to protect the future. By reaching out to each and every individual child in the education system, pastoral care givers are acknowledging their worth and individuality. No child must, or can, be allowed to pass through his schooling unnoticed. "Pastoral care is justified as an expression and an application in practice of a commitment to the value of the individual as a person" (Best, Lang, Lodge and Watkins, 1995:297).

In the next chapter the research design and data collection method are explained. The focus is on the data collection and analysis technique used.

## **CHAPTER 3**

### **RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODS**

#### **3.1 INTRODUCTION**

In chapter two a literature study was made of the key concepts in pastoral care. A justification for the role of pastoral care in schools was discussed and the meaning of pastoral care in education was outlined along with the concept of tutorship. This was followed by a look at the purpose of pastoral care and the underlying features of an effective pastoral care system. Finally the goals of an effective pastoral care system and the structures for administrating the pastoral care management system were outlined.

Chapter three focuses on the process of data collection and data analysis. This focus includes the actual process of data collection as well as the procedures followed to analyse the data. The aim of the investigation is to gather information on pastoral care in education: its need, its purpose, and the strategies needed for its success. The research design and data collection process are now described.

#### **3.2 RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY**

The main research design and methodology is the qualitative case study. This is developed out of two aspects of research design namely the qualitative research design and the case study. An over view of the qualitative research design is given followed by an overview of the case study and more specifically its applicability to the situation being researched.

##### **3.2.1 Qualitative research**

Creswell (1994:145) states that "qualitative researchers are interested in meaning – how people make sense of their lives, experiences, and their structures of the world". Pastoral care is about people and the structures in



place to care for and assist their development through adolescence. “Personal development is not just developing personally, but developing the person – and that is the core of pastoral care” (Marland & Rogers, 1997:15). Creswell has highlighted the focus of qualitative research on lives and experiences. Marland and Rogers have highlighted the developing person in pastoral care. Together they are searching for the same answers about changes in life.

Qualitative research is descriptive in nature as it looks at process, meaning and understanding (Creswell, 1994:145). As a student moves through adolescence, it becomes important that there are structures in place to give guidance and help in his/her journey from childhood to adulthood. The pastoral care system is such a structure to provide students with someone to talk to, an adult figure who is prepared to really care about them.

The current pastoral care system at St John’s College appeared not to reach all the students in the college. It was only partly successful as it dealt with group interaction, but was not helping students on an individual level. The qualitative approach was chosen to address these deficiencies because it is a study of a “social or human based problem” (Creswell, 1994:2). Pastoral care is very much a social or human based issue.

### 3.2.2 Case study

The case study is a type of qualitative research. Merriam (1998:27) defines the case study in terms of its end product: “an intensive, holistic description and analysis of a single instance, phenomenon, or social unit.” What makes the case study relevant in this setting is the limited object of study. The case is viewed as a “bounded system” (Merriam, 1998:27). In this research, the single bounded system is an independent school.

The case study was chosen as it also focuses on “insight, discovery and interpretation rather than hypothesis testing” (Merriam, 1998:29). The special

features of a case study are that it is particularistic, it focuses on a particular program. It is descriptive, it uses literary techniques such as documentation, "quotes, samples and artefacts" (Wilson in Merriam, 1998:30) to substantiate its description. It is heuristic, in that it can bring about a new understanding and discover new meaning of the phenomenon under study (Merriam, 1998:29-30).

In education case study research is conducted to identify and explain specific issues and problems of practice. For this reason it becomes the ideal method for researching a topic such as pastoral care in education. The process will help to explain what pastoral care should entail and identify the problems of practice in the current system in place in the bounded study system, namely St John's College. The current system at St John's deals with group pastoral care and very little individual work is done. There is also very little structure to the group work and so this needs to be addressed. Both students and staff have lost the direction they should be taking in the pastoral system and this has led to the breakdown of the system. Data collection for the purpose of redefining the pastoral care system and what should be happening in the allocated time within the bounded system forms the next phase.

### 3.2.3 Data collection

Data collection involves three stages, namely (a) setting the boundaries for the study; (b) collecting data through interviews and documents; and (c) establishing the best way for recording the information (Creswell, 1994:148).

#### 3.2.3.1 *Setting*

"The logic and power of purposeful sampling lies in selecting information rich cases" (Patton, 1990:169). In line with this statement by Patton students were purposefully selected in an attempt to ensure they would best provide the data to answer the research question. The students in many respects were chosen

as each in their own right provided an excellent case study of pastoral care and the effect it had on them in their unique contexts (Stake, 1995:xi).

### 3.2.3.2 *The Interview process*

The focus group interview process was chosen as the method for collecting data for this study, as Patton (1990:335) puts it, focus group interviewing is “ a highly efficient qualitative data-collection technique”. The interview process was chosen as it allows one to obtain detailed information and help to develop a better understanding of the feelings and opinions of the students. The use of focus groups involves bringing together people of similar backgrounds and experiences to interview about shared issues that affect them.

A further advantage listed by Patton (1990:335) is that “participants get to hear each other’s responses and to make additional comments beyond their own original responses as they hear what other people have to say”. This emphasises the need to get high-quality data in a social context where interviewees are able to consider their own views in relation to, and in the context of, the views of others (Patton, 1990:335).

Interviews in this research project were divided into two stages. The first stage comprised two independent groups of 5 students each. The second stage used two groups of 5 students, the first being made up from a mix of the first two groups and the second a new group of students.

In this first stage each group was interviewed using an unstructured interview process. Each group consisted of carefully selected boys who would bring some value to the discussion (i.e. purposive sampling, Bless and Higson-Smith, 1995:95). The choice of interviewees was very purposeful; as it is important to ensure that those interviewed would make a valuable contribution to the discussion. Rubin and Rubin (1995:42) are of the opinion that carefully selected interviewees prevent “the nightmare of conducting a variety of interviews that you [were] not able to pull together”. The interviewees were

given very little direction in the interview and followed a basic theme of pastoral care and the house system at St Johns' College.

The second stage of the interview process was to select a first group of students, from the two groups in stage one, and interview them. The third interview followed the format of a structured interview using the unanswered questions that arose from the first two interviews. The second group of students in this stage made up the fourth interview. They were students who had not been selected before and were chosen at random. This interview also followed a structured process with pre-set questions being used.

Four interviews were conducted in all and these made up the data collection process and each has been transcribed for easier analysis. The interview schedule of these four interviews was very open-ended. The first two interviews had no structured questions. They opened with a brief explanation of what pastoral care was about and then discussion began around the need for it and what was happening at St John's. The third interview used questions that developed out of the first and second interviews and the fourth interview used questions obtained from McLaughlin, Clark and Chisholm (1996:42).

### 3.2.3.3 *Recording*

Various methods for recording exist and they include field notes; video and/or audio recording; films; and photographs. The audio recording method was chosen, as this would provide an accurate record of the interviews, particularly the informal conversational interviews. These recordings were then transcribed and analysed using Tesch's eight steps for data analysis (Creswell, 1994:155).

### 3.2.4 Data analysis

Patton describes data analysis as a challenge: “The challenge is to make sense of massive amounts of data, reduce the volume of information, identify significant patterns, and construct a framework for communicating the essence of what the data reveals” (Patton, 1990:371). Data analysis is the process of bringing the interview notes together and organising them in such a way that they make sense. The aim of data analysis is to make the process of data interpretation much easier.

The descriptive method of analysis as suggested by Tesch (Creswell, 1994:155) was used. The transcribed interview is read through in its entirety to obtain a complete picture of the interview. This provides the basic story line that is then linked to sentences and paragraphs that support it. Central themes are identified along with categories and sub-categories, all supporting the central theme. Direct quotations are used, from the transcribed text, to support these categories and themes in the report. The report is finally presented in a descriptive form as a record of the findings.

Using the eight steps outlined by Tesch as a guide, the data was analysed according to the following process:

1. The transcribed interviews were printed out and then read through to get a feel for the mood of each interview.
2. The first interview was then selected and reading through carefully thoughts were highlighted and jotted down on the transcribed interview.
3. Following this the similar topics were clustered together for the first interview.
4. The second interview was read through and similar topics were highlighted according to their relevance to the existing topics and new topics were added. The first interview was read again to see if there was material relevant to the new topics and this was added.
5. Different highlighter pens were then used to highlight the segments of text according their topic relevance.

6. By cutting and pasting on computer, the relevant passages of text from the interviews were copied into the separate folder headings.
7. These folders of text were then used to develop the six categories and the two themes that ran through the interviews. The folders were then collated into coherent passages for inclusion in the mini-dissertation.
8. The interview data was then re-read to look for any overlooked relevant passages of data.

These eight steps were used for analysing the data gathered following the interview process for this research project.

### Sample of transcribed interview – Interview 3

- Simon As a school you have your teachers and your students and if they didn't care for the students then there's not much of a connection and building between them and that's just how the schools going to work.
- Allan Ok, Why do they need to care more?
- Richard I think because they are basically building the future, you with them for 5 hours a day and so if they don't really care about you, then how are they going to teach you to go out into the real world.
- Michael I think that if the teacher cares more about the students, the students will show more will and want to do things, they will try to fit in more, they'll feel more at home at school. If the teacher doesn't care about them they're just going to sort of go through school thinking what a waste of time. If the teacher cares they will try to get involved in things, try to work harder.
- Simon I mean obviously the boys realise that school is something they have to do, they have to come to school and they have to work and they have to take part in all the kinds of things. But if they show that care that's almost like that kind of respect that comes from teachers to students. As Michael says which is very true you know the guys will say ok they're caring for me more and showing me a lot more respect so I'll work harder and do a lot more for the school.
- Allan If the staff need to care about the students then why is the present structure within the school, the house structure, why is that failing pastoral care?
- Mohamed Sir I don't really think it's failing. I just don't think it's not being implemented properly.
- Allan But then it is failing. Why don't you think it is being implemented properly?

Mohamed Sir because for it to work everyone has to pull their own weight and like when house tutor period comes, that has to be the same for everyone, not just one teacher do it and the next don't.

### 3.3 RELIABILITY AND VALIDITY

"All research is concerned with producing valid and reliable knowledge in an ethical manner" (Merriam, 1998:198). These two concepts are vital to any successful research undertaking, as they are the checking mechanism for the authenticity of the research. They ensure that the researcher is following good research practice.

**Validity** is generally the trustworthiness of the findings, the inferences drawn from the data. Validity in qualitative research will be determined by the extent to which the data gives an accurate representation of the subjective experiences of the participants. Internal validity deals with the question of "how research findings match reality" (Merriam, 1998:201), while external validity deals with the concept, "how generalisable are the results" (Merriam, 1998:207).

**Reliability**, according to Merriam (1998:205), refers to the extent to which "research findings can be replicated". Bogdan and Biklen (1992:48) describe it as the fit between what is recorded and what has actually occurred. To ensure this 'fit' data has been treated in the same way throughout the research to ensure uniformity.

To ensure validity and reliability the researcher must stress that he is very involved in on going investigation of the topic, pastoral care, and this position gives him an objective view of the topic. During the data collection period the same ground was covered by different respondents ensuring an adequate collection of material. The strategy of peer review and examination was employed to ensure that the data was reflecting the current situation within the case study area. An extensive audit trail was kept of the data analysis

process and of the data collection process. The data descriptions given are also very rich in their descriptive nature of the feelings of the respondents during the interviews. It also helped that the respondents were eager to participate and none of the ones approached chose not to participate. They all felt that they had something to contribute and were aware that the pastoral care system needed improvement. These processes all help to make the findings of this research valid and reliable.

### **3.4 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS**

When researching the position of individuals, especially children, it is important to ensure that they are in no way under any pressure to participate in such a process. Boundaries of morally permitted behaviour are strictly adhered to when undertaking qualitative research. In qualitative studies ethical concerns are "likely to emerge with regard to the collection of data and in the dissemination of findings" (Merriam, 1998:213).

The trust of the students lies in their ability to speak freely as anonymity is ensured. This way the collection of data must be conducted in a morally and ethically acceptable manner. Likewise the findings of the research must be presented in a way so as not to compromise the respondents and the institution under study. Permission for such inclusion in the findings is essential.

### **3.5 CONCLUSION**

Pastoral care is an emotional issue. It focuses on human feelings and experiences within their perceptions of the world. The qualitative research strategy is one that is designed to analyse human emotions and feelings (Creswell, 1994:145). It is the pastoral team "who are charged with an overview of the individual pupil's educational, personal and social progress" (Best, 1994:18). Pastoral care and the qualitative process are linked in their



concern for the betterment of the human being and his continued development.

This chapter has highlighted the research strategy to be used in gathering data for the purpose of this research project. It has discussed the research design and methodology of qualitative research in particular. The justifiable use of the qualitative approach to research pastoral care was also given. The process for data collection has been outlined as focus group interviews at 3 different stages. The process of data analysis was described as using Tesch's 8 steps for data analysis.

The next chapter contains the analysis and the results of the information gathered through the collection and analysis processes.



## **CHAPTER 4**

### **DISCUSSION ON RESEARCH FINDINGS**

#### **4.1 INTRODUCTION**

In chapter 3 the research design and data collection method were outlined. The qualitative approach to research and the case study formed the focus of the chapter. The setting for the data collection and the interview process were also discussed along with the recording technique used. This chapter, chapter 4, contains the results of the data collected at St John's College and the analysis of it having used Tesch's eight steps for analysis.

#### **4.2 PASTORAL CARE AT ST JOHN'S COLLEGE**

St John's College has a proud tradition of over 100 years. The College is divided into a number of houses and has been since its early beginnings when there already existed a concern for pastoral care at St John's. In the early days students were allocated to one of the priests for personal care, and it is out of this personal allocation that the different houses emerged. Today this house system provides for the administrative division and the pastoral division of the college. Each house has a housemaster and no fewer than 5 tutors. This way students immediately have two adult members of staff taking a personal interest in them. Dependent on the number of tutors, the housemaster divides his house into tutor groups of 15 to 22 students. House/tutor periods occur once a week for 30 minutes where either the housemaster can address the whole house or a portion of it, or the tutors have contact with their individual tutor groups.

Over the last few years different approaches to tutoring have emerged. Some houses have horizontal divisions for pastoral care activities, while others have vertical divisions. Some tutors engage in discussion with the group, while others pursue a system of interviews with individual students during which time the rest of the group engage in discussion of their own. With these

different approaches being implemented and both having many positive features and some negative features it was decided to try and come up with the best system for successful pastoral care administration.

Two central themes developed out of the interview process, namely **the tutor** and **the tutor group**. Each theme is further divided into three categories of key interest relating to the main topic and are now discussed further.

### 4.3 THE TUTOR

The tutor forms an integral part of tutoring and the pastoral care process. Michael (Interview 1) reflects this in the comment that *"if a teacher shows a lot of care, it also motivates the student to do well"*. Simon (Interview 2) supports this when he says *"it's a great help having a connection with a staff member who can actually ... sort your problems out"*. Both students reflect on the value of having an adult member of the staff with whom they can feel comfortable and have a respectful, yet familiar relationship with.

The three emerging categories relating to the tutor were *the role of the tutor*, *the personality of the tutor* and *the availability and confidentiality of the tutor*.

#### 4.3.1 The role of the tutor

The role of the tutor is an important component in the pastoral care management system. It is something that must be clearly defined and communicated to tutors, students and parents. Jones (Interview 1) supported this when he said *"make sure that every one is well informed about it, or what it's for, what's going on and how best to utilise it"*. In this statement Jones is emphasising the need for a clear role description to be well defined and communicated to all those who need to know. Part of this communication to the students is to let them know that *"their tutor is not the only person they can talk to. They can go and talk to any teacher they feel comfortable with"* (Mohamed, Interview 1).

There are a number of key areas where the tutor must be proficient in their provision of pastoral care. These areas include individual checking up, as suggested by Thomas (Interview 2), *"Like sometimes they will check up to see if every things ok. That's also just a nice thing to have"*. Michael (Interview 3) goes further to add *"I think it is nice to know that someone is looking out for you in the college"*. Communication regarding progress and behaviour is another key area between tutor and tutee. John (Interview 4) felt that this aspect was not being dealt with satisfactorily. There were disruptive students in class who were not being taken to task by their tutors and there was a problem with an ineffective punishment system. *"Maybe if they were punished more severely they might just think Oh we won't do that again"* (Interview 4). The tutor must fill this role in a manner so as to keep the student informed of their progress and development in a meaningful manner. Unlike as Jones (Interview 1) pointed out *"they've just used it as a time to like [ask], 'did you have any problems' or you know 'do you find any problems with teachers"*. He feels that the interest and level of conviction is very superficial. This interest and conviction is echoed by Michael (Interview 1) when he expressed that *"if a teacher shows a lot of care, it also motivates the student to do well"*. Group discussion for growth of both student and tutor develops out of the meaningful interaction and the tutor must take the initiative here in guiding the students and encouraging them. This is not possible if you *"have a distant tutor"* (Andrew, Interview 1), who is not approachable. The tutor has a vital role to fulfil by being a source of encouragement for pupils and leading by example. As Herbie (Interview 2) stated *"I think if the pupils see an effort coming from the tutors, ... they won't sit in the quad and talk or whatever, they will make an effort"*. Many pupils see the tutor period as a waste of time and therefore make little effort to attend, *"I think people just look at it like another free period"* (Mohamed, Interview 1). Many tutors also see it as a waste of time and do not follow up on boys who do not attend, *"there are those who see it just like an extra, a waste of time in the morning"* (Jones, Interview 3). This gives rise to the reference by Herbie to boys sitting in the school quadrangles and just chatting. However, the most important role the tutor has to play is that of knowing each pupil fully and being able to identify signs of

stress and take appropriate action where necessary. To be able to do this it is *“very important for the tutor to get, build up that rapport with the pupils in their tutor group”* (John, Interview 5). A comprehensive system must be in place to ensure effective assistance is offered to students (Lodge, 1995:22). This will ensure that the relationship between tutor and tutee can take on a more significant meaning.

Mohamed (Interview 3) sums up the role of the tutor very well when he said, *“basically it shows that there is someone who cares. Who wants you to do well, who doesn't want you to get into trouble and will help you with your problems”*. Chris (Interview 4) added to this when speaking about the tutor period and the tutor, but highlighted the fact that the role was not being filled in some cases, *“I think its supposed to get you to know one teacher well so that you can actually go to her with problems but it doesn't really work”*.

#### 4.3.2 The personality of the tutor

The personality of the tutor is a critical aspect in the administering of pastoral care. If tutors do not have their heart in the job then they will not inspire their students. Simon (Interview 3) was convinced that *“how much they really care about that section [group of students] and how important it is to them”* would form a corner stone of the pastoral care system. Tutors must have all the qualities of a friend, but also be a guiding figure, disciplinarian and a role model for their tutees and an teacher. David and Cowley (1980:37) stress the multiple roles a teacher has to play in their all-encompassing position.

Andrew (Interview 1) added to the list of personality traits by adding that they *“should be easy to talk to”*. He said *“it's that the tutors have to be the type of people who you can go and speak to. The tutor has to be someone who you can talk to easily”* (Interview 1). Travis (Interview 2) termed it 'approachable' when he said, *“Mrs B is so approachable because she talks to the whole class”*. Not only must the tutor be approachable and engage the whole class in discussion, but also be a good listener. Simon (Interview 2) emphasises

this when saying "*if they feel they can approach the person and if this person is really attentive and listening*", then students will feel comfortable approaching that tutor for help. Given these characteristics, the tutor has to develop an attitude of genuinely caring about their students. Craig (Interview 4) saw his relationship with his tutor developing to the point where "*you feel comfortable and safe with them*". Jones (Interview 3) on the other hand had experienced a different personality when he said that only "*a few teachers are taking it seriously and there are those teachers who see it just like an extra, a waste of time in the morning*". John (Interview 4) echoed this attitude when he felt that the impression given by the staff led to "*a lack of trust*" in the system.

If these positive personality traits are not in place the tutor will enjoy little success in their role as pastoral care provider. Best, Ribbins, Jarvis and Oddy (1983:45) go so far as to say that the success or failure of the pastoral care system was "essentially based on the strength or otherwise of the staff operating in the system". Travis found that in his interview with Mr B it was not relaxed and he felt ill at ease. This did not lend itself to a convincing relationship and it ended there, "*and then like that was it and he never spoke to me again*" (Interview 2). The genuine caring was not there for Travis; it was as if it were an inconvenience for the tutor. Mohamed (Interview 3), on the other hand, had developed a good relationship with his tutor and was convinced it was "*up to the tutor's character basically*". Both students had encountered different personalities, one, which worked, and one, which did not. Clearly, the type of ideal tutor would be one who is caring, approachable, a good listener and a confidant.

#### 4.3.3 The availability and confidentiality of the tutor

The availability of the tutor for his/her students can be a very contentious issue. In an ideal school situation the tutor would be available 24 hours out of every 24, but practically this is not possible. However, a "*commitment to the whole structure from everyone, students and teachers*" (Jones, Interview 3), will go a long way to ensure meaningful availability of the tutor.

The key to being a good tutor lies in the relationship you develop with your students. *"The pupils need to know that they can approach the tutors if they have got a problem or something, because I think some guys are scared to approach tutors or teachers"* (Herbie, Interview 2). This fear cannot exist, and students must be comfortable in the knowledge that there is help available to them as and when they need it. Another key element of availability is the insight the tutor must have to know when they are needed now, or when the situation can wait. This knowledge is enhanced through the development of the intimate relationship between tutor and tutee.

Essentially the role of the subject teacher is also one of pastoral caregiver and in many cases there is that overlap between teacher and tutor. Mohamed (Interview 1) emphasised this by saying, *"it must be very clear to pupils that their tutor is not the only person they can talk to"*. Students must feel that they can talk freely with any of their teachers, particularly if they have developed a comfortable relationship with one of their subject teachers. In this way they create a situation where the availability of someone to talk to is increased. The school also has a responsibility to ensure that the staff are available within the formal structure. Marland (1974:76) believes that *"a school creates good tutors by the degree they are taken into its confidence, and the degree of responsibility they are given"*. The scheduled tutor period becomes an important time for the tutor group and the tutor to begin to develop the kind of relationship that will determine the time afforded outside of the formal allocated time (see para 2.6.12). By following a system of keeping the same tutor for as long as possible, students and tutors are able to develop the kind of relationship needed for good pastoral care. Michael and Richard were of the opinion that this same tutor policy would enhance the relationship and over time develop it into a meaningful relationship. *"If you are continually changing tutors every term or every year, you are not going to feel confident at the beginning of the year"* (Michael, Interview 3). Richard (Interview 3) added *"If you are changing all the time you can't really build up a relationship with them and they can't really learn that much about you. They just start to learn about you and you change."*

Depending on the structure of the tutor group program, tutors may also be required to find extra time outside of their scheduled group meeting for interviews. This more private opportunity to get together with the tutor will allow for better discussion as opposed to in the classroom with the other students. Simon (Interview 2) felt *"where as if it is privately done then it's, will be totally free time, just you and the teacher and not sort of the class, all the class sitting around"*. Currently the tutor will conduct the 'private interview' in the classroom while the other students in the group engage in 'quiet' conversation of their own, clearly not an ideal situation. Many students will feel inhibited in this situation and the tutor/tutee relationship will not develop to its fullest.

The critical issue will always remain the development of that insight of when to know to drop all for the student and when to leave the situation to be dealt with at another time. It is for this reason that Allan (Interview 2) stated *"you know you can go to your tutor and talk, and you will make time and they will make time to talk about it"*. The relationship will be such that an understanding develops regarding the personal, social and emotional development of the student.

A general concern that arose about the tutor in their overall capacity as someone to talk to, was the issue of confidentiality. Mark and his family, who had experienced an incident which could have warranted school help, sought help from outside the school. They were of the opinion that *"you don't feel safe coming to school with it"* (Interview 4). Despite the presence of an independent psychologist at the school, Mark and his family chose to deal with their trauma in their own way. This proved to be satisfactory as Mark was an able student and his academic progress was little affected. However, had it been a weaker student, the school would have been forced to intervene, as the trauma would have been such that his academic work would have been adversely affected. A number of boys echoed the sentiment that it was not the school's concern, that it would not be necessary to discuss pastoral issues with anybody at school. Chris (Interview 4) said he *"can't really discuss it with*



*the school*". Robert (Interview 4) said "*me neither sir*", and Craig (Interview 4) was emphatic with "*No sir*", when asked if he could. These boys expressed a lack of trust in the pastoral care system as a support system. Robert (Interview 4) felt he would be better off talking to his parents, "*I'd talk to my parents*", and Chris (Interview 4) preferred someone in the extended family, "*I would go to a family member not one of us, maybe my uncle*". There was a lack of trust with the school, "*No, because I would not like to trust them*" (Chris, Interview 4). This lack of trust could be a result of the youthfulness of the boys in the system, they have only been in it for 18 months, and all were able students who achieved well at school thus not attracting attention to themselves with mediocre or poor results. At the same time these boys had not reached that stage in life where they wished to be independent of their parents and so still relied on them for much of their support. All students also came from stable backgrounds unlike some of the other students interviewed who relied on the pastoral care system of the school as their only means of emotional support.

The pastoral care management system allowed for boys to have contact with their tutor but many were under the impression that they could only see their tutor at the given time. They did not see the tutor as someone they could go and talk to at any time.

#### **4.4 THE TUTOR GROUP**

The tutor group forms the core of the division of the school into more manageable parts. It is the smallest grouping of students bar the one-on-one situation. This means it must be the point where all students are at ease in the situation relating to the group and tutor in a less formal manner. The idea of breaking the school down into smaller parts is to enhance pastoral care and as Andrew (Interview 1) put it "*the aim of the tutor group is the pastoral care. It's like to try and get that kind of, the guys must feel at home and stuff like that*". In this theme the three categories were *the group make up, the*

*structure of time and the program, and the group discussion vs the personal interview.*

#### 4.4.1 The group makeup

Schools require some kind of administrative division to make them more manageable. This division can also serve as the pastoral care division, but the role of pastoral care must not be lost to accommodate the many administration tasks also requiring time. The tutor system provides a good method of allowing administrative tasks to be carried out, but at the same time an opportunity is created for developing a personal relationship with the students. Best, Jarvis and Oddy (1983:37) supported the notion of a vertical house division for this purpose, the system in place at St John's College.

Tutor groups within the house can be further divided horizontally, by form, or vertically with mixed forms. Both types of structure currently exist at St John's with some houses dividing into form groups and two houses dividing across form groups. John (Interview 5) described how he had divided within his House across form groups as the tutors *"like the cross, not stuck with one age group of kids"*. The sample groups interviewed had mixed feelings about which division was best. Mohamed was strongly in support of form groups feeling that students of the same age should be interacting with each other. *"You are not on the same mental level and so what we'd understand a std 6 I don't think would be able to"* (Mohamed, Interview 1). Simon on the other hand was in favour of the mixed groups as he felt the opportunity to interact with young and old alike was one not to be missed. *"I think tutor period is a very important time when you can actually interact with your six, sevens and eight's ... important for building relationships between their seniors"* (Simon, Interview 3). Richard (Interview 2) also supported the mixed groups when he said, *"the idea of the mixed groups helps a lot, cause it helps with integration of the standards"*.

With the majority supporting the notion of mixed groups, it was felt that better mixing of the forms might help to alleviate some of the concerns. The major concern being that although the current system of mixed groups was very good in theory, it was not working in practice, Michael (Interview 1) expressed that *"the theory behind this mixed tutor group, I think was quite good, but like Mohamed said, it's not working"*. The motivation for the mixed groups was to encourage interaction across the forms and for the older students to become a kind of mentor for the younger students, make them feel more at home. Andrew (Interview 1) supported the mixed groups, but felt that *"there can be better divisions made"*. Michael (Interview 3) felt the interaction and mentorship could be used to *"make the juniors feel more at home if they can just talk to their seniors"*. Michael (Interview 1) went on further to support a possible partial mixing of the forms by grouping only two forms together as they would then have common ground, *"...break down 9 and 10 ... leave 8 by themselves ... removes [std 6] and the lower 4's [std 7]"*. This division however would not allow for a mentorship opportunity during the pastoral care period. With this division the Std 8 students were isolated as this was felt to be a very tough year in their development. All respondents in the interviews were of the opinion that the std 8 students did not fit into the senior group of the school, nor did they fit into the junior group of the school. *"Traditionally seniors have just been 9's and 10's"* (Mohamed, Interview 3). *"It is a hell of a tough year ... it's kind of just leaving juniors and almost in seniors"* (Simon, Interview 3). Clearly the standard eights would benefit from mixing the groups.

A further advantage of the mixed groups was that it made better use of the tutor/student ratio. With single form groups there are as many as 22 students in a tutor group, while with mixed groups the number was reduced to around 14. By mixing the forms more tutors would be required, form grouping needed only 5 tutors in the house while mixing the groups was only really of value if there were 7 or more tutors in the program per house. Simon (Interview 2) emphasised the need for smaller groups as it helped to improve the

tutor/student ratio, *“by immediately splitting the house into groups and minimising the number, you are increasing the attention to an individual”*.

Whatever the division taking place, it is essential that the reason for division drive the structure. If it were for administration then so be it. If it were for pastoral care then it must remain such and pastoral care must not be overtaken by administrative duties with the tutors becoming administration clerks rather than effective pastoral care givers.

#### 4.4.2 The structure of time and the program

If pastoral care is an important component of what a school offers then it must have formal time scheduled in the weekly timetable. Marland and Rogers (1997:106) suggest a minimum of 40 minutes per week for formal interaction. This time must be as important as any other subject period in order for the program to be effective. It must also have a formal program/curriculum to ensure that it is conducted in an effective manner.

A problem identified at St John's by Richard (Interview 2) was that because of the timing of the tutor period, it was often shortened, *“I think also with the period being after chapel, sometimes it, obviously the chapel runs over and therefore the periods gets shortened. I don't know, maybe we could move it or something? Because, I mean, we've never got a fixed period so you can never do something because some weeks you might have 15 minutes, some weeks 30 minutes. So, I mean I think you have got to have the full 30 minutes. You can't just have half of it or have bits and pieces of it here and there”*. This was as a result of the Morning Mass running over time and so time was lost giving the impression that the tutor period was not really that important. Although 30 minutes per week was scheduled for pastoral care, it was in effect only receiving about 15 minutes. What little time remained was often then just giving to the pupils to do their own thing. This has led to a culture of seeing the tutor period as a free period and not really important. *“I think people take it as a sort of free period, a joke period at the moment”*

(Richard, Interview 2). The implication of this is that although on the surface a sound pastoral structure was in place, it was failing to have a meaningful impact on the lives of the students. Many students do not even go to their tutor period now, as it is perceived to be a waste of time. *"You also get people who think it's a complete waste of time to just go there and so they sit here in the common room"* (Michael, Interview 1). With a lot of time being lost for these various reasons many of the teachers have also stopped conducting effective programs which help them to develop a meaningful relationship with the students. *"The tutor is not really utilising the time so people don't feel that there is any point to go"* (Michael, Interview 1). Basically, for the majority involved it has become a free period, *"I think people just look at it like another free period"* (Mohamed, Interview 1). Mohamed supported the current structure but was scathing of the people doing the job, *"I think the structure is right, it's just that everyone has to do the job properly otherwise it won't get done"* (Interview 3). An added difficulty with the limited time available was that many administration duties were also being performed in this time, among them inter-house competitive activities (Martin, 1994:150), and this added to the erosion of the pastoral care system.

Notwithstanding these difficulties some tutors have continued to try and make the current structure work. John (Interview 5) described how one of his tutors had developed an exciting program for his tutees that included *"prisoners to come and talk to them about what it is like to be in prison because the topic came up. The topic of the death sentence, so he went to the police and said I want someone to come who has been on death row. He also got a rabbi to come and talk to them because the topic came up"*. The structure involves group session time and personal one-on-one time for the tutor and tutee. The difficulty with this current structure is that while the tutor is conducting an interview with one student, the rest sit in the classroom and do very little that is constructive. *"I mean he or she is doing interviews, but then we just sit there and so that is not productive at all"* (Mohamed, Interview 3). Currently the students are left to conduct their own group discussions in the hope that a bond will form between the senior and junior boys of the same tutor group.

Michael (Interview 1) added "*she's talking to that one person and the rest of us just sit there and talk or do homework. We don't achieve anything really*". At the heart of the problem here is the amount of effective time available to the tutor. The so-called 30 minutes a week was being devoted to individual interviews and the group was left to their own devices. Mohamed (Interview 3) gave a suggestion, "*the interviews have to be placed somewhere else ... just at another time*". This means that the entire time allocated to pastoral care would have to be reviewed, as the current 30 minutes would now be devoted to the group. This group session time will require a structured program of activities while allowing for some freedom in order that the discussion does not become stiff and formal. This is discussed further in the next section on the interview and the group discussion. The remaining problem then is when does the interview take place? Going back to the opening paragraph of this section about being serious about pastoral care, more time will have to be allocated to it to accommodate the interview. This would mean time for a group discussion and time for a personal interview would need to be allocated. Simon (Interview 3) felt a scheduled time for the personal interview was necessary, "*it should be a scheduled interview, it must be scheduled to an extent*", as it forced the student to go and meet with the tutor and then follow up would be easier for the tutor. Mohamed (Interview 3) agreed saying "*it should be scheduled because if you have to go and speak to the person in the first interview you won't hesitate to go back*".

Ultimately the time given to the pastoral care structure and the structures in place for administering it will determine the success or failure of the system. If the school is serious about pastoral care they will allocate the time and have effective programs in place. If not, it will become an add-on, with little attention being given to the finer details and thus an activity in name only.

#### 4.4.3 The group discussion vs the personal interview

The structure of the pastoral care program will center round these two core issues, the group discussion and the personal interview. Should pastoral care

be administered through the group or should it be administered on an individual basis, or a combination of both? Michael (Interview 1) was in favour of group discussion as he felt it would draw students, who are currently seeing the lesson as a free period, to the tutor group, as their interest would have been stimulated, "*Group discussions would be better and I mean part of it is the student because they feel there is no need to go and so they don't*". Mohamed (Interview 1) felt "*it is critical that the interviews do take place though, and they're not slacked off*". Clearly both students are supporting the one process but not condemning the other. Either way an important component of this will be the level of trust developed between the tutor and the students. John (Interview 4), when asked who he could talk to believed that "*you can never really trust a person even if it is a psychologist*". Chris (Interview 4) felt he could not be open in either situation because "*I could not trust them [the other boys]*". This lack of trust will seriously inhibit the communication that should take place either in the group session or in a personal interview.

The group approach relies on group sessions where discussion takes place under the guidance of the tutor according to a predetermined program. Thomas (Interview 2) also supported the group discussion as he saw it as getting "*everyone talking*" even if they didn't want to, "*I think that is quite a good idea with the group discussions and the activities because that will actually like get everyone talking even if they don't want to*". Sam on the other hand was a little hesitant, expressing concern about the content of the discussion. "*Group discussions mustn't be on stupid subjects, it must be on relevant stuff and things*" (Sam, Interview 1). Andrew (Interview 1) was a little concerned about the current group makeup being successful in a group discussion, "*what kind of a discussion can you have with std 6's, 7's 8's 9's and 10's?*" Simon, in a later interview, countered this concern when the discussion again centered on the mixed groups and the benefit of them to the younger students. He said "*it is going to expose them to what he might expect, mature decision making*" (Simon, Interview 3). At the core of this remains the need for the tutor to be a good facilitator. The individual process

requires tutors to have as many individual interviews with each of their tutees as often as possible. Both processes require allocated time and a commitment from the tutor to make them happen effectively. It is for this reason that Allan described possible changes to the timetable next year that resulted in more time for the group and the individual, *"the timetable now provides everything. It provides the house period, it provides for group discussion and provides for the personal interview, and all three of those things are important in the whole pastoral care thing"* (Interview 5). The changes will result in 20 minutes on Mondays for group discussion, 35 minutes on Wednesdays for a House meeting and 20 minutes on Fridays for personal interviews. The group sessions will still require discussion topics and these need to be interesting, flexible to accommodate change and relevant to the group having the discussion. Some of the topics, which were seen to be of interest to the students, included exams and exam preparation, *"Well certainly for matrics and std 9's you could talk about the exams coming up. With 6 weeks left the marks are needed for university"* (Mohamed, Interview 3); problems with teachers, *"One might be having problems with teachers"* (Michael, Interview 3); house events for the term, *"House events that are taking place during the term"* (Richard, Interview 3); the Le Sueur trophy, *"A fourth topic could be the Le Seur trophy and how badly we are doing"* (Allan, Interview 3); house spirit, *"And that could lead onto house spirit"* (Mohamed, Interview 3); commitment, *"That could lead on to commitment"* (Richard, Interview 3); and the situation of sport in the school, *"The situation of sport in the school"* (Simon, Interview 3). A problem with other topics such as drug awareness and sex education was that these topics were already discussed in the life skills classes and so the overlap of topics should be avoided.

Ideally a combination of the two approaches will serve the interests of the students best. They will benefit from the group discussion and will also have the personal attention from the tutor in the form of the individual interview. The tutor benefits from both approaches in their process of gathering information about each of their tutees as they strive for a better understanding



of them and their personal, social and emotional development. The NAPCE also believe that both processes are important. In their proposed goals of a pastoral care management system, the first goal is to provide a point of personal contact with every pupil, while the fifth goal is to encourage a caring and orderly environment (Lodge, 1995:21). By incorporating each of these goals the system is covering both types of student/tutor interaction.

There is little doubt that the tutor group, its make up and the functioning of it, are key issues to the success of the pastoral care system as a whole. The tutor group is at the heart of the division of the school and if this is not perfected, it begins a breakdown from within the center of the system. With this key issue in line with student perceptions, the system is well on its way to success. Along with the important role the tutor has to play and the importance placed on pastoral care by a school, a positive step toward having a positive impact on the students is taken. This was not to be the case at St John's College as the perceptions of some of the students was that the house system (tutor and tutor group) was purely an administrative system. When asked what the purpose of the house system was Chris (Interview 4) replied "*organisation, like to line-up in the morning*". Robert (Interview 4) was of the opinion that that the house system was to "*have some spirit like some competition within the school*". Both alarming replies.

Clearly they had no idea about the role of the house in the process of pastoral care and had fallen into the trap of believing the school division was for administrative purposes. Further to this, when asked why we had tutor groups the responses were equally alarming. Robert (Interview 4) did not know why, "*I don't know*"; Mark (Interview 4) felt that the housemaster could not "*deal with a whole house*" and Craig (Interview 4) felt it was "*to control the house*" and also felt it not necessary to have tutor groups. Chris added that he did not feel tutor groups were all that necessary, "*Ja I don't really see it necessary*". John (Interview 4) went so far as to say it was "*half an hour to sit down and do your homework you haven't done*". These responses underline the poor administration of the existing pastoral care system and the

misconception of what the time is really for. Further probing revealed that the students had little or no idea of what the house and tutor system was designed to do. Robert (Interview 4) questioned "*what is it designed to do?*" while Chris (Interview 4) said, "*I don't know what the tutor is designed to do*". These issues are cause for great concern and reveal an ailing pastoral care management system in need of a drastic make over.

#### **4.5 Summary**

Six categories emerged as being central to a successful pastoral care management system. These six categories can be grouped into two broad themes namely, the Tutor and the Tutor Group.

The three categories relevant to the Tutor are the role of the tutor, the personality of the tutor and the availability of the tutor. The role of the tutor is vital as the tutor forms the central figure in the pastoral care management system. They are the adult figure responsible for making and developing the personal contact with the student. Their job is to develop a profile on each child to cover their social, emotional and personal development. "*Any information I get at a marks meeting or feedback from a tutor I go and write it up... like a doctor. Each child has got a page and I just make a small note there. When a parent phones or somebody wants to know something, it's all there*" (Allan, Interview 5). This rigorous process of documentation highlights the use of a personal profile. The personality of the tutor will affect how they go about developing this personal profile on each student. Those who display the necessary enthusiasm for the task will have vast resources at the disposal while others may be left scratching their heads to try and remember who the student is. A tutor who undertakes the task begrudgingly will not develop a personal relationship with their students. The availability of the tutor is closely linked to the personality of the tutor; the tutor will dictate how much time is afforded the task. There will always be the minimum required, but those who go the extra mile will reap the greater reward.

The Tutor Group was the second significant theme and here three key points were the group makeup, the structure of the time for the group session and its program, and the value of the group discussion versus the individual interview. The group makeup was important, as there were two distinct options; to mix ages across the forms or to keep age/form groups together as a tutor group, both having advantages and disadvantages. The final decision of whether to mix ages or not would rest with the choice of the program to be conducted during the tutor group period. This led into the second category that considered the time allocated to the tutor period (formal pastoral care). The time available also determined then the program that could run in order for the tutor to have information rich contact sessions with the students. This further led to the debate of whether individual interview sessions would be a better means of gathering information or the group discussion session. All three themes depended on each other to determine the way forward and it would seem that whichever way was chosen it would result in successful pastoral care, if implemented effectively. Mixed age groups, casual group interaction and personal interviews can lead to a successful personal profile on each student. Single age tutor groups and formal group discussion led by the tutor would also result in a successful profile on each student.

The six categories are all inter-related and the success of any pastoral care management system will depend on how each of them is individually managed and how they are grouped together as a single management structure.

#### **4.6 Conclusion**

Pastoral care is an important aspect of the modern school. It is a way of ensuring a healthy environment for adolescents to grow up in where a sense of belonging and caring is important. In the draft revised National Curriculum Statement, pastoral care features in the Life Orientation Learning Area under the specific Learning Outcomes of Social Development and Personal Development (2001: 14-15). This recognition of its importance adds

emphasis to the development of an effective management system that will result in effective pastoral care.

St John's College prides itself on its history. For over 100 years it has produced boys "rightly trained in body, mind and character" (Nash in Lawson, 1968: 42). However judging by the responses from the current students, the College appears to be lacking in the department of pastoral care. Highlighting the key concepts of the tutor and the tutor group saw many areas where an improved management system would see better pastoral care.

The ultimate goal for a tutor is to know each of the students fully and in such a way that they are able to monitor them and have a positive impact on the student's personal, social and academic development. This process of knowing each student individually was lacking at St John's as reflected in the lack of conviction and commitment shown by both tutors and students to the existing pastoral care system. The personality of the tutor required the tutor to be interested and committed to the program and again the students felt that many of the tutors were just passing the time. Very few tutors displayed the kind of enthusiasm needed for a tutor to be effective. The time allocated to the tutor period was also the only time many of the tutors gave to the program and this was normally interfered with in one way or another.

The structure of the time, following chapel and often not the full 30 minutes, meant that the period lacked credibility for both students and staff. The lack of a structured program for the tutor to follow also adds to the disorganised state of the tutor period. Again the lack of time has led many a housemaster to abandon any hope of implementing a structured program for the group. The make up of the tutor group is one where much experimentation has been taking place and as yet the best solution has not been found. Both types of house division have merits. The idea of a group discussion or an individual interview is one where both options are the best. The group discussion is needed to give an insight into the individual in a group situation and the individual interview is needed to give that personal focus on each student.

These issues are all relevant to the success of the pastoral care management system and chapter 5 contains possible solutions and combines the literature findings with the results of the data collection.



## CHAPTER 5

### SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

#### 5.1 INTRODUCTION

In chapter 4 the data analysis revealed some interesting topics which tie in with the literature evidence in chapter three relating to the role of pastoral care in schools today. It provided insight into a system that has potential for successful pastoral care but is showing little success. Many recommendations are already evident, but because of the nature of factors such as tutor personality and time available, they are not operating as successfully as they could.

Pastoral care remains a structure by which individual students are able to establish a meaningful relationship with an adult within the school environment. The management structure is not the means to the end, but rather it is the opportunities that it provides for pastoral care that will determine the success. It is essential and evident from both the literature (Lodge, 1995:22) and the data, "*I think that it is critical that the interviews do take place though*" (Mohamed, Interview 1), that the students want, and need a point of personal contact with an adult figure. The structure of the house/tutor periods will determine the extent to which this can happen. The process of identifying each and every individual student within the school is going to go a long way to overcoming the invisible child.

#### 5.2 OVERVIEW

Many students go through their school life un-noticed and it is to this end that the pastoral policy of a school must focus on all students in the school. It is out of this that the research problem of overcoming the invisible child emerged. An effective pastoral care management system must be in place to ensure that each and every student has the opportunity to develop individual

contact with an adult figure. The pastoral care system must recognise the individuality of each child.

In order to achieve this the following specific aims were addressed:

- a) explain what is meant by pastoral care;
- b) discuss the purpose of a pastoral care program;
- c) discuss the features of a pastoral care program;
- d) investigate the existing pastoral care program at St John's College; and
- e) provide a framework for implementation of a successful pastoral care program in independent schools.

The first four aims are covered in the preceding chapters and it is out of this that a framework for implementation develops. Four key findings emerge from both the literature and the data collected at St John's College. They are:

- a) the goals of the pastoral care policy;
- b) the aims and organisation of the house;
- c) the house/tutor period and its objectives; and
- d) the role of the house tutor and housemaster.

These form the basis around which recommendations can be made for implementing a sound pastoral care management system. They are expanded upon in section 5.4.

### **5.3 KEY FINDINGS**

These findings emerged from both the literature study and from the data collected from St John's College. They are broad in nature but highlight the key areas that make up a sound pastoral care management system.

#### **5.3.1 The goals of the pastoral care policy**

The goals of a pastoral care policy should include those eight listed by the NAPCE (Lodge, 1995:21) and they must form the base for the way forward,

the starting point. These goals provide a framework by which any school is able to develop an effective pastoral care management system. The goals as set are clear and to the point, and form the nucleus of the pastoral care policy that will then develop around them.

It is essential and evident from both the literature (Lodge, 1995:22) and the interviews (for example Mohamed, Interview 1 and Thomas, Interview 2) that the students want, and need a point of personal contact with an adult figure. The school would do well to serve its own interests and ensure that this system of pastoral care also extends to the families of the students. Irving, in Calvert and Henderson (1998:18), found that parents were "essential partners in guidance". A sound pastoral care policy also helps to keep a check on student progress across the curriculum and provide support and guidance when a possible problem is predicted. Bearing in mind that pastoral care should be preventative rather than reactionary, this process of monitoring provides a framework for which potential problems can be solved before they occur. Pastoral care goals also provide an opportunity for the school to reflect on the service it is providing. By ensuring that the school environment is caring and orderly the school is able to ensure that it is meeting the pupils needs. This will also be achieved by listening to the students and their parent's which is an integral part of pastoral care. Finally the school must ensure that it has good links with professional agencies to ensure that students can be directed to these services where required and staff are able to be well informed of any adaptive strategies they should employ for the benefit of the student. Staff will be kept up to date with modern trends through this good relationship and changes will be smoothly and easily made where necessary. Pastoral care is only one aspect of the school's work. It cannot remain in isolation as the responsibility of one person. A sound pastoral policy with clear well-defined goals must be the responsibility of all staff after all, caring "pervades all we do" as educators (Clemett and Pearce, 1986:16).



These goals can and should form the corner stone of any pastoral care policy and set the way forward for the division of the school into more manageable parts for the administration of the policy. The house system provides for an effective means for administrative division and pastoral division. Each house has a housemaster and no fewer than 5 tutors. This way students immediately have two adult members of staff taking a personal interest in them. Each house retains its own unique character but will subscribe to a number of common aims.

### 5.3.2 The aims and organisation of the house

The aims of the house are a key element in the pastoral care policy as they outline the reason for the very existence of the house and its role in the administration of the pastoral care policy. An important aim is to increase pastoral care through being more proactive than reactive. This way the system is promoting the personal, social and emotional development of the individual child. Secondly the program must be worthwhile, and not seen as a waste of time by all involved. Clearly this was not being achieved at St John's College as indicated, for instance by Michael (Interview 1); "*you also get people who think it is a complete waste of time*". The house must have clearly set out objectives and these would include among others: to ensure that every student is known and cared for as an individual; to develop home-school links and gain parental understanding, co-operation and community in some way; and to develop effective systems of recording student progress and encouraging students to set themselves development targets in school, leisure, social and personal aspects of their life (Blackburn, 1983:166).

Blackburn is very conscious of the need for a formal structure that is well organised and complete. His objectives here are echoed in the data collected from St John's College. Herbie was looking for individual attention to help him reach his potential, "I think it is important that you have a personal relationship with your tutor" (Interview 2). Richard (Interview 2) spoke of the questionnaires filled in by students with their tutor, "*but then with regard to*

tutors and the questionnaires that we have". Allan mentioned his personal profile he develops for each student, "*any information I get at a marks meeting or feedback from a tutor I go and write it up*" (Interview 5). In all these cases the need for recorded information is evidence as part of the process of developing a means for pastoral care. These objectives would then be reflected in the individual organisation of the different houses in the system.

The internal organisation of the house rests with the individual housemaster and here tutor groups can be made up in different ways. The traditional form groups, mixed groups across all forms, or as discussed in the interviews, grouping of some forms together where there may be common ground, "*...break down 9 and 10 ... leave 8 by themselves ... removes [std 6] and the lower 4's [std 7]*" (Michael, Interview 1). This organisational structure will then determine how house periods will be utilised, as group discussion sessions or individual interview time or a combination if time allows.

### 5.3.3 The house/tutor period and its objectives

The house tutors conduct these periods, under the overall guidance of the housemasters. Different approaches to these periods are evident in different schools (Blackburn, 1983:163-174). Up to now there has been one time slot in the timetable that has had to fill the role of house period and tutor period at St John's College. The interviews clearly showed that this was insufficient. Richard (Interview 2), for example said "*I think also with the period being after chapel, sometimes it, obviously the chapel runs over and therefore the periods gets shortened. I don't know, maybe we could move it or something? Because, I mean, we've never got a fixed period so you can never do something because some weeks you might have 15 minutes, some weeks 30 minutes. So, I mean I think you have got to have the full 30 minutes. You can't just have half of it or have bits and pieces of it here and there*", and so more time has to be sought. Calvert (1998:113) also alluded to the shortage of time when he said, "pastoral care enjoys low status in many schools. As a

consequence, inadequate time, thought and resources are often allocated to it".

The objectives of the house/tutor periods must be very clear. Without clear direction and the necessary guidance the period will become a waste of time for both students and staff. This was evident from the students at St John's who felt that without any formal structure the period had no value. Chris (Interview 4) said "*ja I don't really see it as necessary*" and Robert (Interview 4), responding to a question about it being a waste of time, said "*ja, yeah, that's basically it*". It was also clear that there are a number of students who had not had the objectives clearly explained to them and so saw no value in the period. Mark (Interview 4) said "*half the time we don't even get the stuff we are supposed to have*", and Craig (Interview 4), when asked why we had tutor groups, said "*to control the house*". Clearly they did not have the right picture of what the house organisation was about.

The value of this period is critical to the success of the pastoral care program and so clear and definite objectives must be set. These objectives will help both tutor and student to develop a mutual relationship that goes beyond that of teacher-student. This way a better understanding of the personal, social and emotional well being of the students can be developed. Tutors will be better equipped to be proactive and preventative in possible situations of conflict or despair when they occur, a key element of good pastoral care (Best, 1995:18). With these goals, aims and objectives in place a clear description of the role of house tutors and housemasters will ensure that they are effectively directed toward the successful implementation of the pastoral care management system.

#### 5.3.4 The role of the house tutor and housemaster

The work of the tutor is of great importance not only for the routine but also for the widest education and care of the pupils. The tutor carries the day-to-day responsibility for the welfare of pupils in the tutor group and continuous two-

way communication with the housemaster is essential. This responsibility and communication should cover both pastoral and academic care of pupils. Best, Ribbins, Jarvis and Oddy (1983:45) are very clear in the importance they place on the role of the tutor, the success or failure of the system is “essentially based on the strength or otherwise of the staff operating in the system”.

The role of the tutor is very much dealing with the face-to-face issues that students present. The tutor is the critical link between the students and the school as an institution. The role of the tutor is such that it can determine the success or failure of the system. Three key features of a good tutor were identified through the interviews:

- their personality (a key theme in the data collection),
- their motivation, “*it also motivates the student to do well*”, and
- their commitment, Jones said “*commitment to the whole structure*”.

These will determine how they carry out the duties of tutor and thus how the pastoral care system will succeed in helping students to develop a better understanding of themselves. They are vital to the process of creating a stable environment for the student to learn in.

Housemasters undertake to fulfil one of the most difficult roles in the pastoral care management system. They are the primary liaison between the students and the management of the school. They have a contradictory role to fill, as chief disciplinarian in the school and at the same time they must be a sympathetic figure with whom the student can find help regarding their personal, social and emotional well being. Blackburn (1980:56) wrote, “a new role was being created for teachers in secondary schools whose chief emphasis was *knowing individual pupils*”. He followed this with “at the same time the Head of House became the focus for the school’s discipline”; the focus was now on dealing with pupils who presented a problem to the school (1980:57). This contradictory role makes it critical that the pastoral care

management system is well structured and roles are clearly defined and communicated.

## **5.4 RECOMMENDATIONS**

Lang and Marland (1985: 22) offered a model for pastoral care by way of the following explanation:

Pastoral care is something which happens/should happen between teacher and student, interacting in the context of an institution called a school or college which has four interrelated dimensions (disciplinary/order, welfare/pastoral care, academic/curricular and administrative/organisational) and which is, itself, located in a wider social, historical and cultural milieu.

The four interrelated dimensions, discipline, welfare, academic and administration form the foundation for the pastoral policy and it is around these dimensions that these recommendations are moulded. In preparing a model for a pastoral care policy, based on the house division of a school, the four key findings link well with the dimensions of Lang and Marland.

### **5.4.1 The pastoral care policy**

The policy that is drawn up must be based around the goals recommended by the NAPCE and others that may be specifically unique to the school. The goals as described by the NAPCE are:

1. to provide a point of personal contact with every pupil;
2. to provide a point of personal contact with parents;
3. to monitor pupil progress across the curriculum;
4. to provide support and guidance for pupil achievement;
5. to encourage a caring and orderly environment;
6. to promote a school that meets pupils' needs;
7. to provide colleagues with information to adapt teaching;
8. to engage wider networks as appropriate. (Lodge, 1995:21)

These 8 goals capture the desire of a pastoral care program and what it sets out to achieve. They are relevant in our society and to the point enough to be workable. Every school should be striving to meet these every year with every student in the school. They go a long way to ensuring that the invisible child does not remain invisible.

#### 5.4.2 The aims and organisation of the house

The aims and organisation of the house is vitally important in achieving the four dimensions of pastoral care Lang and Marland (1985:22) refer to. They are the backbone of the organisational structure within which the pastoral goals can be achieved. It is through the house organisation that the personal development and welfare of the individual student is planned and supervised. It is here that scope is given to the internal house division and how best the house staff will be utilised to maximise their productivity for the development of the students.

##### 5.4.2.1 Aims



The following aims are set as a guide:

1. To protect and promote the personal maturity, well being and capacity for self-fulfilment of all young people.
2. To help each student learn how to learn, how to evaluate work experience and understand why he is studying a particular topic. School must be seen to be worthwhile and relevant. If a student feels that he is wasting his time, then we fail.
3. To help each student to develop social skills so that he or she can handle the difficulties, disappointments and problems that we all have both in human relationships and in adjusting to a rapidly changing society.

4. To ensure that every student is known and cared for as an individual – has a school program appropriate for his or her needs, is being fully developed, is successful in something and recognised as such, and is making a contribution to the school and community in some way.
5. To develop home-school links and gain parental understanding, co-operation and community in some way.
6. To develop an manage effective systems of recording student progress and encouraging students to set themselves development targets in school, leisure, social and personal aspects of their life (Blackburn, 1983:166).

#### 5.4.2.2 *Organisation*

All schools require some kind of division into smaller parts to make the student body more manageable (Best, Ribbins, Jarvis and Oddy, 1983:37). The house structure is an organisational division that allows for division of the students into houses vertically across forms. Further division of the pupils into their age forms allows for small tutor groups to be established. This is the core of the house system and the tutor approach.

The house is designed to be a community of staff and students with the housemaster as leader. All staff in the school belong to a house with the exception of those at the headmaster's discretion, usually the executive members. The housemaster is the leader of the staff allocated to the house as pastoral care requires teamwork as an ingredient for success. The students will thus look to the housemaster as leader of the house community. The house team will assist the housemaster to carry out the tasks in the housemaster job description, and are allocated duties by the housemaster to suite their strengths. Housemasters should delegate as much to the house staff as they are able to accept. The housemaster is responsible for conducting meetings of house staff with an effective outcome. Meeting times

can be arranged in the house period, or at other times outside school. The housemasters are ultimately responsible to the headmaster for the house and its organisation.

#### 5.4.3 The house/tutor period

It is here that one can see how serious a school is about pastoral care by the amount of time afforded it. In David Martin's (1994:144) survey of Independent Schools in Australia, he found that 75 minutes was the average amount of time afforded pastoral care activities. St John' was operating with 30 minutes a week and of that it was often only effectively about 15 – 20 minutes, *"because, I mean, we've never got a fixed period so you can never do something because some weeks you might have 15 minutes, some weeks 30 minutes"* (Richard, Interview 2).

There are three different time needs in a good pastoral care program. They are the house time, the group time and the individual time. The proposal would need to have a time slot for all three to operate. One house period of 30 minutes (Wednesday) and two tutor periods of 20 minutes (Monday & Friday) are scheduled for meeting with the students. The Wednesday period is for use by the housemaster to attend to the business of house administration duties while the other two periods are for use by the tutor and housemaster. One period is for group discussion with the tutor and the other for individual interviews by both housemaster and tutor. What goes on in the group discussion period should be planned and recorded in a tutor workbook following the outline based on the recommended topics given in interview three. They included exam and exam preparation; problems with teachers; house events; Le Sueur trophy events; house spirit; commitment; and sport in the school (Interview 3). A pro-forma for leading questions must be made available by the housemaster to the tutors to help gain insight into the students. When filled in this can help with the writing of a short report on the interview for the housemaster. These notes of the individual interview should



be kept and the short report given to the housemaster outlining the interview for filing in his file while the tutor can file their notes in the tutor file.

Although only offering 70 minutes to pastoral care, still short of the recommended 75 minutes, it is somewhat more than what was in place before (a variable 30 minutes) and more than the 40 minutes a week recommended by Marland and Rogers (1997:106).

#### 5.4.4 The role of house tutor and housemaster

The role of the house tutor is of vital importance to the success of the pastoral program as is the role of the housemaster. The house tutor has a major role to play in the day to day dealing with the students while the housemaster has an important role to play in the administering of the overall program.

##### 5.4.4.1 *The tutor*

The tutor carries the day-to-day responsibility for the successful functioning of the system. They are in constant communication with the housemaster and must ensure that they are monitoring the three key aspects of the students development, namely his personal, social and emotional development. Each tutor is expected to fulfil the following:

1. Check the progress of individuals in the school, give support and help where required, question pupils and members of staff and initiate action where necessary.
2. Discuss and take necessary action over individual and group behaviour. The tutor will form an overall picture of the student's response in school. He will talk with individuals and with the group and, where necessary, refer to the housemaster.
3. Interpret the school and its policies to the students. Information is given at assemblies, in newsletters and on daily notices. It is often

necessary to discuss the matters raised more fully so that all pupils grasp them. As the situation demands, the tutor will discuss the policy in relation to such matters as class and homework, school dress, punctuality, care of classrooms, the buildings and the grounds.

4. Guide students and advise senior staff when decisions have to be made for subject choices.
5. Discuss matters that concern the group or individuals.
6. Encourage students to participate fully in all school activities.
7. Know fully about each pupil – the home circumstances, interests and hobbies, plans for the future; be sensitive to signs of particular stress that a pupil may be experiencing and take appropriate action.
8. Contribute to the good morale of the group and its members. As a school we seek to encourage pupils to improve their own best performance and to pass from one successful experience to another (Blackburn, 1983:171).

#### 5.4.4.2 *The housemaster*

The role and duties of the housemaster are outlined below and by no means is this a complete list. It must be seen as an outline to which individual schools would add their own unique requirements as they see fit. It provides for some of the more important functions that would be found in most school environments.

1. The housemaster is responsible for the overall development and welfare of the pupils in the house.

2. The housemaster is responsible to the headmaster for ensuring that the pastoral care in their house is effectively carried out.
3. The housemaster supports and advises tutors in all aspects of pastoral work with the group and with individual pupils.
4. Specifically, the housemasters duties include:
  - a) Organising, conducting and supervising a planned program of meetings and activities in house periods.
  - b) Be responsible for the induction of new members of staff in pastoral work.
  - c) Getting to know, and be known by, all members of the house.
  - d) At least one face-to-face contact each year with every pupil in the house. These contacts should be documented.
  - e) Organising, helping and supervising the tutors who are attached to the house during timetabled house periods.
  - f) Registration, and the prompt following up of cases of absenteeism and persistent lateness.
  - g) The discipline of the school.
  - h) Collating pupils' records, and acting as the co-ordinating agency through which all information about pupils is fed to and from the community team, other staff and outside agencies.
  - i) Recommending those pupils for whom special help is required.
  - j) Preparing reports on all pupils, including information supplied by other members of staff who teach them, and making sure that parents have reports and if necessary discussing the content with them.
  - k) Providing guidance to pupils on choice of subjects and courses where necessary.
  - l) Continually encouraging pupils to set and maintain high standards of attendance, punctuality, appearance and deportment, care of property and fabric, consideration for others, and school work in all subjects and activities (Blackburn, 1983:167).

## **5.5 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH**

This research is limited to the views of students in an existing pastoral care structure. Further research could be done with teachers and students in existing structures, and/or in schools where no structure exists, but one is planned. Further research could be conducted with respect to parents and teachers relationships as a result of the relationships developed between teachers and students.

A further study along similar lines to this research would be to critically evaluate an existing pastoral care structure in view of the recommendations of this research as to how an effective pastoral care management system should be operating.

## **5.6 CONCLUSION**

Overcoming the invisible child is the process of identifying each and every individual student within the school context. It is a process of making them feel individually known and cared for. This is the core of what pastoral care in education stands for. The quality of academic provision will depend on the quality of the pastoral provision and thus the success of students can be related to the provision of effective pastoral care (Calvert & Henderson, 1998:7).

For a school to provide a strong pastoral care system the following characteristics should be in place:

- a head and senior management with a vision;
- values that are clearly understood, articulated and shared by the teachers and pupils;
- workable, flexible structures;
- a culture supportive of change and diversity;
- a strategic approach to managing change;

- a willingness to reflect critically on our aims, objectives and effectiveness; and
- a clear notion of what care is and of its relation to learning (Calvert & Henderson, 1998:142).

Clearly the school leadership must have afforded pastoral care the time and resources needed for an effective structure to be in place. The vision would reflect this commitment through what it stood for, the values. The timetabling of time for the pastoral care structure to operate within and the evaluation of it to monitor it and allow for necessary changes would show insight into the development of the system. A commitment to the training of all staff in the process of tutoring would be critical, as it is so very important as the tutor is at the core of the system (Best, Jarvis & Ribbins, 1980: 278). With these characteristics in place the pastoral care management system of a school is destined for success and thus the success of the school will follow.

Modern trends in society are looking to the schools to provide for a stable environment for the greater education of the whole child. Those traditional values and morals once learnt from society through the family are now being taught in schools and learnt through a commitment to the well being of the individual child. Best, Jarvis and Ribbins (1980:282) summed up this need for effective pastoral care when they said, "there seems little reason to doubt that without pastoral care schools would be grimier and unhappy places".

Clemett and Pearce (1986:16) give a definition of pastoral care and it sums up what a school should be striving for in its provision of such a program. It focuses on the need for the program to be individually focused and the need for it to be an integral part of everything that the school does.

Pastoral Care is effective when everyone in the school community knows, and feels secure in the knowledge, that as valued members of that community they can participate in giving and receiving encouragement, guidance and support. Such a climate will be created

by the attitudes of staff and pupils and may be enhanced by a specifically designed pastoral care system.



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