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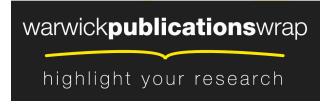http://wrap.warwick.ac.uk/49374/

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Defining and assessing spiritual health: a comparative study among 13- to 15- year-old pupils

attending secular schools, Anglican schools, and private Christian schools in England and Wales

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Abstract

This paper argues that the nation's commitment to young people involves proper concern for their physical health, their psychological health, and their spiritual health. In this context the notion of spiritual health is clarified by a critique of John Fisher's model of spiritual health. Fisher developed a relational model of spiritual health, according to which he conceives defines good spiritual health in terms of good an individual's relationship within to four domains: the personal, the communal, the environmental, and the transcendental. In the present analysis, we will make comparisons are made between pupils educated in three types of schools: publicly-funded schools without religious foundation, publicly-funded schools with an Anglican foundation, and new independent Christian schools (not publicly funded). The Our findings draw attention to significant differences in in the levels of spiritual health experienced by pupils within these three types of schools.

Introduction

The health of children and young people should be of central concern ~~for~~to any ~~the~~ nation~~.~~, ~~not simply in view of the nation's concern for the well-being of the young, but also in view of the way in which T~~the health of a nation's ~~the~~ young people is not only important inherently, but also as~~functions as~~ a barometer for the health of the nation itself. During the 1940s and 1950s educational research in England and Wales focused on measuring and monitoring the physical health of ~~the~~ young individuals as the nation planned first for survival, and then for reconstruction, after the Second World War (see Francis, 2010). Later in the twentieth century, research focused more on measuring and monitoring the mental health of ~~the~~ young people, as a range of social problems had been identified that proved damaging to the health of the nation ~~were identified as related to mental health status~~. At the beginning of the twenty-first century a third domain began to capture research attention, namely the domain of spiritual health (for review see Francis & Robbins, 2005). The first objective of this paper is to clarify the notion of spiritual health.

While concern with spiritual health may be conceived as a proper concern for all educational institutions, it may be also conceived as a special concern for schools established by or supported by religious foundations. An established connection between churches and schools ~~Within~~has long existed in England and Wales ~~there has been a long-established connection between churches and schools~~. ~~Moreover, this~~This historic connection between churches and schools took on a new dimension in the late 1960s with the embryonic development of what has become known as the new independent Christian schools (for review see ap Siôn, Francis, & Baker, 2009). The second objective of this paper is to clarify the connection between churches and schools in the education provision within England and Wales.

The third objective of this paper is to chart the empirical research literature concerned with identifying the connection between schools established by or supported by religious foundations and pupils' attitudes, values and worldviews within England and Wales. This review of existing

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knowledge will ~~lead into reporting~~provide a background for data derived from a new empirical study concerned with assessing the spiritual health of 13- to 15-year-old pupils in England and Wales. The study focuses on students attending three types of schools: publicly-funded schools without religious foundation, publicly-funded schools with an Anglican foundation, and new independent Christian schools (non-publicly funded).

Spiritual health

The notion of spirituality has played an increasingly important part in educational theory and educational legislation in England and Wales. ~~Through the~~The Education Reform Act of 1988 (Department of Education and Science, 1989)~~-~~ enshrined a spiritual basis for education throughout England and Wales ~~was enshrined in~~by creating a~~the~~ legal requirement that the curriculum of each school should be one that "promotes the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental, and physical development of pupils at the school and of society." Nowhere, however, in initial ~~g~~Government documentation was there any attempt to offer a definition of "spiritual development." In the absence of any agreed definition, a considerable literature developed from a range of different perspectives. In a~~n~~ ~~penetrating~~ analysis of the ~~of the situation which arose in~~ educational debate following the Education Reform Act of 1988, Adrian Thatcher (1996, p. 118) argued that "accounts of "spiritual development" appear to have proliferated out of control."

~~Partly i~~In part as a reaction to the sometimes vague and imprecise ways in which the term "spiritual development" has been used in recent years, another research tradition has set out to establish a more rigorous usage of the cognate term "spiritual health." At the forefront of this work ~~within the educational arena~~ is the Australian researcher John Fisher. Fisher set out both to establish a coherent conceptual model of spiritual health and to develop a set of reliable and solid psychometric instruments capable of operationalising that model (see for example, Fisher, 1998, 2004, 2008).

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Fisher begins his conceptual analysis by recognising that the concept of "spiritual health" is doubly problematic when one considers the way in which the two terms "spiritual" and "health" have themselves undergone considerable development in recent years. To begin with, Fisher argues that classical definitions of spirituality tended to concentrate on the religious and the ecclesiastical, or on matters concerned with the soul. Current studies in spirituality, however, have tended to adopt much wider definitions, integrating all aspects of human life and experiences (Muldoon & King, 1995). For Fisher, a definition of spiritual health has to make sense within both of these definitions.

Fisher then argues that there has also been a similar widening in the definition of health. According to Fisher, the medical field has shifted its emphasis from the exclusive treatment of disease to a greater concern for the whole person. For Fisher, a definition of spiritual health needs to recognise the way in which the words "health," "healing," and "wholeness" are all derived from the same root. He cites the definition offered by Coward and Reed (1996, p. 278) that "healing is defined as a sense of well-being that is derived from an intensified awareness of wholeness and integration among all dimensions of one's being."

Prior to Fisher's work, several attempts had been made to link the two concepts of spirituality and health, most generally within the idea of "spiritual well-being." For example, in setting out to define and measure spiritual well-being, Ellison (1983, p. 332) suggested that spiritual well-being "arises from an underlying state of spiritual health and is an expression of it, much like the colour of one's complexion and pulse rate are expressions of good (physical) health." Ellison's (1983) Spiritual Well-Being Scale (The SWBS) stimulated a great deal of research during the 1980s. The measure proved to be useful both in population studies concerned with mapping individual differences in wellbeing and in clinical settings. The review of ten years of work with this instrument, published by Bufford, Paloutzian and Ellison (1991) provided general support for the

reliability and validity of the measure and for the usefulness of the construct over a wide range of studies. The main constraint on this instrument, and on the conceptualisation on which it builds, concerns the explicitly religious context in which it was shaped.

Fisher's aim was both to build on Ellison's (1983) helpful notion of thinking in terms of conceptually discrete dimensions of spiritual well-being and to develop a dimensional model of spiritual well-being which would value both religious and non-religious perspectives. His solution to this problem was to discuss spiritual health in four ~~domains,~~domains and to develop a series of tools capable of assessing these four domains (including the SH4DI: the Spiritual Health in Four Domains Index).

Four domains of spiritual health

In developing his conceptual framework for spiritual health, Fisher drew on the discussion advanced by the National Interfaith Coalition on Aging (1975), which argued that "spiritual health is the affirmation of life in a relationship with God, self, community and environment that nurtures and celebrates wholeness". Fisher recognised that these four sets of relationships were also ~~variously~~ mentioned in ~~other~~ subsequent discussions of spiritual health. ~~For example,~~ Hateley (1983) wrote about relation to self, integration, and self-esteem; moral development, empathy in the community, and religion; mystery of creation; and relationship with God. Young (1984) mentioned the inter-relatedness of body, mind, and spirit within the context of inner peace; relations with and love of others; relation with nature; and God as the focus of belief. Goodloe and Arreola (1992) spoke of meaning and purpose, with self-transcendence; social and spiritual action with others; oneness with nature; and disembodied spirits, abstract and personal relations with God. According to Hood-Morris (1996, p. 440), "the spiritual component includes transcendent and existential features pertaining to an individual's relationship with the self, others, and a higher being . . . coupled with interaction with one's environment" (1996, p. 440).

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Working with these four sets of relationships, Fisher (1998) analysed the responses from interviews with 98 teachers in a range of state, Catholic, and other non-government schools near Melbourne, Australia. On the basis of these analyses, Fisher proposed that spiritual health is a fundamental dimension of people's overall ~~health and~~ well-being, permeating and integrating all other ~~the other~~ dimensions of health (including the physical, mental, emotional, social and vocational). In addition, Fisher (1998, p. 191) argues that spiritual health is a dynamic state of being, as revealed~~shown~~ by the extent to which people live in harmony within relationships in the following domains of spiritual wellbeing. First, the *personal domain* is concerned with internal relationships with the self. Second, the *communal domain* is concerned with external relationships with other people. Third, the *environmental domain* is concerned with relationships with the physical and human world on both local and global planes. Fourth, the *transcendental domain* is concerned with relationships with those aspects of life which transcend the ordinary everyday account of the physical environment. The transcendental domain embraces matters of ultimate concern, cosmic forces, transpersonal phenomena, and (in traditional theistic categories) God.

Fisher has offered a broad theory of spiritual health and advanced broad definitions of the four domains which he conceptualises as core to his model of spiritual health. Much of Fisher's subsequent research has concentrated on testing different operationalisations of this theory. For example, an early study reported by Fisher, Francis and Johnson (2000) described the Spiritual Health in Four Domains Index developed for use among teachers. Fisher (2004) described the Feeling Good Living Life Instrument developed for use among children as young as five years. It is recognised that, although such instruments provide only approximate indicators of the underlying constructs, the information generated offers useful insights into the spiritual health of groups and of individuals and provides reliable and valid predictors of a wide range of human individual differences.

Building on Fisher's pioneering work, Francis and Robbins (2005) attempted to

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operationalise the four domains of spiritual health within their survey conducted among nearly 34,000 secondary school pupils. From their~~his~~ questionnaire battery of 128 items, Francis and Robbins selected seven indicators for each of the four domains. At one level, this is an inadequate sample of indicators to represent such broad conceptual categories. At another level, however, concentrating on a small number of well-chosen indicators permits proper care and due weight to be given to the discussion of each one. These four sets of seven items provided the following operationalisations of the four domains.

The *personal domain* is concerned with what young people believe about themselves and with what young people feel about themselves. There are certain recurrent things that young people are likely to say about themselves when they are enjoying a good level of spiritual health within the personal domain. First and foremost, they are likely to affirm their self-worth and to put forward a confident and secure self-image.

The *communal domain* is concerned with what young people believe about those with whom, in one sense or another, they share their lives. There are certain recurrent things that young people are likely to say about others when they are enjoying a good level of spiritual health within the communal domain. First and foremost, they are likely to affirm their relationships and to feel positively about other people. The three key areas of experience ~~which~~ that access this dimension of spiritual health among adolescents concern relationships with parents, relationships with friends, and relationships at school.

The *environmental domain* is concerned with what young people believe and feel about their connectedness with the natural, physical, and human global environment. The environmental domain raises fundamental questions about global citizenship and about sustainable development. There are certain recurrent things that young people are likely to say about the world in which they live when they are enjoying a good level of spiritual health within the environmental domain. First and foremost, they are likely to recognise the importance and significance of global issues.

The *transcendental domain* is concerned with what young people believe and feel about those aspects of ~~life which~~life that transcend the ordinary everyday account of the physical environment. The transcendental domain embraces matters of ultimate concern, cosmic forces, transpersonal phenomena, and (in traditional theistic categories) God. In some senses the transcendental domain is more complex to operationalise than the other three domains. The added complexity is a function of the way in which conceptualisation in this area is not independent of fundamental theological assumptions.

Fisher's notion of spiritual health, developed in Australia and in the UK, resonates well with the broader discussions of the educational implications of religion and spirituality in the USA, as discussed, for example, by Jeynes (1999, 2003).

Churches and schools

Currently, within England and Wales, there are three groups of schools that are closely linked with Christian churches (or to a lesser extent with other faith traditions). Technically the Schools Standards and Framework Act 1998 (Department for Education, 1998) refers to these schools ~~are referred to by the Schools Standards and Framework Act 1998 (Department for Education, 1998)~~ as schools that have a "religious character." These three kinds of schools are: state-maintained schools, "traditional" independent schools, and the so-called "new" independent schools. Each of these three kinds of schools has its own peculiar history.

The ~~largest number~~majority of schools with a religious character are those within the state-maintained sector. These schools~~, and~~ trace their origin to the fact that the original initiative for the provision of 'public' education in England and Wales came not from the state but from the Churches, through voluntary societies like the National Society founded by the Church of England in 1811 (Burgess, 1958), the British and Foreign School Society founded largely by Non-conformist Churches in 1814, and the Catholic Poor School Committee founded in 1847 (see Cruickshank,

1963; Murphy, 1971; Chadwick, 1997). When the Government first voted in favor of public money

for schools in 1833 it did so by distributing these funds through the National Society and the British

and Foreign School Society. When the Education Act of 1870 established secular machinery to found

schools, it did so not to supplant the initiatives of the church-related societies, but to fill the gaps

within voluntary provision (Murphy, 1972).

Against this background, the major determinant in shaping the current provision of schools

with a religious character within the state-maintained sector was provided by the Education Act of

1944 (Dent, 1947). This Act acknowledged the Churches' historic investment in schools, but also

recognised that the Churches were in no position to bring all of these schools up to a required

standard for post-war educational reconstruction. The ingenious compromise solution of the

Education Act of 1944 was to ensure that the Churches had a statutory role in shaping religious

education throughout the whole state-maintained system and to offer the Churches a choice between

two different futures for their voluntary church schools. Voluntary schools were individually given

the choice between "'aided"' or "'controlled"' status. This choice enabled schools which could

afford to retain a high level of independence to do so (aided status), while those that either could not

afford such independence or did not desire to retain such a high level of independenceit could

nevertheless retain something of their church-related character (controlled status).

In the case of aided status, the churches were responsible for the capital expenditure and

retained the right to appoint the majority of their governors, to appoint their headteacher, and to

provide denominational religious instruction and denominational worship. In the case of controlled

schools, the churches were absolved of ongoing financial liability, but retained the right to appoint a

minority of their governors, to provide denominational religious worship, and to offer

denominational religious instruction for those children whose parents requested it. At the time of the

Education Act of 1944, the Non-conformist Churches largely opted out of the church school system,

the Roman Catholic Church opted entirely for aided status, and the Church of England went for a mixed economy of aided and controlled status according to local preferences.

The *basic* framework provided by the Education Act of 1944 has remained unchanged by subsequent legislation. Faith schools of this nature currently account for a third of state-maintained primary schools and a tenth of state-maintained secondary schools. The real issue concerning these schools relates to the admissions policy. In principle, the Roman Catholic Church has seen the main purpose of its schools as that of providing an alternative educational system for parents who wish a "Catholic" education for their children. Following the language of the Durham Report (1970), the Church of England has maintained a twin function for its schools: on the one hand, the *general* function of serving the nation through the provision of neighbourhood schools, often in single school areas; and on the other hand, the *domestic* function of providing a distinctive, Anglican education for the children of parents who seek it. At the time of the Education Act of 1944, a small number of Jewish schools claimed voluntary-aided status, and in recent years a small number of Islamic schools have also been added to this category.

The research question presented in this paper, formulated within the context of the state-maintained system in England and Wales, concerns the extent to which those church schools with an Anglican foundation (Church of England, or Church in Wales) generate an ethos that may be reflected in different levels of spiritual health among their pupils. The question is of particular interest given the commitment of the Anglican Church, defined in the Durham Report (1970), to fulfil both *general* and *domestic* functions through church schools. As a consequence, the overt religious distinctiveness of church schools may be less obvious in Anglican schools than in Roman Catholic schools in England and Wales.

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The "traditional" independent schools with a religious character trace their origins to a wide range of historic initiatives, including those directly byof churches, by religious communities, by religious societies, and by private benefactors wishing to secure a religious connection. Alongside Anglican and Catholic traditional independent schools, there are some well-known Methodist and Quaker schools in this categoryas well. There is such variability within this sector that a general research question becomes difficult to operationalise.

The "new" independent schools with a religious character trace their origin to a Christian foundation opened in Rochester, England in 1969 (Deakin, 1989). Within this context, the new independent Christian schools, often associated with the Christian Schools Trust (www.christianschoolstrust.co.uk), were variously founded by local churches or by a consortia of parents. Such schools set out to offer a radical alternative to the 'secular' values of the broad, state-maintained sector of schools. A parallel initiative was undertaken by the Islamic communityThe Islamic community undertook a parallel initiative in founding independent schools to found independent schools, some of which , some of which were linked by the Association of Muslim Schools UK. Buddhist and Hindu schools are also Aamong the registered independent schools with a religious character are Buddhist and Hindu schools.

A second really interestingintriguing research question concerns the extent to which these new independent Christian schools generate an ethos that may be reflected acrossin different levels of spiritual health among their pupils. The question is of particular interest given the distinctive theological emphasis of these schools. Following Deakin's (1989) analysis of the first twenty years of these new independent Christian schools, the subsequent development of Christian Schools in England and Wales has been chronicled (from the insider's perspective) by Watson and MacKenzie (1996) and Baker and Freeman (2005), and (from the outsider's perspective) by Poyntz and Walford (1994) and Walford (2001a, 2001b).

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In his attempt to understand the theological and ideological motivation underpinning the independent Christian schools in the United Kingdom, Walford (1995a) conducted a series of semi-structured interviews with the headteachers of 11 of the 65 schools included in the 1993 address list of the Christian Schools' Trust, and received completed questionnaires from 42 of the other 54 schools. Walford's data demonstrated considerable diversity in these schools, but it also demonstrated clear underlying themes which united them. On the basis of these data the following profile was offered by Walford: (1995a, p. 7).

> These schools share an ideology of biblically-based evangelical Christianity that seeks to relate the message of the Bible to all aspects of present day life whether personal, spiritual or educational. These schools have usually been set up by parents or a church group to deal with a growing dissatisfaction with what is seen as the increased secularism of the great majority of schools. The schools aim to provide a distinctive Christian approach to every part of school life and the curriculum and, usually, parents have a continuing role in the management and organisation of the schools. (1995a, p. 7)

Much of the theology currently underpinning the Christian school movement is of the kind that Astley (2002) would describe as ordinary theology. It is not couched in the systematic form of the theological academy, but in the direct form of the evangelically-shaped believer. Within this genre good insight into the theological motivation behind Christian schools is provided by an analysis of Baker and Freeman's (2005) first-hand account of their personal involvement in the movement. The new Christian school movement is grounded in belief in a God who takes the initiative within the lives of the people of God to bring to fruition the purposes of God. Here is the God who communicates with individuals and with groups through scripture, through pictures and through prophecy. Here is the God who authenticates the message through answered prayer, through healing, and through the release of necessary finances.

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Astley, J. (2002). *Ordinary Theology: Looking listening and learning theology.* Aldershot: Ashgate.

Church schools and pupil attitudes

The pioneering works by Brothers (1964), and Lawlor (1965) trace back the empirical studies among pupils in Roman Catholic schools in England and Wales a~~A~~s part of a broader international research agenda concerned with pupil attitudes within Roman Catholic schools~~, empirical studies among pupils in Roman Catholic schools in England and Wales can be traced back to the pioneering works by Brothers (1964), and Lawlor (1965)~~. The field then burgeoned from the mid 70s (for review see Francis, 2002).

Considerably less is known about pupils who attend Anglican schools in England and Wales. One particularly useful study in this field was reported by Lankshear (2002) who compared the values profile of six groups of pupils: Anglicans in Church of England schools and Anglicans in non-denominational state-maintained schools, non-affiliates in Church of England schools and non-affiliates in non-denominational state-maintained schools, and members of other Christian denominations in Church of England schools and members of other Christian denominations in non-denominational state-maintained schools. The data demonstrated that Anglicans attending Anglican schools recorded higher levels of personal dissatisfaction, higher levels of religious values, and comparable levels of moral values in comparison with Anglicans attending non-denominational schools. Non-affiliates attending Anglican schools recorded higher levels of personal dissatisfaction, lower levels of moral values, and comparable levels of religious values in comparison with non-affiliates attending non-denominational schools.

Even less is known about pupils attending new independent Christian schools. One particularly useful study in this field was repeated by Francis (2005) who compared the ~~values~~ worldviews of ~~the~~ those ~~13 to 15 year old~~ boys attending 19 independent Christian schools (usually providing quite small secondary facilities) with the boys attending the 114 non-denominational state-maintained schools included in the Teenage Religion and Values Project (Francis, 2001). The comparison was based on 136 boys in the independent Christian schools and 12,823 boys in the non-

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denominational state-maintained schools. Francis (2005, p. 139) drew the following conclusion from his data.

>   The data provided by the present study [demonstrate] . . . that the values environment modelled by 13- to 15-year-old boys attending Christian schools is significantly different from that modelled by boys in the same age range attending non-denominational state-maintained schools.

According to these data, boys attending the Christian schools were more likely to be committed to a belief in God and in the inerrancy of scripture. They were more likely to hold a positive view of the church, to support the place of religious education in school, and to reject superstitious beliefs. They were less likely to hold liberal attitudes toward alcohol, tobacco and sex. They were less likely to be troubled by bullying at school and more likely to respect their teachers. They were more likely to feel good about life and about themselves.

Research agenda

Against this background, the aim of the present study is to utilise Fisher's model of spiritual health as operationalised by Francis and Robbins (2005) in order to compare the profile of year nine and year ten pupils (13- to 15-years of age) attending three types of schools in England and Wales: new independent Christian schools, Anglican schools within the state-maintained sector, and schools without a religious character within the state-maintained sector. The research design is that of a descriptive study intended to profile the ethos of these three types of schools in terms of the overall levels of spiritual health displayed by their pupils. Differences detected between the three types of school may reflect different admissions policies or different influences exerted by the schools themselves.

Method

New independent Christian schools catering tofor year nine and year ten pupils tend to be quite small. Baker (2010) gathered data for 461 pupils attending 25 schools in this category. Comparable data were subsequently provided by 2,565 pupils attending 12 Anglican schools, and by 5,346 pupils attending 26 schools without a religious character but within the state-maintained sector.

Participating schools were asked to follow a standard procedure. The questionnaires were administered in normal class groups to all year nine and year ten pupils throughout the school. Pupils were asked not to write their name on the booklet and to complete the inventory under examination-like conditions. Although pupils were given the choice not to participate, very few declined to do so. They were assured of confidentiality and anonymity.

Sample

The participants comprised: wWithin the new independent Christian schools, the participants comprised of 244 males and 217 females, 230 year nine pupils and 231 year ten pupils; within the Anglican schools, 1,269 males and 1,296 females, 1,176 year nine pupils and 1,389 year ten pupils; within schools without a religious character, 2,635 males and 2,711 females, 2,937 year nine pupils and 2,409 year ten pupils.

Instrument

The questionnaire contained 189 items arranged for responses on a five-point, Likert-type scale (Likert, 1932) comprised of :agree strongly, agree, not certain, disagree, and disagree strongly. Following Francis and Robbins (2005) seven items were employed to assess each of Fisher's four domains of spiritual health: personal, communal, environmental, and transcendental.

Analyses

After collapsing the scores recorded on the five-point Likert-type scale into two categories—combining on the one hand the agree strongly and agree responses, and on the other hand the

disagree strongly, disagree and not certain responses—we calculated ~~In each case~~ the statistical significance of the differences in responses between the two groups ~~has been~~using ~~calculated by~~ the chi-square statistic ~~after collapsing the scores recorded on the five-point Likert-type scale into two categories, combining on the one hand the agree strongly and agree responses, and on the other hand the disagree strongly, disagree and not certain responses~~.

Results and discussion

Schools without a religious character

Table 1 establishes the reference point for the study by presenting the profile of the pupils attending schools without a religious character within the state-maintained sector.

[INSERT TABLE 1 HERE]

The personal domain is concerned with what young people believe about themselves and ~~with what young people~~ feel about themselves. The statistics in table 1 present a mixed message. On the surface things seem to be going well for the majority of young people. Levels of self-esteem and self-worth are high, with only 16% of the young people feeling that they are not worth much as a person. Levels of perceived satisfaction with life are high, with 71% finding life really worth living and 71% being happy in their school. Below the surface, however, there is a somewhat less positive view. If a sense of purpose and meaning in life is taken as a key indicator of spiritual health, then a little less than two thirds of young people pass this test (65%). Life without a sense of purpose can be discouraging and debilitating. Confidence in self and in self-direction is not as high as it may seem. Only 38% of the young people denied that they are often longing for someone to turn to for advice. The darker side of the spiritual health of young people is illustrated by ~~the~~ two key facts:~~facts~~ that 30% of these students often felt depressed and 18% sometimes considered taking their own life.

The communal domain is concerned with what young people believe about those with whom ~~, in one sense or another,~~ they share their lives and with what young people feel about those

relationships. The statistics in table 1 present a mixed picture. To begin with, bonds with parents are not particularly good. Nearly half of the young people are not clear that they find it helpful to talk about their problems with their mother~~um~~ (45%) and 61% are not clear that they find it helpful to talk~~ing~~ about their problems with their father~~dad~~. Two out of every five young people are worried about how they get on~~e~~ with other people (39%) or about their attractiveness to the opposite sex (45%). Such statistics reveal a lack of confidence in forming and sustaining relationships. While 85% of ~~the~~ young people reported that they like the people with whom they go to school, ~~below the surface lurks something much darker~~something darker may lurk below the surface of these reports. The fear of being bullied at school casts a shadow over the life of one young person in every five (20%). Around two thirds of the young people reported that they have close friends with whom they find it helpful to talk about their problems (65%)~~.~~, which is ~~The less~~ good news, but also means~~ is~~ that 36% could not affirm that this is the case within their own experience.

The environmental domain is concerned with what young people believe about their connectedness to and interdependence with the natural, physical and human global environment, and with what they feel about that domain. The statistics in table 1 suggest that ~~the~~ young people attending schools without a religious character are far from secure in this domain. On the one hand, 50% of the ~~young people~~students register concern about the risk of pollution to the environment and 62% register concern about the poverty of the developing world. On the other hand, this means that half the young people were not really concerned about environmental pollution (50%) and 38% were not concerned about the poverty of the developing world. For many young people, global peace remains illusory, with 40% displaying concern about the risk of nuclear war. Closer to home, racist attitudes appear to undermine peaceful co-existence within the fabric of a multicultural and multiethnic society. Half the young people feel that there are too many foreign people living in this country (51%), and that immigration into Britain should be restricted (48%). Hope for the future is shown by the fact that 66% of the young people would like to make a difference in the world. One in

Comment [NK30]: AUTHORS: Could this also reveal that people are generally just concerned with this?

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five ~~of the~~ young people, however, feel completely disempowered and said that there is nothing they can do to help solve the world's problems (20%).

The transcendental domain is concerned with what young people believe about those aspects of life ~~which~~ that transcend the ordinary everyday account of the physical environment, and what young people feel about that domain. The statistics in table 1 indicate that when spiritual health in the transcendental domain is conceived in traditional theistic terms, fewer than one in four young people believe in God (22%), although the proportion rises to one in three who believe in life after death (36%). Hostility or indifference to organised religion is reflected in the small proportion of young people who reject the accusation that church seems irrelevant to life today (28%). The low level of confidence in traditional religious practices is reflected in the small proportion of young people who feel that prayer helps them a lot (12%). Moving away to alternative spiritual beliefs, more young people believe in their horoscope (28%) than believe in God (22%). At the same time 23% believe that it is possible to contact the spirits of the dead and 13% believe that fortune-tellers can tell the future.

Anglican schools

[INSERT TABLE 2 HERE]

Table 2 sets out the profile of pupils attending Anglican schools within the state-maintained sector alongside the profile of pupils attending schools without a religious character within the state-maintained sector. ~~In view~~Due to the ~~of the~~ number of variables being tested, the probability level has been set at .01. The major conclusion to be drawn from this table is that there are no significant differences between the levels of spiritual health displayed by these two groups of pupils in terms of the personal domain and the communal domain. In terms of the environmental domain pupils attending Anglican schools were more likely to take the view that there are too many foreign people in this country (57% compared with 51%). In terms of the

transcendental domain, there are ~~in the Anglican schools~~ higher levels of belief in God (35% compared with 22%), higher levels of belief in life after death (40% compared with 36%), and higher agreement that prayer is personally helpful (19% compared with 12%) ~~,~~ in the Anglican schools, but in all other respects the two groups are indistinguishable.

Christian schools

[INSERT TABLE 3 HERE]

Table 3 sets out the profile of pupils attending independent Christian schools alongside the profile of pupils attending schools without a religious character within the state-maintained sector. The probability level has been set at .01 as well. The major conclusion to be drawn from this table is that the ethos of the new independent Christian schools is considerably more distinctive than the ethos of the Anglican schools. First, pupils in Christian school display a better level of spiritual health in the personal domain. Pupils in Christian schools display a higher sense of purpose in life (82% compared with 65%), and a higher level of happiness in their school (77% compared with 71%). On the other hand, pupils in Christian schools are more likely to long for someone to turn to for advice (42% compared with 33%). Second, pupils in Christian schools display a better level of spiritual health in the communal domain. Pupils in Christian schools are more likely to find it helpful to talk about their problems with close friends (70% compared with 65%), and are more likely to like the people they go to school with (89% compared with 85%). At the same time, they are less likely to be worried about being bullied at school (13% compared with 20%). Third, pupils in Christian schools display a better level of spiritual health in the environmental domain. Pupils in Christian schools are more likely to show concern about the risk of pollution to the environment (56% compared with 50%) and more likely to show concern about the poverty of the developing world (82% compared with 62%). Pupils in Christian schools are less likely to take the view that there are too many foreign people in this country (38% compared with 51%). Pupils in Christian schools are more likely to want to make a difference in the world (84% compared with

Comment [NK32]: AUTHORS: What do you mean by the probability level? Do you mean that the p statistic is less than 0.0

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66%), and less likely to feel that there is nothing that they can do to help solve the world's problems (13% compared with 20%). Fourth, in terms of the transcendental domain, pupils in Christian schools display a much higher level of commitment to traditional religiosity: 87% believe in God (compared with 22%), 75% believe in life after death (compared with 36%), and 71% believe that prayer helps them a lot (compared with 12%). Only 9% of pupils in Christian schools maintain that the church seems irrelevant for life today (compared with 32%). At the same time, pupils in Christian schools are much less likely to support alternative spiritual beliefs. Only 6% of pupils in Christian schools believe in their horoscope (compared with 28%). Only 7% of pupils in Christian schools believe that fortune-tellers can tell the future (compared with 13%).

Conclusion

This paper has employed John Fisher's model of spiritual health to explore differences in the overall ethos (as reflected by the body of pupils) of three different types of schools in England and Wales. Taking spiritual health as a measure of school ethos, and taking schools without a religious character within the state-maintained system as the benchmark, attention has been focused on two distinctive types of schools with a religious character: Anglican schools within the state-maintained sector and new independent Christian schools. Three main conclusions emerge from this study.

The first conclusion concerns the utility of Fisher's model and what this model has to say about the spiritual health of young people within the benchmark category of schools without a religious character within the state-maintained sector toward the end of the first decade of the twenty-first century. The model has offered a rich characterisation of this group of young people. In terms of the personal domain, the data celebrate the discovery that the majority of young people (71%) find life worth living, but also draw attention to the fact that 35% have no sense of purpose in life and to the fact that 18% sometimes consider taking their own life. In terms of the communal domain, the data celebrate the discovery that the majority of young people (85%) like the people with

whom they go to school, but also draw attention to the fact that 20% live in fear of being bullied at school. In terms of the environmental domain, the data celebrate the discovery that the majority of young people would like to make a difference to the world, but also draw attention to the fact that 20% felt that there is nothing that they can do to help solve the world's problems. In terms of the transcendental domain, the data demonstrate that alternative spiritualities may now be gaining greater support than conventional religion: 28% of young people believe in their horoscope, compared with 22% who believe in God.

The second conclusion concerns the ethos of Anglican schools within the state-maintained sector. The spiritual health of young people within these schools is indistinguishable from that of young people within schools without a religious character within the state-maintained sector apart from two markers within the transcendental domain. Young people in Anglican schools are more likely to believe in God (35% compared with 22%) and more likely to believe in life after death (40% compared with 36%). On the one hand, this finding may allay fear that the Anglican Church could be abusing its privileged position within the state-maintained sector of education to influence young people differently from schools without a religious character within the same sector. On the other hand, this finding may lead to some puzzlement regarding the Anglican Church's commitment to a non-distinctive presence within education.

The third conclusion concerns the ethos of the new independent Christian schools. The spiritual health of young people within these schools is distinctive across all four domains. Within the personal domain, pupils within Christian schools enjoy a higher sense of purpose in life (82% compared with 65%). Within the communal domain, pupils within Christian schools gain more support form close friends talking about their problems (89% compared with 85%) and are less likely to be worried about being bullied at school (13% compared with 20%). Within the environmental domain, pupils within Christian schools are more committed to making a difference to the world (84% compared with 66%). Within the transcendental domain, pupils within Christian schools are

much more inclined to believe in God (87% compared with 22%) and less inclined to believe in horoscopes (6% compared with 28%). These findings ~~seem to be~~appear to be consistent with the aims of the new independent Christian schools, which seek to create a radical alternative educational environment different from that found in schools without a religious character within the state-maintained sector.

The present study is, however, limited by the relatively small number of schools participating., Bby restricting the sample to just two year—groups within these schools (year nine and year ten) and by not including a wider range of schools, especially Roman Catholic schools, the study may limit the breadth of its applicability. These limitations are, however, being address by the authors' ongoing research program~~me.~~

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