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Illuminating the place of personal values and Christian beliefs in teaching sensitive and controversial issues in Personal Social Health Education (PSHE) in South East England: A Life History Approach

by

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for the Degree of Doctor of Education

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DECLARATION

I certify that this work has not been accepted in substance for any degree, and is not concurrently being submitted for any degree other than the Doctorate in Education (EdD) being studied at Christ Church University (CCCU). I also declare that this work is the result of my own investigations except where otherwise identified by references and I have not plagiarised the work of others.

Student……………………………….………….……… (Signature)

1st Supervisor……………….……….………………. (Signature)

2nd Supervisor………….……………….…………. (Signature)

DEDICATION

I am dedicating this work particularly to Christian teachers of PSHE in recognition of the tensions they sometimes face in teaching issues that conflict with their faith positions and the need to balance these with the requirements of their professional obligations. However, I would like to include all those with a Christian (or wider religious) faith who might struggle with reconciling their personal faith and values in their professional practice across various careers and disciplines in public life, within a society where secular and liberal values are increasingly prominent and advancing.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

ABSTRACT

Christian teachers of Personal social health education (PSHE) can be conflicted when confronted with sensitive and controversial issues in their professional practice. Concerns include unprofessional conduct, exercising undue influence of their personal values and beliefs on students and being untrue to their faith. These can lead to uncertainty in negotiating areas of conscience and controversy.

This life history study situated within the south east of England was used to illuminate the complexities which abound when operating within a wider milieu of perceived marginalisation of the Christian faith through advancing secularisation and liberalism. These tensions are reflected in the curriculum, policy frameworks and legal documents and have implications for teachers' personal values, Christian faith and professional practice. Semi-structured questionnaires were administered to 13 PSHE teachers and analysed for emergent themes, borrowing language from thematic, ethical and theological analysis.

The research illuminates insights into a wider context of faith in professional life. It demonstrates the way teachers are in transition in these conflicts, yet understanding faith as a holistic quality. Findings show that the approaches that teachers adopt to the interpretation and application of faith in personal life influence how faith is integrated professionally. The conflicts confronted, reflect responses of resilience, compliance and rebellion, while some teachers remain unchanged in their positions.

Analysis of the data suggested that discreetly integrating faith in practice is a coping strategy some teachers employ. My study suggests that silence can be a price to pay for faith, balancing *courageous restraint* with conflicting compromises and professional hypocrisy. The research captures teachers in transition located in professional practice obligations, ethical and theological positions as they negotiate and navigate the place of their Christian faith and personal values with students' rights, freedoms and autonomy.

CONTENTS

CHAPTER 1:   Setting the scene

CHAPTER 2:   Review of the debates

SECTION ONE

SECTION TWO

CHAPTER 3: Methodology

CHAPTER 4:   **Results and findings**

Section ONE

SECTION TWO

SECTION THREE

CHAPTER FIVE: Data Analysis and Discussion – Creating life histories

Chapter 6: Conclusion

CHAPTER 7: Implications and recommendations

List of figures

List of Appendices

No.	Titles of appendices	Appendix	Page
1 & 2	Conceptual framework & Illuminating the concepts	A - B	210-211
3	PSHE Certification Advisory Service Kent	C	212
4	Consent form	D	213
5	Education faculty research ethics review: Application for full review	E	215
6	Ethics review checklist	F	229
7	Peer review report	G	243
8	Invitation to participate letter	H	250
9	Participants' information sheet	I	251
10	Participants' ethics application update letter	J	254
11	Recruitment appeal letter	K	255
12	Ethics approval confirmation letter	L	256
13	Interview schedule blank	M	257
14	Emerging themes from Pilot interview #2	N	270
15	Annotated main interview schedule – Jim	O	273
16	Adele's permission for appendix after viva	P	284
17	Adele's transcript	Q	285
18	Participants' validation letter	R	328
19	Completed data analysis sheet	S	329
20	Data analysis photos	T	330
21	Summarised emerging themes – Transcript data	U	338
22	Department for Education: Teachers' Standards	V	349
23	PSHE topic plans years 7-12 sample topics	W	350-376
24	PSHE Certificate of Achievement	X	357

List of abbreviations

A level GCSE	Advanced level General Certificate of Secondary Education
APPG	All-Party Parliamentary Group
BERA	British Educational Research Association
CAQDAS	Computer-assisted Qualitative Data Analysis Software
COE	Church of England
CPD	Continuing Professional development
CU	Christian Union (Christian student group mainly evangelical tradition)
DfE	Department for Education
DfES	Department for Education and Skills
EBSCO	Online reference system text databases from leading information providers.
ECHR	European Convention on Human Rights
ECM	Every Child Matters policy
EdD	Doctorate in Education
HSP	Healthy schools programme
INSET DAYS	In-service Education and Training
ITT	Initial teacher training programme
KJV	King James Version (of the Holy Bible)
LA & LEA	Local authority and Local Educational Authority
NC	National Curriculum
NICER	National Institute for Christian Education research

NIV	New International Version (of the Holy Bible)
NQT	Newly Qualified Teacher
NVivo	Qualitative software computer analysis programme
OFSTED	Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (inspect and regulate care and services for children and young people)
OT/NT	Old Testament/ New Testament (in the Holy Bible)
PSHE LEAD	PSHE co-ordinator of schools in a LA cluster
PGCE	Postgraduate Certificate in Education
PSHE	Personal Social Health Education
RE/RS	Religious Education/Religious Studies
RQ	Research question
SEAL	Social and emotional aspects of learning (whole-school approach to promoting the social and emotional skills).
SLT	Senior Leadership Team
SMSC	Social Moral Spiritual and Cultural policy
SoW	Scheme of Work
SRE	Sex and Relationship Education
STI	Sexually Transmitted Infections
UCCF	Universities and Colleges Christian fellowship
UK	United Kingdom
UNCRC	United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child
UNHR	Universal Declaration of Human Rights
WWJD	What Would Jesus Do? (A challenge to attempt to act in a way that personifies the teachings of Jesus)

CHAPTER 1

Setting the scene

1.1 Overview

In this life history research study, I am concerned with the legitimacy of being a Christian Personal Social Health Education (PSHE) teacher and the direct conflict this seems to bring against being a Christian with professional obligations, and whether these can be interwoven. By this I am referring to the compatibility, manageability, as well as the possibly inherent irreconcilable tensions often reflected in professional practice. Through the constructed narratives of thirteen PSHE teachers, I will explore, analyze and illuminate the relationship between personal values, Christian faith and some approaches employed in the teaching of sensitive and controversial issues. According to Atkinson (1998) 'storytelling is a fundamental form of human communication', which not only gives a 'narrative account of an event or happening', but also provides knowledge and brings 'deeper meaning to our lives' through a reflective process (p.1).

In this chapter, I will provide an overview of my study including the key factors, which were influential in its conception. Furthermore, I will outline the context, significance, purpose, limitations, aims and research questions as I set the scene for my research. Locating and situating myself in my study is important to document the complexities of being a Christian PSHE teacher and researcher. These, in addition to a brief overview of the study chapters and philosophical assumptions will help to provide an underpinning for understanding the remainder of the thesis; illuminating for example, how I have analysed the qualitative data collected, drawn conclusions and identified the knowledge gap and subsequently state my contribution to the field.

1.2 Introduction

The Evangelical Alliance facilitated an inquiry, *'Clearing the Ground'* and published its preliminary report in February 2012. It was overseen by Christians in Parliament, an official All-Party Parliamentary Group (APPG), and explores and illuminates the

freedoms of Christians within the United Kingdom (UK) public life, investigating *'Are Christians marginalised in the UK?* Their key finding suggest that,

> Christians in the UK face problems in living out their faith and these problems have been mostly caused and exacerbated by social, cultural and legal changes over the past decade.

Christians in Parliament, (2012, p.1)

This bears much relevance to my research theme, acknowledging and underpinning a concern I have identified as significant in my professional practice that relates to a wider 'socio-political context' and 'change within stories' (Squire et al. 2014, p.79). In studying this complex social reality, the life history method is particularly useful and appropriate. Life stories though shared individually are embedded historically and culturally in a wider social, political context (Riessman, 1993; MacLure, 2003). Reid and West (2015) put it this way, '…stories are not isolated individual affairs but reflect and constitute dialectics of power relations and competing truths within wider society' (p.2). The life history method thus enables an exploration of teachers' motivations, perceptions, feelings, insights, experiences and the relationship between their individual life stories and the wider contextual narratives (Plummer, 1995; Everington, 2012).

In this educational life history doctoral thesis under the chosen research theme: *Faith, Beliefs and Values in Education/Profession Identity*, I am investigating and illuminating how Christian PSHE teachers manage, cope or deal with conscience and controversy in the delivery of topics that might be of a sensitive (complex and delicate) and controversial (debatable, contentious, divisive) nature in their teaching. Furthermore, I want to explore and analyse their unique insights and interpretations into the stories they construct through language and discourse (Dhunpath, 2000), regarding issues of conflict in their personal values, Christian faith and professional practice, as research themes and a resource (Plummer, 2001).

My research study provides a path to attempt understanding teachers and teaching (Goodson and Sikes, 2001) and gives me the opportunity to see individual teachers as persons where they 'communicate emotions, transmit cultural values and create history' (Boyatzis, 1998, p.67). It seeks to illuminate an understanding of teaching

through a study of teachers' personal lives (Goodson, 2000), their experiences, attitudes and values, histories socially and personally (Sikes and Everington, 2004). Additionally, it could illuminate an interpretation of the relationship between their personal values (morals, standards and principles), Christian beliefs and approaches or strategies employed to teach sensitive and controversial issues. Furthermore it also seeks to illuminate some 'tensions and contradictions emerging when juxtaposed' with balancing such ideals against expediency (Ryder and Campbell, 1988, p.8), to reconstruct through story telling their social realities critically through discursive practices (Denzin, 2000; Kainan, 2002).

I chose my title because I am a PSHE teacher with a Christian faith and directly affected by the issues I am studying. In my professional work, I found that sometimes I am conflicted ethically, professionally and theologically when delivering some sensitive and controversial topics which pose significant burden on matters of conscience. Furthermore, I want to research and illuminate how other PSHE teachers (used interchangeably with *participants*) with a Christian faith cope when dealing with similar issues when handling this intricacy. Thus, through my research study, I intend to explore how their stories might intertwine and help to make sense of my own. This could help to locate the values and perspectives of myself and participants in re-presenting the life history text (Plummer, 2001; Goodson and Sikes, 2001). Such co-construction fundamentally develops and communicates meaning (Squire et al., 2014).

Although not generalising on the findings, my study though situated in a localised setting, could provide insights and implications on a much wider professional debate (Sikes, 1997; Goodson and Choi, 2008, Plummer, 2001), hence my chosen life history approach. However, my real claim is mapping the complexity of the conflicts at a detailed level, seeking to offer depth more than breadth in my study. Accordingly, life history which has 'blossomed in education...against a trend towards evidenced-based practice' (Reid and West, 2015, p.4) ensures that the voices of teachers are articulated, thus contesting what may be considered 'oppressive discursive and structural practices' which endeavours to exercise control and make teachers' desires less prominent (Tierney, 2000; Plummer, 2001).

1.3 PSHE teaching: contextual challenges and opportunities

PSHE has experienced a tumultuous history (Willis et al. 2013) and its curriculum contains topics, which are as the name suggests, 'personal' and 'ripe for educational controversy and debate as value areas and issues are rearranged and redefined' (Bailey, 2005, p.8). The challenge of identifying and defining these issues form a part of the basis for its inherent complexity (see Chapter 2), as do their controversial inevitability as a 'part of life' (Watson and Ashton, 1995, p.71). For example, some of the topics under the broad subject themes include Personal (hygiene and safety); Social (relationships, friendships, families, domestic violence, marriage, divorce, same-sex relationships, change and loss, death and bereavement, rejection and bereavement among others), (see also Appendix W).

These topics potentially pose tremendous opportunities for debate and critical thinking in the personal and social development of young people (Inman et al. 2003; Wright, 2007). However, they also can provoke controversy, evoke strong emotions and trigger persistent tension for some teachers both personally, professionally, ethically or theologically, despite helping them to clarify and own their identities (Lovin, 2013). In some schools, the scope of the subject extends to contributing significantly to the delivery of Every child matters agenda (ECM), Spiritual moral social and cultural development (SMSC) policy (PSHE association, 2012), Healthy schools programme as well as other schools' policies for example, Drugs, alcohol and smoking, Equal opportunities and Sex education. However, there is often inadequate provision for many schools through restricted curriculum and staff who feel 'unprepared, unqualified or uncomfortable…or understandably nervous' (Bailey, 2005, p.9).

Generally, there is the common experience of PSHE teachers of a lack of choice over teaching PSHE. Whereas most secondary school RE, History, Science or English teachers will usually have a very specific interest in these school subjects, most teachers 'end up' teaching PSHE without having chosen it. For this reason, tensions and conflicts for example, cultural clashes might be inevitable with respect to PSHE than with other subjects. However, sensitive and controversial issues concerning values and professional identity are not limited to Christian teachers of

PSHE. These culture clashes could be experienced and addressed either similarly or even in the same manner; for instance, groups with distinctive positions of strong principles like environmentalists, socialists, feminists, vegetarians, political, economic or ethnic groups. Consequently, I have established in the literature, my research boundary in the next chapter (page 26).

1.4 My story and path to PSHE teaching: Personal upbringing and the place of faith and values

Locating my historical self in the study is significant as it acknowledges my position and perspective but also documents the complexities for influence, familiarity, sympathy and potential bias. I was born in Birmingham, England to Jamaican parents who had migrated to Britain in the 1950s. My parents are devout Christians of an evangelical, Pentecostal and charismatic tradition. My experience of an extremely strict upbringing and compulsory church services attendance grounded me in the Christian faith. However, it did not necessarily expose me to any other faiths or liberal interpretations to Christian believing.

My later experiences of work, study and travel in other countries exposed me to other faiths, secular positions, beliefs and interpretations; along with stricter legal and professional frameworks within which to operate (for example, Equalities Act 2010, DfE Teachers' Standards, 2012), (Appendix V). I found I had to adapt and adjust to these professional and legal demands, requirements and expectations. This meant tolerating, accepting and respecting others' values, beliefs and faith positions though different to mine. I felt this process of theological transition was necessary to obtain and maintain my qualification and career prospects. This initially created the conflict of how to accommodate without necessarily assimilating the understandings and interpretations contrary to my belief position. Doing so would engender a sense of being untrue to and not 'contending for the faith' (Jude 3, KJV Bible) or 'bearing witness to the faith' (Theissen (2013, p.223), but rather 'conforming to this world' instead of being transformed…' (Romans 12:2, KJV). Piper (2008) argues that 'virtually all of Paul's letters served the church by clarifying and defending doctrinal truth and its practical implications' (p.27). These are seen as part of my Christian witness.

My personal values, beliefs and Christian faith therefore underpin my convictions and philosophy of both education and life. Although I would consider the context for Scriptural application to complex PSHE issues, my stance would be to embrace the authority and inerrancy of Scripture, as Hanson (1997) writes, 'the fundamentalist view emphasises that the Bible is inerrant' (p.7).

1.4.1 Personal story - professional context and current involvement

I am currently a full-time teacher of PSHE and previously, advanced level (A-Level) Sociology at a boys' grammar school in Kent for the past twelve years. As part of the preparation for teaching PSHE, I attended Continuing Professional Development (CPD) sessions pertinent to my field but also in 2007, completed the then newly established one-year PSHE certification programme (Appendices C and X). This qualification was intended to address a concern whereby non-specialist PSHE teachers were reportedly 'ill-equipped to deal in part with the sensitive and controversial issues the subject presented (Ofsted, 2005).

This personal account and academic interest contributed to my original idea for my thesis and formed part of my overall positioning in this study. Goodson (1981) in Sikes (2006) writes,

> *In understanding something so intensely personal as teaching, it is critical we know about the person the teacher is.*

(Sikes, 2006:69)

However, this intimate knowledge of the teacher presents professional, ethical challenges and theological complexities given the tension between personal beliefs, curriculum requirements and legislative frameworks, which I will address elsewhere in this study.

1.5 The origin of the idea for the research: Academic considerations

As an area of personal interest, I have explored various aspects to this theme in previous academic programmes and assignments in the Bachelors and Masters degrees. I have also addressed associated themes in the seven taught modules in this Doctorate in Education (EdD) programme written modules (O'Connor, 2012a; 2012b; 2013a; 2013b; 2013c; 2014). These modules further illuminate the process of my topic selection and also inform the development of my thinking on these issues.

They challenged my perceptions and attitudes on the complexities of faith in professional practice.

The final Module 7, *'Writing for publication'*, gave me the opportunity to explore reflectively, what sustained me in the teaching profession for thirty-two years, mostly in a secularizing context. This is published as chapter 5 in the book, *Being Christian in Education – reflecting on Christian professional practice in a secular world* (Bryan and Worsley, eds. 2015), published by the university as part of its 50th anniversary by the *Jubilee cohort*.

1.6 Subjectivity Statement

My motives for teaching and adopting particular strategies in my professional practice are partially influenced by my meta-narrative. However, the curriculum requirements and legislative frameworks require that I exercise some restraint to my meta-narrative. Whilst principles and 'language of ethics' maybe promoted in these documents, according to Pattison (2007), they can raise questions about public legitimacy and acceptability, being narrow, failing to develop professionals who will reflect 'autonomous, rational judgement and choice in light of universally important moral principles and concerns' (p.58).

My biographical history and personal time line will thus contribute to the formulation of my research questions (Walford, 2001), that is to say, how I intend to collect and analyse data (Chapter 5) as 'an activity which involves the interpretative processes' of the researcher (Oliver, 2014, p.117). Here, Oliver argues that these questions are developed during a 'process of interaction with the social context of professional work' (p.118). Nonetheless, my final decision remains complex, subjective and influenced by my personal interests (Balnaves and Caputi, 2001), background, issues and problems within my professional and wider contexts.

Documenting the established place of my current professional role and the relationship between that role and my research subject will contribute to a framework for authenticity, believability, trustworthiness and validation in my interpretative qualitative study, rather than aiming for an objective stance. This highlights the complex 'ethical parameters of the inquiry' (Riessman, 2008, p.185) inherent in my

study (Chapter 3). For instance, Letherby et al. (2013) warn against embracing an air of academic superiority over our participants. Nonetheless, accepting and addressing my 'intellectual privileges' and their implications are helpful in contextualising my reflexive and analytical research processes as well as those of my participants (p.90).

1.7 Opportunities for wider insights and explorations

The Human Rights Act 1998 with the addition of religious discrimination to the prohibited forms of discrimination now sees a significant number of cases based on religious rights before the courts. These cases raise wider questions about the relationship of religion to law or the place of faith in professional practice, creating the possibility for 'explicit conflict between the religious and the secular' (Cumper and Lewis, 2012, p.55). My research theme is therefore applicable not only in teaching sensitive and controversial issues in PSHE but has wider implications for a range of disciplines and sectors, policies, initiatives, legislative frameworks and social trends (Oliver, 2014).

Therefore, the issues addressed within this study are not only complex, divisive, contentious and debatable, but also both fundamentally and conceptually multidisciplinary and relevant with local, regional, national and even global significance. Although addressed from an educational perspective and within the field of PSHE, it is hoped that my study will highlight relevant and pertinent issues worthy of scholarly interest, prominence and illumination, thus justifying its insights, application and significance to other fields and disciplines. Hopefully, Christian thinking might be encouraged as we reflect on the interaction of my research theme within contemporary culture.

1.8 Statement of the problem

The Preliminary report into the freedom of Christians in the United Kingdom (UK), 'Clearing the ground' by Christians in Parliament (2012), earlier mentioned, identified another key finding. They concluded that,

> *The experiences of Christians in the UK seeking to live out their beliefs and speak freely illustrate a very real problem in the way religious belief, and in*

particular Christianity is understood and handled. The problem is a pressing challenge to our idea of a plural society.

<div align="right">Clearing the ground (2012, p.2)</div>

This finding is significant and relevant to my study as it underscores the conflict and questions of co-existence of Christian beliefs in professional practice and relates it to a wider plural society. However, issues of conflict also extend to faith traditions and interpretations of faith within the Christian community. For instance, Guite (2006) argues that 'church history makes it clear that there are and always have been real differences of opinions and judgement between Christian communities over matters of faith and practice' (p.89).

There seems to be a stressful time of professional and theological uncertainty for some Christian PSHE teachers as they struggle to navigate a path into compliance seemingly compelled through economic or legal expediency. This underscores the complex transitional process of the personal and the professional, the ethical and the theological. Therefore, as Inman et al. (2003) conclude, 'developing effective practice in contexts is challenging for practitioners' (p.17). Even more so when matters of faith seems to compound this challenge, to add to such issues as identity and belonging, sense of self, notions of teacher professionalism and pupils' rights and freedoms. Therefore, the place of personal faith in professional practice seems to be a matter that they continue to wrestle with (Bathmaker and Harnett, 2010).

A specific challenge and area of wrestling occurred years ago as part of my personal narrative also corroborated in my research findings (chapter 4). I noticed that some Health Professionals when they delivered Sex and Relationships Education (SRE), in the PSHE curriculum, over-emphasised issues of sexually transmitted infections (STIs) and contraception, particularly condom acquisition and usage (O'Connor, 2012 in *Being Christian in Education, Bryan and Worsley, eds., 2015).* Another challenge related to changes made in the law and subsequently policy guidelines which implications for the place of teachers' personal values, beliefs, professional identity and practice.

Teaching within these professional and legal restraints for example, the 'Equalities Act' (2010), Marriage (Same sex Couples) Act 2013, the National curriculum (NC),

Ofsted and PSHE association guidance and the DfE Teachers' standards (2012), (Appendix V); and 'given the plurality of choices…it is increasingly difficult to make sense of a diverse and complex world' (Wright, 2004, p.3). The DFE (2014), advocate that pedagogy should include the promotion of both tolerance as well as mutual respect for those with different faiths and beliefs. Nevertheless, given these and other concerns, I want to ascertain how particular others (Christian PSHE teachers), relate to them in their practice and by extension, how they might relate to Christian professionals in the public sphere. Nevertheless,

> *The problems that Christians face are far from universal, but they do represent a trend towards a reduction in the space given to belief in public life. As a result this leads to an assumption that religious belief should be a private activity.*

Clearing the ground (2012, p.3)

This seems to suggest that there could be unresolved issues at personal, professional and national levels. The problem seems to be related to the compatibility of Christian faith in professional practice where some 'individuals tend to view religion as a matter of personal faith or opinion, and most areas of public life becoming gradually secularised' (Esposito et al. 2012, p.27). Here, faith in professional life is 'peripheral or almost invisible' where previously they seemed central or pivotal in society (Copley, 2005, p.7). However, 'a secular, atheist or agnostic belief position in the classroom should be recognised by all students as an identifiable belief position rather than a neutral stance' (Revell and Walters, 2010, p.4). (Secularist critique mentioned in chapters 2 & 6 but outside this thesis scope).

1.9 Philosophical underpinning and justification

I aim to reveal the nature of the world as understood and interpreted by the participant PSHE Christian teachers, their meanings and sense making of the complex issues I am investigating. As Hanson (1997) puts it, 'belief involves holding something to be true' (p.1). The beliefs pertinent to teachers' Christian faith are those that together make up their 'interpretation of the journey of life' (ibid, p.1); and story is the chief means of articulating the Christian faith as 'reality is interpreted…in light of the values, stories and experiences which influence' the teachers (Chater, 2000,

p.10). This will provide an opportunity for exploration and illumination of these perceptions and individuals' identities (Dhunpath, 2000) from their multiple perspectives.

My philosophical stance therefore suggests a relationship between the qualitative paradigm that is to say, how participants shape their worldview, and the interpretivist epistemology. Here, in my knowledge production I am using mainly words and texts in my reflection of social phenomena and to produce insights into the social world (Denscombe, 2010; Squire et al. 2014). This locates teachers' life experiences, perceptions and interpretations centrally in my study (Atkinson, 1998); thus, adopting ontological and epistemological approaches which embrace individual teachers' agency (Riessman, 1993, p.2).

My interpretivist stance is significant as I provide opportunities for the PSHE teachers to make sense of the issues through their experiences, perceptions, interpretations and knowledge produced (Radnor, 2002), by them instead of being wholly structured, ordered, 'out there' waiting to be discovered. Nevertheless, there are some elements of objectivity and an external reality 'out there' as regarding the inerrancy or infallibility of Scripture in relation to understanding sensitive and controversial issues and Christian beliefs and values. However, it is necessary to include a more liberal stance and a paradigm that proves useful in interpreting the meanings that teachers attach to their data responses. This desire to know and interpret how personal values, beliefs and professionalism relate to sensitive and controversial issues therefore, coheres with an interpretivist epistemology, albeit, suggesting a more 'provisionalist approach to epistemology' (Bailey 2005, p.9).

I expect my research to be somewhat open-ended or even 'messy', 'far from neat, clean, tidy, unproblematic and neutral process' (Cohen et al. 2011, p.177). This means that there might be no solid definitive conclusions drawn on the issues from the teachers' possibly multiple interpretations based on their faith formation and traditions. This concern of what we can know or be certain of, limits and restricts my claims and steers me to a more cautious, tentative and modest approach to my theorising, explanations, propositions and conclusions of my research issues

(Chapters 6 & 7). Bailey (2005) sums it up appropriately, 'it is no surprise then, that yet again in this area of inherent controversiality teachers should feel a distinct degree of discomfort, which ultimately may never be resoluble' (p.9).

1.10 Research Aims

My aims will inform the nature, direction and scope of the research seeking to illuminate and perhaps challenge thinking rather than confirm and settle the debate (Bullough and Pinnegar, 2001). To guide my research design decisions and to ensure that my project is worth doing and of value, I have developed and adopted the following aims, which therefore seek to:

1. Explore and illuminate perceptions, insights and interpretations into the constructed narratives of teachers' lives to develop an in-depth understanding of the relationship between their personal values, Christian beliefs and approaches to teaching sensitive and controversial PSHE issues.

2. Investigate the legitimacy/authenticity of being a PSHE teacher, the direct conflict this brings against being a Christian and whether the two can be interwoven in a way which satisfies both.

3. To examine some pedagogical approaches adopted by Christian PSHE teachers to address conflict of personal values, faith and professional practice

4. To analyse and present some of the tensions which seem inherent in religious believing within an increasingly secularised context and bring about greater understanding for Christians working in a wider plural society.

I will build on existing knowledge, as I explore teachers' life stories. Thus, depth of focus and not widespread data source is my main remit. While I am not seeking to generalise, my chosen life history approach can 'illuminate the interactive dynamics between professional and biographical contexts' of teachers (Goodson and Choi, 2008, p.24). This method will help to acquire deep knowledge and understanding of the relationships between the personal and the systems both at individual and collective levels (Goodson and Choi, 2008).

1.11 Research questions

My research questions will highlight the research problem, clarify my study focus and relate their significance in plugging the knowledge gap. They will provide an opportunity to explain, describe, explore and analyse the issues as well as provide a better understanding, knowledge, factual and conceptual conclusions and answers to my research aims (see chapter 6). The nature of my questions reflecting 'why' 'how' what's it like' and 'what does it mean to you' contributes to the justification of life history method (Goodson and Sikes, 2001, p.21). These questions serve as boundaries guiding my conceptual framework (chapter 2; Appendix A-B), design, methods (chapter 3), data collection source and findings (chapter 4) and analysis of the data (Chapter 5). I used them also to guide the interview schedule and they form a significant role in the question formulation, conclusions drawn and implications (chapters 6 and 7).

I want to identify as well as illuminate the issues when teachers experience tensions and controversy in their professional practice and the decisions they make in these critical moments (see chapter 4, pages 93-95; fig 4.6). The precise experiences of teachers of PSHE, with strong Christian beliefs and convictions, have various origins and are in transition; and on occasion present these teachers with dilemmas in their working lives, adopting a range of strategies for resolution or compromise.

From the literature, controversial issues are difficult to define (Cooling 2012). There can be a measure of subjectivity in identifying, defining and managing sensitive and controversial issues in PSHE. The existence of the issues in practice justifies a response strategy regarding its impact or their effect on students and teachers. Teachers identified and perceived sensitive and controversial issues as such because (from the data in Ch. 4,p.93) these topics focus primarily on the 'personal' 'social' 'health' 'economic', ethical and political (citizenship) aspects of students' lives (page 94). These issues and tensions that they identified after the interviews have the potential to cause upset, distress or harm, affect core identity and could cause difficulty, tensions or embarrassment in discussing them for both students and teachers (Ofsted 2010). Additionally, these topics/issues engender different/strong views or a range of opinions held as valid; they can relate to pupils' lives or

circumstances, invoking strong responses, evoking strong emotions and extreme debatable views which could also present views that significantly conflict with those of mainstream society.

Therefore delivering these topics could engender a range of emotions and conflicting views requiring specialised skills to teach (Ofsted, 2005), especially when personal values and Christian faith inform teachers' working lives. Ryder and Campbell (1988) as well as Claire and Holden (2007) for example, point to research which lament the inadequate training and lack of confidence experienced in the effective delivery of these issues. Having considered some relevant and significant issues, published literature and research associated with this field of study it will be of academic, professional and personal value to conduct research into the following specific questions:

1. What sensitive and controversial issues and tensions do Christian PSHE teachers identify in their professional practice? (p. 93, fig. 4.6).

2. How do they manage the personal and professional challenges arising out of teaching these issues/topics?

3. What relationship exists between personal values, Christian beliefs and the approaches employed in teaching these issues?

4. What are the wider macro-political implications for Christian faith and professional identity and practice?

I decided on these questions because they will illuminate the complexity of identifying and defining sensitive and controversial issues as well as the significant burden Christian PSHE teachers face in managing, negotiating tension and maintaining a Christian faith in professional practice within a wider pluralist society (Day and Lynch, 2013).

1.12 My Research setting

To address these research questions, I chose to locate my study in Kent, in the southeast region of England. My thirteen participants represent a range of school types as described in chapter 4. These are located in approximately seven districts across the county of Kent representing various socio-economic, educational and ethnic backgrounds. They extend well beyond my immediate local catchment area to

reflect a wider perspective of Christian PSHE teachers' views in diverse contexts and districts across a reasonably broad cross-section of the southeast region (See map in Chapter 4, p.66). The schools offer different PSHE provisions ranging from integrated, form tutor time to discrete provisions. This will provide an opportunity for participants to share their unique experiences, perceptions, stories and concerns (Merrill and West, 2009).

In my study, PSHE teachers self-identified as 'Christian' (see chapter 4, p. 88). In chapter 3, this formed the basis for their recruitment as suitable research participants, based primarily on their personal conviction and profession of their Christian faith (Appendices H, Q) with their 'stories being the chief means of articulating the Christian faith' (Hanson 1997, p. 2). In keeping with my research aims, title and questions, I seek to illuminate their particular experiences as teachers of PSHE possessing Christian beliefs in moments of conflict in their working lives. Additionally, their Biblical beliefs and practices could inform and guide them in their work, thus making a difference in how they perceive the nature of their role (Smith and Shortt, 2003). All teachers interviewed agreed that faith and practice should be integrated; take Chrissy and Karen for instance:

> *Remember that ultimately, faith is who we are…meant to be all of us…the whole part of us wherever we go, whatever we do (Chrissy)*

> *…I could not do my job without it (my faith) ...part of my identity (Karen)*

However, these have various origins and could in critical moments, present them with dilemmas in their working lives (see chapters 2, 4 and 5) on matters of conscience despite oppositions to faith and practice integration (Moore 1995, Hirst 1965).

In order to contextualise my use of the terms 'Christian' and 'Christian PSHE teachers', I have included a working definition to guide my discussion and justification for their use to ensure coherence throughout the thesis; where Christianity extends beyond mere cultural identity to informing ethical and theological frameworks; for example, see Chrissy's and Karen's statements above. According to

Guite (2006) 'Christianity embraces many languages and cultures, giving rise to an astonishing variety of practices and interpretations, yet all with a common basis of shared faith inspired by the teaching, life and death of a carpenter from Nazareth' (p.1). Amidst these differences in traditions in emphasis and in understanding, we can identify three core elements which arguably are essential parts of what it means to be a *Christian*;   firstly, belonging to a faith community with regular church attendance and possibly involvement. Secondly, believing, that is, 'acquiring and eventually inhabiting a system of beliefs and a framework of faith about a pivotal role of Jesus as the meeting place of God and humanity, the person in whom a broken relationship is restored. Thirdly, behaving, Christianity has at its core, a sense that human behaviour is significant; indeed that it has eternal consequences' (p.3). Hanson (1997) also identified 'believing, commitment and trust' as significant aspects of faith (p.2).

Christians came to believe that 'Jesus was himself a full incarnation and complete manifestation of God' (Jones 1999, p.6). 'Christian' is a wide-ranging term and although the teachers in my study self-identified as Christians belonging to various denominational traditions (Baptists, Methodists, Catholic, Church of England or more broadly as Evangelicals or Liberals); This is consistent with how teachers self-identified as recorded in chapter 4, (page 87) *'Religious affiliation, involvement and factor influencing faith decision' and 'Teachers self-defined theological positions'),* (page 88) 'Nevertheless, there are core beliefs to which all Christian communities in all ages have continued to bear witness' (Guite 2006, p.2). These are related but can engender conflict of priority especially in reconciling 'belief, practice and custom'. Jones (1999) argues that imbalance in reconciling these leads to 'distortions, tribalism, fundamentalism, sectarianism, and legalism' (p.21).

Beliefs have been expressed and emphasized differently by Christian communities (Jones1999, p.1) and 'involve an expression or communication of one's own personal convictions, even if that expression is utterly private as in a silent prayer' (p.14). This is confirmed especially by Adele who reportedly uses what she calls 'covert' prayers as part of her faith/practice integration and coping strategy in managing the inherent tensions (page 92). Christian faith must be a part of that

everyday life if it is to be established in the understanding of reality which most people hold to be normative' (p.15). (See findings Ch. 4, page 92) "Christians are encouraged by their faith to work out and live by the values of God's Kingdom' (Guite 2006, p.106). However, "to bring out its true significance, belief necessitates practice and needs to be interpreted with practice; because it is practice which indicate the relevance of belief by demonstrating how it changes the way in which people live' (p.16). However, belief can also serve as a 'marker of cultural identity, an expression of significant social relationships and belong or organising centre for an individual's or group's life' (Day and Lynch 2013, p. 201).

Hence my quest in research question 3 to ascertain how they manage these conflicts of their faith in professional practice in critical moments of uncertainty and tension. This is consistent throughout thesis as each chapter for example in the literature; among other things I addressed 'integrating values and Christian beliefs in practice approaches; controversy/tension and Biblical responses and is consistent with Guite's (2006) explanation of 'belonging, believing and behaving' (p.6), (See also chapters 4, 5, 6).

In chapter 3, I outlined how teachers self-defined and how that formed the basis for their recruitment suitability (see also chapter 4, figure 4.4) *'Teachers self-defined theological positions').* My research findings in chapter 4 provide significant life history data from their life stories that along with my analysis, conclusion and implications seem to confirm that their understanding of Christian faith exceeds mere cultural identity to embraces ethical and theological applications. In chapter 4, I found that Christian disciplines including Bible reading, church attendance and involvement, and the community of faith played a significant part in formulating the values and beliefs they adopted as their own and seek to integrate in their working lives, consistent with the literature (Guite 2006).

Whilst 'Christian theology is concerned initially with the belief that God is present in the world and has acted within history in Jesus of Nazareth as revelation of God's will to be with the world and ultimately save its inhabitants' (Jones 1999, p.5), 'it must be acknowledged that the revelation of God in Jesus Christ which involves people in

many different forms of historical, personal and social reflection is never solely revelation… but also of 'concealment' (p.6); hence the conflict of interpretation as 'faith seeks understanding' (p.7), as Christians 'step back from a religious faith and ask questions about it (Hanson, 1997, p.4), given the 'differences on certain points of importance' (McGrath 2008, p. viii).

Teachers acknowledge these and most see their participation in this research as being able to 'raise awareness of these contentious and divisive issues' (Chapter 4, p.111). However, there is the need for openness along the 'intellectual journey' as there are different specific theological claims of different traditions and different communities - "tested by their coherence against the original confession of faith in Jesus Christ'. Thus, teachers had to clarify their personal core values and Christian beliefs over time and with maturity (see Chapter 4, p. 111) which highlights teachers' *'Development and transformation in Christian faith'* and the *'relationship between Christian beliefs and teaching approaches.'* They embrace the significance of behaving as a criterion of Christian conduct, developing openness, empathy and adopting broader interpretations and application of faith to practice as faith develops and transitions through life's experiences.

Whilst Christians who embrace a liberal tradition might tend to adopt a more flexible less authoritative interpretation to Scriptures, faith and issues of controversy and sensitivity, those of an evangelical, charismatic and Pentecostal tradition tend to hold a more fundamental view of Scripture 'as authoritative guides for the thought and life of Christians in this present age.' (Wolterstorff 1980, p.12) (See chapter 4). (See chapter 5, page 122) Essential evangelical beliefs according to Marsden (1991) include:

1. 'Reformation – doctrine of the final authority of the Bible
2. The real Biblical character of God's saving work recorded in Scripture
3. Salvation to eternal life based on the redemptive work of Christ
4. The importance of evangelism and missions
5. The importance of a spiritually transformed life' (pages 4-5).

'Evangelicalism includes striking diversities for instance, holiness churches, Pentecostal, Methodists, all sorts of Baptists, Presbyterians etc.' (p.5). However, while they may have varied ideas about the precise role of the Bible in Christian life 'Christians of all confessional backgrounds regard the Bible in some way as being authoritative' (Smith, and Short 2003, p.15). However, my participants saw changes or shifts in their understandings and interpretations of handling sensitive and controversial issues in their practice based on exposure, experiences or education. Norman (2003) argues that 'individual Christians seems little aware of just how secular their own lives have become merely by integrating with the encompassing special norms' (p.44). He further refers to what Church leaders now endorse as 'Christian family' to 'secular decencies' necessary to provide stability and effective childrearing (p.46). The 'privatising of religion' and individual preferences mean that Christians can 'make up their understandings of Christianity...using their own judgement' on matters, for example on 'abortion and divorce' (p. 48).

My study therefore illuminates and captures PSHE Christian teachers in transition located in their professional practice obligations, ethical and theological positions, 'religious or existential belief systems, identities and practice' (Day and Lynch, 2013, p.200), as they navigate the place of their Christian faith in their practice amid these scope for controversies.

1.13 Significance of the Study

According to Sikes and Everington (2006), 'research is about furthering understanding, increasing the universal sum of knowledge and making better informed sense of whatever it is that is being studied' (p.15). Through a life history approach, teachers' stories will give an account 'about the things that happen to them, set within a wider context', as I make interpretations and re-present their lives by taking a wider overview (ibid, p.8).

The significance of this study reflects the important role it can play in determining an answer to the knowledge gap, in addition to possibly improving the human condition. Consequently, my contribution to the body of knowledge suggests that my findings could potentially be beneficial in the field to reflect more prominently an appreciation

of Christian perspectives in professional practice. My findings are significant because they will highlight my participants' views of their contribution to the wider context, the place of policies, laws, guidance documents and their beliefs (chapter 6 and 7). It also reflects some current multidisciplinary events and issues in the public domain. This social purpose of my research, can potentially benefit not only Christian PSHE teachers but can relate to professionals in diverse disciplines and spheres at all levels of society; policy-makers, other subject teachers of faith and none, teachers in initial teacher training Programmes (ITT), and other stakeholders including parents and students (see Chapter 7).

Green (2010) argues that 'Christian educators should also engage with secular social theory in order to counter the marginalization of religion (p.10). My study could illuminate and generate a greater understanding for Christian professionals, how their Christian faith is manifested through 'believing, behaving and belonging' (Guite, 2006). Worsley (2013) further argues that this approach, supported by academic publications will stimulate confidence, resulting in an escalation in the engagement of the contribution of faith-based reflections.

My study therefore addresses what I call a *multidisciplinary interpretivistic dimension;* that is, it relates to various fields and disciplines, multi-faceted yet subjective and tentative in its interpretation and claims. My findings can be applicable to diverse fields and professions for example, medicine, the military, hospitality, leisure and travel, education, business and commerce, politics, judiciary among others. This potentially addresses the wider concepts of marginalisation of faith positions, professional boundaries, freedom of religious expression and professional identity tension, and poses a challenging question: *Is a Christian faith position compatible with professional identity and practice across various fields in a plural society?*

With regards to Ofsted, National curriculum (NC), PSHE association, DFE Teacher Standards (2012), my study could add a dimension to further illuminate and inform thinking; thus raising awareness of the place of Christian formation from a teacher's perspective in a more authentic and tangible way. Furthermore, there are opportunities for inclusion in initial teacher training (ITT), PSHE seminars and continuing professional development (CPD) programmes at local, regional and

national levels, which seem lacking currently (Willis and Wolstenholme, 2016). Therefore, this serves a social purpose and potentially benefits society through its multidisciplinary contribution to a current topical yet divisive issue.

In educational research, one of the most significant features of work on teachers' lives is that it provides insights into teaching (Dhunpath, 2000). Narrative research of which life history is a variant, is dedicated to celebrating the voices of the silenced and marginalised, but also celebrates the 'biography of an authentic reflection of the human spirit, providing a mirror to reflect visions of our other selves' (ibid., p.550). This justification for its use, recognises the whole person that the teacher is and the many and varied values, Christian beliefs and experiences that they bring to their respective professional contexts, to reflect 'a thorough examination of oneself as a teacher: who am I, what I think of children and what do I think of teaching?' (Cole, 2002, p.2).

My research study is important as it has scope for providing illumination, exploration, explanation and evaluation of belief positions (Denscombe, 2012). Thus, it builds on existing knowledge, fills a gap in the knowledge, tackles existing tensions, and potentially empowers self, practitioners, and by extension, students and stakeholders; appealing to a wider public context due to its multi-disciplinary significance.

1.14 Contribution to the field

Despite policies and research into various aspects of teachers' values, beliefs and approaches to delivering various aspects of the PSHE curriculum, the place, perspective and practice of Christian teachers' life stories is not prominent. From a secular perspective, many studies focused on the contents, purpose, effectiveness, delivery and assessment strategies of PSHE (Ofsted, 2013; Clemitshaw and Calvert, 2005; Willes and Wolstenholme, 2016; Oulton et al. 2004). Key research recommendations suggest that further support for teachers is needed as 42% primary and 38% secondary teachers lack expertise in teaching sensitive and controversial issues (DfE, 2011, 2013). However, these among other studies (see chapter 2), did not focus on Christians PSHE teachers. As such, my study builds on

this knowledge but further illuminates and extends our understanding from a faith perspective, relating these issues to my study aims and research questions.

Furthermore, a review of the debates indicates that the place of personal values and Christian believing combined in delivering sensitive and controversial issues in PSHE remains underexplored. Neither did my more detailed literature search reveal any specific study on Christian PSHE teachers. Thus, this as well as my application of the life history approach to my study theme ensured my contribution to plugging a knowledge gap. Additionally, my application of the life history method that combines these with Christian believing that highlight teachers' burden, conflicts, inner wrestling in their attempts to reconcile their relationship and the different strategies that the teachers adopted to handle sensitive and controversial issues in their professional practice, is original. Therefore, my study of Christian PSHE teachers contributes to comprehensive understanding of teacher professionality with a context of faith but with wider implications.

Studies have explored how religious faith can influence teacher perceptions, experiences and practice (for example, Sikes, 2006; Revell and Walters, 2010; Revell and Bryan, 2017), also the motivations, beliefs and values of teachers of different subjects, how they make sense of their work, how they teach, how they view the contents and the interpretation put there-on (Oulton et al. 2004; Ofsted, 2013). However, my study specifically addresses the gap in the knowledge through my stated research aims and questions, combining personal values, Christian beliefs, with professional identity and practice. It specifically contributes to creating new understandings of existing issues, extending the work of others through varying for example, their sample, scope, methodology and identifying 'new and emerging issues worthy of exploration' (Trafford and Leshem, 2008, p.17).

1.15 Assumptions and limitations

My assumption is that teachers will answer truthfully to the interview questions based on their personal experiences. However, there are many and varied reasons why this may not necessarily be the case. For example, the nature of my life history study requires discussing and divulging personal stories and sensitive issues. These could have implications for their personal as well as professional lives if their views on

these issues shared with me become public knowledge (see ethical considerations). Furthermore, they may also feel pressured to respond *professionally* to protect privacy. Thus, their actual views might not fully disclose their true positions on the issues, with implications for validity. The issue of trust and building rapport are therefore important to me in using this approach.

Additionally, given my close connection to the issues in this research earlier outlined, my own familiarity to the context, there are limits to objectivity (potential for bias or even assuming a victim stance on my and participants' behalf) resulting from my role as Christian PSHE teacher and researcher. There will also be limits to my claim of emancipation, empowerment and giving voice (Sikes, 2006) despite life historians' use of auto/biographical approaches because they have a political commitment to give voice to silenced and hidden lives. However, the notion of emancipatory or empowering research is problematic, raising questions of power relations with my teachers, given my 'intellectual privileges' and the extent to which the 'true' story can be generated (Letherby et al. 2013, p.91), (see also chapter 3).

1.16 Overview of chapters

Below is an indication of the broad areas that will be addressed in the subsequent chapters to help demonstrate how my thesis will be structured as it develops.

Chapter 2: I will explain in section one how I devise my conceptual framework and develop the themes and concepts identified from the aims and research questions. Section two examines the published PSHE literature and research relevant to my study.

Chapter 3: I will set out the research design and strategy providing a detailed account of the participants, instrumentation and the procedure followed. I will also outline and further justify my choice of philosophical underpinning and life history method, noting also the ethical considerations relevant to my study. Details of the pilot and main interviews: procedures and process, themes and findings are addressed, as will my location in the study as researcher/PSHE teacher. I will address some implications of life history interviewing regarding faith sharing and professional practice.

Chapter 4: Here, I will briefly outline the background to my participants: teaching contexts, demographics, timelines and profiles. Findings are underpinned by themes identified from the research questions and participants' narratives supported by direct quotes and diagrammatic representations.

Chapter 5: I will identify, interpret, interrogate and analyse themes and their relationships to yield life history data. This chapter includes the processes and procedure for my analysis. Coding, transcription and category formation are addressed. I will re-state the significance and contribution of my research study.

Chapter 6: My thesis conclusion will summarise my key findings, ascertaining the extent to which I have achieved my aims and answered my research questions. I will examine the research process and advance a reflexive account. Restating my contribution after my interviews informed by the literature, I will outline some opportunities for further exploration and research.

Chapter 7: I will examine my findings, their significance, rationale and interpretation to ascertain the implications to speculate theorise and thereby suggest recommendations. Providing answers to the 'So what?' question, the chapter ends with detailed implications for particular stakeholders.

1.17 Conclusion

I set the scene for my life history study into the legitimacy of being a PSHE teacher and the direct conflict this seems to bring against being a Christian, in order to illuminate the relationship between personal values, Christian faith and approaches employed in the teaching of sensitive and controversial issues. I established my personal, academic and professional interests in the field having outlined my purpose, aims, research questions, settings, philosophical underpinning as well as the justification and limitations of my qualitative, interpretive stance. The chapter included an identification of the knowledge gap and my subsequent knowledge contribution.

In Chapter 2, I will explain in section one how I devise my conceptual framework and develop the themes and concepts identified from the aims and research questions. In section two, I examine the published PSHE literature and research relevant to my study.

CHAPTER 2

Review of the debates

2.1 Introduction

This is a review of the debates which my thesis is set around. It provides an overview of relevant themes which focus on Christian PSHE teachers and how their personal values and Christian beliefs inform their professional identity and practice obligations. The extent to which their personal values and faith influence their professional practice regarding the teaching of sensitive and controversial topics is relatively unexplored and under researched.

I did not use a specific protocol as in the case of a systematic review; instead I devised a conceptual framework (appendix A-B) to guide the structure, contents and boundaries of this review of the PSHE literature and debates. I borrowed some features of a traditional literature review because of their suitability to provide scope for exploration, creativity, and a broad description of the field of ideas relevant to my study (Jesson et al. 2011; Torgerson, 2003). For example, this review affords me the flexibility and subjectivity coherent with my life history method and philosophical assumption. However, this approach could be criticised for being too flexible, lacking transparency and not replicable (Petticrew and Roberts, 2006).

SECTION ONE

2.2 Devising my Conceptual Framework, search strategy and boundaries

According to Trafford and Leshem (2008), the conceptual framework is a 'set of meaning people use to make sense of their world and behaviour within it, yielding insight and understanding of people's behaviour' (p.84). This *set of meaning* will provide a theoretical overview of my research and the approach used to order the research processes. For the sources of the conceptual framework, I drew on my experiential knowledge, research questions, title and existing literature. I focused my search on the university's online library subscriptions inclusive of eBooks and journals. I also included policy documents, textbooks, chapters in edited books,

google scholar, google chrome, websites, PhD and doctoral thesis through EThOS (e-theses services online) and EBSCO electronic journals.

The review of literature has scope for a much deeper and wider exploration into the concepts of values and teacher professionalism; hence justifying the boundaries of the literature I will review is helpful. Sensitive and controversial issues surrounding values, professionalism and professional identity are not limited to teachers of PSHE or Christian teachers. Hanson (1997) argues that an understanding of faith as involving 'belief, commitment and trust' makes it clear that not only religious people have faith. This broader understanding of faith shapes lives and worldview interpretation in their entirety. This can extend to gross atrocities (p.3). There are similarities and clashes of cultures with other worldviews. Therefore, sensitivity, controversy or evangelicalism could also relate wider afield to other groups; for example, environmentalists, socialists or other political groups, feminists, vegetarians among others including economic, class or race causes.

These tensions, conflicts and divisive issues could be experienced and tackled in the same or similar ways to Christian PSHE teachers and could present distinctive positions of strongly-principled views, and perhaps even 'evangelical' in the broadest sense. Therefore, my justification for the literature being reviewed provides a practical recognition of my research boundaries despite this broader sense of evangelicalism. Marsden (1991) reminds us that 'evangelicalism however, does not refer simply to a broad grouping of Christians who happen to believe some of the same doctrines; it can also mean a self-conscious interdenominational movement with which people from many sub-groups identify' (p.5). Whilst this might be from a theological perspective, I appreciate a wider scope for evangelicalism that extends beyond an understanding of faith, or in this case being *Christian* (outlined in chapter 1, page 5). However, for the purposes of my study, I will set my boundary within discussions in Christianity and the concepts I have identified and drawn from my research title and aims as reflected in the conceptual framework (appendix A-B). My justification for establishing my literature boundary is that I want to highlight and illuminate the specific experiences that Christian teachers of PSHE might have. These strong Christian beliefs and convictions have various origins and represent

the process of transition that they often contend with. These are significant as they sometimes present these teachers with critical moments of dilemmas in their working lives. This focus and specific boundary provide me with an opportunity to extend the forefront of my discipline through advanced scholarship and making an original contribution to knowledge.

2.3 Illuminating the issues

I use the word 'illuminating' in my title to mean focusing the spotlight on, exposing, enlightening, informing, highlighting or giving some prominence to the issue, that of the conflict Christian PSHE teachers seem to face in their professional practice. As well as balancing personal and social values, it highlights the issue of teachers who struggle to make decisions on appropriate boundaries for PSHE (Ryder and Campbell, 1988; Inman et al. 2003). I want to illuminate these issues because PSHE teaching seems to pose inherent conflicts especially for teachers with a Christian faith with possible implications for faith in a wider professional practice.

Furthermore, PSHE teaching requires expertise, experience, thoughtfulness, empathy, sensitivity as well as an awareness of the policy, legal and professional framework for effective practice. Additionally, a measure of self-awareness, confidence, conviction and a firm grasp of one's faith position are required to navigate this complex terrain of conscience and controversy. The life history approach provides an opportunity to illuminate 'human subjectivity' and the 'interactive dynamics between workplace and biographical contents of the teachers' (Goodson and Choi, 2008, p.34).

I will now highlight the title concepts and research title themes below.

2.3.1 Integrating personal values into professional practice

Teaching PSHE provides opportunities for teachers to examine sensitive and controversial issues while reflecting on their personal values. According to Pattison (2007), these values, articulated or otherwise, reflect what people are 'attitudinally predisposed towards' (p.30). They assume that students are helped to clarify and 'build up their own value system' (Watson and Ashton, 1995, p.17), albeit, in a non-judgemental manner and without indoctrinating (Downie, 1990; Copley, 2005).

'A 'value' as defined by Straughan and Wrigley (1989) 'is a consistent, reasonably justified, effort-intensive, motivation' (p.75). For Jarrett (1991), 'values' is defined as 'something we prize, cherish, esteem, respect or hold dear...' (p.45); or an 'affective disposition…. something we recognise as good or worthwhile or a belief or attitude about truth, any thought, behaviour or object' (Pattison, 2007, p.41). Therefore, our perceptions of teaching sensitive and controversial issues might be connected to the sense we make of our experiences as well as the professional and legal obligations underpinning practice. This can lead to tensions, particularly in terms of values linked to faith. Carr (2000) for example, cites tensions as well as differences of emphases between vocation and profession. A vocational understanding of teaching demonstrates 'significant continuity between occupational role and private values and concerns...' where teaching is perceived as a 'ministry' with lives 'given over to the service of others' (p.10) and God's Call (Esposito, 2012) which 'glorified God' (Bruce, 2013).

A professional stance on the other hand, embodies a very different set of values that is 'more impersonally regulated and often has been constructed, in the alleged interests of clients, upon very precise separation of professional from private concerns' (Carr 2000, p.11). He identifies a definable tension of the teacher as 'traditional *cultural custodian* a representative or exemplar of the virtues and values of a given culture, and the more modern 'professional' idea seen to be 'value-neutral or to keep personal commitments separate from professional concerns' (p.19).

The extent to which teachers' values might influence their teaching and the scope of this could be problematic. For instance, Schon (1991) recognises the conflict of values, goals and purpose that frequently are embroiled in professional practice. For Alexander (2008), however, pedagogy involves both teaching and the broader issue of motives. He argues that teaching is merely a technical rather than an educative process if it is void of its justifications, values and theories especially of relationships with the wider world. This view is endorsed by Barnes (2012) when he also argues that teaching is technical and robotic if it is void of our values. A new professional stance however, strongly advocates a more neutral, objective positioning, as identified by Bryan (2012). This issue, therefore, of how much of us, our principles, morals and standards (values) should inform our teaching remains a contentious one

nevertheless, Thiessen (2013) strongly asserts, 'neutral teaching is impossible' (p.224).

The problematic nature of values, faith position and professional identity is highlighted by Bryan and Revell (2011) in their research of Religious Education (RE) teachers. They refuted a suggestion that a 'good teacher' is 'neutral and objective'. In support, Hill (2004) argues that,

> *Good teachers are able to develop knowledge about values, to practise the skills of value discussion and negotiation, and to develop the empathy needed to understand the motivational strength of the values held by others (p.58).*

Therefore, constructing a value-neutral position is impossible (Kelly, 1989). Kelly further notes that the curriculum serves as the transmitting vehicle for its message, where it conveys meanings and exemplified values. The values we adhere to might likely represent our own favoured ideological positions and we all have personal ideologies that affect all our philosophies and actions (Wraga and Hlebowitsh, 2003).

The issue of private versus public, non-negotiable or choice in values is one that has been at the centre of tension in this debate, with strong views for a clear distinction between them (Haydon, 1997; Bigger and Brown, 1999). A claim that values rooted in precise religious beliefs are private having no place in the public domain is well-documented (Hirst, 1965; Wilmer, 1992; Cook, 1996; Moore, 1995; Bryan, 2012, Copley, 2005). However, theological and Biblical claims arguably advocate the influence of Christians in the public domain to illuminate and preserve (shed light and uphold moral values) as 'salt and light' (chapter 6), (Matthew 5: 13-15 KJV). Yet, even with the rise of social networking, the private sphere could be on the decline due to interest of the security services in conversations in private closed spaces.

Both political and religious leaders generally desire a renewed sense of 'moral responsibility' and 'civic values' (Gardner et al. 2000, p.109) including: tolerance, respect, caring for the environment, civic duties, equal opportunities, rights and responsibilities, responsible action and political awareness, although the path to achieving them is debatable. Recognising the tension regarding values inculcation and clarification, Lockyer et al. (2003) advocate a compromise between social and cultural diversity that permits values pluralism while also embracing some values and

practices of liberal democracy that support common identity. This approach is helpful but seems to ignore a theological component of religious values that also contributes to the common good of society. Cooling (1994) warns against '...competing beliefs systems in society not becoming a source of danger to either individual citizens, or to society as a whole' (p.105). However, as Gray (2000, p.6) puts it 'we do not need common values to live together in peace' rather common institutions where many life forms coexist and humans thrive, because 'conflicts of values go with being human' (p.9) and can present opportunities for human flourishing (p.34).

In part, conflicts some PSHE teachers face in their professional practice (see chapter 4), might relate to the place of their personal Christian beliefs and deeply held religious convictions. 'Beliefs involve an expression or communication of one's own personal convictions, even if that expression is utterly private…' (Jones 1999, p.14). From the literature and the data (Chapter 5), concepts of fundamentalism, evangelical, charismatic, Pentecostal or liberal Christian emerged. This makes it challenging to arrive at a precise definition for 'Christian beliefs' as understandings and interpretation of Scripture as well as how teachers related life and practice are different in their 'explanations of the Christian faith' (McGrath 2008, p. ix). The question, *can one legitimately be a Christian and a PSHE teacher?* seems legitimate to contemplate.

2.3.2 Controversial topics in PSHE from a Biblical perspective

The subject of sensitivity and controversy in PSHE is prominent in many research projects (Claire and Holden, 2007; Cooling 2002, 2010; PSHE Association 2010; Cohen et al., 2011; Oxfam 2006; Oulton et al. 2004; Carrington and Troyna, 1988). Report by Ofsted (2013) for instance acknowledged tension and complexity of identifying as well as developing effective pedagogical strategies to manage them in PSHE teaching.

The Crick Report (1998) defines a controversial issue as

> *An issue about which there is no fixed or universally held point of view…*
> *(they) usually divide society and for which significant groups offer conflicting*
> *explanations and solutions*

Advisory Group on Citizenship (p.56)

For Cooling (2012), an issue is controversial when, 'people do not agree about it, because that is the only way to honour fairness' (p.170). He argues that 'settled issues should be taught directively and controversial ones, nondirectively' (p.169). In his debate with Hand, he proposed a 'diversity criterion' approach to identifying religiously controversial issues. Cooling suggests that we teach as *controversial*, issues that have 'significant disagreement between different belief communities where those communities honour the importance of reason giving and exemplifying a commitment to peaceful co-existence in society; and teach as *settled* only those matters…from wide agreement and compelling evidence' (p.169).

The challenge of, and criteria for identifying and defining them as such are themselves controversial (Cooling 2012; Thiessen, 2013, Mellor, 1986). PSHE topics (Appendix W) it could be argued have the potential for sensitivity and controversy. For example, these topics and issues can be opened to subjective interpretations, as they 'lie on or outside the boundary of the dominant hegemony' (Carrington and Troyna, 1988). Adding teachers' personal standards, principles and morals as well as their Christian beliefs, can exacerbate the complexity regarding the way in which teachers identify, define and manage these issues (see chapter 5).

The PSHE Association on their website updated 2016, offers guidance on the sensitive and controversial issues and identifies some as 'child sexual exploitation and other forms of abuse, the impact of online pornography on children, the dangers of extremism and radicalisation, forced marriage, honour-based violence and female genital mutilation.' Delivering these topics could engender a range of emotions and conflicting views requiring specialised skills to teach. Ryder and Campbell (1988) as well as Claire and Holden (2007) for example, point to research which lament the inadequate training and lack of confidence experienced in the effective delivery of these issues.

Besides conflict of conscience, the extent to which a modern, secular and religiously diverse educational system publicly funded is affected by Biblical values, adds another dimension of controversy (Cooling, 2011). Adopting a Biblical view as authoritative to these and other PSHE topics or embracing 'Christianity as a form of authoritarian meta-narrative' in addressing them is problematic (Wright 2004, p.116). For example, Cook (1996) challenges any view to ultimate truth, arguing that issues

including the morality of abortion, euthanasia, same-sex relationships, social justice, war and personal freedom attract many different belief positions. This is so not only in RE, but PSHE also.

Not only are teachers' personal principles, morals and standards subjective and potentially influential in topic delivery but also their Christian beliefs. Smith and Shortt (2003, p.37) note that as the Bible may shape one's sense of self; even as teachers, professional identity, actions and relationships might likely be impacted. The nature of this impact is a crucial part of the controversy, seen 'as part of life' (Watson and Ashton, 1995). Therefore, the issue of whether a Biblical view is kept private and separate from practice has been deliberated. There is an expectation that, according to Moore (1995) Christian teachers should leave their beliefs at the classroom door. Likewise, Hirst (1965) sees religious beliefs in education as not only a 'dangerous nonsense' but also private matters having no place in shaping education. Cook (1996) adds to this, arguing that having 'strongly held views' and expressing them as absolutes run into a barrage of criticisms and disapproval. These positions however, assume that a Biblical view negates autonomous rationality and does not necessarily afford the same significance and respect as is given to secular worldviews. However, Bible views are not always absolutes but subject to many interpretations.

For Cooling (2011) however, education should only produce students who are 'rationally autonomous' (p.2). Although a secular agenda seems dominant, there should be respectful appreciation of others' life-shaping Biblical beliefs as a resource to be utilised in education rather than a problem to be 'privatized' or a 'managed (p.4)…in light of both the sensitive and complex settings of modern schools. However, Thiessen (2013) further sees this as advocating in part, aspects of evangelism and hence needs 'more careful nuancing' (p.222).

2.3.3 The context and controversy of PSHE: Identifying issues and tensions in professional practice

Personal identity, matters of conscience, professional practice, policy and legal requirements could contribute to tensions in delivering sensitive and controversial PSHE topics. Norman (2009) argues that liberal and secular principles underpin western institutions including education but these 'liberal ideal of toleration' embrace

more 'rational consensus' rather than claims to a 'single way of life' (Gray 2000, p.1); in addition liberalism 'calls for freedom of speech and thought' (Gaus, 2003). For Copley (2005) and Hick (1985), education and other social discourses are informed by secular language; and until recently a western philosophy of religion was predominantly underpinned by the Judaeo-Christian tradition. Biblical virtues in education debates remain controversial (MacIntyre, 1984). Green (2012) notes the problematic relationship of Christian teachers between their beliefs and professional practice. She furthers acknowledges that,

> *An organisational framework might be shaped more by secular educational policies or by secular assumptions…than it is by the explicit Christian ethos of the school.*

<div align="right">

(Green cited in Smith and Cooling 2012, p.13)

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This view contributes significantly to the nature of the existing tension and perceived marginalisation of a Biblical construction. Green (2012) later strongly advocates the need for Christian educators to acknowledge the extent to which 'their own beliefs interact with the structure and practices of secular education policy' (p.9). This, she argues has implications for the cultural experiences of students. Cooling (2011) argues that, teachers' personal beliefs should be acknowledged and not seen as 'clutter' but integral to people's worldview. Such beliefs can provide fulfilment of the deepest aspirations for individuals even of radically different cultures and denominations within, the framework of this common faith (Guite 2006, p.82). Belief can also be 'a marker of identity, an expression of socially significant relationships, or an organising centre for the lives of individuals and groups…' (Day and Lynch, 2013 p.199).

The tension and challenges of private beliefs versus professional identity and practice are well-documented (Wilmer, 1992; Hirst, 1965; Bryan, 2012). In fact, Bryan and Revell (2011), recommended that resolution and justification are needed, regarding a perception that personal faith should not be revealed and that the relationship between teachers' faith and professionalism can be problematic. PSHE teachers encounter the task of identifying and clarifying their own principles, beliefs and understanding of and approach to 'truth' as an important reflexive process in

establishing how their personal faith relates to professional practice particularly regarding issues of sensitivity and controversy.

2.3.4 Professional identity around Christian belief - managing personal and professional challenges

Professionally and practically, there are a number of strategies suggested for managing sensitive and controversial issues in PSHE (Oulton et al. 2004; Ofsted, 2013; Willis and Wolstenholme, 2016). While they do not specifically reflect a position of Christian faith, other literature accounts for various generic pedagogical approaches that can be integrated including incorporating theological thinking through metaphors, stories, hermeneutics, moral discussions (Smith and Shortt, 2003; Cooling, 2010; Cook, 1996).

Hull (1976) identifies two ways in which a Christian philosophy of education might be inculcated. Firstly, to start with broad moral principles which 'embody values' (Pattison, 2007, p.32); and seek to deduce educational conclusions. Secondly, by starting with Scriptural references about education and applying them to educational context. Hirst (1965) recognises the place and contribution of private beliefs which may be true though lacking rational explanation. However, he questions such truth in the absence of public justification and challenges the role of Christian knowledge in educational reflection. For some teachers, however, the stance taken by Hart (1995) that their Christian theology as an explicit activity of faith be embraced unashamedly is welcomed and supported. This seems applicable both in schools that are not of a religious character plus other religious sources of authority.

According to Smith and Shortt (2003), we should not expect the Bible to directly address the details of a particular discipline, even though it might say something about its ultimate context. There are many approaches and models which might be applicable in addressing and interpreting issues in PSHE. Firstly, they identified the 'incarnational' model where the teacher embodies personal qualities and models them. In this case, opportunities to subtly include views without overt expressions of faith are created and employed. This approach is embraced in my study as some teachers integrate discreet theological discourse and faith-based narratives to manage inherent conflicts in their practice involving sensitive and controversial

issues (see chapters 4-6), because 'influences and persuasions can take many forms, not just open evangelism' (Thiessen, 2013, p.223). Furthermore, any 'sustainable transformation emanates from inner convictions, values and priorities (Bigger and Brown, 1999).

In their article, 'Metaphor, Scripture and Education' Shortt, Smith and Cooling (2000) suggest a metaphorical model to relate the Bible to education which can be made applicable to teaching sensitive and controversial PSHE issues. Their suggestions include using principles, stories and metaphors. They argue that indwelling the Biblical meta-narrative and allowing Biblical metaphors to play an influential role in our thoughts and practice are both ways of linking the Bible to education. Another approach to constructing and adopting a Biblical view in PSHE is where, Cooling (2010) argues for a 'hermeneutical approach.' Students are helped to 'ponder the meaning and significance of Biblical teaching in life', rather than an 'apologetic approach' where such information is transmitted. Since only a segment of Biblical text is made up of instructions that can be applied directly to current controversial issues, Wright (1991) suggests that the Biblical narrative maybe compared to an unfinished play with four Acts. The task here entails immersing the self into these Acts and then creating an individual unique fifth Act while being both truthful to the text but creative in its application.

Additionally, Cooling (2012) suggests what he calls, 'Courageous restraint' as one strategy to handle these issues. By this he means being able to 'stand back from what is reasonably our first priority in order to respect the interests, needs and integrity of other people and achieve peaceful co-existence with them' (p.178). Whilst being admirable and helpful, this approach does not account for deep inner struggles and turmoil of the teachers wrestling with the issues while they *courageously restrain* themselves; because its adherence to policy and legal requirements regarding the protection of others seems more prominent than those of the teachers.

Applying these models to handling sensitive and often controversial issues in PSHE has much merit; however, for some they may be construed as watering down the Scriptures and being politically correct, denying or not 'contending for the faith' (Jude 1:3, Bible), failing to be true witnesses in the teaching 'ministry' or simply 'conforming to the world and not transforming' it (Romans 12:2, NIV Bible). Nonetheless,

adopting an 'incarnational' model in PSHE seems an appropriate model as Christian beliefs are not only deeply held but lived out in front of students. Such modelling can increase credibility and be a more relevant Christian witness than an apologetic and fundamental approach if delivered or simply transmitted without conviction or empathy, as 'beliefs are truly significant only if they find embodiment in behaviour and practice' (Pattison, 2007, p.73; Bigger and Brown, 1999), and not misused to dominate others and to 'silence further debate' (Wright, 2004).

These approaches could be seen to accept diversity, disagreement in interpretation, value the contributions of all and emphasize the importance of contextualization. However, the Bible's influence upon culture is complex and whilst general principles may lend some guidance, yet 'borrowing Biblical language, themes and imagery have not always been faithful to Biblical text' (Smith and Shortt, 2003, p.32). Nevertheless, these approaches are helpful in contributing to the attempt to construct a Biblical view and so impact and influence this context.

2.3.5 Relating personal values and Christian beliefs within a wider context

In delivering PSHE topics as a Christian teacher, there is potential for personal faith and beliefs to influence the approaches employed in practice. The definition of teachers' professional roles is influenced by their morals and beliefs (Bryan and Revell, 2011). Our teaching and learning can find meaning and purpose for us in the 'meta-narratives of our faith positions' Shortt (2012) further argues. In chapter 5 for instance, and supported by Blake and Katrak, (2007), teachers bear out the view that core values that underpin Christian beliefs include love, respect, fulfilment, justice, forgiveness, reconciliation, integrity, hope and trust.

Some conventions, guidance, legal or policy documents are set within a much wider framework of national or international bodies. These include the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) 1948 and the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR, the United Nations (UN) Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989) (Chapter 6). Reconciling the complexities of personal values, beliefs, rights and freedoms within a legal framework remains a crucial part of that challenge (Bowie, 2017).

It is argued that our 'western ideas of human equality, dignity and rights are partly founded in Christian doctrine' (Arthur et al. 2010, p.30; Bowie 2016); and 'former Christian teaching constitutes part of national heritage' (Norman 2003, p.44). The suggestion here is that this contribution of Christian doctrine to public values could be applicable to the 'general welfare and common good of all society' as Christianity locates itself globally in a network of systems culturally, politically and economically (Copley, 2005; Lovin, 2013). Therefore, whether Christians or other religions, the cultural formation of ideas, the sources of society's values may be informed by and cultivated through particular narratives and those sources are worthy of identification and study in lessons.

SECTION TWO

2.4 What we already know: The published PSHE research literature

My literature search suggests that a wide range of studies already exists on PSHE as a subject (DfE 2005, 2011, 2015; Ofsted 2005, 2010; Mead 2004; PSHE Association, 2014; Willes and Wolstenholme, 2016). Some of these studies focused on its prevalent models of delivery, perceptions of its relevance, effectiveness and usefulness, teacher identity tension, lack of resources, making recommendations for improved practice as well as policy and curriculum provision. Still others emphasised attitudes to and practices of controversy, limitations of curriculum time and space. The place of personal values, beliefs and teaching, initial teacher training provisions and reviewing impact and effective practice, leadership and management and quality of the provision and progress 2010-2015 under the Coalition government, remain the remit of others (Oulton et al. 2004; Ofsted 2005, 2013; Jones, 2003; Mead, 2003; DfE, 2015; PSHE Association, 2014 and Willis and Wolstenholme, 2016).

2.4.1 A summary of the findings from the research

The limited provision and the issue of sensitive and controversial in PSHE are well documented (Ofsted 2005, 2010, 2013; Mead, 2004; DfE, 2011; Guest et al. 2013). The Department for Education, DfE (2011) study sets the stage for developing an understanding of the context and provision of PSHE in schools. Some key findings suggest that the PSHE provision was found wanting at both primary and secondary levels. These findings are corroborated by other research (Ofsted, 2013; Clemitshaw

and Calvert, 2005; Willes and Wolstenholmes, 2016). The DfE (2011) study note the limited nature of these provisions, especially regarding issues of a sensitive and controversial nature:

> *Sex and relationships education (SRE), drugs, alcohol and tobacco (DAT) education, enterprise education and personal finance are taught once a year or less between 59% and 74% of primary schools (DfE, 2011, p.3).*

There seems to be a consensus in the research literature that using qualified PSHE teachers remains the most effective way to ensure meaningful delivery (PSHE Association 2014; Oulton et al. 2014). The suggestion that continuing professional development (CPD) qualifications should be encouraged and funded is a fundamental recommendation in some of these studies (see chapter 6). This has implications for how teachers navigate the complexity in teaching this aspect of their work against the backdrop of poor training of staff and low subject status. The DfE (2011) study sums it up well:

> *The practice of a subject being taught by teachers of whom upwards of 90% do not have a specialist qualification would rarely or never be applied to other subject specialisms, yet is commonplace, according to the survey data, for PSHE education (p.6).*

Against this background, they call for a whole school approach in a DfE (2015) study, which sought to review the impact and effectiveness of PSHE practice. They reiterated the need for taught lessons by trained staff that are comfortable doing so. The nature of the subject with regards to its sensitive and controversial topics further require that they not only employ the services of stakeholders (parents, school governors, health professionals, and other members of the wider community), but also reflect inclusivity (see chapter 6). Managing these issues will require respect for other cultures, ethnicities and also disability, faith, age, sexual orientation and gender identity (p.10).

Although not specifically related to Christian PSHE teachers, some studies reflect the engagement of personal values, Christian beliefs and professional practice. For example, Jones (2003) addressed the complex issue of supporting teachers in 'developing professional capabilities but managing the conflicts arising out of the

interaction of their personal and professional lives…with those expected by and of the profession (p.385). To explore this, she adopted 'a case study approach using semi-structured interviews and questionnaires'. Her sample consisted of ten newly qualified secondary teachers. A significant concept of teachers' *personhood and teacherhood* emerged from her work. This highlights the complex challenges that arise in the reconciling process of personal values, beliefs against the authenticities of developing positive pedagogical identities. Furthermore, her findings highlight a desire among her newly qualified teachers (NQTs) to synchronise personal beliefs and values with professional practice through expressing greater creativity and autonomy.

2.5 Research from a Religious Education perspective

With an aim to investigate the influence of 'What if learning' working with teachers as co-researchers on their approaches to teaching and learning in their classrooms, Cooling et al. (2015) explored *The influence of Christian Ethos on teaching and learning in Church Secondary Schools*. The *What if learning* strategy, an educational approach, developed by an international team of American, Australian and British educationalists, is intended to give support to teachers in creating a learning environment that is underpinned by a Christian ethos and emphasising Christian learning in the curriculum over content. One crucial and relevant element of the 'what if' strategy which Revell and Walters (2010) support, is the conviction that no classroom is belief-neutral. Therefore, it enables teachers to frame their pedagogy in terms of Christian virtue development and to design learning practices of their classroom to promote that.

Whilst this links well with my third research question and first aim, it does not include the position of state schools where such explicit demonstration of faith may not necessarily be as prominent. Furthermore, the subjects included in the study did not include PSHE, Nonetheless, one crucial finding of their study that is significant to my research, is a perception that 'occasionally expressed concern that the *what if* learning approach was not 'Christian enough' …one teacher stated,

> *There is a sense in which anything that doesn't see people becoming Christians isn't fulfilling the ultimate mission (*Cooling et al. 2015, p.5).

These teachers 'find it easier to "tell" students about Christian ethos rather than to design practices which enabled them to experience that ethos' (p.3). This designing of practices could be perceived by some Christian teachers as watering down the gospel.

The contentious issue of how religious beliefs be managed in education today is addressed in *Doing God in Education,* Trevor Cooling (Theos, 2010). Revell and Walters (2010) also researched the way Christian student RE teachers understood the relationship between their faith and professional issues in relation to objectivity and teaching RE neutrally is examined. They addressed this through interviews with 184 students RE specialist teacher-trainees at both primary and secondary levels, in three universities across London and in the provinces. Their findings bear much pertinence to my study; the majority…,

- '…of all RE student teachers believed that knowledge of their faith or personal beliefs can be problematic in the classroom.
- …believe that sharing their faith with pupils could influence pupils and could be unprofessional.
- …believe that faith should not be shared or only under qualified circumstances and
- 'Agnostic or atheist RE teachers saw sharing their lack of faith or their own questions about the validity of faith could be a positive contribution to the lesson' (Revell and Walters, 2010, p.4).

Similar to Revell and Walters (2010) study, Guest et al. (2013), in a longitudinal study from 2009-2012, studied an evangelical approach to the beliefs of student Christianity in a national survey of 13 universities. In this context, they recruited a much broader sample and a wider range of issues explored. Their questionnaires contained many related themes and concepts of a sensitive and controversial nature, thus making its findings of significance to my study. For example, it addresses, 'moral values (including those associated with assisted dying, drinking culture, abortion, gender, equality, homosexual practice, attitudes towards religion, church participation or patterns of involvement in religious activities, attitudes towards religious authorities and views on major doctrinal issues such as Jesus and the

Bible' (p.209). Some of these topics are included in PSHE lessons and the dilemma of teaching them potentially poses conflict for some Christian teachers (chapter 4).

Guest et al. (2013) note that in recent years, 'Christian unions' (university Christian student groups primarily of an evangelical tradition) have 'featured in several public conflicts on university campuses. Issues of contention include 'equality and tolerance, especially gender, sexuality and the treatment of other religious groups.' This conflict seems to be primarily between what the authors identified as 'conservative evangelical' and 'charismatic evangelicals' (p.210). These seemingly polarising views attract controversy especially in this age of globalisation, pluralism, postmodernism and secularisation (Copley, 2005).

The University and College Christian Fellowship's (UCCF) public statement of belief online could trigger division, controversy and much disapproval:

> *The fundamental truths of Christianity, as revealed in the Holy Scripture'…including statements on the 'inspired and infallible' status of the Bible, the sinfulness of all human kind, meaning that all are 'subject to God's wrath and condemnation' and the notion that all who believe in Christ are pardoned of all their sins and accepted in God's sight. This is adopted as the core, non-negotiable aspects of Christianity (p.211).*

If this faith position reflects the fervent conviction by a PSHE teacher, then there is tremendous potential and scope for conflict (within and without), wrestling and struggle. There would also be professional and legal ramifications potentially should such interpretation forms the underpinning for addressing contentious, divisive and emotive issues in professional practice.

I have looked at some Religious Education studies in order to relate their findings to my research given that my search did not result in any specific study on Christian PSHE teachers, and PSHE is often delivered in RE. It is however worth looking at the research done by the Office for standards in education (Ofsted), as the key government inspection body that is pertinent to my study and field of PSHE.

2.6 Ofsted Reports - Summaries of related findings

Ofsted is the Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills that inspect and regulate services caring for children, young people, as well as those providing education and skills for learners of all ages. Whilst Ofsted may provide useful data, reports and recommendations on various aspects of PSHE as the chief inspection body, it does not meet the rigorous criteria characteristic of academic research, including being peer-reviewed. Nevertheless, the judgements, findings and recommendations reflected in these Ofsted Reports are significant to my study. I have used such reports (and associated academic literature) to augment my original contribution to the field in the concluding chapter 6 as they form a basis for informing reports into PSHE curriculum and practice, as well as providing an opportunity for me to compare my findings and understandings before and after my interviews.

Ofsted reports into the PSHE provision have addressed many dissimilar themes. Among these are the quality of the provision (Ofsted 2005) and evidence from Inspection reports on its status and progress in the curriculum (2010). Furthermore, the findings on teaching sensitive and controversial issues (2013), the strengths and weaknesses of the quality of the provision (2013) and Guidance offered to Ofsted Inspectors on making judgements of the teaching quality, leadership and management of the subject (2013).

2.6.1 Ofsted (2005) Personal, social and health education in secondary schools

This study seeks to account for the quality of school's provision for PSHE. The authors referred to policies and schemes of work, plus scrutinised pupils' work. They visited over 60 schools and selected a national sample of varying types and locations. From this they gathered secondary data evidence from over 100 inspection reports. A primary finding of relevance to my study is that 'PSHE programmes failed to provide pupils with the opportunities for them to explore issues effectively' (p.1).

In a later guidance to its inspectors, Ofsted (2013) sets as a criterion of effective practice, the encouragement of students to examine opinions and listen respectfully to others' views. This will contribute to and ensure that they develop 'excellent critical skills, (and) can evaluate information well and make informed judgements' (p.6).

Ofsted (2010) conceded that the PSHE provision is 'Not yet good enough.' They reported on evidence from inspections between Sept (2006) and July (2009) in 165 maintained schools in England. Their findings suggested that in the schools visited:

- More knowledge and better understanding of SRE, Drugs and alcohol and mental and emotional health were needed by students
- The sensitive and controversial nature of some topics with demanding themes resulted in the discomfort caused to some teachers, further compounded by a deficiency in effective staff development.

Building on the same research theme in 2012, Ofsted Report Summary gathered evidence from 24 inspections of schools, 24 secondary and 2 special schools between January and July (2012). Over 290 lessons observed, meetings convened with 200 teachers, leaders, managers and spoke with 700 pupils. Additional evidence gathered through an online survey of 178 responses from 11-18 year olds in state schools and colleges across England. This broad sample yielded some key findings which suggest that teaching Sex and Relationship Education (SRE) 'required improvement in 42% of primary and 38% of secondary schools.'

Whilst, primary students seem to receive too much emphasis on friendship and relationship, their puberty provision lacked exposure to the emotional and physical aspects of SRE. On the contrary, in secondary schools, there was an imbalance towards the 'mechanics' of reproduction rather than focusing on relationships, sexuality, influence of pornography on students' understanding of healthy relationships, dealing with emotions and staying safe (chapter 4). Thus, there is a requirement for more age appropriate SRE to avoid inappropriate sexual conduct, exposure and exploitation.

A significant finding which seems to resonate with other studies (Jones, 2003; PSHE Association 2014; Mead, 2004; Oulton et al. 2004), was that, some topics such as sexuality, mental health and domestic violence were being omitted from the curriculum. The findings regarding teachers without training in PSHE is corroborated by other studies which document the gravity of the limited training and unpreparedness of most PSHE teachers to handle the sensitive and controversial

aspect of their practice (Jones 2003; Mead, 2004; Oulton et al. 2004; PSHE Association, 2014).

2.6.2 Ofsted's criteria for Inspecting PSHCE: Judgements on sensitive and controversial issues

In 2013, Ofsted in a guidance document to its Inspectors (who inspect 150 schools annually), admitted that visits for PSHE are less frequent when compared to other subjects. The 'quality of teaching grade descriptor in PSHE' state that:

> *Teachers are confident and skilled in discussing sensitive and/or controversial issues; effective discussion is a very strong feature, pupils are encouraged to investigate, express opinions and listen to others, consequently they develop excellent critical skills, can evaluate information well and make informed judgements.' (p.6). The quality of the curriculum provision requires one that is 'explicit, comprehensive and coherent and the statutory elements of sex and relationships education (SRE) are fully met*

(Ofsted, 2013, p.9)

Following on from this, Ofsted (2013) education survey and DfE (2014) stipulate that schools should provide a broad and balanced curriculum promoting spiritual, moral, social and cultural development (SMSC). Notwithstanding, findings based on an analysis which was conducted by the University of Hertfordshire and the PSHE Association, suggested that PSHE topics that were well taught and related to personal safety, health and wellbeing, sex education and relationships resulted in those students being less likely to bully or be bullied. They also were more likely to possess positive relationships with peers and exhibit a sense of belonging. They used data from the Health Behaviour in School-aged Children (HBSC) research study of 5,335 English school children ages 11-14 (2014).

Such claim however might not be generalised, as its sample is limited and restricted in the demographics. Furthermore, it may not necessarily be wholly the domain of simply teaching PSHE effectively for such claim.

2.7 Reflecting good practice in delivering sensitive and controversial issues

Good practice remains an important and necessary part of all pupils' education (DfE, 2013). Part of this *good practice* is the ability to handle effectively sensitive and controversial issues (Ofsted 2013). This view was earlier established (Stenhouse, 1980; Kelly, 1989). Research findings have highlighted the extent to which teachers even from a secular standpoint struggled with issues of expressing their views and under what conditions they may choose to do so (Harwood and Hahn, 1990).

Similarly, Mead (2004) in a small-scale study examined the PSHE/Citizenship framework and the opportunities for student teachers to gain an understanding and experience of the relationship between values, personal and social development and learning. Mead builds on a previous study (Mead 2003) which explores opportunities for the primary initial teacher education to reflect values education. Whilst being done from a generic curriculum standpoint, the findings underscore some significant themes that are central to my research study. Firstly, university student teachers received very little guidance with sensitive issues (see chapter 4) for example, on 'multiculturalism in Britain' (p.24); secondly, the opportunities to teach or observe SRE were limited. For instance, in 2014, the PSHE Association Research (Annual survey responses Summary, 2014) found 71% decreased hours of PSHE and that 32% teachers were not well-trained. Thirdly, there was an implication that student teachers were ill-equipped to handle teaching sensitive and controversial areas (p.25).

Given the extent and nature of the issues addressed over a significant chronological period, it is worth identifying and interrogating the more current literature/research on the status of the subject. Elizabeth Truss (2013) for example, in her *Review of Personal social health and economic education* argues that schools should build on the statutory requirements for PSHE in the National Curriculum. Such statutory guidance includes sensitive and controversial areas like drug education, financial education, sex and relationship education (SRE) and healthy living. However, despite these well-intended recommendations, many barriers impede the effective delivery of the PSHE provision and specifically, the effective handling of sensitive and controversial issues.

More recently, Willis and Wolstenholme (2016) explored the extent to which the status and provision of PSHE in schools have altered under the coalition government in 2010-2015. They collected data through interviews with 'five strategic stakeholders', surveying nine PSHE Leads in a sample of all primary and secondary schools in the local authority (LA). The inclusion of stakeholders broadens the debate and adds depth to the contribution to the issues they were investigating. (See chapter 6). Their findings suggest that stakeholders value PSHE. In part its significance is linked to the wellbeing and preparation of students for later life. They acknowledge the challenge of retaining teaching time in the curriculum as well as a widely held perception that PSHE was not 'supported or prioritised at a governmental level.' Similar to other studies (Jones, 2003; Mead, 2004), they lament the absence of a 'national teacher training' programme, initial teacher training (ITT) or funded Continuing Professional Development (CPD) for existing teachers.

2.8 Examining the debates of PSHE literature: Some central issues emerging

The key theories and perspectives arising from research and the literature therefore suggest that the matter of sensitive and controversial issues in PSHE is a matter of personal and professional concern (Ofsted 2005, 2010, 2013; Mead, 2004; Guest, 2013). There is consensus among researchers and in the literature that the lack or limited preparation of teachers to deliver these topics is a prominent and recurring issue. However, some researchers have focused on the place of personal values and beliefs in teaching (Revell and Bryan, 2017; James, 2003; Cooling et al. 2015; Revell and Walters, 2010; Mead, 2004). This arguably can contribute to the controversy regarding faith in professional practice and discussion as to their compatibility and legitimacy (Langer, 2012). However, 'strong personal commitments' need not negate 'a high level of educational professionalism' (Jackson and Everington, 2017, p.9).

It is also clear from the literature that PSHE as a subject has not been awarded the same recognition as other statutory ones at all levels including governmental, policy and local in individual schools (Gemitshaw and Calvert, 2005; Willis and Wolstenholme, 2016; DfE, 2011; Mead, 2002; Ofsted, 2013). Whilst there are schools offering the recommended hours and curriculum content of discrete

provision, the same is limited and restricted in the available curriculum time (Ofsted, 2005).

These sources when clustered together seem to suggest strong relationships among them and the concepts identified. For example, noteworthy are the connections, trends, meanings, significance these hold for how PSHE teachers and stakeholders perceive PSHE as a subject. Authors of various studies identify a trend in the struggle to recognise and secure a place of prominence and statutory embedding in the curriculum. This remains despite numerous calls for PSHE to enjoy greater subject inclusion and raised subject profile (Oulton et al. 2004; DfE, 2015; Ofsted, 2013).

There seems to be a consensus among the authors in expressing a desire for PSHE to be formally recognised with adequate training, resources, curriculum time, guidance for teaching sensitive and controversial issues and strategies for initiating, implementing, internalising and embedding (Fullan, 1982) it more prominently. These issues and concepts identified in the literature have significant bearing on my research questions. For instance, they address various pertinent issues including, defining sensitive and controversial issues as well as acknowledging the conflict and tensions inherent in the subject. Furthermore, the research literature addresses a wider perspective on the issues indicative of one feature of the life history approach. As Sikes and Everington (2001) state, life history method has the 'ability to astride the micro-macro interface and to consider the dialectical relationship between the individual and society' (p.8).

Some of the core issues, problems and tensions addressed by literature include limited teacher training to manage effectively the conflict of personal values and beliefs in professional practice, strategies for implementing and integrating Christian faith in practice (Shortt and Smith, 2003; Cooling et al. 2015). There are common elements identified in the studies regarding sensitive and controversial issues (Ofsted, 2005, 2013; Mead, 2004). Also, they include strategies to deliver these complex and divisive topics (Stenhouse, 1980; Harwood and Hahn, 1990; Jones, 2003), personal values and beliefs in practice and Christian ethos in teaching (Cooling and Green, 2009; Mead, 2004; Guest et al. 2013).

An area of discrepancy identified is in a DfE (2011) research 'Mapping study of the prevalent models of delivery and their effectiveness' seems to suggest that 'the predominant delivery mode at both primary and secondary was discrete lessons. However, this seems to differ from the general trend of the research findings (see also chapters 4 and 6),

Other studies are similar to mine in the themes and concepts or the method and sample size but are different in subject area or discipline, context, location or combining all research variables. Jones (2003), for example, is similar although using a case study approach, recruited a sample 10 newly qualified secondary teachers to 'reconcile their personal values and their beliefs with the reality of teaching' (p.385). These studies can nonetheless, be of relevance to my specific research area for these reasons (Bheenuck, 2010; Cooling et al. 2015; Cooling and Green, 2009; Revell and Walters, 2010; Guest et al. 2013; Sikes and Everington, 2001, 2003). Whilst the authors of most of these studies addressed the issues from a faith perspective, none is PSHE specific and several studies cited were not from a faith perspective.

Relevant, significant themes and issues are addressed however; they tend to focus primarily on the students, the legal and policy frameworks underpinning PSHE delivery, curriculum provision, leadership and management. The place of the teacher in the debate, although reflect their deficiency in skills to address sensitive and controversial issues, does not seem to be prominent. The published literature fails to relate this to the needs, insecurities, wrestling and concerns of the Christian PSHE teacher. Studies seem to address general strategies to deal with sensitive and controversial issues but have not addressed a perspective of faith (for example, Oulton et al. 2004). PSHE research by DfE and Ofsted reports, PSHE Association or individual authors (Jones, 2003; Mead, 2004) have not employed a life history approach and subsequently did not address in-depth the life stories, perceptions, insights and experiences of Christian PSHE teachers as regarding their personal values and beliefs and the impact on their practice.

Cooling et al. (2015) studied and made recommendations to the Church of England (COE), catholic churches Higher education and other teacher educators, school leaders and the classroom teacher on Christian ethos and teaching and learning.

However, this did not address the place and influence of the Christian ethos in the publicly funded non-religious settings and contexts of PSHE teachers of a Christian faith. Nonetheless, their recommendations are worth considering for illumination and perhaps application:

They wrote:

> *…..There is a key contextual challenge to be addressed in that most of the teachers had never come across a theological approach which supported them in integrating their professional work within a Christian ethos. There is an urgent need for the development and dissemination of a Christian theological understanding of teaching and learning that overcomes both these sense of weirdness and the sense of not being Christian enough (p.5).*

From their research findings and recommendations in *Christian student RE teachers, objectivity and professionalism* by Revell and Walters, (2010) RE teachers should critically explore opportunities for/against faith sharing with pupils during training and religious beliefs discussed simultaneously with other belief types. Furthermore, and importantly so, 'a secular atheist or agnostic belief position in the classroom should be recognised by all students as an identifiable belief position rather than a neutral stance (p.4).

Controversial issues cannot always be resolved by recourse to reason, logic or experiment because they involve emotions, but can be further explored as more information becomes available. Oulton et al. (2004) further argue in favour of a development of principles to teach these issues. These could include neutrality, balance and reason, making pupils aware of bias in materials and provide skills and abilities to identify them. Providing a supportive environment could encourage confidence in pupils to become fully engaged in the learning process. There is also a need to address the development of relevant policies at both local and national levels including legal requirements.

2.9 Conclusion

A review of the debates, research and the PSHE literature suggests that issues of sensitivity and controversy in PSHE delivery is addressed (DfE, 2011; Ofsted, 2013; Jones, 2003; Mead, 2004; Equalities Act, 2010; Willes and Wolstenholme, 2016). However, debates on the specific conflict that Christian PSHE teachers encounter

that conflict their faith and practice is less prominent. Studies have addressed RE teachers (for example, Revell and Walters, 2010; Sikes and Everington, 2001, 2003), applying Biblical principles to teaching (Shortt and Smith, 2003; Cooling, Green and Revell 2015; Cooling et al. 2015), albeit not specific to PSHE.

Building on these, my study addresses a current problem substantiated by its value in the answers the research questions provide and illuminate. Consequently, it supports and extends previous research for example, Revell and Walters (2010); however, it differs and departs from works cited above which lack Christian faith.

Whilst my literature research findings and conclusions (Chapter 6) are moderate and bear a tentative grasp on knowledge, my study is distinctive and worth doing because it addresses the relevance of these themes and concepts in an underexplored area. Thus, it contributes to illuminating the place of Christian faith in professional practice, thereby filling a gap in the knowledge and making an original contribution to the field.

In the next chapter, I set out the research design and strategy I adopted in collecting and re-telling the stories of the participants. I revisit my philosophical stance, life history method justification and revisit my position as a Christian PSHE teacher and researcher (chapter 1). The chapter includes a description of the participants, the instrumentation and procedures I employed. It comprises some strategies and issues I considered when administering interviews on sensitivity, controversy and Christian beliefs. It concludes with a consideration of ethical issues related to my research.

CHAPTER 3

Methodology

3.1 Introduction

Being a PSHE teacher and researcher: Methodological considerations

It is necessary to locate and position myself in this research given that the inclusion of an autobiographical section in life history research is strongly supported (Sikes 2006, 2010; Goodley, 1996; Ball, 1990). In order to be ethical and credible it is imperative that I reveal my positioning and location in the stories that I present as social research (Plummer, 2001; Tierney, 2000). My intimate connection with the research has ethical implications, for instance, the risk of 'suggestibility bias' (Evans, 2002) with potential sympathy towards teachers and subjectivity in the data selection process.

These could present opportunities for contamination in my analysis and conclusions with potential to affect the validity of the study. Therefore, declaring my positionality is an ethical imperative because acknowledging my assumptions and prejudices according to Goodley (1996) helps provide honest appraisals of my insider role. Furthermore, being opened to scrutiny regarding the construction and interpretation of stories (as regarding believability and authentic re-telling), can contribute to achieving coherence with the broader theoretical issues and by extension, the usefulness of the study to other researchers in the further development of knowledge claims (Riessman, 1993).

My biography and professional values, passion, beliefs, attitudes and interests as researcher (Stroobants, 2005; Stake, 2000) relate to my choice of topic, and have implications for my method, analysis and interpretation of data (Sikes, 2006). Additionally, my involvement can help to create a backdrop for my informants to narrate their life stories through reciprocity and controversially perhaps, be 'given a voice' and thus be 'empowered' (see ethical aspects). Here my own voice as insider-outsider can unearth many submerged power issues (Goodley, 1996); thereby potentially helping them to share their own perceptions and lived experiences in a

non-threatening environment. My study will produce qualitative data in response to my research questions and aims, leading to plugging a gap in the knowledge.

3.2 Rationale for my research design

My research therefore aims to explore insights, interpretations and meanings into the constructed narratives of teachers' lives in order to develop an in-depth understanding of the relationship between their personal values, Christian beliefs and their approaches to teaching sensitive and controversial PSHE issues (Chapter 1). To do this, I devised a strategy of deliberately linking ontological, epistemological and methodological underpinnings to relate to my aims, method, data analysis and conclusions to reflect coherence throughout my study. I also wanted to account for and reflect a process that narrates and underpins the theoretical, technical, practical, ethical and philosophical aspects of my study (Oliver, 2014). Punch (2000) refers to this process as 'connecting questions to data', that is, 'purpose to process' (p.52). This connection will produce life history data as my research questions stated below and in Chapter 1, inform my interview schedule (Appendices M, O).

To explore and satisfy my aims, I formulated five research questions that will add focus, set boundaries for my study and be of academic, professional and personal value. This strategic process of question formulation set out the direction and shape of my exploration, determined my data type and analysis strategy. I devised these questions because they could stir controversial debate around my topic, address a relevant and contemporary issue, provide some guidelines to inform good practice in PSHE delivery and address a gap in the knowledge around my topic by applying the method in a new context (Denscombe, 2012).

My questions are:

1. What sensitive and controversial issues and tensions do Christian PSHE teachers identify in their professional practice?
2. How do they manage the personal and professional challenges arising out of teaching these issues/topics?
3. What relationship exists between personal values, Christian beliefs and the approaches employed in teaching these issues?

4. What are the wider macro-political implications for Christian faith, professional identity and practice?

The answers to these research questions will contribute to the substantive body of knowledge and address a gap in our understanding of how Christian PSHE teachers cope when conflicted on matters conscience and controversy in their professional practice (Chapter 6).

3.3 A shift in my approach – choosing a suitable method

I chose the theme of *Values, beliefs and professional identity* because I am directly affected by the issues. Yet, my setting could be too familiar and posing myself between familiarity and strangeness risks the possibility of giving a sympathetic account (Hammersley and Atkinson, 1995). However, such familiarity though complex, could provide a firm foundation on which to build rapport with teachers, 'understanding of nuances and behavioural expectations and have analytical insights into the workings of the settings' (Bailey, 1996, p.36).

Initially, I wanted to undertake an auto/biographical narrative study of my Christian faith in professional practice. I intended to explore, reflect and illuminate the strategies I employed when dealing with sensitive and controversial PSHE topics in my professional practice. However, using the life history method allows me to explore, analyse and illuminate if, as well as the extent to which particular others might struggle with similar issues. This could help provide insights and raise awareness of the wider concern and implications of faith in professional practice.

I wanted to understand the meanings and interpretations that my informants placed on my research themes chosen for analysis and set them within a much wider context (Goodson and Choi, 2008) of personal faith, professional identity and practice. This is an important feature of life history method. Through its application, I explored how they made sense of and accounted for their personal identities and professional practice that related to teaching sensitive and controversial issues.

There are alternatives to my use of the life history method, for example, a case study approach of one or two schools could also be used. By extension, using a large sample and a survey method, questionnaires could yield quantitative data on the number of teachers affected by these issues. In addition, the aims, method, choice of

different paradigm, deductive to test theory with conclusions high in reliability instead of validity with generalizable conclusions would yield a different set of outcomes (chapter 7). This could encapsulate a wider theological and professional basis for understanding the issues.

3.4 Suitability of the life history method

I considered the life history approach most suitable and appropriate to examine these specific issues of conscience and controversy for Christian PSHE teachers to illuminate their personal life experiences, meanings and interpretations to get a broad and deep knowledge and understanding of my informants' thoughts, feelings and perceptions. Given the qualitative and inductive nature of my research, life history seems to be the most suitable approach (Atkinson, 1998), to use in focusing on specific issues of conscience and controversy that place significant burden on Christian PSHE teachers. This is justified because I wanted to adopt a method that can, as Goodson and Choi (2008) state, '...'illuminate the interactive dynamics between professional and biographical contexts of teachers' (p.24).

My focus therefore, will be gaining relevant insights; 'deep, reflective thoughts on their lives' (Atkinson, 1998, p.40) My aim here is not to generalise or be statistically representative, but rather to gain an insight and develop a theoretical argument that might be better understood at a collective level within wider society (Reid and West, 2015; Sikes, 1997; Goodson and Choi, 2008; Beattie, 1995). Additionally, to engender new assumptions and ideas whereby much broader exploration, possibly explanation or even investigation maybe later advanced (see chapters 6 & 7).

3.4.1 Historical and contextual underpinning

The life history method achieved prominence in the early 1920s in the Chicago tradition of sociological research and educational inquiries and has provided a scope for its wide adoption since the 1980s, according to Goodson and Choi (2008). Given the nature of my study, its use is significant as it 'eliminates the disappearing individual' concept (Goodley, 1996, p.335) in positivistic paradigms where human experiences and emotions are removed from research processes. Here, sense is made only of sections of teachers' lives, instead of seeking to understand the

entirety of the narrative (Dhunpath, 2000), which my study attempts to address through its life stories.

Despite initial reservation within the Academy, individuals' interpretative experiences, their stories, meanings and positioning within the social world continue to attract scholarly focus (Plummer, 2001). Citing Josselson (1995), Atkinson (1998) argues that in *academe*, we have entered a stage of the narrative; with 'story as a way of knowing' becoming, an equal par with other key disciplines (Atkinson, p.74). Here, boundaries, practice and thinking are challenged, departing from disrupting oppressive orthodoxies (McLaughlin and Tierney, 1993; Fine et al. 2000) and challenging other methodological forms which are arguably limiting or prescriptive (Sikes and Goodson, 2003). Life history scholarship therefore, endeavors to challenge practices and thinking that seek to silence marginalized and less powerful individuals and groups, 'giving a voice' to them (McLaughlin and Tierney, 1993; Goodson, 2000; Goodson and Sikes, 2001).

Using qualitative approaches to study the lives and professional practices of teachers is well-documented (for example Sikes et al. 1985; Goodson, 1992; Munro, 1998; Goodson and Sikes, 2001). A range of teachers' experiences have been captured in educational life history research. For instance, on same sex relationships, primary, female and black teachers (Roach, 2005; Munro, 1998; Nias, 1989; Grace and Benson, 2000); parent-teachers (Sikes, 1997), in addition Sikes and Everington (2004) have explored teachers of specific subject areas. Reid and West (2015) conclude that 'a good story…gains its credence from engaging fully with the particulars of a subjective experience and from a process of transforming understanding by the generation of new insights and meanings' (p.3).

In my life history study context, I will focus on the centrality of teachers' perspectives. This interpretation however is changeable, tentative and contingent as reality is primarily self-constructed instead of being discovered (Stanley, 1993), as new ways of knowing are explored (Richardson, 2000). The stories revealed in my interviews (both pilot and main) are powerful research outputs because they provided me with the reality of the teachers' situations, dilemmas and struggles in their personal life stories and professional practice (appendices N, Q, T). This could challenge the indifference, objectivity and neutrality so frequently produced by samples and

impersonal subjects (Goodson and Sikes, 2001). Yet, I acknowledge the problematic nature of narratives, one being that since all stories are constructions, texts are opened to multiple readings and interpretations. Additionally, Reid and West (2015) relate to narrative accounts as 'reducing everything to text' and being limited in their attempts to representation of experiences.

Another criticism of life history is that it produces no definite results displaying a 'defensive tone' or failing to clarify the distinction between biographer/researcher/journalist' (Dhunpath 2000, p.544). Furthermore, there is controversy surrounding the blending of the personal and professional. The place of faith in professional practice or the usefulness of narrative research is also contentious. Methodologically, I had to contemplate whether my small non-generalisable sample of teachers would suffice. Nevertheless, my emerging narrative through extensive interviewing yielded a 'richness of depth which empirical research involving larger samples is unlikely to yield' (Dhunpath 2000, p.548), thus, my rejecting of this latter alternative.

I agree with Goodley (1996) in his justification for using this approach. The personal nature of and intimate issue in PSHE provides a significant backdrop as he notes its emphasis on the 'personal in social theorizing' and the demystification of social scientific study with its 'technical and jargonized nature' (p.333). Furthermore, Riessman (2008) argues that 'knowledge is constructed in everyday world through an ordinary communicative act – story-telling' (p.14). These stories provide credibility through engaging with the subjective experiences of teachers, which then through a process, transforms our understanding thus, generating new insights and meaning (Reid and West, 2015).

Life history therefore, 'is an agency through which historically marginalised individuals may account for their lives' (Goodley 1996, p.334). It is not merely autobiographical or anecdotal, but it also provides an understanding of how individual teachers' lives have been shaped historically, culturally, socially (Scott, 2000) and theologically. This contributes to the individual teachers' identities and agency as these are reflected and informed by the narrative representations (Letherby and Ramsay, 1999). Thus, it seems most appropriate, relevant and applicable for my informants through the interview process, to share their life stories

'located within their historical context' (Goodson, 1992, p.6), to reflect how they might have mixed feelings in their teaching on matters of integrating their Christian beliefs in professional practice.

Overall, I applied the life history method to my study because my epistemological position 'values the subjective and idiographic' (Goodson 1992, p.9). It allows me to interrogate teachers' intentions not just the contents of stories but their purposes, significance, histories, gaps, sighs, silences and inconsistencies. The nature of sensitive and controversial issues necessitates diverse subjective perceptions, experiences and theological interpretations. This will inform my research of the grounds upon which truth claims about the world will be made. Additionally, this will provide an underpinning upon which a contribution to knowledge will be advanced.

3.5 Further philosophical issues

These have ontological implications regarding participants' perceptions of social reality. Wright (2004) puts it this way, '…any description of reality we produce must include an account of our place within it; subjective experience needs to be brought into a synergetic and sympathetic relationship with objective reality' (p.54). Thus, my participants can assign different ontological understandings or status to these sensitive and controversial issues whether they are real, constructed or even privileged (Wilson, 2009).

The relativism of truth associated with the construction and analysis of biography, however, remains a continuing criticism of life history research. As my participants storied their experiences in the interview process, they provided 'a series of subjective views with particular kinds of truth' lodged in their narratives (Dhunpath 2000, p.547). These stories reveal truths about their experiences, establishing order and meaning which enable connections with others (Riessman, 2008). However, this created a dilemma because whilst I seek to ascertain truth (Cohen et al. 2010) in my research, Owen et al. (2009) argue that demanding truth can be 'faulty and problematic' (p.181), as storying their experiences are from the standpoint of subjective realities. As such, knowledge about their beliefs on sensitive and controversial issues is different from knowledge about these issues (Wilson 2009, p.237). Sikes and Everington (2006) further acknowledged this intricacy when they

note that informants are involved in a 'creative act' when telling their life stories, despite their commitment to the *truth*. Thus, I acknowledged the limitations of their stories supplied for use as data as teachers needed to balance trust, matters of disclosure in their interviews with sharing honest stories personally, theologically and professionally.

Consequently, I may not capture in its entirety, my informants' experiences due to these multiple realities and various ways of storytelling. These are told within and are based on specific contexts (Hertz, 1996). Therefore, this so-called *crisis of representation and legitimation* (Denzin and Lincoln, 1994) reflected a further complexity of the relationship between epistemology, methodology and the reporting of my research. The conflict between how informants narrated their lives as opposed to how they should potentially has validity implications. For example, they can narrate their life stories according to an 'aspirational coherence, for a unitary self' (p.16), thus representing their beliefs and actual PSHE teaching experiences only partially and selectively. A case in point could be that teachers might need to protect their true beliefs on homosexuality on professional, economic and legal grounds. It is critical therefore, to distinguish between life stories or narratives and life histories, that is to say, differentiating between their stories versus my interpretation and analysis of them.

3.6 Gaining access to the participants

I familiarised myself with the university's ethical procedures and worked closely with my supervisors leading to gaining ethical approval (Appendices E-G; L). To secure the sample for my study, I contacted approximately thirty schools by posting letters, making phone calls and sending emails after initially obtaining specific details from the internet of schools. The participant information sheet which had a separate covering letter inviting them to participate (Appendices H, I) was sent in addition to the consent form (Appendix D). These spelt out the details of my research, explained the procedures I put in place to ensure that they were not harmed and that their rights were protected (Burgess, 1989; Sikes and Goodson, 2001).

I contacted not only local schools in the immediate cluster but those further afield in the wider southeast region, in keeping with the geographical context of my research (see chapter 4), practicality and accessibility (Punch, 2000). This process of initially

'looking through public domain' – list sampling (Cohen et al. 2011, p.167) yielded few responses and potential participants being relatively restrictive (Burgess, 1984). I did not want to seem overly insistent consequently, I waited for some weeks to pass before re-contacting selected teachers (See appendix K) by post, email and actual school visits in some cases. This recruitment challenge could be due to the sensitivity of my research, the fact that few schools offer a 'formal' PSHE programme and not many teachers specifically met my research criteria of being a Christian PSHE teacher. Furthermore, some teachers might have had reservations for various reasons to openly expressing their professional, personal and theological stance on the issues.

Given these complexities, I decided that purposive, convenience and snowball sampling techniques would be the most appropriate and pragmatic approaches to select my sample. However, these sampling approaches present various limitations including the potential for bias based on relationships between participants, resulting in 'homogeneity (similarity) of the sample's attributes...', (Cohen et al. 2011, p.168; Goodson and Sikes, 2001). Nevertheless, 'compromises have to be reached in sampling and access' (p.170) as obtaining a 'bias free' research lies outside the realm of my assumption (Hammersley, 2000).

3.6.1 Some specific issues from the pilot studies

Both teachers recruited for my preliminary investigation (pilot) teach PSHE and other subjects in mixed ability comprehensive schools. Like all other participants, they do not possess formal qualification to teach PSHE; neither is it their main subject area (except for Nikki and Emma). In part two, question 3 of the interview schedule, the expression *subject identity stereotype,* as well as question 13, section 6 regarding how policies are related to personal experiences seemed unclear at first. I later rephrased these for clarity to reduce academic jargon.

I also needed to probe more robustly for deeper meanings and to ensure that the responses to my research questions had sufficient depth and relevance. Question 12 on the relationship between personal values and teaching approaches had to be rephrased twice as it seemed unclear. In addition, asking about relationships between Christian beliefs and teaching approaches seemed unclear (section 5). I

revised the research questions removing duplicates and amending for sense, clarity and succinctness. Notwithstanding, no significant changes were needed for the schedule (Appendix M, O).

3.6.2 Interview procedures for the participants

This was my first experience of doing an 'academic' interview. Anderson and Arsenault (2002) argue that such novice position can afford me as researcher a fresh perspective and with proper supervision, contribute to knowledge building. Such inexperience led me to check out weeks in advance audio recording devices in stores and online. Once acquired, I executed several practical and technical operational precautions. Despite their technological advantages, according to Goodson and Sikes (2001), they pose limitations in terms of reliability and their potential impact on the research process. They could cause distractions, mistrust and discomfort, which could restrict discourse for 'free storying' for some participants. Furthermore, they provide restrictive capacity to non-verbal communication and or subtle nuances (Riessman, 1993).

The interview process was a long and complex one; from background searching of the relevant literature, familiarising myself with the practical and technical aspects to gaining ethical approval (Appendix L), and recruiting sample and arranging time, location and conditions for interviews. All teachers gave consent to being audio-recorded when I sought their permission to do so. Interviews lasted between one and two hours and were administered away from teachers' professional spaces and at locations of their choosing to provide safety, confidentiality, relaxation, ease of communication (Herzog, 2005); given the intimate nature of my life history study. Only Mark (pilot) suggested doing his interview at my home to avoid domestic distractions at his home. For all interviews, as Goodson and Sikes (2001) and Clough (2002) suggested, I built a warm, cordial and positive atmosphere and relationship to put the interviewees at ease. I gave participants the opportunity to select pseudonyms for use throughout the study. Two participants insisted that their real names be used I respected their requests and explained the ethical implications, yet being careful to further protect their anonymity and other personal identifiers.

3.7 Instrumentation: Choosing my method for data collection

The life history semi-structured one-to-one, primarily face-to-face interviews 'yielded a variety of kinds of information' (Drever, 2006, p.1). I used the same schedule as a guide to the interview process; however, the questions were not necessarily posed in the same way or order. For example, elaborated responses may have been provided for the description of the timeline stories and in so doing, answers to pending questions were also supplied. The complexity of formulating questions meant that I needed to balance obtaining specific and useful data to answer my research questions, satisfy my aims, and plug the knowledge gap and ensured academic rigor. I also needed to give participants opportunities to freely share their stories in ways that they decided what, how much and when to story their perceptions, experiences, meanings and interpretations; seeking to obtain as much from their entire life stories through interviews as their discreet stories for the unit of analysis (Risessman, 2008, p.6).

However, such life history data does not yield generalizable and reliable data from which I can extrapolate to a general population. Nevertheless, alternative techniques for example, structured interviews, experiments; closed-ended questionnaires would not be suitable or epistemologically coherent for my study. This is because my life history research seeks to explore the values, beliefs, perceptions and experiences of my informants within the backdrop of a wider context. The inductive, qualitative and interpretative nature therefore requires a method such as life history semi-structured interviews that encouraged a broad range of interpretations and constructions of the social reality I am exploring (Drever, 2006). However Thomas (1995) and Goodson and Sikes (2001) highlighted the suitability of 'other' inquiry tools applicable to life history researcher. The use of (research and theoretical) documents to underpin the individual stories of teachers' lives within their cultural, historical, political and theological contexts could seek to balance and locate these stories within a wider theoretical framework (Goodson, 2000) and scholarship.

Another inquiry tool I employed for collecting the life stories was the inclusion of the timelines within the interview schedule. They served primarily as guides to conversations, encouraged teachers' reflexivity and provided opportunities to prepare mentally and emotionally for the rest of the interview, to 'storyboard'

(Riessman, 1993, p.55) their experiences. Here they selected and narrated events of significance personally and professionally, 'traumatic or celebratory' (Thomas, 1995b, p.12). However, I also acknowledged the selective nature of this participant empowerment. For me, this open invitation to *'please construct a timeline of the key events in your life'* (interview schedule), engages teachers in a collaborative (Atkinson, 1998), and democratic process of my power as researcher. However, it also runs the risk of possibly lengthy discourses providing arguably, redundant details for example, repetitions, paddings (Gillham, 2005) in the transcription process, (Appendix Q).

3.8 Transcription and analysis process: Methodological considerations

Following the administering of the interviews, I embarked on the complex and labour-intensive process of transcribing them verbatim, being careful to establish authenticity to original data as closely as possible (Appendix Q, U). See also Adele's completed transcript (Appendix Q) and permission to use (Appendices P). This however, was crucial to the process of re-telling the teachers' stories in my quest for meaning (McCormack, 2004). This has implications also for my interpretation and final representation of teachers' life histories (LeCompte and Goetz, 1982). They, according to Sikes and Everington (2006), have an important part to play in illuminating human subjectivity. Even after careful transcription, the actual 'speech, pace, tone, emphasis can be lost in the process in reflecting levels of meaning' (p.23). This attempt therefore, to re-present the interviews by identifying and separating 'substantive statements, padding and repetitions' (Gillham, 2005, p.130) is a complex one.

I further skimmed and interrogated the transcripts (identifying key terms and phrases, expressions, repetitions, pauses and reflections, expressions of joy or pensive mood); coded and summarised them using personally designed data analysis sheets to reflect the emerging list of pertinent issues and themes (see Appendices N-Q; S, T). This assisted me in developing a greater sense of data familiarity, insights and revised interpretation, which emerged from my multiple readings (Katz, 1983). An analytical process of summarising and re-summarising all responses on large sheets of A1 then on A3 sheets ensued, to have all responses

for each question easily accessible in one place. From the identified recurring themes I wrote narrative accounts. I extracted specific themes from the broad categories identified to reflect the issues outlined in transcripts but relevant to my aims (see Appendices S, T, U).

3.9 Interviewing teachers about controversy, professional identity and sharing faith: Issues, Strategies and Implications

Faith sharing is highly personal and relevant to the subject knowledge, teaching approaches and professional identity of the PSHE teachers. It is related to their personal values and Christian beliefs and poses considerable 'threats to their own professional security' (Cohen et al. 2011, p.167); and how they are perceived (Atkinson, 1998). However, the sharing of a 'teacher's religious convictions if done in the right way, can lead to further learning...' according to Theissen (2013, p.225), and yield valuable contributions to my research findings. The interviews provided opportunities for my informants to share intimate aspects of their faith positions and professional practice; and self-identified their theological traditions (see page 88, chapter 4), when contextualising their identities, in a manner comfortable to them. The sensitivity and potentially problematic nature of the interview process necessitated care, trust, collaboration, sensitivity, flexibility and respect for their beliefs, meanings, interpretations and convictions.

Goodson and Sikes (2001) identify three main characteristics of sensitive research, which are significant and relevant to my life history study. Firstly, it intrudes into the private sphere, secondly, deals with some deeply personal beliefs or experiences and thirdly, involves investigating religious practices. For Cohen et al. (2011), 'all educational research is sensitive, the question being one of degree' (p.165). Whilst they support these characteristics outlined by Goodson and Sikes (2001), they add that, 'sensitive educational research can also act as a voice for the weak, the oppressed, those who are not listened to; equally it can focus on the powerful and those in high-profile positions' (p.166).

3.10 Ethical considerations

The life history research has tremendous potential to affect the lives of my participants due to the sensitive nature of this method (Goodson and Sikes, 2001), which poses professional and personal risks to teachers (Bell, 2002). I addressed these in the research design as recommended by Sikes (2001). I used the data I collected in this research in accordance with Data Protection Act and the British Educational Research Association (BERA) and subject to ethical clearance from the university (Appendices E-G, L). Ethical issues are thrown into 'sharp focus in sensitive educational research' (Cohen et al. 2011, p.170; Wellington, 2000). Regarding narrative research, Merrill and West (2009) suggest four ethical aspects when working with human participants, which I find helpful to locate and underpin my research process. These are firstly, equality between researcher and participant to avoid exploitation; secondly, participants' involvement; thirdly, dealing with painful, sensitive and emotional issues and fourthly, ensuring confidentiality, privacy and anonymity. I decided to use these aspects as a guide and checklist to do my interviews (Merrill and West, 2009, pp.169-178)

3.10.1 Equality between researcher and participants to avoid exploitation

Teachers gave up their time to share their life stories to assist me in addressing these issues of personal, academic and professional concern. Thus, it is important to care, respect and not treat them as merely 'respondents' (Plummer, 2001) or simply to collect data to advance my career. The power which knowledge of the teachers gave me as the researcher in a privileged position, must also be carefully managed by being 'emotionally sensitive and intelligent...exercising caution' (Goodson and Sikes, 2006, p.27; Sikes, 2001), and avoid being patronising or arrogant (Cohen et al. 2011). However, my participants had considerable power to influence not only my research procedure but also in what they (from a dominant position), made available to me as data, through their intimate stories. This reflects the complexity of negotiating this power relations base on careful relationship building in creating safe spaces in dealing with sensitive topics (Squire et al. 2014, p.91).

I prepared and administered the interview questions in a thoughtful manner striving for 'sharedness of meaning' in use of my language (Denzin and Lincoln, 2010) to

secure valid data and avoid academic power relations conflict. Wright (2004) argues that modernity embraces a central tenet for individuals to be empowered, autonomous and personally responsible. I acknowledged and made allowance for this autonomy and empowerment through, providing selective time line information, pseudonyms (anonymity) and the right to opt out. However, I had to surrender some control in the interviewing process to provide teachers a more democratic and collaborative experience. This, despite having a particular path in the interview schedule to address my research questions/aims; yet, as Riessman (2008) puts it 'narrative interviewing necessitates following participants down their train…giving up control of a fixed interview format – encourages greater equality and uncertainty…so power is shifted; although power relations are never equal, the disparity can be minimised' (p.24).

Sikes (2006) gave a further warning of patronising and imperialistic overtones, with claims that being involved in life history work can be 'emancipatory and empowering'. Thus, I allowed participants to retain some equality and control over audio-visual records of themselves and over their stories particularly at the transcription stage. I did this by sending transcribed interviews and draft findings, analysis and conclusions chapters for their scrutiny, amendments, clarifications and validation (Appendix R). Beattie (1995) however, affirms that the life history approach may be empowering for both participants and wider communities (p.146). This is so as it centralises their voices in educational research and policy initiatives (Goodson, 2000, p.19); however claims of empowerment require cautious pursuits (Harvey, 1990) since empowering claims can inadvertently harbour unintended consequences or 'disempowering' features (Goodson and Sikes, 2001) particularly as regarding my voice being too dominant in the re-telling of life stories as life histories (Denzin, 1989).

Nevertheless, 'emancipation' as a claim in life history approach as argued by Sikes (2006) assumes ignorance on the part of participants and stakeholders for example, policy-makers; adopting a patronising tone that the research will suddenly illuminate! However, for Merrill and West (2009), narrative research of which life history is a variant, can and actually illuminate, make sense of and give *voice* to teachers' experiences, perceptions, stories and concerns; recognising their agency (Goodson,

2000). Here, the challenge is whether my research can lead to change through 'giving a voice' and if so to whom (Chapter 6, Implications for stakeholders).

'Using one's life story on life histories can also be empowering' – it enhances one's sense of self-worth (data evidence - Nikki, Adele); and 'guides to deeper understanding of their own lives' (Atkinson, 1998, p.22). However, participants should never feel they have been exploited or their stories simply used for my research needs. Sharing stories and having a sense of collegiality, a sense of not being alone (Plummer, 1995) in Goodson and Sikes, (2001), in the struggles of their faith in practice can arguably be empowering for my participants. Here, 'life stories and histories of others who have similar characteristics, backgrounds, experiences and perceptions can be empowering and emancipatory' (p.101), although the stories presented may not necessarily reflect true life experiences entirely. Yet, the warning given by Cohen et al. (2011) must be heeded that 'care must be taken by the researcher to avoid sounding condescending, patronizing, domineering or high-handed.' Rather the need for 'respect, dignity to the participants, equality and feeling valued' (p.175) should be pursued.

3.10.2 Participants' involvement

Through my contact with my participants and the research information they supplied, they had an opportunity to make an informed decision as to whether to participate voluntarily. I hope that they did not feel pressured to participate, especially given their sense of collegiality with me as a Christian PSHE teacher. Their desire to please and help me in my research could add pressure on them to consent. The information sheets provided (Appendices H, I), outlined the ethical aspects, rights, responsibilities, expectations and entitlements including their right to opt out at any time without explanation or to participate without inducements, coercion or payments.

Having secured their desire to participate, I ensured that contact was away from their schools' premises or properties, or in school time, respecting their choices of interview venues. They participated also through supplying their individual stories as data. Furthermore, they checked their individual interview transcripts to ensure participant validation (Appendix R) of my audio recording (as requested), plus

chapter drafts of my analysis and interpretation. For example, as with Karen's analysis (chapter 5), she expressed reservation to me about my use of 'absentee' in describing her father who had adopted a more instrumental (provider) role in her upbringing. I deleted and amended (Trafford and Leshem, 2008), my analysis and interpretation to reflect her representation of him as a hardworking provider who was neither particularly nurturing nor expressive emotionally. I re-contacted Karen with my amendment. Thereafter, the datum was in my control.

Otherwise, participants expressed satisfaction with my transcription, findings, analysis, implications and conclusions drawn (except for Simon who migrated, Chrissy and Nathan who moved to undisclosed addresses). This complexity showed that while participant validation is advised ethically, it remains a complex process. At some stage I had to take control or complete responsibility for the data, analysis and conclusions, avoiding further respondent consultation (Anderson and Arsenault, 2002); yet ensuring that they did not feel exploited or abandoned especially at the end my research process (LeCompte, 1993).

Therefore, my participants' involvement placed much responsibility on me to employ a range of strategies to protect them from professional harm. I did not disclose my sources, location or make connections that could identify them, so their views remained private, (see also Appendix P, p.285).

3.10.3 Dealing with painful, sensitive and emotional issues – The interview process

In the interviews, I spoke to teachers about aspects of their personal values, Christian faith and professional practice that remain highly personal and intimate (Sikes, 2006). They carry 'potentially threatening effects for participants when their private experiences are under investigation and research is concerned with social control' (Squire et al. 2014, p.99); risk of loss of professional standing if views are known and are deemed to contravene school or national policy guidelines or statutory requirements. This could have also resulted in them being exposed, discriminated against, reprimanded for professional misconduct or threats made to their jobs. Thus, the in-depth interviewing required for studying sensitive topics (Lee,

1993) suggested that life history remained a significantly appropriate method given my research focus (Goodson and Sikes, 2001).

Not only was emotional sensitivity possibly experienced by the informants as they 'recalled different memories' (Atkinson, 1998), but I could also be affected as I listened to their stories. It was possible to become sympathetic as a participant researcher with potential for being 'too native for objective analysis/interpretation' as well as the challenge of knowing 'a setting and make it unfamiliar' (Measor and Woods, 1991, p.69) added to this intricacy. I used sensitive interviewing strategies asking appropriate questions, allowing flexibility through 'prompts and probes' as required for depth of meaning or clarification (Drever, 2006, p.17); respected their privacy and provide a warm, non-judgemental, cordial atmosphere to encourage honest sharing (Goodson and Sikes, 2001 and Clough, 2002).

I attempted to pose such questions in a neutral manner, allowing participants time and space to reflect. Interviewing them about aspects of their Christian faith and values, regarding their teaching approaches is highly personal. Cohen et al. (2011) recommend that the more sensitive the research, the more important it is to conduct face-to–face interviews for data collection. Additionally, teachers' beliefs about their reasons for adopting certain teaching approaches, also remains highly personal as this relates directly to their subject knowledge, professional identity and conduct. Acknowledging and making provision for this was crucial as I could do damage to their reputations and professional careers, if their responses are traced back to them.

3.10.4 Ensuring confidentiality, privacy and anonymity

My research meant that I had to establish common ground and rapport plus establishing and sustaining relationships over an extended period. I was also privy to personal information in the shared narratives of teachers as 'new meanings' evolved from their stories (Atkinson, 1998, p.62), taking care that answers provided by teachers could not be overheard by passers-by. As carefully outlined in my ethics application, I ensured the safekeeping of all materials. I used separating identifying markers from the data to protect their identity, data, titles, institutions and positions. I

did not disclose the names of my participants or make available the transcripts or audio recording of their interviews to third parties.

These safeguards I put in place to prevent damage to their reputations, professional and personal relationships and career and to prevent responses being traced back to them. I ensured that I made no connection of my participants' identities to my supervisors. Furthermore, no data was stored on the university or school servers. There are also ethical concerns for the teacher, CCCU and partner schools. If selected teachers were from schools in partnership with the university and therefore are colleagues, revealing or discovering their identities and views could be in conflict; thus, the precautions outlined contributed in protecting their anonymity. This disclosure could cause professional harm to the teachers and further damage the reputation and credibility of the university. Despite these strategies, anonymity and confidentiality are complex issues and there are limits to both concepts.

3.10.5 Results of study and control

Overall, I included teachers at different stages of data collection, interview feedbacks, transcription, analysis and interpretation and conclusions drawn. Some participants including Simon requested only a summary of the study when completed; others like Ester, Nikki, Karen and Tim expressed an interest in full access to my findings. Whereas, I have written to thank all participants for their participation, I intend to write to notify them of the final research publication and the nature of public access at the appropriate time, online or in university library.

3.11 Conclusion

With a view to explore the complex interconnection between participants' beliefs, professional identity and the effect of this relationship on approaches to teaching sensitive and controversial issues, it was necessary to use a method that illuminated, emphasised, explored and encompassed the subjective experiences of the participants themselves; their thoughts, feelings, perceptions and practice (Goodson and Sikes, 2001). I also acknowledged some intricacies of interviewing teachers about their faith and professional identities. I located myself in the research, outlining my design, participants, instrumentation and procedures to gain participant access, recruit, interview, transcribe and analyse life history data. I restated my philosophical

stance and justification for using the life history method. The chapter concludes with an explanation and justification of the ethical considerations I employed to protect my participants.

In the next chapter, I will provide a description of my participants' profiles and the interview findings as narrated by them, taken from the transcripts. The chapter includes three sections. In the first, I will underpin and contextualise the research findings by outlining the demographics of the participants, their profiles and initial life stories. I will also consider the findings from and implications of the pilot study data.

In the second section, I will focus on presenting the findings from my main eleven teacher-participants with the themes and categories assigned, taken from the interview schedule and data. These range from initial personal life stories to their responses to the five specific research questions, which are addressed in the third section. I will identify, analyse and interrogate the emerging themes and categories from the transcripts themselves in chapter 5.

CHAPTER 4

Presentation of findings

Section ONE

4.1 Introduction: Demographics of participants

I selected thirteen participants including two for the pilot study (both male secondary teachers) comprehensive schools for this study. Of the main participants, seven were females and four males. Except for Mark in the pilot (African decent), all participants were white British teachers, except for Jim who is white South African. Their school types ranged from primary (2) to secondary (10) including one Junior High (Fig. 4.1). These are located in Kent, in the south east (SE) of England and included districts of Chatham, Canterbury, Margate, Ashford, Tenterden and Folkestone. The map of the Kent in the SE below (Figure 4.2) shows the spread of participants.

MALE	FEMALE	SCHOOL TYPE			AGE RANGE
		PRIMARY	**JUNIOR**	**SECONDARY**	
4 (plus 2 pilot)	7	2	1	8 (plus 2 Pilot)	26-62

Figure 4.1: Summary of school types of main participants

Figure 4.2: Map of Kent districts and towns

All except one participant is married with children. Their job titles vary from supply teacher to Deputy Head, with ages ranging from 26 to 62 years and covering teaching experiences from five to forty years, (Karen just retired). PSHE delivery methods at the time of data collection, ranged from tutor time, few discrete and primarily integrated provisions. The largest group represented was PSHE integrated mainly in Religious Education (RE). Whilst all teachers (except Emma), had other subject responsibilities, none was qualified with PSHE certification (Appendices C and X). This seems to corroborate with research findings highlighting the gravity of the issue regarding untrained and underprepared PSHE teachers (Ofsted, 2013; PSHE Association, 2014; Mead, 2004; Oulton et al. 2004) as described in chapter 2.

4.2. Participants' profiles and initial stories

The initial stories from their timelines and profiles below will help to set the stage for, and provide an underpinning and contextualisation for later analysing and making sense of the data (chapter 5). Except for three participants, (who insisted on using their real names), all names are pseudonyms (See Ethical considerations in Chapter 3). Apart from direct quotes or references, the description of my participants reflects my summary as narrated by them in their timelines. Such description contributes to protecting their anonymity.

Mark

Mark described himself as a 40-year-old African man, married and has been teaching since 1993. He was born into a Christian family. This contributed significantly to his present personal values and Christian beliefs. This religious formation undergirds the principles, standards and morals he now adopts. They inform his teaching as well as the primary socialisation of his children. He immigrated to England fifteen years ago and currently teaches Religious Studies, History and PSHE while embarking on part time postgraduate studies in Education.

Tim

Tim is a UK citizen who migrated to the south east. He grew up in non-religious atheistic home. He had his own personal and unique experience of conversion after a major tragic international incident that caused him to reflect on life's purpose, the impact and nature of evil and human suffering in the world. In his words:

> *… When I saw what happened, I was a bit of a physical wreck for two or three days…I couldn't go to work…couldn't stop crying, was just shaking with fear. I became a Christian because I thought we've got to stop this…the sheer fact of turning to God and praying is the only you way you are going to overcome evil (Tim).*

Tim is very involved in his local church and serves mainly in the music ministry. He has been teaching for fifteen years in a mixed comprehensive high school where he credits his overcoming professional obstacles to his faith. He is married with young children.

4.2.1 Introducing my main participants – Stories from their time lines

Adele

Adele was born in Western Europe to British parents, who provided a loving, nurturing Christian upbringing. They later moved to the south east of England living in various districts. Hers was a very closely-knit family with strong military connections. After her general certificate of secondary education examinations (GCSE), she took a gap year, travelled abroad, and met her spouse. Having returned to the UK and did teacher training, she graduated and got married the same

year. She taught first in a Junior School in the south east and is currently in senior leadership elsewhere (Appendix Q, Adele's transcript, p. 286).

Nathan

Born in 1989 at the time his dad was training for ordination, Nathan and family migrated from north England to the southeast. He has worked in a church in north England but has returned to a full-time post in the south east in Christian ministry. At his current secondary school, Nathan is involved with the Christian Union and teaches RE and leads the PSHE programme.

Janet

Born in the north of England, Janet is 52 years of age. She had a happy upbringing and still has a close relationship with her family. Of Church of England background, she now attends her local Baptist church. She studied languages at college of Further education, and then began teacher training. Discouraged by the current emphasis on targets and outcomes in education, Janet now significantly reduced her hours and does supply teaching in a primary school.

Emma

Born in 1978 and attended a little village primary school in the south east, Emma attended high school then went on to university in north England, where she studied Social Sciences. Returning to the south east, she worked as a residential social worker for approximately 4 years. She soon settled in a committed relationship and started a family. The challenge of balancing this with work within social services proved challenging so, she thought:

> *'I can teach!' So perhaps a little bit misguided, I felt that teaching was an easy option.*

With the successful completion of the Postgraduate Certificate in Education (PGCE) qualification, she gained employment at a girls' secondary grammar school as the fulltime PSHE teacher.

She explains:

> *They had just taken it from the form teachers and wanted me to take it over and teach it as a discrete subject which was fantastic so, erm…it linked in very well with my social work experience.*

Simon

Simon abruptly finished his formal education at 17 and went to seek employment in a factory. He lived with his girlfriend. They later got married and 'started a family.' Simon recalls how his wife then became a Christian and how it affected his life and relationship:

> *… the next stage was when my wife became a Christian erm, which at first I was fine with then. Erm, then I became quite anti… we hit a bumpy patch in our marriage erm, round about 7-9 years of marriage…we had a crisis of…erm… my wife was into Christianity attending Inter-schools' Christian fellowship (ISCF) and erm…she was actively trying to evangelise me and I was very much rebelling at that and was angry.*

As the crisis unfolded, Simon did some personal research into Christianity after admiring the depth of his wife's commitment to her faith. He concluded:

> *…reflecting on it, how much this Jesus meant to my wife (named removed), I just decided that if he meant that much then I really need to know Him (Jesus), so at that point I converted to Christianity…became a Christian…There were times when things weren't easy but I never look back since! (Simon)*

Nikki

Nikki survived what she described as a 'challenging and tumultuous teenage stage.' She recounts the death of her father at an early age. For her, the upbringing was Christian and 'quite strict' in the Church of England denomination. She was married at age 20 and lived in the south east ever since. Nikki described herself as being 'actively atheist' until about 22. Nikki recalls the effectual prayers of her church

community for her sick baby who has ongoing health issues. This experience influenced her life. She explains:

… but that kind of took me back to having a faith, (because) I had an experience that took me away from having a faith.

Karen

Karen recalls a very stressful childhood experience, from a controlling mother to a father who although was supportive, focused more on his role as provider (instrumental role) as opposed to more nurturing (expressive) role. Yet, she had the advantage of having 'three very Godly Christian god-parents who have been supportive throughout my life.' Her Christian involvement from a young age including being head girl of the choir was useful. She went to college and recalled having a very lonely experience there. She struggled with issues of personal identity which led to her 'going a little bit off the rails.'

She attended a Church of England chapel and later 'met a wonderful Christian boyfriend and soul mate', who later became her husband and a vicar. Karen recalled the marriage breakdown of a family member, a miscarriage, death of a parent and the other admitted to a residential home. She is over 60 years old, taught RE and PSHE and has 40 years teaching experience.

Esther

Esther attended an independent Christian school through infant, junior and secondary where she sat GCSE. Both her parents became 'born-again Christians' in their teenage years. Her mom was in education while dad worked in Christian ministry. Esther had a very strong Christian upbringing as she now explains:

I started out with a real in-depth upbringing with a focus on the Bible. … erm, I also went to church and was filled with the Holy Spirit as a teenager… erm … I was never exposed to mainstream 'world' at all and so struggled for couple of years but kept my faith…and erm, went through a massive journey of….(reflecting)…as soon as I was baptized I started questioning my faith and questioned if there was a God and if there is, how do I know it's Christianity.

(Esther)

76

The end of university life however, changed all this as she confessed an unwavering faith and love for Jesus. Married soon thereafter, Esther did RE teacher training in the same year and almost immediately started teaching PSHE. Having now moved to senior leadership team (SLT), she now trains others to coordinate PSHE/RE.

Jim

Born in 1978 in Africa, Jim (white African) reported being bullied in school; that plus family business bankruptcy, adversely affected his confidence. An upbringing in a racist environment also contributed to the negative attitudes and values fuelling discrimination and prejudice. However, a two-year period in Latin America helped him challenge these attitudes and engender a love and respect for diversity.

Returning to Africa, Jim decided to 'live for Christ' and was baptised. He started teaching in January 2006. Jim recalls:

> *I originally came to the UK to teach Chemistry and Science. Erm….decided to change over to Math for various reasons, one of which was faith-related… The two schools I taught at expected me to teach evolutionary theory as absolute unquestionable fact and erm, I'm afraid I can't do that!   (Jim)*

Terry

Terry recalls a life of transition and adjustments, some of which were traumatic for personal reasons. Born in a law enforcement family, he developed moral values and high standards. Terry attended a grammar school in the south east and struggled with finding his own identity and fitting in socially. He puts it this way:

> *…I learned not to belittle people (but) to value them. Then going to work part time helped me to meet new people… erm…I did some work in a primary school and felt drawn towards teaching as a career...*

Terry's teaching experience includes 12 years in a primary school; junior school as well as supply teaching in various schools in different areas parts of the south east…in Art, RE and PSHE. He is married with four children and now a newly qualified church minister.

Chrissy

Chrissy was married at twenty-one. She narrated,

> *I wasn't brought up in a Christian family at all erm, was very anti-Christianity erm, my parents were not anti-Christianity we just didn't go to church. I started to go to church with a friend when I was 15…16. I was quickly hooked into the youth group we had a youth group of about 120 youngsters…I was converted fairly quickly and was preaching by the time I was 19! (Chrissy).*

This amazing story continues with reports of positive influences of friends who shared her values, and Christian beliefs into tertiary education. With a smile, she noted that most of them got married to individuals within that tightly knit group of Christians.

Chrissy managed the challenge of motherhood simultaneously training for the Methodist ministry. After years of Christian ministry, she took a sabbatical then entered teaching. She outlines her reason for this change:

> *…I can exercise my ministry most effectively in terms of within schools…I mean I have only taught for 15 years...so in terms of teaching, I am not that experience in that sense…* (Chrissy)

Nevertheless, she rose to the ranks of senior leadership. Recently she embarked on a new post as Head teacher.

4.3 Conclusion from timeline stories

While most teachers had a Christian upbringing, three had 'unchurched' backgrounds. Teachers mentioned stories of loving and nurturing experiences as well as challenging ones. They dealt with a range of difficulties including relocations, divorce, death, demanding parents, loneliness, economic hardships including bankruptcy, sickness, cancer, miscarriage and complex life's dilemmas for which there seemed no easy or immediate answers. They highlighted significant events, which seemed to counteract some of these perplexing life events. These included baptism of children into the faith, job changes and promotions, academic achievements, marriage, fostering and ordination to the priesthood.

4.4 Pilot findings: Personal values and stories of conflict

The processes of adopting their values range from parents, church, siblings, to those developed over time and learning through life's experiences. These experiences however, conflicted in different ways and to varying extents with their practice as outlined in the stories they narrated. The contentious nature of values and professional practice is well documented (Smith and Shortt, 2003; Bryan and Revell, 2011). Schon (1991) also acknowledges the complexity of negotiating a balance of 'values, purposes, goals and interests' in practice (p.17). Some contentious issues that were highlighted in the pilot were maintaining balance, neutrality, and dealing with students' prejudicial views, for example on immigration. They also highlight inner conflicts they faced when required to be non-judgemental and accepting especially on issues of homosexuality.

Another area of potential conflict had to do with students asking about their personal Christian beliefs on issues or of God, which required them to judge appropriate response boundaries (Ryder and Campbell 1988; Inman et al. 2003). For example, Mark relayed an incident of disagreement with a student about the existence of God, where he felt that the student's tone was hostile, offensive and disrespectful to those of faith present, both to him as well as to Christian students. This Mark pointed out to the student who later apologised.

4.4.1 Christian faith and beliefs

Mark's approach to interpreting Scriptures evolved over time; however for him, the Ten Commandments are absolutes and fixed, embraced as an authoritative guide for Christian thought and life (Woltenstorff, 1980; Smith and Shortt, 2003). He sees the nature of the teaching profession as being restrictive. As such, he tends to embrace a more 'guarded approach' on matters of faith sharing. He adopts a generic approach if asked by students, choosing to say, 'some Christians would say…' This reportedly prevents him giving his personal views.

Tim however, embraced the authority of Scripture, arguing that there are too many conflicting views; therefore, an open approach to Biblical interpretation is required.

Like Mark, he also used disclaimers in lessons when asked to share his personal faith perspective on sensitive and controversial issues. Furthermore, they both sought to develop critical thinking in students. In sharing the development of his personal faith, Tim adopts a 'What would Jesus do?' (WWJD) approach to life. This creates an awareness of God's presence to guide his conduct. However, with maturity he is adopting a more tolerant and even compromising attitude to life's complexing issues.

4.4.2 Initial findings from the research questions

The findings suggested that both participants identified sensitive and controversial issues as such in their practice because they directly affected students and triggered a response from them. One example of such topic given was 'domestic violence.' Sensitive and controversial topics can cause discomfort, harm, upset potentially (Ofsted, 2012), and require teachers' knowledge of pupils' backgrounds. In one story outlined, a girl walked out crying because of the issues that affected her. Some of these issues that the pilot identified included racism, immigration, radicalisation, child sex protection, abuse, bullying, sexting, family life, foxhunting, abortion and politics.

Tim told the story of how a lesson on *Loss* was particularly poignant to a child whose father had died. In this case, the welfare officer addressed the issue, providing as one option, the right to opt out of future lessons of similar sensitivity. Tim wants students to be respectful, accepting and non-judgemental. Both participants agreed in the pilot study data that it is difficult to separate personal values, Christian beliefs and professional practice. Furthermore, there is a 'strong link' between them. Tim further argues:

> *Values made me a good PSHE teacher, SLT recommended me because of my beliefs, and you need empathy to teach sensitive and controversial issues.*

When contemplating the relationship between his personal values, Christian faith in addition to his teaching approaches, Mark states that:

…faith is personal and inseparable…there is a strong link between faith and practice…there is a clash with expectations in delivery.

Tim's approach of valuing students as individuals and showing them forgiveness represents one way of linking his faith to practice. However, a story of personal struggle with same sex marriage, gender conflict reflected his inner wrestling. He asks, 'do we reassess our beliefs and values?' He concluded that 'we should defend faith but not convert or evangelise' Likewise, Mark agreed stating, 'we need a level playing field, society needs both religious and secular views.'

4.4.3 Wider context to the issues

They (teachers in the pilot) cited recent events in the national news including the bakery owners who objected to decorating a cake supporting same-sex marriage, and the bed and breakfast owners who refused hospitality to a homosexual couple. Quite firmly, both teachers argued that 'Christianity is marginalised but not Islam!' Tim states:

> *We are a Christian country but hostile to Christianity. We must 'switch off on our jobs!*

Mark reiterated:
> *Yes, society is secularised; faith is not valued…policy makers need to consider those with faith too.*

Mark told a story of having a
> *…group hug before an external exam and the students requested prayer. I grappled with this but obliged, then told the Head next day. We are restricted and controlled by laws and policies.*

From his cultural expression of Christianity, evangelical and conservative perspective, Mark's interpretation of 'prayer' seems to be more than merely wishing his pupils well or delivering a more 'liberal' Christian prayer; but instead, an explicit

blessing or language calling on God's spirit in a more spirit articulated prayer. However, is there a suggestion that this is unacceptable compared to a more 'liberal' Christian prayer?

To my question on the potential impact of their individual life stories, Tim's response was more of a challenge,

> *Christians have to accept that there is no choice sometimes. Saint Paul advises to obey the government. God understands the conflict and difficult situations we face. Being true to the faith is our desire but how would we cope in the face of persecution and death?*

A perception shared is that the ascendancy of secularisation, which has also infiltrated guidelines, policies and the law, inhibits faith sharing with students. Given the nature of their narratives, it would seem that pilot participants might read into their professional context an experience of the beatitudes, 'Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake. (Matthew 5:11, Bible, KJV.) In other words, there seems to be a worldview-affirming situation where the difficulties they have enable them to articulate their Christian faith as the suffering sacrificial faithful under opposition from a disbelieving world…perhaps too self-aggrandising.

To conclude this section, Mark laments:

> *…it is even difficult to pray for others and to bring faith into the professional sphere, secularisation is dominant…teaching embodies an inherent fear of disclosing faith to our students.*

SECTION TWO

4.5 Findings from the main interviews: Data source and process

My source of evidence for this section comes from the narrated life stories reflected in teachers' perceptions, experiences and insights gained through the interview

schedule data. These bear much similarity with the findings from the pilot study. Having recorded the interviews as described in the methodology chapter 3, I needed to produce a 'valid written report' of them depicting my thematic 'first stage analysis' (Gillham, 2005, p.136). To arrive at my findings I transcribed the interviews verbatim and reduced the transcript notes to their key points followed by identifying and putting the 'substantive statements into categories' as suggested by Gillham (p.136). Each one took an average of 12 hours to transcribe manually from the recorder, with a total count of over 120,000 words. The challenge was to reduce the data identifying the substantive from the redundant elements, yet maintaining its validity, character and quality.

4.5.1 Primary socialisation and childhood influences

The influence of parents seems to suggest a direct connection with some values embraced by the teachers. The hypocritical and unfaithful conduct of her parents, contributed to a faith crisis for Emma. Whilst Nikki had a challenging adolescence, she had a supportive family network. She now adopts and models this to her own children. Other teachers cited having stable and nurturing upbringings that helped to foster 'Christian moral values'. They had modelled for them, values including faith, charity, love, meritocracy, commitment, contentment, ambition and resilience. Like Nikki, some teachers now inculcate these and other attitudes, beliefs and values in their own children.

Overall, the teachers seemed to make sense of their parental influences in different ways. For example, some elements of primary socialisation influenced some teachers accordingly:

- Having significant impact but had to clarify their own values, beliefs and identity especially since in some cases they were too fundamental and narrow.
- A controlling upbringing led Karen to adopt a more permissive and laid-back approach to childrearing which later backfired.
- Struggled with racism, prejudice and discrimination prior to challenging them
- A strong sense of law and order, justice, discipline and fairness expressed by those from military and law enforcement backgrounds.

4.5.2 Life's central themes and future aspirations

From these respective backgrounds, teachers adopted various meanings and themes, which now seem to guide and inform their lives. They spoke of values like stability, independence, developing personal identity, perseverance, purpose, charity, Christian service, care for the environment and doing God's will. For Nikki after her 'destructive teenage path', she highlighted security and determination as drivers in her life. Emma, after witnessing unfaithfulness and hypocrisy in her parents, now deeply values authenticity and empathy. Likewise, Simon spoke of being less self-centred and more compassionate following the birth of his children.

All teachers want either to continue their career prospects in education or work in various aspects of 'Christian ministry' and service. For example, some aspire for headship (Chrissy already achieved this since her interview; Esther and Adele, both Assistant Heads). Adele and Chrissy both desire 'to make an impact' to balance the perceived lop-sidedness of targets and outcomes which seem to take precedence over the wellbeing of teachers and students.

The aspiration to further Christian service is also noteworthy among the teacher-participants. For instance, Nathan is now pursuing a degree in theology with a view to later enter the priesthood. Chrissy was a Minister before a teacher and Jim expressed desires for the priesthood. Karen is a retired vicar's wife who became a teacher only because female vicars were not ordained then. Other teachers expressed a desire for God's purpose, guidance and to engage in fostering, overseas mission and helping others based on their own life experiences.

4.5.3 Personal values inculcated and adopted: Developing an identity

Teachers spoke of Biblical, moral and liberal values. They identified love, care, listening, empathy, acceptance, non-judgementalism, co-operation, teamwork, openness, honesty, critical thinking, resilience, modelling God's love and prioritising faith. In adopting personal identities, teachers outlined interesting stories leading to them adopting their personal values. There are some significant findings:

   a. Teachers had to clarify their values over time and with maturity

b. Christian disciplines including Bible reading, church attendance and involvement, and the community of faith played a significant part in formulating the values they adopted as their own

c. Meritocracy as a vehicle for upward social mobility was celebrated

d. Life's experiences challenged their assumptions and engendered greater levels of compassion, selflessness, openness, acceptance and empathy

e. Current professional practice is underpinned by Christian values, with a deep relationship with Jesus and a strong desire for students to succeed

f. Applying these values to life's crises contributed to them finding their identities

g. Raising children seemed to have changed the views some teachers have of God and resulted in a more loving, caring and empathetic approach, away from her more 'fundamental evangelical to a more liberal one' in practice (Chrissy).

4.5.4 Values transition and challenging assumptions

Except for Nikki, Karen and Jim who cited extremely challenging circumstances in their upbringing, the teachers seemed generally, to celebrate stable and loving childhood experiences. However, as they grew and matured they identified and clarified their own values and identities. For some it was during or after university, risky and poor life choices including petty criminality. However, these life experiences served to challenge their assumptions and engendered a greater sense of introspection.

These experiences led or contributed to value transition. These led to a more focused, less narcissistic life in Simon's case. For others, it was being less dogmatic and uncaring and developing a deeper sense of care, justice and fairness for the poor and marginalised. These changes however, are not conflict-free. As with the pilot studies, other issues raised included the level of low aspiration, apathy and indifference to pupils' future career expressed by some students as well the

prejudicial attitudes and views expressed by others on matters of poverty, immigration, race and sexuality**.**

Another issue was 'Evolution'. In her story, Adele had to counteract the upset caused to a deeply distressed student by seeking permission from SLT to present the arguments for creationism. Two teachers noted an over-emphasis on the mechanics of sex and little focus on healthy relationships (chapter 2) or abstinence as an option. Emma found that issues of sex caused conflict when a female student fiercely disagreed and challenged her stance on 'anal, oral sex and fluid sexuality.' There seems to be a tension between aspects of the media's representation of sexual life, which tends to emphasise and overstate particular sexual practices. This climate can not only influence students but also contribute to the difficulty of articulating a professional ethical, professional or theological view. Thus, teachers can face tensions between health guidance, libertarian sexual attitudes, women's rights, gay rights and religious rights, which challenges the nature of what constitutes healthy SRE in teaching. These are the views of these teachers.

4.5.5 Resolving areas of conflict with students

Primary school teachers (Terry and Janet) agreed that for them, this is less an issue to contend with as pupils seemed to be more open and less likely to confront or challenge. For the secondary school teachers, however, conflicts seemed more prevalent. They identified a range of potentially conflicting topics including: pornography, terrorism, multiculturalism, abortion, racism and abstinence. Teachers addressed these by encouraging respect, courtesy, debate and critical thinking (more in research question 3 later in this chapter). Five teachers agreed personal values should be transmitted, but five also thought that they should only be, as and when appropriate and inevitable to maintain balance and counteract potentially prejudiced views to which students are sometimes exposed in their home environments.

The impossibility of teaching value-neutral is acknowledged by Kelly (1989). Nikki and Janet thought that it was not appropriate to impose teachers' values on pupils but should only model the desired conduct or attitudes. For Esther, transmitting

'character values' like not interrupting, love, morals and liberty are quite appropriate without undue influence. There are some general areas of consensus on using disclaimers, being specific about what is personal and stating that the teacher's view only present one interpretation of the issue.

4.5.6 The place of Christian beliefs in personal identity and professional practice

As seen from the time lines, teachers had different experiences of coming to faith. The figure 4.3 below shows religious affiliation (as self-defined by teachers), involvement and factors influencing faith decisions.

Coming to faith	Number of teachers	Influences leading to faith	Religious involvements	Current Religious affiliations	
Christian upbringing	6	Parents, youth convention, personal decision	Sunday school, youth meetings, family prayers, chapel and assemblies, religious festival, choir	Baptist/evangelical	2
				Anglican (COE)	5
				Evangelical/Pentecostal	3
No religious upbringing	3	Adversities, spouse, life experiences		Catholic	1
				Methodist	1
				Evangelical Anglican	1

Figure 4.3: Religious affiliation, involvement and factors influencing faith decisions

Figure 4.3 suggests that an evangelical persuasion seems to reflect the largest number of teachers who so self-defined. In addition, most teachers had a Christian upbringing. Their religious involvement continued into adulthood. Findings suggest that all teachers are currently serving in their local churches in various capacities. These include leadership, children's ministry, music/worship, small groups, youth ministry, missions, lead services, coffee bar, pastoral duties, hospitality, Bible study, counselling, prayers and preaching. As also shown in Figure 3 above, they hold a range of denominational persuasions that inform their interpretation of Scripture and its application to the sensitive and controversial issues they face in their practice.

Eleven teachers considered that they are open to different interpretations, suggesting that there are no 'black and white areas'. Of this, six described the Bible as a 'working document' and that their core convictions are 'fixed but flexible' in their interpretation and application. For Janet and Esther however, the Bible is 'the Truth, the Word of God…a living word that is applicable', an understanding that seems to build on Hart's (1995) theological position of it as '…a living and active faith in Christ...' (p.5). Karen referred to her training in RE which exposed her to a broader interpretation of it as a 'literal document' (see figure 4.4. below). This position for her seemed to foster a greater sense of appreciation for diversity and inclusivity. Teachers agreed that there is conflict on how the Bible maybe interpreted and applied to life's complex issues within the context of teaching sensitive and controversial issues. Regardless, they all concluded that there must always be respect for others' opposing views.

Teachers' self-defined theological positions

TEACHERS	DEMONINATION	BELIEF POSITION
ADELE	Baptist	Evangelical
NATHAN	Anglican	Evangelical
EMMA	St Mary's – Pentecostal* (Started attending a year ago*)	Evangelical
SIMON	Pentecostal and Anglican	Liberal
JANET	Baptist	Evangelical
NIKKI	Church of England	Liberal (open to context and interpretation)
KAREN	Church of England	Liberal
ESTHER	Charismatic Church of England	Evangelical (with Liberal traits)
JIM	Catholic	Conservative
TERRY	Anglican	Liberal (open to context and interpretation)
CHRISSY	Methodist	Liberal

Figure 4:4 Research data analysis showing teachers' expressed church affiliation as self-defined

4.5.7 Strategies employed in faith sharing

Teachers agree that the extent to which faith maybe shared while teaching issues of a sensitive and controversial nature is complex and laden with inherent risks. Among these are the potential to be misconstrued, having parents complain about insensitivity or undue influence, unprofessional conduct or teachers simply divulging too much information especially if sharing with students outside of lessons when teachers' 'guards might be down.'

Collectively, they contributed suggestions for sharing a Christian perspective in a relatively safely and professional manner. They mirror those suggested for personal values:

- Emphasise that personal views are such and represent only one view
- Use disclaimers to preface views
- Give opportunities for students to challenge these views
- Be objective, critical and respectful
- Apply the Scriptures to the issues as the Word of God
- Protect children's vulnerability and choose age appropriate content

4.5.8 Development and transformation in Christian faith

The experiences of Christian faith for teachers reflect a process of adaptation and transformation as they embarked on different stages and experiences in their lives. Teachers, who had a stable and God-centred childhood still identified, clarified and embraced their own personal faith later in life. They collectively identified various factors that contributed to this transformation, growth and positioning. Like values transition, they cited life's experiences and traumas, multiculturalism, educational advancement and raising their own children. These experiences engendered a sense of love, care, compassion and empathy. Emma for example, pointed to her child out of wedlock and current state of cohabitation. These she finds deeply conflicting but justifies them as helping her to be more non-judgemental of others.

These changes in their Christian experiences seem to move from fundamental, traditional, evangelical perspectives to adopting views that are more liberal. Cook (1996) and later Wright (2004), welcome this transformation. They challenge the holding of any Christian view as being authoritative to be problematic. My findings suggest that teachers are:

- More self-assured and confident in their faith as it develops; it reflects deeper conviction as personal faith is worked out in life's situations
- More opened, less dogmatic and subjective
- Developing more childlike faith and a deeper personal relationship with Jesus
- Adopting wider interpretations of Scripture to life's contentious issues
- Learning to challenge narrow, racist or prejudicial issues
- Developing a stable faith despite life's vicissitudes

Prayer for God's guidance and direction reportedly undergirds these changes and development of faith as they possess inherent conflicts.

4.5.9 PSHE Teaching: Experiences, perceptions, tensions and practice strategies

They were at best 'limited or non-existent': this was the response most teachers gave to their own personal experiences of how they were taught PSHE in school. Some recalled a provision integrated in other subjects, offered in tutor time, by house parents (in boarding school), focus afternoons, in 6th form on careers; or in one case, a single talk in year 10 on 'masturbation'. In summary, three teachers had integrated provisions, three had a mixture of provisions and others simply cannot recall any provision at all.

From this background information, I wanted to hear the personal stories of how they became PSHE teachers themselves. It was part of RE or the primary curriculum and hence expected that it be delivered was the experience of some. One teacher currently co-ordinates the PSHE provision and teach some classes. Three teachers gladly took the challenge because of their backgrounds: Emma has a social work

degree and sees PSHE as an extension of that caring, nurturing role, while Jim previously taught PSHE under a different name in Africa. Chrissy is an ordained Minister and also sees PSHE as an extension of Christian ministry.

I wanted to probe much deeper to see how this translated into their delivery approaches. For most teachers, this corroborates the findings of previous report (Ofsted, 2012), that the training provided is limited. One teacher referred to her initial teacher training programme as providing support. In fact, none of the 13 teachers including the pilot study has a PSHE certification qualification (Appendix C). Claire and Alden (2007) bear this out in their research. In addition, a later DfE (2011) study suggests that 90% of teachers then lacked PSHE qualifications. Well-trained PSHE teachers 'are best placed' to deliver effective provision (PSHE Association, 2014). Teachers reported using materials from the PSHE association, PSHE Lead, school assemblies, form time provisions, 55-minute lesson weekly plus 6 focus days (Nathan only), use of text books, through RE and collapsed or enrichment days to aid in their subject delivery.

4.5.10 Personal qualities of the PSHE teacher and subject identity stereotypes

From the data, I selected a list of qualities to reflect some perceptions of what makes an effective PSHE teacher. See figure 4.5.

Openness **selflessness** **sacrificial** **social skills** **flexible**	**facilitator** **good rapportt** **good classroom management** **model desired conduct** **approachable**	**engaging** **passionate** **good subject knowledge** **not easily embarassed**

empathy **sensitivity** **relevant** **good use of questions**	**non-judgemental** **encourage informed life choices** **respect others' views** **Be a person**
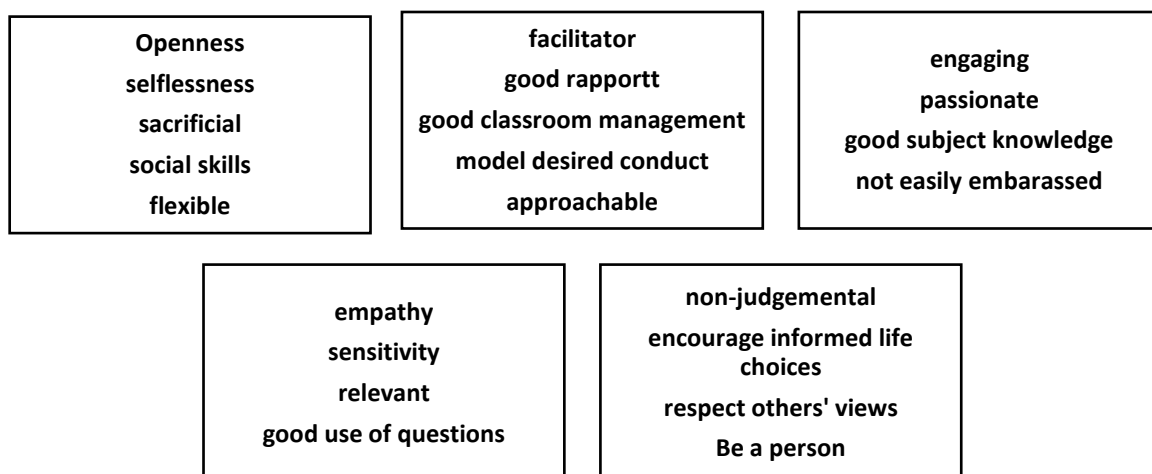
Figure 4.5: Showing teachers perceptions of qualities in PSHE teachers

Teachers also recognised the perceptions and stereotypes held of them by other teachers. For Karen, 'PSHE teachers are well respected' primarily due to the sensitive and controversial issues they teach. Others noted that because it is not an 'examined' subjected externally, PSHE teachers have more time for creative and engaging lessons. Some see it as a bridge between the curriculum and the pastoral. Teachers did not comment on any negative perceptions of the subject for example, to question or challenge its relevance in the curriculum.

4.5.11 Influences of personal values and Christian beliefs on professional practice

All teachers agreed that their Christian faith is an integral part of their professional practice (later addressed in research questions). For Adele, it 'massively influenced' her teaching. She prays before school ('covertly'); admitted, and defended the position that her faith enhanced practice. The other teachers in support suggested in their stories that:

- It is relevant to life as it is part of their identities which cannot simply be 'switched on and off' (Janet); they are 'absolutely intertwined' and reflected through love, care, valuing the students (Emma)
- This connection reflects God's calling and faith which underpins teaching, (Simon); Jim asserts that faith cannot be simply left at the door and be separated. Karen added:

> *The teacher is a whole person, faith helps me influence pupils and avoids cold rigid lessons.*

Jim, previously disciplined for professional misconduct, outlined his personal story. This restraint followed an incident where he unwittingly shared his personal Christian views with students on an issue surrounding sexuality. He concludes the story thus:

> *Now I try to make no connection (between personal faith and professional practice)…I just work to pay the bills.*

Jim's stance seems to resonate with Arthur et al. (2010) who argue that when religion is relegated to the private spheres, there are likely responses. These include, 'aggressive intolerance, retreat and retaliation and restricting of religion to a private affair concerned with the edification and salvation of individuals and religious communities but with nothing to contribute to the wider society…' (p. 3).

The consensus on this theme of professional personal values, beliefs and practice seems to be, that all subject teachers teach their values but should own it and teach respectfully, modelling the required ones desired but with empathy. Smith and Shortt (2003) support this approach. They advocate an 'incarnational model'; that is, embodying the personal qualities then modelling them. Cooling (2003) also advocates a subtle or metaphorical approach (see chapter 2).

SECTION THREE

4.6 Specific research questions underpinning themes

Introduction

In this section, I will present my specific research findings in relation to my five research questions. The findings outlined in the previous section, directly connect with these questions forming a context for further illumination and exploration but also providing a backdrop to test for consistency (Chapter 5) in responses. I will structure this section under these five main themes I took from the interview schedule data, namely:

1. Identifying and defining sensitive and controversial Issues
2. Professional and personal identity: Identifying Issues and tensions
3. Managing personal and professional Issues
4. Relationship between Christian beliefs and teaching approaches
5. Christian beliefs and professional identity and practice - Wider context and implications

4.7 Theme: Identifying and defining sensitive and controversial issues

The nature of PSHE as a subject and the responses provided, suggest that the topics covered (Appendix W) are themselves sensitive and controversial (Ofsted,

2012). The literature (Chapter 2) suggests that attempts to define these issues are also inherently controversial (Cooling, 2012). The data in both pilot and main studies, suggest nonetheless that these topics, centred on the 'personal' 'social' 'health' 'economic' aspects of students' lives, (see figure 4.6) have the potential to:

-   Cause upset, distress or harm, affect core identity,
-   Cause difficulty or embarrassment in discussing them
-   engender different/strong view or a range of opinions held as valid, they relate to pupils' lives or circumstances, invoking strong responses, evoke strong emotions held as valid
-   Cause conflict for teachers and students
-   Foster extreme views and are debatable
-    Present views that conflict those of (mainstream) society

PSHE TOPICS CATEGORISED				
PERSONAL	**SOCIAL**	**HEALTH**	**ECONOMIC**	**CITIZENSHIP**
Hygiene Safety (online, home, school, out and about) Self-esteem body image, identity Personal goals, qualities and skills Puberty Roles and responsibilities	Friendships Bullying Family pressures Marriage (heterosexual and homosexual) Divorce Change and loss Death and bereavement	Drugs education (Including smoking, alcohol, legal highs) Healthy eating Mental health Sexually transmitted infections Promiscuity, Sexting, Pornography Healthy relationships Making healthy choices Mental and emotional health	Managing money and budgeting Mortgages Banking – savings and investments Job and career options Post 16 options University and vocational routes Interviews, CV writing, application forms Employability skills, The economic environment Consumerism	Human rights Democracy Laws Rights and responsibilities Multiculturalism Prejudice and racism Politics Homelessness Immigrants Laws Democratic process

Figure 4.6: Showing breakdown of topics under broad categories

4.7.1 Topic selection

Teachers employed a range of strategies to select and deliver these topics. For some, it is the 'PSHE Lead' as provided by the Local Education Authority (LEA), (now LA), through attending training conferences. Others identified the use of expert teachers, consultation with students and parents (surveys), PSHE Association or the Social and emotional aspects of learning (SEAL) schemes of work (SOW), Heads of departments or in some cases in primary settings, senior leadership team (SLT) delivering these topics. Fig. 7 shows some topics findings from the interview data.

Bullying	**Sex education**	**Mental health**
E-safety	**Drugs education**	**Pornography**
Body image	**The law**	**Female genital mutilation**
Radicalisation	**Politics**	**Sexting**
Faith issues	**Genetics**	**Abortion**
Sexuality	**Family life**	**Climate change**
Promiscuity	**Incarceration**	**Multiculturalism**
Domestic abuse	**Imigration**	
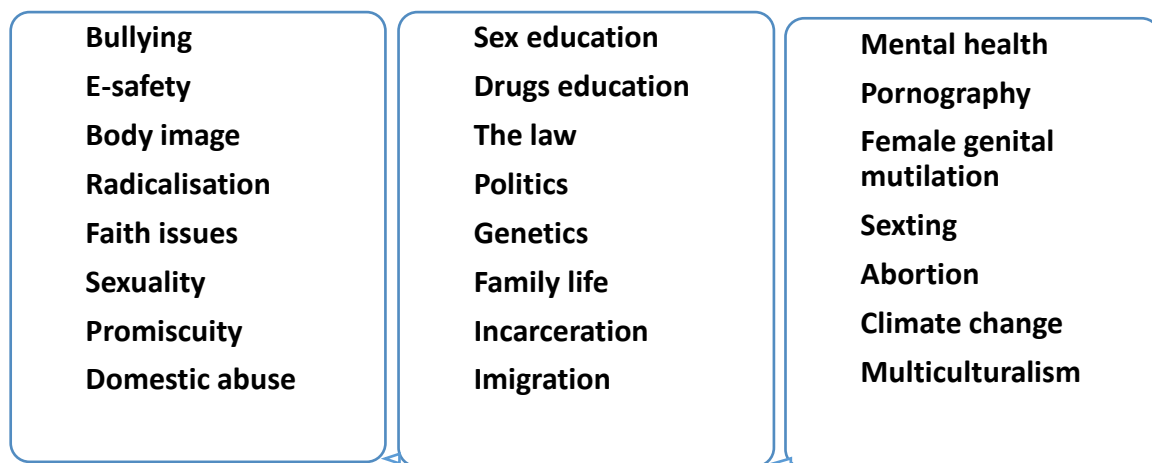
Figure 4.7: Sensitive and controversial topics suggested by teachers

4.7.2 Implications for identifying sensitive and controversial issues as such

The findings suggest that there are strong implications for identifying and subsequently teaching these topics. They require balance in their delivery, good subject knowledge, subject-specific training for effective teaching (Oulton et al. 2004), more careful planning/preparation and the ability to address opposing views or even challenge to assumptions, values and beliefs. They also require more sensitivity to the students' needs and circumstances. For teachers, conflict and discomfort can also potentially affect lesson quality. Additionally, teachers' lack of

passion, conviction or basic resources could further result in uninspiring lessons. It is clear from these responses, that teaching sensitive and controversial topics require objectivity, balance, neutrality (Cooling et al. 2015), criticality and also an understanding of legal and professional restrictions.

4.7.3 Delivery responsibilities

Teachers had mixed views as to who might assume responsibility to address these issues with pupils (see figure 8). Overall, they recognised that ultimate accountability rests with parents; however, other groups have a crucial role to play in their students' development. For example, the school, government, charities, faith groups, guest speakers and expert staff can and should contribute. The consensus is that we all have a moral duty (figure 8), as Adele points out, 'schools alone cannot mend the ills of society.' According to Karen, however, the school has greater responsibility as the home can be intolerant, prejudicial, narrow, parents embarrassed. In support, Chrissy adds:

> *School has a vital role to play, home might be too narrow…pupils need broader scope to explore.*

Nonetheless, there is no substitute for well-trained and resourced teachers supported by government guidance and (policy) framework. The matter of who should take responsibility for the delivery of PSHE is reflected in the responses teachers provided in figure 8.
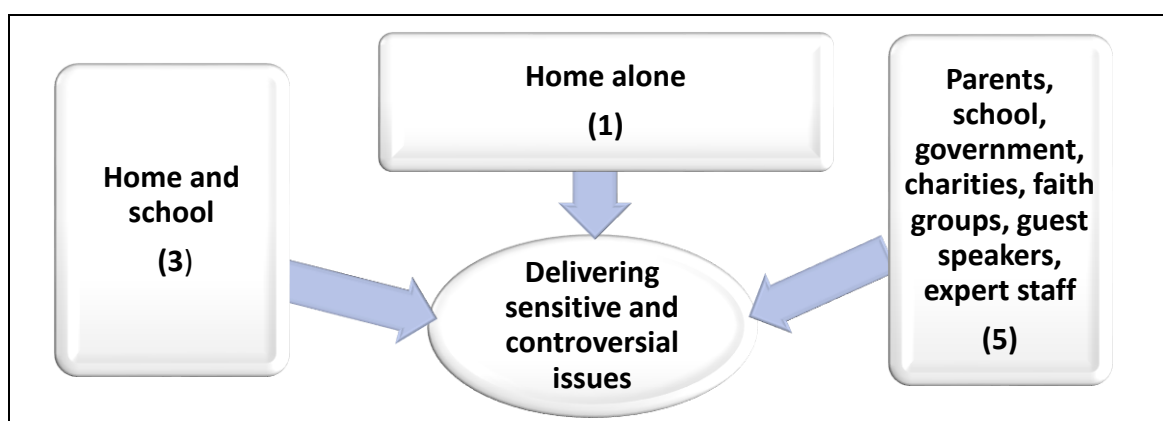
Figure 8: Summary of teachers' responses on delivering sensitive and controversial issues

Research question 1: What sensitive and controversial issues and tensions Christian PSHE teachers identify in their professional practice?

4.8 Theme: Professional and personal identity: Identifying issues and tensions

The issues and tensions identified have conflict potential for both students and teachers. Nathan for example, related a story of sexuality where a pupil disagreed with the church's position on homosexuality and suggested an imposition of the law on the church for compliance. For Emma, disagreement around issues of anal sex and abortion with a female student who objected to her views on them as being 'unnatural' spurred conflict. Nikki told of pupils' level of apathy and indifference over immigration issues. Likewise, Terry challenged a student's prejudicial and discriminatory attitudes and views on similar issues.

There are additional stories of inner conflicts, for example, Adele cited having to teach lessons on evolution and homosexuality and also mentioned a conflict in her values where SLT/Head focused solely on targets and academic success outcomes at the expense of care and empathy for students and staff. This Barnes (2012) describes as technical and robotic. Two other teachers also mentioned the prominence afforded homosexual issues in resources and policy documents and the readiness to label the church as 'homophobic'. They further express conflict of beliefs and values with students on matters of pornography, freedom of choice/promiscuity, risk-taking behaviours and unhealthy relationships.

However, Esther had inner struggles which were more political than religious. Jim has mixed feelings that for him, teaching has become a job and no longer a vocation. Therefore, he now lacks conviction. Terry's liberal views and desire to create balance led him to challenge homophobic attitudes in children. All teachers except Simon admit to 'open' conflicts. To cope in these situations, they suggested being professional, embracing the faith, empathising, caring, understanding, praying, being honest as this improves pupil-teacher relationships

Figure 4.9 shows some specific issues causing tensions/concerns

ISSUES OF CONCERN	RESPONSES
Fear of professional misconduct	8
Fear of indoctrination/evangelising	2
Exercising undue influence	4
Personal conviction compromised	2
Parental disapproval/pupils misconstrue	3
Breaking the law	1
Untrue to the faith	5
Others, please specify: *'I can be sacked, now I work for the money' (Jim)*	

Figure 4.9: Specific issues causing tensions/concerns

All teachers agreed that personal values and Christian beliefs have or could potentially influence their teaching of these topics. However, Simon's view is that 'teaching with academic integrity and professionalism' can minimise conflicts, but there will always be scope for potential influence.

> *You can't help it they underpin teaching (Adele)*

> *Potential for influence…yes, yes…yes…it's who I am, my views influence how I teach, be open though (Chrissy)*

Research question 2: "How do they manage (cope or deal with) the personal, professional challenges arising from teaching these issues?"

4.9 Theme: Managing personal, conscience and professional issues

The responses shown in figure 10 demonstrate the range of strategies employed.

STRATEGIES	RESPONSES
Devil's advocate	8
Evade or avoid questions/topics	1
Role play	3
DVDs and/ or YouTube	2
Respectful discussions	8
Question and answer	2
Circle time	1
Seek help and pray	2
Refer to Head of department	1
Rely on text book	1
Guest speakers	10

Figure 4.10: Showing range of strategies teachers employed

Teachers adopted these strategies: primarily devil's advocate, guest speakers and respectful discussions, for several reasons. The findings suggest that by so doing, they provide scope for openness and safety, ensure pupils are valued, develop critical thinking and ensure that they exposed their students to a range of opinions on issues. For the teachers themselves, the strategies they have identified engendered and further developed non-judgementalism, eliminated or greatly minimise the risk of exercising undue influence, promote value clarification, integrity and encourage informed and balanced debates. In addition, they heighten teacher sensitivity to pupils' needs, backgrounds and circumstances and further minimise potential for harm, hurt or discomfort. The scope for embarrassment is also minimised and the risk of teachers prioritising their personal agendas is discouraged.

In using these strategies however, teachers reportedly accompanied them with well-established and jointly formulated ground rules. The findings suggest that teachers sought to inculcate in students a positive use of language to include empathy, understanding and encouragement instead of undermining, condemning or judging

others. For the teachers, a recurring strategy suggested is to 'be who you are' and always 'clarify what's personal.' Mutual respect, tolerance, acceptance, empathy, unconditional love, Christian values, academic integrity, plan well and communicate effectively to minimise being misunderstood are further guidelines teachers suggested as necessary to cope and manage effectively.

Adopting these strategies however could pose their own inherent tensions; for example, it is clear from the evidence that despite all these, some teachers are still conflicted on delivery of some topics, for instance, 'homosexuality'. There is a suggestion that 'teachers therefore need to be prepared to answer questions about lesbian, gay and bisexual issues in an appropriate way or at least be able to point students in the direction of others who can (Stonewall Educational Guides, p.23). The question of how far is appropriate to share Christian views, 'be yourself', to be true to the faith or to 'courageously restrain' oneself (Cooling in chapter 2) is ever present. However, teachers expressed different views on the matter of whether sharing their personal faith maybe considered evangelising or indoctrinating. The findings suggest the following in Figure 4.11.

Is sharing your faith in lessons evangelising or indoctrinating pupils	
Yes	2
No	5
A bit of both	1
Depends how it is done	2

Figure 4.11: Perceptions of faith sharing

The consensus seems to be that teachers help students to develop the skill of critical thinking. In retrospect, two teachers admitted that teaching strategies they have employed in the past straddled a 'delicate fence', had complaints been raised. They

however did not deliberately do this. For Simon sharing a Christian view is evangelising as it 'offers a view, so state them objectively not to convert but respectfully'. This view of transmitting values without indoctrinating is supported (Downie, 1990).

Research question 3: "What relationship or connection exists between their Christian beliefs and the approaches employed in teaching these topics/issues?"

4.10 Theme: Relationship between Christian beliefs and teaching approaches

The motivation teachers have for teaching (Alexander, 2008) and how they perceive their roles is underpinned by their values and beliefs. This is reflected in their stance on teaching whether as a vocation or a career profession (Bryan, 2010). From the research, eight teachers specifically described their roles as a calling or vocation (Carr, 2000). Their stance and perceptions provided include:

To make a difference in a secular world with the rubbish and impact lives (Adele)

Teaching is becoming too professionalised it used to be a vocation but now it is too uncaring and target and outcome driven…I only do supply now (Janet)

We need to meet all human need and develop their potential (Nikki)

I could have offered myself for ordination later but I chose not to as I felt I was doing God's work in teaching; women couldn't be ordained in the 70s (Karen)

It provides an 'opportunity to make a difference to minister wholeness and acceptance (Chrissy)

If allowed, now it's only pays the bills otherwise...a ministry (Jim)

> *I am called to do it...I'm passionate to see God's kingdom grow. It's about salvation, restoration of lives, relationship, and renewal of lives, bringing hope and a future to children (Esther)*

This links in with Jeremiah 29:11 in the Bible, which states:

> *For I know the plans I have for you, declares the LORD, plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.*

> *(New International Version)*

The findings suggest that teachers do integrate their values and beliefs in their teaching based in part on their perception and stance on their roles in the profession. All research participants agree that there is a connection, but hasten to add a caveat (Harwood and Hahn, 1990). The association for most was discreet, yet interrelated and interpreted as part of Christian witness and ministry. Smith and Shortt (2003) put it this way,

> *Indwelling the Biblical metanarrative and allowing Biblical metaphors to play a formative role in our thoughts and practice, are ways of linking the Bible to education (p.162).*

With this approach in mind, values of respect, fairness, justice, good behaviour management, valuing pupils, showing compassion, tolerance and sensitivity were direct connections of personal values and Christian approaches identified. For Simon, the connection is through safety, sharing and 'showing grace and forgiveness leading to repentance.' Emma cites showing care and empathy, building relationships and being true to her personal beliefs. In times past, Esther would shout at students and use put-downs or potentially hurtful language; however, she now models Christian love, discipline, guidance, respect and dignity for all, valuing not criticising or judging. She sees her values, beliefs and practice now as intertwined.

From these findings, Christian faith seems to play an integral part in the lives and strategies teachers employ in their practice. In addition to the points above, they expressed other ways of linking faith and practice. Karen suggested a seemingly insignificant example of always marking and returning students' books promptly.

Whilst this may be understood as being professional and efficient, she links it to her faith. Additionally, she models a life of joy (a 'fruit of the Spirit').

> *But the Holy Spirit produces this kind of fruit in our lives: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness.*
>
> *(Galatians 5:22, New Living Translation)*

Beside these 'fruits' or values and virtues, Terry advocates trust, being a good listener, being available to the students outside of lessons, developing relationships and being a part of their lives. These findings suggest that Christian faith be included in teachers' professional lives and not be compartmentalised and remain outside the classroom as a private entity (Hirst, 1965). These quotes seem to reflect the strength of feelings on the issue (exclamation marks reflect their voice inflections in the interviews):

> *Absolutely…I can't put on an act as suggested in my training! I am conflicted …it should be left at the door but I don't (Emma)*

> *How can you not integrate? Most ridiculous! (Adele)*

> *A private entity…No! (Nikki)*

> *It has to be included…pupils are already exposed to religious elements like assemblies and symbols (Esther)*

> *…not possible to separate them, it's not a Sunday morning thing (Jim)*

> *Never compartmentalise, but give full range for balance (Chrissy)*

> *Faith is active so needs to be integrated as a testimony for pupils with integrity, respect, openness. In my school I am known as a practising Christian (Terry)*

…yes, but I am conflicted. I don't evangelise, faith is part of my identity…
cannot   separate, be clear of undue influence (Simon)

4.10.1 Appropriateness of secular worldviews

Though considered irreligious and not unified, teachers expressed mixed views as to the appropriateness of secular views in legal, policy documents, or integrating them in the teaching. Only Emma objected to their inclusion citing conflict especially on issues of condom use, demonstration or distribution and promotion of a safe sex agenda. Jim also shares strong views on the matter, arguing that,

> *There is no such thing as a neutral view…atheism is a religion…I stopped*
> *teaching Science…*

Karen told a story of an Ofsted observed lesson where she gained high commendation for the soap operas and real-life television video clips with secular themes she used in that lesson. She sees a secular and liberal view therefore, as 'necessary since the school is a microcosm of society.' Green (in Cooling, 2012), sees this engagement as also necessary to restrain and counteract the marginalisation of religion.

Research question 4: "What are the macro-political implications for Christian beliefs and professional identity and practice?

4.11 Theme: Wider context and implications

Government policies, professional policy documents (DfE, 2014; PSHE Association, 2012) and statutory requirements; The Marriage (Same Sex Couples) Act (2013), Equalities Act for Schools, (2010) are significant when teaching PSHE, regarding tolerance, equality, non-judgementalism and non-discrimination. I asked the teachers if they considered the law, policy and guidance documents to be compatible with their faith positions and if they could co-exist or be interwoven in a way compatible to both faith and practice. The findings from the data suggested a mixed response but acknowledge the ongoing challenge of reconciling these entities (Jones, 2003).

104

For Adele, PSHE is already 'grounded in faith'. They can co-exist if 'covertly' integrated, she argued. However, some participants stated that while they are not compatible, teachers need to be 'professional' and reflect this in the delivery methods adopted. These should reflect inclusivity, tolerance, care and mutual respect for those holding different faiths and beliefs (DfE, 2014). However, there is admittedly a conflict and the struggle to avoid undue influence seems to be a real concern for several teachers. For Esther, she noted that the law is correct but a deeper level of interpretation is required and 'head teachers are unclear in interpreting faith.'

Jim takes a firmer approach when he asks:

> *Is freedom of speech and tolerance applicable to all? How are documents interpreted? Policies are vital but faith must be valued very much the same.*

From these statements, there seem to be a call for consistency as a liberal and secular positioning appears dominant and advancing. Continuing, Jim strongly asserts that,

> '*They create conflict due to their unequal enforcement. Laws and policies are used to silence opposing views, not encourage dialogue.*'

However, in contemplating some implications of laws and policies on the experiences of the Christian PSHE teacher, some highlighted their ability to complement, add balance and creativity, inclusivity and objectivity thus protecting the rights of all. Hence, they both complement and conflict. Notwithstanding, a position that Jim and others shared seem to suggest that, not only is there a decline in Christian influence, but also a denial of attention, influence and power of Christian faith. Norman (2003) argues that,

> *When daily life is bereft of references to religion, it can scarcely be expected that religion will be regarded as a significant part of the culture; in reality the presentation of religion will be increasingly negative (p.48).*

Findings therefore, on the marginalisation of faith suggest mixed views. The majority (7 teachers) felt that Christian faith is marginalised. Nathan argued that there is a further inconsistency with Islam as Christianity is 'watered down and has lost respect.' Karen expanded on this to suggest that not only Christianity but also Religion as a whole as being marginalised, compounded by political correctness. For example, in Christianity, some local councils she pointed out have replaced 'Christmas' with 'Xmas' and 'winter lights' in town centres. Faith seems to cause 'offence or it is ridiculed' (Jim).

On the contrary, three teachers disagreed with this stance, and others agreed conditionally. Simon for instance, argues that faith currently carries much influence, citing the open reporting of religious statements nationally. Esther adamantly states:

> *No, Christianity has marginalised itself…we are too worried and misinterpret the law.*

Chrissy reported sometimes having to,

> *… apologise for the church sometimes…our own fault…move on!*

These approaches seem to embrace a more liberal stance. Yet any suffering as a PSHE teacher is a requirement of professional life. For Adele with a more evangelical, Pentecostal stance, the implications for a wider context seem significant. I had asked for their insights and perceptions of Christian believing and professional identity and practice across other disciplines and careers; for example, in Medicine/health care, Politics, Law, Hospitality, Science, Government departments. Such awareness could illuminate the development of effective practice, raise awareness of others' struggles as well how locate themselves in a rapidly changing national and globalized context (Inman et al. 2003).

Adele continued,

> *There are massive implications but there is a difficult path to tread. It is positive that faith can be shared and lived out; albeit respectfully, however,*

there are inherent conflict and fears, leading to some being professionally disciplined or even gagged, legal action for example, the magistrate's views on same sex adoptions.

Other teachers highlighted some cases in the national news (like those mentioned in the pilot study and chapter 1), including the impact of the Sunday trading laws on some Christians with potential for discrimination or the Bed and Breakfast owners sued for denying hospitality to a gay couple. In addition, the Christian couple who refused to decorate a cake supporting gay marriage, or the woman with her crucifix at work that caused offence or the matter of whether the playing of the Lord's Prayer advert was appropriate at a cinema. Citing these contentious issues in the national news, teachers seem to suggest that there is conflict on how to abide within the law, to which they are, subjected (DfE, 2014), yet obey their consciences. They conclude that there needs to be respect, tolerance and consistency. For Christians in all spheres, Janet suggests that faith be integrated into and practise privately and covertly. Adele has similar views however, for Jim it is,

God's laws before man, human rights are fundamental to all.

4.11.1 Impact and significance of sharing life stories, perceptions and insights

Whilst I cannot generalise on these findings, my study affords teachers an opportunity to story their unique individual experiences with some implications for application to a much wider context. This for some is reportedly both liberating and empowering. Findings suggest that the issues raised in the study potentially are relevant to Christians in various professions. Thus, teachers are confident that their life stories potentially could:

- *Raise awareness of the issues (by talking, reasoning, sharing demonstrating compatibility (Adele)*
- *Encourage Christians to speak out in all conflicts…'it affects all professions' (Janet)*
- *Help train Postgraduate certificate in education (PGCE) student-teachers, provide a good resource for use in my continuing professional development (CPD) sessions, supporting other stakeholders and PSHE teachers (Emma)*

- *Add academic relevance as a seed is sown, challenging us to ask questions, acknowledge the conflict, offer help and support to colleagues and stop compartmentalising personal identity, Christian faith and professional practice (Nikki)*
- *I hope 40 years of teaching will be authentic, influential, also a source of encouragement as I follow Jesus' example (Karen – now retired)*
- *Help instil British values: authenticity, teachers to be themselves, not sterile but motivated, modelling Christian life in a secular world (Emma)*
- *Be an act of reflection but also stand in solidarity with others (Simon)*

4.11.2 Overall stance and perception of Christian believing in a secular context

All the teachers agreed that Christians in any sphere of influence, work and discipline should be able to demonstrate their faith and that it is compatible with their practice. Nikki reiterates:

> *You cannot separate faith and identity…it's unfair, unrealistic…we are not all secular.*

Findings also suggest the need to,

- *Model faith, don't preach, be authentic and sensitive (Adele)*
- *Show care but be honest about our values and positions of influence. Encourage and develop critical thinking and openness and value and love people*
- *Flag up the positive aspects and contributions of Christianity to the country, for example, laws, traditions and community spirit (Simon)*

Furthermore, it is important to:
- *Mould or model and instil in children desired values especially at primary level (Janet)*
- *Recognise the place of values in teaching. Personal values made me a good PSHE teacher (Emma)*

- *Recognise that everybody is an evangelist for something…but hold views in church and be careful elsewhere (Simon)*
- *Remember that ultimately, faith is who we are…meant to be all of us…the whole part of us wherever we go, whatever we do (Chrissy)*
- *…I could not do my job without it (my faith) …part of my identity (Karen)*

4.11.3 Reflection and closing comments: A final word from the participants

These comments and quotes highlight the responses provided in the last question of the interview: "Is there anything else you would like to add?" I wanted my participants to have a final moment of reflection where they purposefully and deliberately contemplate and enquire into their thoughts and actions (Loughran, 1996).   This act of reflection yielded these parting comments on the themes presented and their overall research experience:

Adele:

(It's) great to reflect on the theme, motivation and rationale for teaching PSHE. I needed this opportunity to talk about these things…really enjoyed it!

Nathan:

The process of interviewing is good.

Janet:

…difficult for us in a secular world; the research highlights the importance of faith and the difficulties of being a Christian in a secular world.

Emma:

You have got me thinking in a positive way…so much to reflect on.

Simon:

Restrain view outside (classroom) to avoid undue influence…but there is conflict.

Nikki:

> *I don't think you can EVER (emphasising) separate it! I don't think you can, for me it keeps going, for me it does! … NO one should be asked to put their faith at the door when they walk into a room because (it) is unrealistic and unfair, but at the same time, I feel that everyone should respect everyone else's faith and everyone else's stance…*

Esther

> *…very grateful to be a research participant…, avoid compartmentalising life!*

Jim

> *…your personal faith is a part of who you are...it's not just personal, it should always be apparent in your dealings with others… but I don't mean that they should be converted to Christianity, by that I mean that they might have learnt something about respecting others…*

Terry

> *We are spiritual…we acknowledge God in tragedies example plane crashes…*

Chrissy:

> *…can't separate them (personal values, Christian beliefs and practice)…God wants all our lives.*

Karen:

> *Your stance is part of your Christian life. We are called to be the yeast in the dough. It's hard, really hard…emotionally…physically draining (Reflecting hard)…giving of self… "For this I have Jesus."*

4.12 Conclusion

Teachers' life stories differ but their upbringings seem to influence the values and beliefs they now adopt and transmit. They seem to use their experiences of joy,

purpose, nurture, trauma, disappointments or pain in a process leading to transformation, hope and resilience. Through processes of adaptation, transition and development, they have challenged their attitudes, beliefs and assumptions, educational training, personal experiences and life's vicissitudes. For some, this resulted in a more caring, understanding, liberal and empathetic approach.

While they remain inwardly conflicted on the issue of their personal faith in their practice, they have agreed to employ strategies that encourage respect, tolerance and acceptance…a bit of compromising without condoning. Yet, some teachers seemed to lose faith in being a teacher with a vocational perspective on the profession, due primarily to a perceived advancing secular and uncaring agenda; one which seems to promote targets, outcomes and academic achievements over the welfare and wellbeing of staff and students.

Teachers have mixed feelings on the extent to which they considered Christianity as being marginalised as well as the degree to which secular views and approaches may influence their practice. Nevertheless, they are confident that the significance of sharing their stories and participating in this research will:

- raise awareness of these contentious and divisive issues
- provide encouragement to other Christian PSHE colleagues
- be a resource for teacher training at academic and professional levels
- be a source of influence, reflection and solidarity with fellow Christians in a much wider context.

In the next chapter, I will identify, interpret, interrogate and analyse the themes emerging from the transcripts and interview schedule. This will serve to give meaning to and illuminate actual coded categories enshrined within the life stories now presented as life history data. Building on the gap outlined in chapter 1 and reiterated in the final chapter, I refer to my contribution to the field in light of my analysis. In the conclusion chapter 6, I go into more detail to reflect on my contribution in light of the literature and Ofsted reports and how my findings are informed after the interviews.

CHAPTER FIVE

Data Analysis and Discussion – Creating life histories

5.1 Introduction

'How do we make meaning from a life story narrative?' (Atkinson 1998, p.62) and construct life history data from their constructed stories? (Riessman 2008). The life history narrative approach in this context, is appropriate as it is basic to understanding human actions (MacIntyre, 1984) and in the words of Goodson and Sikes (2001) aims to,

> *explore how individuals or groups of people who share specific characteristics, personally and subjectively experience, make sense of, and account for the things that happen to them (p.40).*

With this in mind, these subjective and personal experiences were analysed within the context of the aims of my study (Chapter 1). These along with my five research questions (chapters 1 and 3), were used to guide my interview schedule as well as the category headings in chapters 4 and 5.

By establishing their own Scriptural interpretations teacher-participants connected with my research issues and its context. My findings suggest that this challenged them to reassess their positions in light of new knowledge gained in their process of transition, that of belonging and becoming (Riessman, 2008). The overall analysis helped me create a theory of understanding the relationship between professional identity and practice and faith. Issues of being a public professional and balancing privately held values and Christian beliefs raise various potentially conflicting issues. Among them are individual rights (including pupils'), freedom of speech, professional honesty, views and boundaries, religious freedom, faith marginalisation and compartmentalisation. My research captured teachers in transition in professional practice, in contentious ethical and theological positions. This engendered different responses in their approaches to these conflicts. For instance, some teachers

responded with resilience, compliance or rebellion while others seemed to remain unchanged in their positions.

In this chapter I examine the data including what Drever (2006) refers to as 'data preparation and analysis and summarising results' (p.71). However, some degree of 'selective transcription' was inevitable as I moved from transcripts to themes and coding to categories. These represented the broad headings from which I derived other themes and sub-headings, applying thematic analysis developed across stories (Riessman, 2008), to stories that developed from the interview conversations and interview schedule.

5.2 Manually analysing the data

As I listened to the teachers' interview tape recordings and transcribed them, I wanted to work in an intimate way with the data to obtain more valid and authentic responses. After careful consideration of the costs and time implications to learn and master NVivo or any other computer-assisted qualitative data analysis software (CAQDAS), I concluded that 'the convenience of its taking over the donkey work could limit interpretative sensitivity' (Weitzman 2000, p.146) and a manual analysis was therefore justified despite its labour intensity.

According to Weitzman (2000), an advantage of using software packages is their usefulness in contributing to coding, editing, storing, being able to search and retrieve, writing up as well as other features. Using Microsoft Word in managing the interview data, I share Gillham's (2005) views when he writes,

> *With modest data set (perhaps fewer than 30 transcripts) it is probably not worth the cost of buying and mastering it…otherwise standard Office word processing software will* suffice (Gillham, 2005, p.146).

This however, is subjective, as modest data set in a qualitative sense still produced voluminous data after transcription (see Appendix Q, p. 286, Adele's transcript). Although NVivo could add tremendous ease in the assembling and coding process, it presented its own restrictions and limitations and the actual analysis and

interpretation of the data would ultimately remain my responsibility. The operations of the software could mean that the procedure for actually processing the data was concealed intellectually speaking, arguably reducing the academic rigour according to Gillham (2005).

5.3 Data and category selection strategy and process

I approached the complex methodological challenge of data selection from the transcripts, by contemplating and employing a few strategies. Firstly, the relevance of the issues to my aims, research questions, previous research and literature. Secondly, I identified significant data, the number of teachers that raised an issue or specifically suggested its importance, as well as recurring themes. Therefore, the process of analysis was subjective with potential for my own bias to influence the process as I grappled with 'the relationship between participants' utterances and researcher's interpretation of them' (Riessman, 2008, p.15). Writing myself into the research is therefore advisable, rather than attempting to deny this subjectivity and potential for influence on the research. Goodson and Sikes (2001) put it this way,

> *…personal background information will enhance the rigor of their work by making potential biases explicit… (p.35)*

5.4 Researcher Reflections

Thus, including a reflexive account (see also chapters 1, 3 and 6), can add contextual clarity to the data analysis. My reflexivity also influences how I analysed the data, drew my conclusions as well as set out ways in which I have been challenged and even changed by the research process (chapter 6). My insider role however was complex; teachers' interpretations of their words could validate my own experiences and even lead me to assume a victim stance on behalf of both interviewees and myself. Thus my personal subjective interpretations posed inevitable risks. This process of reflexivity also related to how I saw my research topic. This included the influence of such reflexivity on the epistemological and philosophical position I have adopted (Goodson and Sikes, 2001).

5.5 Categories identified from the research aims, interview schedule and data

As a guide to selecting the themes, I considered in my research data: repetitions, relationships, similarities and differences, significant problem statements and issues, in order to represent new knowledge about the world primarily from the participants' perspectives. These categories are:

- o Constructed narratives of teachers' lives (Stories from their timelines, Aim 1)
- o Tensions and conflicts/legitimacy of Christian believing in a secularising context (Research Question: RQ1, 4, Aim 2)
- o Professionalism: Pedagogical approaches, strategies and justifications (RQ2, 3, Aim 3)
- o Wider secular context (RQ4, Aim 4)

Under each of these broad categories similar to chapter 4 (for coherence and consistency), I used themes taken from the data to reflect teachers' specific issues identified. The overriding claim is that this research demonstrates the way teachers are in a period of transition and faith is understood as a holistic quality by teachers.

Category: Constructed narratives (analysing life stories)

5.5.1 Theme 1 - Making sense of upbringing: clarifying, adopting and transmitting values

Primary socialisation, through the inculcation of values influenced the lives of the teachers. The impact of this influence is not quantifiable, but served to reinforce in some cases, the core principles, standards and morals adopted, transmitted and now applied as guides to behaviour and life. Values of love, acceptance, non-judgementalism, co-operation, teamwork, openness, honesty, stability, reason, resilience, freewill and modelling desired standards to both students and their biological children seemed to play a significant part in the life experiences of some teachers. This seemed to be so, as after a process of transition through biological

and emotional maturity, life's experiences, relationships and exposure, teachers were challenged to reflect critically on their upbringing.

Their family religious traditions reflected a link in how they later interpreted and lived out their Christian faith (Hanson, 1997, p.5). This critical analysis led to a clarification and subsequent adoption and ownership of their personal values. This is significant as sociologically, the stabilisation of the adult personality ensued arising from the impact and a process of transition. This seemed to form a repetitive trend in the data and demonstrated a relationship between upbringing and the values adopted as core among teachers. It extended to their relationships and the process leading from their inculcation, exploration, clarification, adoption and application amidst the tensions and conflicts of professional practice and personal life.

These adopted values formed part of the moral and ethical underpinning of teachers, representing not only desirable behaviours to be modelled, but also served as a vehicle for upward social mobility through meritocracy, handling life's crises, coping with adversity and making compromises. Whilst there were similarities among teachers in the extent to which they reflected them in their teaching practices as documented in their life stories, this process was not the case for all teachers. Although the fundamentals of parents' values were praiseworthy and desirable, a small minority reported the impact of control, overbearing, harshly inconsistent and unreasonable disciplinary regimes.

Karen states:

> *My mother was very controlling and we had a very restricted lifestyle so we were not allowed to go out and play with other children as much we could go out and play on our own, I NEVER (emphasising strongly) went out without an escort… erm, she was always there to meet me.*

Furthermore, parents' hypocrisy and unfaithfulness both in their Christian lives and marriage engendered a sense of mistrust, anger, fear, resentment and rebellion, as in the case of Emma:

> *…my parents… we were always erm, we always went to church on a Sunday. But things weren't always good between my parents and I was aware that my parents weren't faithful to each other but would always put on this*

116

> *WONDERFUL (emphasising) kind of family on a Sunday but then as soon as*
> *we got in the car, it would kind of fall apart and that made me kind of angry*
> *and not want to go to church because it just felt like a bit of a façade.*

This connection between childhood experiences (primary socialisation), and how values were internalised is significant. Firstly, it reflected the struggles and tensions these conflicting values inculcated as teachers grew and developed; but secondly, it demonstrated a sense of resilience and redemption. Redemption, as teachers later showed forgiveness, grace and compassion to parents, or received forgiveness for their own rebellion; and resilience as they triumphed over adversities, currently reportedly modelling positive values in their own domestic and professional spheres of influence. Tim related how his own children stemmed his inherent selfishness. I will borrow his contribution,

> *…becoming a father erm, takes away the inherent selfishness that men have.*
> *… But becoming a father and a Christian teacher helped me to be a better*
> *person…*   *(Tim)*

Although not all teachers responded negatively to the exposure through teenage rebellion, the process to wholesomeness and confidence in later life was a much more rigorous one. The process of sense-making, challenging assumptions, identifying and clarifying their own core values reportedly led teachers to a place of care, empathy, compassion, selflessness, acceptance and non-judgementalism, generally speaking. Through primary socialisation there seemed to be a process of formation, transformation, growth, repositioning, adopting, application, and modelling. This led to a challenging of assumptions through their life experiences including, rebellion, exposure, decisions, multiculturalism, as well as through childrearing and education. This contributed to teachers generally adopting values of love, care, compassion, empathy, non-judgementalism, tolerance and selflessness.

 Emma for example, whose case of cohabiting and having a child out of wedlock, not only challenged her personal morals, standards and theological position but continued to result in deep internal conflict and a sense of hypocrisy.

In her words:

I think really…possibly having (baby) and not been married and living with (partner), (names removed) …I think I need to not see that it was so…I think that for me, I had to see that I was not living in sin. (Baby) was kind of out of wedlock, those kind of old fashioned views and I think that I needed to be a bit more flexible that I can still have Christian values, Christian beliefs…so perhaps for my own benefit…

Whether through these conflicts and inconsistencies, personal or life's trauma, there seemed to be a depth of resilience and determination to overcome obstacles. This related and applied to the professional sphere in transmitting or more so, modelling these values for their students. However, they could also pose a risk for intolerance and judgement when teaching issues of a sensitive and controversial nature.

The support of family, significant others and Christian fellowship seemed to play an integral part in the formation, adjustment and transformation of some teachers. This resulted in a subdued and compassionate approach in practice as the reality that some students were not recipients of such level of support in their primary socialisation. Nikki empathises,

I was lucky that I had people to pick up the pieces for me and if I had not married my husband I would probably be a single mom now…my husband was able to support me, but I know that I was lucky in that way! So I have to put that in perspective and say they could always go back (to school) others may not be so lucky.

This position in the values of teachers however, further posed potential for conflict with students' positions.

5.5.1.2 Conflict with students' values

Teachers did not teach in a vacuum, but the primary socialisation of their students: their values, cultures, attitudes, norms and values, integrated into their teaching experiences. This raised the challenging questions: *to what extent should teachers transmit their personal values? Who decides if those are the values students should adopt or should students left to identify and clarify their own?* Here they would 'build

their own values system' (Watson and Ashton, 1995, p.17; Haydon 1997). However, where they (students), expressed intolerance, prejudice or discriminatory attitudes to marginalised groups, teachers promptly challenged them. This reflected a battle that some teachers had to face. Both Adele and Terry attested to this when they said:

> *…you could just see some of the kind of things at home coming through in the children and erm, one of the students referring to the Muslim picture, said that 'he looks dodgy!' which upset one of my Muslim children in the class and I had to deal with that…I had to do a whole other lesson on prejudice. (Adele)*

For Terry:

> *Erm…the race thing...in a predominately white school, middle class school and with people moving into the area I can remember having to challenge the language that comes what children picked up from home background and erm…I think underneath I would use a Christian belief of valuing everybody for who they are.*

5.5.1.3 Value conflicts in wider school and educational contexts

As teachers related to a much wider audience outside the classroom to include colleagues and senior leadership, they expressed clashes in their personal values. A few teachers cited these issues; however, I refer to Adele who outlined a tension in the senior leadership team's (SLT) attitude, described by Barnes (2012), as cold, rigid, insensitive approach and target driven culture. This attitude conflicted with her as she advocated a more sensitive, caring one where student and teacher-wellbeing play a more prominent role in school leadership and ethos.

Esther raised a significant and interesting case of conflict of interest. She explains,

> *Erm, yeah, another big one that stuck with me is Christian Union: as head of RE, I have a real question in my mind as to whether or not I should be the one to run Christian union…so the decision for me was that I would support the Christian union, providing them with a location, by being their advocate to SLT in my capacity as Assistant head…I don't want something to cause my teaching to be seen as indoctrination, and the decision was made…I believe that it should be run by students.*

Esther's story presented a snapshot of some issues for potential conflict teachers encountered and presented the strategies they employed to address and resolve them. Hence, the journey to identifying, clarifying, transitioning, adopting and eventually applying personal values in practice related to and is underpinned by Christian values, with a personal relationship with Jesus based on deep conviction and a strong desire for students to succeed.

Whilst this desire was echoed by all teachers, it formed a basis for conflict and tension within an education system which frequently fluctuated in its direction (Day et al. 2005) and consistently seemed to vacillate between occasional policies advocating wellbeing and a more lopsided inclination towards criteria of success based on targets and measurable outcomes (Barnes, 2012). This theme reflected the extent to which teachers highlighted and repeated its significance in the interview transcripts. It suggested a relationship between personal values adopted through upbringing and approaches taken in professional practice as well as to coping with life's experiences and vicissitudes. From the overall data in the transcripts, teachers identified and sought to model a range of values in the professional practice. These included listening, acceptance, non-judgementalism, commitment, teamwork, openness, honesty, compassion, determination, authenticity, empathy, selflessness, care, stability, perseverance, security, love, charity; and in students, ambition, aspiration, critical thinking, resilience, achievement and deferred gratification.

5.5.1.5 Locating personal values in professional practice

These values highlighted, play a significant role in the lives of the teachers. These related strongly to education and 'Christian ministry', as well as suggested and reflected a perception of teaching that navigated towards a ministerial and calling positioning. In education, some teachers outlined their aspirations as having inclinations towards Headship, PSHE Co-ordinator, mentoring PGCE student-teachers and promoting vocational subjects in the curriculum. Others identified aspirations leading more towards overseas missions, engagement in aspects of God's service and purpose, entering the Priesthood and providing foster care. These were considered as deeper level of 'Christian ministry' although all teachers generally saw their teaching as an important part of 'Christian ministry'.

Category Two: Christian believing

5.6. Theme 2: The journey of personal faith – Nurturing Christian beliefs

Ten of the thirteen teachers had a Christian upbringing. Stories of engagement and participation in religious activities and Christian fellowship reportedly played a significant role in the lives of most as borne out by Hanson (1997). He writes. '…Christian faith is communicated mainly through story…' (p.6). As with values, teachers had to embark on their own personal journeys of faith exploration especially after leaving home, whether or not they had a Christian upbringing. This process nevertheless, led them through different paths, experiences, transitions and durations, to eventually clarifying and importantly, owning their personal faith.
Adele states,

> I still live my life in a right way, what that is but I don't think I was ever a 'bad' girl but maybe some of the priorities I now have in my life weren't there when I was in that sort of 'wilderness patch' so I would say now that my values are strong but they are strongly based on my Christian faith and I own them very strongly, I believe in them. So I would say they are much stronger now, they have always been there; they are just a stronger version now because they are mine and not somebody else's.   (Adele)

This sense of ownership referred to her respective processes of developing a firm commitment to personal faith, a deep and personal relationship with Jesus Christ which extends beyond Christianity as mere cultural identity. It is worth highlighting the tremendous significance some teachers especially Adele and Esther placed on the need to find, clarity and eventually 'own' their personal faith and not merely to meander in that of their parents. This process demonstrated the progression as derived from my research data analysis, which led to a 'reworking' or adaptation and ownership of personal faith, not merely a profession but a possession there-of. This meant not merely giving mental assent. This embodied their fervour, devoutness, depth of conviction as well as the extent to which they were prepared to model or share that faith, or even be convicted or offended. Whilst most teachers had a religion upbringing, others did not. Despite this difference, a general trend seemed to suggest a process of adaptation (in some cases from being unchurched to faith and

belonging to a congregation), from a fundamental, traditional evangelical tradition to a more liberal stance primarily through exposure and education. This led to questioning, exploration, experimentation, clarification and conversion or recommitment, ownership of personal faith.

This is significant as the adoption of a childhood faith though sincere, somehow was challenged and tested through the process of peer pressure, exposure to life's experiences and trauma leading to a progression of sense making of life's vicissitudes. Let us take Nikki for instance, with a sick member of her family. There seems to be an internal conflict of faith as she asked repeatedly, *'where is God in all of this?'; 'Will He heal her?'* This conflict raged on internally despite that firm underlying core sense of trust, belief and the ardent support and prayers of friends, family and church members. She explains,

> *…erm, I just think there was no answer to why my (child) was ill and I don't understand it and I wanted to get some understanding. I think in a way getting some understanding is still an issue I think it is one of those conflicting things for me, I want to have that and I want to understand it but I can't find the answers for (the) suffering, erm and I think that is a continued battle for me.(Nikki)*

Some differences but mainly similarities existed in teachers' stories of ownership, faith triumphing over adversity, developing humility and a desire to apply and model this experience to others. Yet, the approach that teachers adopted to the application and interpretation of faith in life's personal, practical or domestic and professional spheres did not occur in a vacuum. This indicates from now on how teachers perceive their faith holistically and not as a compartmentalised entity.

5.6.1 Self-defined denominational positions

Both individuals and groups need to define and identify who they are (Woodhead, 2011). The teachers' belief positions informed their understanding of faith based in part by their religious denominational traditions. By this, I mean the label they adopted to reflect their faith position and believing for instance evangelical, Pentecostal, liberal or secular Christian (figure 4.4, p.88). This process was complex

and represented a unique journey and faith progression. The significance and relationship therefore of such stance, whether Pentecostal, evangelical or liberal as might be further demonstrated in their church affiliation and label (Church of England, Baptist, Methodist, Evangelical assembly), seemed to suggest a strong relationship between their faith and the interpretation they held of Scripture and its application to sensitive and controversial issues in their practice.

An examination and interpretation of their life stories, particularly in their time lines, seemed to suggest a strong connection between teachers and the influence of their faith. The analyses from these findings are significant, substantial and provided explanations, interpretations and an underpinning for addressing the place of Christian believing in a professional sphere. The data from the transcripts on the development and application of Christian faith to professional practice reflected a process from exploration, experimentation, enlightenment and adaptation. This seemed to contribute to developing confidence, openness, childlike faith and conviction which further developed in some teachers', broader interpretation to and application of faith to sensitive and controversial issues, subjectivity as well as helping them to challenge narrow views of issues, although their core beliefs were unaffected.

These religious values and overarching themes identified, interpreted and presented from the data are noteworthy. This is so because they further set the process of analysis in context. Thus, a Christian upbringing and the belief positions later embraced seemed strongly related. Yet, a process of exploration, questioning, experimentation and sense-making of life's experiences, formed part of the journey before they embraced a personal, deep conviction and ownership of Christian faith. However, this deep conviction led to greater confidence and stability as personal faith was worked out in life's complex situations, despite an inability to locate God in the midst of life's crises. This did not necessarily result in a rejection and abandonment of faith despite periods of questioning, despite occasional detours.

Teachers' depth of personal conviction did not necessarily negate the presence of inner conflicts in practice, but possibly exacerbated them in some cases. However, applying Christian faith to practice seemed to encourage a more opened, less dogmatic and subjective stance despite their denominational persuasions. This

professional stance, however, reflected a partial interpretation of faith to practice as most teachers remained inwardly conflicted. Nevertheless, life's experiences for example, childrearing for some, influence how faith was lived out in professional practice. For Chrissy, they resulted in a more loving, caring, selfless and empathetic approach, away from a more 'fundamental evangelical to a more liberal one.'
In her words:

> *…with the birth of my children, it changed my view of God because before that I was very … (sighed hard)…I suppose I was converted to Christianity from outside...you know you have a kind of 'saved, unsaved' and that goes for everybody and that kind of evangelical bit, that was quite dramatically changed when I had the children. (Chrissy)*

This view illuminated the process of developing empathy, love and care. They related not only to personal values but also to Christian faith. This sense of empathy and selflessness applied not only to professional practice but also to the approach and attitudes towards others with alternative views on sensitive and controversial issues, in and outside of school.

Adele sums up well the issues represented here,

> *I would say there was a time when I had a real wilderness point but time… a time of transition; but I think it was a part of having a faith that I was brought up with. I often talk about this with my home group, to a faith that was my own (Adele)*

Thus, the process of transitioning and negotiating faith was a complex one. The next category explores this complexity.

5.7 Category 3 – Tensions/conflicts of faith /legitimacy (RQ1)

a. **Theme 3: Negotiating faith: transitions and ownership - Ethical and theological analysis**

All teachers acknowledged direct conflict or the potential for conflict of their Christian faith in their practice of teaching what they identified as sensitive and controversial issues in PSHE. My data analysis evidence seems to suggest a greater level of conflict acknowledged among teachers who embrace a more traditionalist evangelical or Pentecostal stance in their interpretation of the Bible (page 40).

5.7.1 Liberal and evangelical persuasions

There was an even split generally of the sample between teachers who self-identified as liberals and evangelicals. Teachers of a liberal persuasion whilst embracing strong personal convictions, tended to adopt a more open, tolerant and accepting view professionally; and to some extent, might even 'question or reject the traditional Christian ethos of "sex only in marriage, celibacy in singleness" in order to embrace more contemporary mores (Pattison, 2007, p.160). This is worth exploring.

The identification of teachers to a more liberal agenda seemed to be very prominent. These teachers not only seemed to suggest less conflict but expressed understanding, sympathy and some solidarity with colleagues of a more traditional fundamental persuasion who seemed more likely from the research evidence to be more expressly conflicted. Jones (1999) also bears this out when he acknowledges the place of fundamentalist views about the Bible status, one being the 'conviction that it is literally true' (p.14). This could pose 'real danger where a person with strong commitments is in a teaching position' (Watson and Ashton, 1996, p.71).

My research therefore captured teacher-participants in transition located in professional practice, in ethical and theological positions. Their respective persuasions have implications for how they saw and managed professional issues of conflicts, as explained in Chapter 2. This transition might reflect a shift from naïve realism where their interpretation of their faith was direct, unmediated, and unproblematic, to the converse in a critical realist stance (Cooling, 2012). The crisis or tension of relating faith to professional practice as outlined in the findings in chapter 4, posed deep inner struggles for most teachers, regardless of Scriptural

interpretative persuasions held. Some teachers transitioned in their belief positions, while others retained theirs, remaining seemingly untouched in their interpretations and assumptions. This was a complex scenario underpinned by many factors. Even those who advocated a liberal stance and teaching with 'professional integrity' still alluded to inner conflicts. This suggests an attempt to separate inner conflicts from professional practice while accepting professional obligations to students.

This conflict, pointed to issues of professional honesty and the extent to which teachers felt that they were being true to themselves, their faith, profession, students and consciences. How did they really feel?

Janet explains:

> *Yeah, yeah... (silence) well you have to deal with them… yeah…(silence) I think as a Christian if things get to a point where you are feeling quite under pressure with it all then you have to say something…and as a Christian, pray about it, yeah, yeah…*

This seems to highlight also, deficiency in the relationship between teacher training requirements and practice (chapter 2). Emma further explains,

> *I remember during my PGCE years, the man (Tutor) said 'You have got to walk into that classroom and put on an act' and I'm just thinking 'I can't do that! Erm, it's me and (pause) I can't pretend to be that person who…it's me…absolutely!*

Simon and Chrissy, both of a more liberal stance whilst advocated that teachers adopted a more flexible and open stance, called for a 'safe place for teachers to vent'.

5.7.2 Negotiation and transition

Issues of faith transition for teachers seemed to follow paths of exposure, insight and embracing change, which seemed to have an air of inevitability, as 'adults change'

after a process of 'critical self-reflection' (Astley 2002, p.25). Bearing this out, Atkinson (1998) puts it this way,

> *People are always in the process of changing, growing, and evolving as well as seeing themselves in different ways. Lives are being composed all the time; and stories about the lives we are composing are being rewritten, recast and retold...* (p. 71).

Both education and living in a multicultural society seemed to widen teachers' outlook and encourage broader perspectives on issues. This exposure appeared to result in changes in teachers' 'attitudes, beliefs, disposition, skills and capacities' (Astley 2002, p.21). This generally led them away from a narrow fundamental stance to a more liberal one, which embraced tolerance and non-judgemental attitudes, at least outwardly for some. Teachers repeatedly shared stories of having to teach contentious and divisive topics, which conflict sharply with their belief positions. Some topics of a sensitive and controversial nature identified by teachers from the research data included Sexuality - homosexuality and same sex marriage, fluid sexuality, anal sex, abortion, condom distribution, pornography and promiscuity; Other divisive topics identified included mental health, drugs education (especially cannabis use), evolution, female genital mutilation, fox hunting, pupil apathy and indifference towards lessons of migration, the economically and politically marginalised, prejudiced assumptions, freedom of speech, race issues, evolution, as well as a substantial focus on by SLT on targets and outcomes at the expense of pupil or staff wellbeing.

5.7.3 Faith and values integration

Teachers admitted to the inherent nature of PSHE as a subject of potential conflict and contention as reflected in some of the topics they highlighted earlier. All teachers agreed the extent to which their personal values and Christian faith hold potential for integration in their professional practice. However, they all likewise hastened to add caveats and disclaimers to such integration. This appeared to reflect not only a desire to be professional, faithful to their ministry or Christian call in reflecting

personal and professional integrity but also fear; one of concern of not exercising undue influence, evangelising or indoctrinating as regarding not 'instilling particular beliefs or values into the unwilling or the unaware' (Copley 2005, p.3). This for them was important in order to uphold the law and adhere to policy directives. Nevertheless, teachers strongly maintained a firm stance on the non-compartmentalisation and compatibility of their faith in the professional sphere.

Most teachers agreed that there is conflict in their professional practice. As mentioned the three who claimed to have no real conflict in teaching had certain similarities. Firstly, they all embraced a liberal stance; secondly, they advocated embodying and displaying professional and academic integrity to avoid undue influence (Jackson and Everington, 2017) and thirdly, they expressed a measure of conflict and inconsistency. For instance, when Simon states that *I have no teaching conflict but I'm conflicted regularly* he seemed to be suggesting that from a purely professional standpoint, he adopted a pragmatic stance; where he followed the rules and delivered the divisive and contentious issues in a manner that reflected his training, professionalism and personal integrity. However, could feeling conflicted be part of a Christian calling, to be *in but not of the world?* (John 17:16).

The conflict of the professional demands and matters of conscience come into play here; that of managing and balancing personal conviction and courage to be resilient despite constraints, and coping with inherent personal uncertainties and reservations (Ryder and Campbell, 1988), in chapter 2. For Adele, a pushing of the boundaries seemed inevitable although a subtle and restrained approach of integration was the strategy she employed. The sense of not being caught or because no one complained, appeared to be expressed by at least two teachers; and whilst there was no deliberate malicious intent to influence or indoctrinate, the depth of the conflict was clearly highlighted, perhaps with a Biblical tone,

> *…straightway the father of the child cried out, and said with tears, Lord, I believe; help thou mine unbelief (Mark 9:24 Bible, KJV).*

This suggests a despairing cry from a conflicted father desperate for help in his distress. Could there be any similarity in, *I have no conflict teaching sensitive and controversial issues because I teach with academic and professional integrity yet on*

the other hand, I am internally conflicted? As mentioned in chapter 2, Cooling (2012) identified what he referred to as 'courageous restraint' as one strategy for handling potential conflict in professional practice. *What are the inner struggles, turmoil they might wrestle with while 'courageously restrain' themselves?* There could be a personal cost to courageous restraint.

5.7.4 Perceptions of teaching and potential for conflict

From the data, all teachers embraced their roles as a calling or a ministry 'as unto the Lord' (Esther). For them, it was more than an ordinary job or professional career. In chapters 2 and 4, I cited Carr (2000) who highlighted the vast chasm between a vocational versus a new professional (Bryan, 2010) understanding of teaching. As he explained it in (Chapter 4), a vocation offers 'significant continuity between occupational role and private values and concerns...' (p.10) with use of the word 'ministry' and lives 'given over to the service of others', while a professional stance is more impersonal and based on a deliberate separation of professional from private concerns, celebrating neutrality and objectivity (Bryan, 2010). Adopting this former vocational, ministry, calling outlook to their teaching, all teachers passionately spoke of influencing students, building relationships, being genuinely concerned for their well-being in and outside of school. This level of care and passion seemed to transcend mere professional pedagogical engagement but 'often focused on the relational aspect of teaching…loving, caring for students and teachers was central to their role and purpose as teachers' (James 2015, p.45; Day, 2004). Here, according to Guite (2006), the heart of Christianity reflects not merely following programmes, but in learning to love people (p.98).

5.7.5 Professional boundaries, restrictions and impositions

A noteworthy issue from the research data relates to these points and the theme of professional boundaries, restrictions and government impositions. For Jim, his disciplinary action for professional misconduct when he inadvertently shared his personal views not only caused him to adopt, rather reluctantly, a strictly professional approach to his job, but now sees teaching as it 'simply pays the bills' a theme that relates to much wider issues. These include:

1. The extent to which honest respectful views can be shared by teachers both in and outside of the classroom (or professional) settings

2. The extent to which honest Christian views expressed cause offense.

3. A perception that government intervention restricted teacher voice and the ease with which faith views seemed to be dismissed

4. The place of private conversation with students on matters relevant to them with potential for them being misconstrued

5. The extent to which freedom of speech and expression were seen to be unfairly interpreted when representing Christian faith

6. Maintaining a dignified silence (courageous restraint?) on issues of faith and controversy seems to be the price of truth, Christian faith and professional honesty

These themes and issues are significant and relate to each other because they could reflect strongly held positions potentially applicable to other careers, disciplines and spheres outside of education. They suggest inconsistencies and perceptions of marginalisation in a wider context, as well as for most teacher-participants who reflected some similarities but also differences in perceptions on the extent to which Christian views maybe declining in influence. For example, the majority of teachers shared these views on inconsistencies and a reluctance to compartmentalise their Christian faith from professional practice. Nonetheless, the view that Christianity as a whole is marginalised in the wider context was not shared by all teachers. Three teachers reiterated the need for Christian teachers as a whole to be professional and appreciate the wider context of secular and liberal values. Christians in general and the church at large would need to adapt and be more open in an increasingly secularising post-Christian context. In Chrissy's words for instance:

…church can be non-inclusive, emphasise divisions rather than unity…Church needs to move on! I apologise for the church sometimes…too narrow.

This view is embraced by Pattison (2007), who argues that Christians will eventually 'accept second marriages and same sex relationships' and 'repent for past stigmatisation and intolerance' (p.157). Notwithstanding, this was not the view expressed by the majority of teachers. For most, this suggested adaptation, acceptance of more liberal views was a complex process, primarily due to perceptions of an advancing secular agenda and a strong perception of inconsistencies in the interpretation and application of laws and policies in the professional sphere, necessitating more balance and sensitivity (Coalition for marriage, 2013).

Category 4 – Professionalism: Pedagogical approaches, justification and relationship of faith to practice (RQ1, 2, 3, Aim #3)

5.8 Theme 4: Faith, values and practice relationship

The connection between personal values and Christian beliefs within a professional sphere is a contentious one. From the data, all teachers agreed that faith connects directly to their professional practice. These two, they strongly argued, must not be compartmentalised (see also James, 2009). A close examination revealed their use of various strategies, outlined and discussed in my findings (chapter 4) to counteract this challenge. Primarily, respect, objectivity, disclaimers, ownership and full disclosure of personal views as such (James, 2015), when they were stated, appeared to be the most prominent strategies employed.

These corroborate with the literature (chapter 2) suggesting the use of various pedagogical approaches; including incorporating theological thinking through metaphors, stories, hermeneutics, moral discussions (Smith and Shortt, 2003; Cooling, 2010; Cook, 1996). The 'What if' approach to integrating faith into professional practice, is also explored by Cooling et al. (2015). The integration of faith in professional practice is well-documented (Hull, 1976; Smith and Shortt, 2003; Cooling, 2010; Jackson, 2004). However, some teachers used discretion rather than overtly integrating faith in their practice. Instead, they chose rather to model faith, pray silently or used discrete theological language to disguise deeper meanings. Adele explains,

I think erm…it depends if I'm honest, on what you are doing. Sometimes it can be more overt and sometimes it has to be more covert for example like when I mentioned "we are all uniquely made"... for me that's a covert way… that's a covert way of saying "God created us in His image."

For Adele, although working with younger teenagers (Junior high), she found this 'covert' or subtle, restrained and inconspicuous approach helped her avoid deeply contentious and divisive debates on *creationism*. Although PSHE is arguably divisive and controversial, yet, spirituality and faith seem to underpin it. For example, Chrissy saw initiatives like *Every Child Matters Agenda* as containing elements of spirituality:

- Being healthy
- Staying safe
- Enjoying and achieving
- Making a positive contribution
- Achieving economic well-being

DfES (2004) now DfE (cited in Digman and Soan, 2008)

Although, including the issues of faith and values to secular guidance and policy directives appeared to add a level of complexity to handling the sensitive controversial topics, for my Christian PSHE teachers, this seemed very important. The Scriptural guidance of 'doing all as unto the Lord' was apparently taken very seriously and literally as Esther explains,

Increasingly people don't have a language of spirituality and I think the SMSC (Social moral spiritual and cultural) agenda actually brought in that language. Yeah, I think we all teach with our values in the way we teach and the way we treat others is intrinsic in all of us. I do everything as unto the Lord. It's crucial for me and being respectful to my management. I am under the authority of my head teacher and God has placed me under that authority…so my professional practice is totally guarded by my expectations of myself as a follower of Christ. (Esther)

Esther's position was a good example of how teachers not only linked faith to practice but adopted a ministry, vocational and calling understanding and

interpretation to their professional practice, though possibly contentious (see chapter 2). This consequently informed such practice reflecting or even resulting in a deep passion, conviction and an acceptance of their professional identity and practice as an integral part of their Christian service. From my research data this included demonstrating respect and fairness in teaching, managing behaviour effectively, valuing students, demonstrating compassion, sensitivity and tolerance, forgiveness, care, sympathy, building relationships, using and modelling positive language, acceptance and love, covert prayers, being a good listener and being available to students especially outside of lessons, being aware of boundaries and utterances during unguarded moments.

5.8.1 Christian faith and teaching sensitive and controversial issues

There were similarities on the identification, definition, implications, strategies and justifications of sensitive and controversial issues in practice among participants. They argued that teaching these topics void of a faith perspective could deprive students of developing objectivity and critical thinking skills. Whilst these may seem to be generic professional aspects of their practice from a secular standpoint, teachers spoke with deep conviction of this specific connection to their faith. For instance, some justified this connection with scriptural references, modelling the 'fruit of the spirit'.

> *But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith (Galatians 5:22, Bible KJV.)*

Worthy of note also, was the relationship of this perception with that of their motivation for teaching. For example, all teachers except one (who does so reluctantly as earlier mentioned), saw their teaching as an act of Christian ministry, service and in some cases, a calling. This links in with what Hanson (1997) refers to as how 'people's actual faith shapes their whole lives and interpretation of the world' (p.2). This further speaks of a divine mandate to execute a specific task, thus having spiritual and eternal implications and consequences. The evidence in their stories, suggested that for them, integrating these virtues and graces into their teaching

extended well beyond the mere professional to actively interpreting and integrating faith as an act of doing, where God is central.

However, an analysis of the data suggests that most teachers used a discreet and subtle approach, when and where they modelled their faith. Although there were professional elements inherent in these strategies, the place of faith in their inclusion was prominent in the understanding and delivery of them for these teachers. They attempted to strike a balance between a respectful appreciation of the professional boundaries, restrictions and personal freedoms; however, there was also a reservation and trepidation concerning the professional consequences and conflicts associated with issues and implications of integrating faith in practice.

On the one hand, these had to do with fear of professional misconduct, evangelising, indoctrinating, exercising undue influence, being untrue to the faith and fear of being misconstrued (see figure 4.9, p.98). Copley (2005) argues that 'every culture and society inducts its young into its beliefs and values and provides them with a worldview' (p.3), *but whose beliefs and values?* There are deeper levels of concern and tension, one being that of professional hypocrisy. In one sense, this related to what Nikki referred to as the requirement in training to separate beliefs from professional life. She picks up the issue,

> *I don't think you can EVER (emphasising) separate it! I don't think you can, for me it keeps going, for me it does! if I do, life would be a lot harder erm, I think, there are times when you ask those professional questions but you are going to use your faith to answer I think in a way, NO one should be asked to put their faith at the door (Nikki).*

Clearly, her training failed to account for a place for her faith in her teaching of these contentious issues. From the literature and research findings (chapter 2) lack of training for teachers in delivering sensitive and controversial issues remains an area of urgent need (Claire and Holden, 2007; Oulton et al. 2004; PSHE Association).

5.8.2 Professional hypocrisy

Another theme from the data highlighted was *professional hypocrisy* in the sense that teacher taught these topics while being conflicted; that is to say, teaching content without conviction; referred by Hoyle and Wallace (2006) as professional

ironies and ambiguities. One teacher resorted to an over reliance on the textbooks, ensuring that as little discussion ensued. Some teachers mentioned the inner wrestling and feeling of insincerity, pretence or denying and being untrue to their faith, a sense of not 'contending for the faith' (Jude 1:3). But contending for the faith implies taking a firm stance (apologetics) and letting one's voice be heard in defence of strong convictions and beliefs albeit, respectfully, gentle and openly (2 Timothy 2:26).

Esther affirms,

> *I think there is a responsibility on the church to then stand up and say "this is our Christian belief on this issue" and my role as an educational person is to say, "What is the church saying about this issue"?*

There was a strong perception that such Christian views would be stifled once aired. Teachers nonetheless, advocated respect for others' views even if they were religious and seemed not to reflect those held by mainstream society. This respect would engender a measure of authenticity needed in their teaching, as their faith is not portrayed as an act but an integral part of their personal and professional identities.

5.8.3 Being Pragmatic about it

Adopting a pragmatic approach to handling these issues of sensitivity and controversy, seemed to add a bit of minimal consolation and compromise. For example, in sex education, the teacher-led demonstration and distribution of condoms (through 'C' Card centres, now "Get it!" and not directly at schools by these teachers) posed a significant source of conflict for some teachers. This they saw as an act of encouragement and incitement. However, alongside this wrestling and inner turmoil (primarily due to their sincere Biblical belief that sex outside of marriage is a sin), was a measure of reservation, resignation and acceptance of the greater good being served (avoid STIs and pregnancy).

There seemed to be inconsistencies between theory and practice. From the 'PSHE & Citizenship Spotlight Series' *Faith Values and relationships Education*, there is a strong emphasis on the need for SRE to have a multi-faith perspective to encompass the many 'faiths and cultures, developed in partnership with parents/carers and the

wider community' (Blake and Katrak 2007, p.1). This approach should also be 'sensitive to the range of different values and beliefs within the multi-faith and multicultural society' (DfEE 2000, p.12), as teachers sought to develop a deeper knowledge and understanding 'about sex, sexuality and relationships alongside other public health concerns such as teenage pregnancy, HIV and STIs…' (Blake and Katrak, 2007 p.1). However, as Nathan pointed out, the over-emphasis on the mechanics of sex (chapter 2), as opposed to virtues, morals, healthy relationships and abstinence remained a source of inner tension even within this pragmatic stance. These values and virtues rarely were, if at all presented in lessons to balance the arguments and somehow afford students opportunities and exposures for informed life choices. In Nathan's own words:

> *Yeah, yeah, I think the thing I always struggle with is sex education because yeah, I agree that we should teach it but I worry that too much emphasis is placed on the sex and not enough on the relationships erm… and when you've got a group of teenagers, you have to be careful how you deliver that.*

The literature corroborates this. Whilst Nathan adopted more of a 'textbook style' approach to handle some of these issues, he like all other teachers, aimed for respect, openness, and development of critical thinking skills in pupils. The strategies according to the evidence when adopted were justified due to their inherent benefits and outcomes (Hitchcock and Hughes, 2003). Yet, the contradictions remains as James (2015) puts it, 'the best we have to do is to act with care, mindfulness, humility and caution; it is in this place it seems to me that ethical practice has the greatest chance to grow' (p.22).

Perceived benefits of and justifications for teaching strategies employed by teachers icluded developing non-judgementalism, minimising the risk of exercising undue influence, promoting values clarification among students, encouraging informed and balanced debates, minimising scope for embarrasment and increasing teacher sensitivity, empathy, care and openness. The strategies employed are relevant and related to the much wider context of Christian faith in the wider context, addressed in the next category.

Category 5: Christian believing in a wider secularising context

5.9 Theme 5: Policies, guidance documents – maintaining standards and equality or instruments of inconsistency and division

The legal, guidance and policy frameworks governing the teaching profession strongly stipulate and advocate values of tolerance, equality, acceptance, non-judgementalism and non-discrimination and promote strict checks and balances regarding the place of personal faith in practice (DfE, Teachers' Standards, 2012 and Equalities Act, 2010). They are crucial in protecting rights, freedoms and maintaining respect for others' beliefs, views and values. From the data, they serve two purposes: firstly, on the positive side, to engender and encourage wider appreciation and respect for diversity, tolerance, acceptance and neutrality, respect for all, freedom of speech and a departure from a narrow, restricted and fundamentalist view. According to Cumper and Lewis (2012), the UK has extended its already well-established laws on the grounds of 'race, gender and marital status' to now include 'age, disability and sexual orientation.' There is potential therefore for conflict between religious and other claims, for example, as regards 'providing adoption services to unmarried couples, including same-sex cohabiting or civil partners' (p.52).

Secondly, these policy guidelines and their changes generally supported and promoted a secular agenda according to evidence from some teachers. They can potentially restrict professional honesty, freedom of speech for Christian and faith views; promote inconsistencies, uncertainty and imbalances in their interpretation and application in negotiating both national and international values (Bowie 2017). These favour a liberal and secular stance, leaving those of faith feeling marginalised. Policies and practices were sometimes seen to promote a more 'sterile' professional agenda seen as robotic and technical (Barnes, 2012) over a vocational, ministry one, adopted, embraced and pursued by teachers of faith, as the data evidence suggests.

Teachers' views on the place of laws, policies and guidance documents in practice were categorised under two broad headings. They were seen on the one hand as complementing their practice by providing balance, creativity, inclusivity, objectivity whilst protecting the rights and freedoms of those involved, particularly the students. However, on the other hand, they were also perceived by some teachers as engendering conflicts in the sense that they reflect inconsistencies, favour the liberal

agenda, provide scope for ambiguous interpretations and applications, being restrictive and promote secularism.

Against this background, we need to promote a new approach to teaching. Jim called for a

> *…. respectful interesting teaching strategy… (which) puts character back into teaching and relate faith to job but don't convert, have integrity.*

Here, Jim seemed to speak on behalf of teacher-participants and echoed Barnes' (2012) call for the *person* of the teacher to be more prominent in the practice and the profession of teaching. This approach strongly suggested an inclusion of the teachers' values, beliefs, experiences, perceptions, discretionary judgements and care (Goodson and Hargreaves, 1996); albeit, with the caveats already mentioned. In chapter 2, Jones (2003) using the concept of concept of '*personhood and teacherhood*' advocates supporting teachers in 'developing professional capabilities but managing the conflicts arising out of the interaction of their personal and professional lives…with those expected by and of the profession (p.385). Copley (2005) also strongly advocates as a more prominent place for the 'rights of the teacher' (p.14). However, the rights and freedoms of students must be recognised.

Research by Bryan and Revell (2011) of Religious Education (RE) teacher-trainees, (see chapter 2), suggests that although they consider issues of identity and faith to be of personal importance, their perception of what constitute a 'good teacher' is detached. This perception relates to a professional worldview, which embraces *rationality* and *objectivity* as benchmarks. Conversely, Hill (2004) celebrates as 'good teachers' those able to 'develop the empathy needed to understand the motivational strength of the values held by others' (p.58) in O'Connor (2012). This suggests a conflict of compatibility, compromise and co-existence regarding the interpretation and application of laws, policies and guidance documents to practice.

Education remains highly politicised and successive governments with short term and constantly fluctuating policy agendas seem to embark on politically expedient programmes (Barnes, 2012; Day et al. 2005). These are reflected in their ideological underpinning of the purpose of education, be they faith-based, political or ideological: 'romantic, scientific rational, vocational or economic' (O'Connor, in Bryan and

Worsley, 2015). This represents the wide range of values and beliefs that can underpin philosophy of the education provision. Whilst a new professional outcome and target driven agenda arguably drive up standards, they can present scope for conflict in teachers' values to implement, for instance as regarding parentocracy, marketization and the academization of schools.

Despite these areas for conflict in values and Christian beliefs applied to a macro level, only a small minority of teachers agree on the marginalisation of Christianity. The argument that we 'are moving away from Christianity (post-Christian), was advanced; but that was only if by *Christianity* we meant the 'church' (traditional church attendance). (See also chapter 7). This was significant as, Esther explains,

> *I think that the church has marginalised itself as much as society has marginalised it…and has chosen to separate itself in a way that is unhelpful in some respects…erm, and in some ways even deserve to lose its place because too much the church talks about division rather than unity, exclusivity rather than inclusivity.*

She adopted a more liberal stance and suggested that the examples of Jesus modelling integration and acceptance of sinners as with the Samaritan woman (St. John 4:9, Bible) or eating with tax collectors (Mark 2:16, Bible) seemed to embody the very essence of how Christianity should reach out to secular liberal society rather than complain of marginalisation. In support, Pattison (2007) is resolute that churches should 'follow the *mores* of society' instead of embracing a position that is distinctive and 'based firmly upon the Christian tradition and theological reflection' (p.156). However, could we consider this to be compromising, condoning, co-operating or contending for the faith? Or is this an either or choice? In the literature, Green (2012) argues that 'Christian educators should also engage with secular social theory in order to counter the marginalization of religion (p.10) as according to Guite (2006), 'Christianity is not a private cerebral religion' (p.2).

Those sharing Green's view, featured prominently among the teachers who embraced a liberal position to their faith and issues. There seemed to be a wider perception of secularism or a liberal stance, projected as neutral, rational and objective when Revell and Walters (2010) suggests it is a distinct definable belief

position. This contributes to the inconsistency and imbalance earlier identified; here Jim seems to lament and assert that,

> *…atheism is celebrated as scientific and intellectual, Christianity demonised. Everyone evangelises something.*

This view has gained some traction by Thiessen (2013) who bears this out when he highlights the inconsistences of teachers committed to Marxism or atheism positioned as academically respectable but Christian commitment is a mere personal belief. The same epistemological status of academic respect should be afforded to Christian worldview, as 'secularists are the atheistic evangelists of secularisation' (Copley, 2005, p.7). However, for Cumper and Lewis (2012), this extends beyond Christianity. They write, 'there seems to be emerging a confident assertion of state values that do not include religious values…' (p. 57).

This controversy and inconsistency from a faith perspective (Jim and Karen) suggested that Islam was favoured and given preferential status and treatment, with approaches to Christian faith shrouded in political correctness so as not to cause offence. Thus, there seemed to be a fear of radicalisation and Christian fundamentalism, often expressed through political appropriateness. This issue was significant to the debate because some teachers felt that their fundamental Christian views, which represented their Scriptural interpretations, were perceived equally with radical Islam. However, there is a strong call by some participants to separate Christianity from radical Islam.

There were similar views to that effect, chief among them was that shared by Karen. She noted the offence that even Christian religious celebrations seemed to cause. She notes,

> *…there are some local authorities that are saying, "you can't put up Christmas decorations" – you can put up decoration that say 'winter festival' but not 'happy Christmas' in light across the street, that's being marginalised. We say ridiculous things like it will offend Muslims, well that's rubbish because Muslims celebrate Christmas…also Diwali (Hindus) so I think a lot of Councils have stirred up problems to be deliberately provocative, that is marginalising.*

Here, Karen's strong views represented a majority consensus among my participants. These caused teachers to draw conclusions that policy, guidance and legal requirements on freedom of speech, tolerance and non-discrimination are not fairly or consistently interpreted and applied. Furthermore, direct consequences of the unequal enforcement of laws results in a perception that laws and policies simply silence opposing views and not engender debate. For Cumper and Lewis, (2012) '….areas where the practices of faith communities…are subject to state restrictions and regulation… (are) restricted in part through legal arguments' (p.52). They further argue that 'the legal structures of the UK have not been supportive of formal, overarching visions of the place of religion and religious organisation within the legal order (p.57). However, Guite (2006) suggests that there should be restraint on government intervention with individuals left to work out their own salvation, or settle their own damnation through their own chosen actions. For some this might seem a step too far. Norman (2003) for example, argues that the individualistic dimension to religious believing is problematic as 'believers …make up their own understanding of Christianity; for example, on issues like divorce or abortion, modern Christians like to exercise their own judgement…, ignoring the vast body of moral theology…(p.49).

A starting point, however, could be trying to understand the Christian faith belief position instead of ridiculing it. Transitioned to a protest, militant and rebellious stance, Jim maintains that,

> *People are strongly discouraged from believing anything – be safe, grey neutral. Christians are increasingly put in positions to choose between living out faith (fundamental human right) and security of employment. (Jim)*

Whilst only a minority of my teachers seemed to express these strong views, there was a consensus about the declining influence of Christian faith as a whole in a wider context (Cumper and Lewis, 2012). Norman (2003) for instance, argues that 'English secular politicians cannot cope with people who take religion seriously'…as such 'the English church has to operate in 'deepening secularity' (p.44). This he argues, results in 'a piecemeal abandonment of traditional observances…provisions of entertainment, baptism of infants, marriage ceremonies, funerals all becoming secularised (p.50).

The issue of faith in wider professional life potentially pose considerable ramifications for those of Christian faith. But,

> *….Erm, ultimately, faith is who we are …erm, erm… and it is meant to be the whole of us, not just a bit of us and if it is meant to be the whole of us, then we take it with us wherever we go whatever we do. Whether we are a teacher or stood on the back of a hill because we are in the army or...erm, stood in a prison cell if we are a prison officer I don't think you can separate the two… I think God wants all our lives, ALL (emphasising) of it, not just some of it! 'faith is meant to be who we are…meant to be all of us…wherever we go, whatever profession, (Chrissy).*

Karen added her contribution,

> *It's part of our identity' 'it's all of us wherever we go…can't separate. God wants all of us (Karen).*

5.9.1 Suggested coping strategies and national trends

Amidst the challenges cited and the potentials for significant conflicts noted, all teachers repeated and firmly maintained that both in practice and in the wider spheres, there needed to be tolerance and (for some), inconspicuous applications using respectful non-evangelistic strategies for integration of faith (Smith and Shortt, 2003). However, a few teachers advocated 'speaking out' as and when needed; not to convert but to challenge silence as what seemed to be an inevitable price of faith.

A number of teachers cited current issues in the national News; particularly those to do with same sex marriages and their conflict with Christian proprietors (see also Cumper and Lewis, 2012). These included the Christian couple with the bed and breakfast and the Christian owned bakery *Ashers* in Northern Ireland, who have since lost their appeal against the court ruling that refusing to bake a cake supporting homosexuality was discriminatory in October 2016); same sex adoptions, crucifixes at work and the Lord's prayer advert in cinemas. In the case of the 'gay cake' case, there was an acknowledgement of the complexity of the issues by the legal system and a fervent call by vested interests for urgent clarity in the interpretation of the laws

in the context of the place of religious faith in practice, (beyond the scope of this study for in-depth exploration).

5.9.2 Significance of life stories in the broader context

The life history approach allowed teachers to share their individual stories, perceptions and experiences, and for their life history data to be applied to and illuminate the specific categories, concepts and themes to a much wider context. For Atkinson (1998), sharing life stories is beneficial in that they provide clearer perspectives on personal experiences. This leads to deeper meanings, enhance self-knowledge, sharing of 'cherished insights and experiences' which brings joy, 'validation and release burdens' creates a sense of community, be an inspiration to make life changes and gain a clearer understanding of the future based on past experiences (p.25-26).

From my research data, I demonstrated using teachers' personal life stories, their articulated perceptions of how their actual participation in this research has significant implications. Overall, from the interview data these included: raising an awareness of the issues, encouraging Christians to speak out, providing scope for teacher training input, being of academic and professional relevance as well as influencing and instilling values. Furthermore, their participation could demonstrate solidarity with and empathy for other Christians wider afield, encourage authenticity, and provide opportunities to model faith in especially in secular contexts. Encouraging reflection and debate as well as challenging the myth of faith compartmentalisation whilst acknowledging the reality and existence of tension, conflict and controversy is a healthy way to confront the issues presented. Thus, the potential impact lies in the application of these stories presented, having the power to influence, provide scope to explore issues of controversy and sensitivity, and further provide opportunities to project a loving God, thereby dispelling perceptions of God with condemnation and judgement.

These reportedly gave my Christian PSHE teachers a sense of purpose; one that despite their conflicts and inner turmoil on various delicate, complex, divisive and contentious issues, caused them to value and appreciate the significance of their faith in practice and implications for wider afield as the data evidenced. To this end,

my study provided an opportunity for them to voice their experiences to illuminate complex issues. This for some was reportedly liberating and empowering, despite the problematic nature of this claim in the literature (chapters 1 and 3). Against this background, I will now establish my claim to a contribution to a gap in the knowledge (building on from chapters 1 and 2), in light of my analysis.

5.10 Contribution to the field and unexpected data emerging

In this study, I set out to explore, investigate and illuminate the relationship between PSHE teachers' Christian beliefs, personal values and their teaching approaches of sensitive and controversial issues; the direct conflict this engenders and their perceptions of Christian believing within an increasingly wider secularizing context. Through a review of the relevant debates of my topic in chapter 2, the evidence suggested that my specific topic has gaps, which provided scope for further exploration. Having employed the life history approach as part of this quest, I engaged in an intimate way by obtaining teachers' authentic voices in order to increase the sum of knowledge. Therefore, I provide an interpretation, theory and representation on an aspect of the world (Goodson and Sikes 2001, p.48), that of personal values and Christian beliefs in professional practice as narrated by these teachers. Their stories formed a crucial part in the contribution of data, which sought to plug a gap in this under-explored area as I illuminated the influence of religious faith on teacher perceptions, experiences and professional practice.

I contemplated how they made sense of their faith, pedagogical strategies and interpretations of their work (Sikes, 2006) as they managed controversial issues (Oulton et al. 2014; Ofsted, 2012). My study contributed to creating new understandings specifically of Christian PSHE teachers and extended the work of others (for example Revell and Walters (2010) who researched RE PGCE student teachers and their response to their perceptions of integrating their faith in their teaching. Oulton et al. (2004) explored some issues in Citizenship, but not PSHE or from a faith perspective as outlined in chapter 2. I deviated from, and subsequently extended these studies by targeting specifically Christian PSHE teachers, locating my research in the south east of England, used a sample of 13 teachers (including 2 pilot studies) and employed a life history approach. I identified new and emerging issues from my interview schedule and transcript data (Appendix N, O, T, U) 'worthy

of exploration' (Trafford and Leshem 2008, p.17) and extracted from teachers' life stories, unique perceptions and experiences represented in this analysis and conclusions drawn (chapter 6).

My research yielded interesting and significant findings, which suggest further insightful research possibilities. I find these issues emerging from the data to be somewhat unexpected and noteworthy:

- A perception exists that silence seemed to be a price to pay for having a Christian faith. The issue of professional honesty and its consequences and the ease with which a Christian position seemed to be inconsistent with secular policies and laws
- The conflicts that Christian students' perceptions and management of sensitive and controversial issues could possibly pose
- The need at various levels (not only in ITT programmes), for teacher training on handling issues of sensitivity and controversy, professional boundaries
- The use of prayer and theologically subtle language by teachers as a coping strategy
- The extent to which maintaining academic and professional integrity challenged *courageous restraint* or conflicting compromise
- Boundaries in cultural expressions of Christianity in view of school leaders as regarding praying for or with students. How religious should the prayer look? – Explicit language, blessing/calling on God's spirit? Implications for liberal and evangelical Christians.
- Is there tension between health guidance, libertarian sexual attitudes, women's rights, gay rights, religious rights; what constitute healthy SRE teaching?

The Christian perspective of teachers' life stories (in PSHE) I have illuminated, are not prominent despite literature, research and policies into areas of beliefs, values, curriculum and resources. The significance of this study (outlined in chapter one), related to possibly improving the human condition, will also illuminate the gap in the knowledge which my study addresses.

This wider usefulness, relevance and application located my study in a much broader debate and context. I addressed and theorised on how individuals of Christian faith coped with contentious and divisive current issues prominent in the media and society. Thus, the social purpose my research study can potentially benefit and is of particular significance not only Christian PSHE teachers, but is relevant and applicable to a range of professions and fields, of individuals of faith and none. These include Medicine, Hospitality, Leisure and travel, Education, Defence, Business and commerce, Politics, Judiciary and others. Furthermore, there is potential for this new knowledge being relevant and applicable to policy-makers at various levels and stakeholders (Chapter 7). Through my contribution, there is potential for the influence of Christian approaches to be considered and recognised, not only to education, but also to other careers and disciplines to encourage Christian engagement (Green, 2012), an awareness of issues, encouraging a faith stance in challenging a view to compartmentalise faith and professional practice.

5.11 Conclusion

This analysis chapter afforded me the opportunity to examine and evaluate the categories and themes identified in order to provide explanations, reasons, interpretations and making sense of the key issues emanating from the life history interview data. I attempted this by looking for repetitions, relationships, significance, similarities, differences and influences in the constructed narratives of teachers; as well as issues highlighted by them deemed to be of significance to them or my research purpose. The decisions I have already outlined, are subjective in nature.

From the broad categories and themes identified, teachers gave insights into their experiences, perceptions and experiences. They reflected the extent to which primary socialisation and their individual experiences influenced them, leading to identifying, clarifying and eventually owning both personal values and Christian beliefs. These however, posed tremendous potential for conflict in their professional roles and necessitated a transitioning in their belief and value positioning leading for some to a transitioning in their stance on, and attitudes to various controversial issues. Whilst they saw and acknowledged the role of their values and beliefs in practice, they recognised the need to follow legislative frameworks and policy

guidance although these posed significant tensions inwardly for them. This resulted in various responses from compliance, passive resistance to protest.

Teachers' views varied on the extent to which they perceived the Christian faith as being marginalised. Those that embraced a more tolerant and opened response, tended to be of a more liberal persuasion, however, in contrast to the literature, they were not 'intolerant…vindictive, unmerciful in their attitudes to those who adhere(d) a more conservative view, or threaten(ed) their values' (Pattison, 2007, pp.160-161). Nevertheless, there was consensus among my teachers that faith should not be compartmentalised in the professional sphere, including in the wider society.

In the next Chapter, I will conclude my thesis by reviewing the aims and summarise answers to my research questions. A reflexive discussion of the research process is included in order to relocate myself in the study in light of my findings and analysis. Factual and conceptual conclusions are drawn as I restate my contribution and suggest further research possibilities. In addition, I enhance the conclusions with reference to my original contribution to the field drawing on Ofsted reports and other literature in Chapter 2 before and after my interviews to augment my contribution. I also draw on my findings in Chapter 4, to make my participants say more and to emphasize and make the life and school events they shared more prominent and explicit.

Chapter 6

Conclusion

6.1 Introduction

The problematic nature of sensitive and controversial PSHE issues in PSHE is well documented (for example Mead, 2004; Ofsted, 2005 and Willis and Wolstenholme, 2016). However, approaching these issues from a Christian faith perspective and combining this theme with PSHE teachers' personal values as I have done in my research study, add a unique and complex dimension to this contentious and under-explored issue, 'using stories to express their faith and communicate their worldview' (Cooling, 2002, p.44).

I explored, investigated, analyzed and illuminated teachers' constructed narratives and lived experiences (Somekh and Lewin, 2005), the relationship between their Christian beliefs, personal values and the teaching approaches adopted for teaching sensitive and controversial issues; the direct conflict this engendered and their perceptions of Christian believing within an increasingly wider secularizing context. This provided insights into the relationship between their beliefs and values as they wrestled with the legitimacy of being a Christian and PSHE teacher. My study also provided rich historical and current understandings in the process of transformation and transition (McLeod and Thomson, 2009). In this research, I created new understandings of faith in professional practice, 'extended the work of others and identified new and emerging themes worthy of exploration' (Trafford and Leshem 2008, p.17), as well as adding to 'theoretical developments in the field (suggesting) practical problems that need a remedy' (Denscombe, 2012, p.172). (See also recommendations (p. 187) and contribution, (p.153).

I have made some progress in achieving my research aims; however, I cannot provide definite answers to satisfy them in their entirety. While teachers acknowledged the conflict that their Christian faith and personal values posed in their practice, the extent of this was varied, based on their perceptions of teaching, its

purpose and evaluation of the curriculum, (Middlewood and Burton, 2001). Furthermore, it seemed to depend on their faith tradition, be it of a liberal or more conservative evangelical stance, or whether religion was perceived as 'belief, identity, structured social relations, ideology, norms and values or practice' (Woodhead, 2011, p.121).

6.2 Synopsis of answers to research questions

My research questions sought to reflect teachers' insights on and application of some issues in their work and to provide some degree of 'high legitimacy based on the combination of specialised knowledge and professional responsibility' (West et al. 2007, p.127). In identifying and defining sensitive and controversial issues, teachers agreed among themselves and with the literature that such issues are difficult to define; nevertheless, these issues had potential to cause upset, distress, embarrassment, engender strong views or a range of opinions in conflict with mainstream society and evoke strong emotions held as valid by both teachers and students, research question. Therefore, these topics require care in planning, balance and sensitivity in their delivery.

Issues of sexuality, reconciling personal values and faith, recognising students' values and the impact of their primary socialisation caused some tension. Teachers also struggled inwardly with fear of professional misconduct, misconstrued or perceived to be evangelising or indoctrinating pupils, exercising undue influence, or having personal conflict as regarding not contending for their faith (RQ1) They adopted a range of "covert and overt strategies" (Adele) to manage these conflicts; overt being primarily devil's advocate, guest speakers and respectful discussions, (RQ2) Their perceptions of how personal faith related to their practice hinged on their motivation for and worldview of teaching, primarily as a vocation, calling and ministry as unto the Lord. However, teachers agreed on a respectful, balanced, non-discriminatory and non-judgemental approach (RQ2). Although guidance, policy and statutory documents reflect these values, and positively influenced practice, a perception existed among some that their misinterpretation and unfair application provided scope for a potential to silence opposing views and discourage respectful dialogue (RQ3). My intension was to produce data that contributed to plugging a

knowledge gap and develop new understandings of existing issues and emerging themes primarily from questions 2, 3 and 4.

6.3 Factual conclusions

Based on the evidence collected from my investigation, and related to data from my research questions, I concluded that with maturity, experience, exposure and education, teachers clarified and owned their values regardless of their primary socialisation and formation. Some of these 'values and perceptions were…constant, others more flexible and context-dependent' (Costley et al. 2010, p.86). Furthermore, values reflected their Christian faith and on occasions, sharply conflict with those of their students, the curriculum or statutory requirements. However, love, compassion, selflessness, openness, acceptance and empathy for students are engendered, as teachers' personal experiences challenged their previously held assumptions and although potentially overlap with British values, took precedence over them as 'higher' values (Bowie and Revell 2016, p.9). Thus, teachers felt that their Christian values underpinned current professional practice self-understanding resulting in a deep relationship with Jesus and a strong desire for students to succeed.

Although for professional, legislative and theological reasons, they remained conflicted on the issue of their personal faith in their practice, there was consensus on the strategies they employed to cope. Teachers, who embraced an evangelical Pentecostal tradition, seemed to reflect and articulate a deeper crisis of faith in their professional practice, which according to Morris (2013) can challenge notions of contextual constructions and current politically influential views. Whilst some compromised on these without necessarily condoning beliefs and practices contrary to their faith, there was consensus that teaching sensitive and controversial issues reflect the professional framework of respect, tolerance and acceptance.

In the wider context, there was no complete consensus; firstly, on the extent to which the Christian faith was considered to be marginalised or secondly, the appropriateness of secular views and approaches influencing professional practice. However, teachers were confident that sharing their personal stories through participating in this research would have profound and significant impact and

application. They proposed: illuminating the issues addressed, encouraging Christian colleagues, and providing a useful resource for teacher training as well as encouraging reflection and solidarity with Christians in broader professional contexts (Chapters 5 and 6). There was consensus that Christians wider afield should be able to demonstrate their faith and that it is compatible with their work regardless, especially 'through guided reflection on the relationship between their personal beliefs and professional practice' (Jackson and Everington, 2017, p.9). I found compelling evidence as Chrissy puts it…

> …ultimately, faith is who we are… meant to be all of us…the whole part of us wherever we go, whatever we do. (Chrissy)

This statement coheres with the consensus of my teachers that faith in professional practice should not and cannot be easily compartmentalised, but is best modelled with authenticity and sensitivity without 'preaching' (Adele), respecting children's' rights and freedoms. Furthermore as Woodhead (2011) puts it, a system of meaning should be embraced which covers life in its entirety. This approach teachers felt would support the development and encouragement of critical thinking in students and encouraged openness and love for people by teachers themselves. This stance however, seems to conflict with a subtle use of religious language in practice to disguise and transmit personal faith expressed by a significantly small minority.

6.4 Conceptual conclusions

My factual conclusions interpreted as concepts further suggest that teachers seemed to reflect greater confidence in handling life's tensions and struggles in proportion to the development of their faith, primarily through personal and professional situations. Some significant secondary findings were revealed as a by-product of my research study (Trafford and Lesham, 2008).

Using an interpretative epistemology and inductive qualitative paradigm, which suggested my openness to multiple realities and interpretations of how my teacher-participants storied their personal values and Christian faith in practice, helped me to develop theory and propositions and present conceptual conclusions based on the

sensitivity of my topic. Teachers became less dogmatic, judgemental and subjective in professional practice and more objective, empathetic and respectful in their applications and interpretations of Scripture to life's contentious issues. They became more self-critical, challenging their own assumptions, narrow and prejudicial attitudes, as they grew more progressive and stable in their Christian faith despite life's vicissitudes and transitions.

My research evidence suggests that the interpretation and inconsistent application of Guidance, policy and Statutory requirements contributed to an imposed burden (chapter 5). Teachers wrestled with issues of professional honesty, boundaries, legislative and professional restrictions in order to maintain professional and academic integrity or simply to keep their jobs, responding compliantly, with silent resistance or pragmatism in their transitions.

Silence seemed to be a price to pay for having a Christian faith. Conflict and crisis of faith abounded as teachers contended with the implications and consequences of professional honesty, freedom of speech and restrictions. This imposed significant burden as they attempted to manage the ethical, pragmatic and theological aspects of professionalism. This resulted in a tension of conflicting compromises and 'courageous restraint' (Cooling, 2012). Consequently, few teachers routinely disguise, integrate their personal Christian beliefs with subtle theological language, as they seemed to lose faith in seeing teaching as a vocation. Therefore, balancing religious freedoms with professional and legislative restrictions remain a conflicting, divisive and recurring issue; as Bowie (2017) suggests, so too 'human rights, fundamental freedoms and national values in educational policy…' (p. 3).

Without generalising, my theory is that other Christian professionals in wider contexts could employ routinely disguising, integrating personal Christian beliefs with subtle theological language as a coping strategy. My findings and knowledge produced therefore, might inform and influence other corporate cultures (Somekh and Lewin, 2005), 'embedded in wider political struggles' (McLeod and Thomson, 2009, p.34), as the themes and concepts explored and illuminated seem to bear much relationship between them. Yet, findings showed a key opposite direction – how professional practice informs faith.

6.5 Revisiting the gap and making an original contribution

My topic addresses issues of some significance to the teaching profession and beyond. It illuminates the particular experiences of teachers of PSHE who have strong Christian beliefs and convictions, which have various origins and are in transition; and which sometimes presented these teachers with dilemmas in their working lives. I found the moments and brought illustrations of critical incidence when silence and restraint came into play. They adopted a range of strategies for resolution or compromise in handling these critical moments. A significant original contribution from my study illuminated the moments when Christian PSHE teachers were confronted with and had to deal with sensitive and controversial issues in their professional practice. It pinpointed those specific moments when they experienced tensions, challenge or controversy around topics of sensitivity and controversy. The examples of cultural and religious issues and conflicts became apparent and those critical moments when encountered, engendered and reflected responses of resilience, compliance and rebellion, while some teachers remained unchanged in their positions.

I demonstrated the way teachers were in transition in these conflicts, yet understood faith as a holistic quality. My contribution therefore,
- lies in the discussion of the different strategies that Christian PSHE teachers adopted in addressing sensitive and controversial issues in their practice
- combines personal values, Christian beliefs and professional practice of PSHE teachers using the life history method demonstrating the relationship between biographical context, identity and practice
- brings illustrations of critical incidence when silence and restraint came to play; I captured and illuminated the moments when Christian PSHE teachers in transition, encountered issues of sensitivity and controversy in their work. I illuminated the moments when they faced and experienced tensions and controversy in their professional practice and the decisions they made in these critical moments.

The findings from the Ofsted reports (and associated academic literature) in chapter 2 are helpful in augmenting my original contribution to the field. This allows me to model and demonstrate how I might have changed my views as a result, in the first instance, following the analysis of the literature review (and methodology) and, in the second instance, after the results of the interviews. From an Ofsted (2012) report primary school students seem to receive too much emphasis on friendship and relationship, their puberty provision lacked exposure to the emotional and physical aspects of SRE. On the contrary, in secondary schools, there was an imbalance towards the 'mechanics' of sex and reproduction rather than focusing on relationships, sexuality, influence of pornography on students' understanding of healthy relationships, dealing with emotions and staying safe. I found after my interviews that this was confirmed to be so (chapter 4).

Prior to my research, the literature identifies that sensitivity and controversy in PSHE is prominent in many research projects (Claire and Holden, 2007; Cooling 2002, 2010; PSHE Association 2010; Cohen et al., 2011; Oxfam 2006; Oulton et al. 2004; Carrington and Troyna, 1988). Report by Ofsted (2012) acknowledged tension and complexity of identifying as well as developing effective pedagogical strategies to manage them in PSHE teaching. In my study however, I found that the approaches that Christian PSHE teachers adopted to the interpretation and application of faith in personal life significantly influenced how faith is integrated professionally. I did not locate any research into Christian PSHE teachers and their response to sensitive and controversial issues in critical moments of conflict in their faith, values and practice. My research therefore after the interviews, illuminates insights into a wider context of faith in professional life beyond the field of Education.

There seems to be a consensus in some of the research literature that using qualified PSHE teachers remains the most effective way to ensure meaningful delivery (PSHE Association 2014; Oulton et al. 2014). However, in my study after the interviews, I found that none of my thirteen participants had PSHE certification (Appendices C, X), although about two are delivering the subject as their main teaching area as a discrete subject. Additionally, a DfE (2011) study 'Mapping study of the prevalent models of delivery and their effectiveness' also seems to suggest

that 'the predominant delivery mode at both primary and secondary was discrete lessons. However, this appears to differ from the general trend that I found after my interviews. My findings after them suggested that discrete PSHE lessons were not the predominant delivery mode at both primary and secondary levels; rather, most participants alluded to PSHE lessons being integrated into Religious Studies or other subjects as well as other non-discrete provisions such as form time or focus days being more prevalent in their experiences and practice (see also chapter 4).

The issue of supporting teachers in 'developing professional capabilities but managing the conflicts arising out of the interaction of their personal and professional lives…with those expected by and of the profession' was addressed in the literature by Jones (2003, p.385) as well as Ofsted report (2010). My study extended this issue through the life history method and adding a significant element of Christian faith and personal values of PSHE teachers specifically to the debate. This report also highlighted the sensitive and controversial nature of some topics with demanding themes that resulted in the discomfort caused to some teachers, further compounded by a deficiency in effective staff development. Furthermore, Mead (2003) highlighted the insufficient guidance university student-teachers receive in preparation to teach sensitive and controversial issues, which Nikki confirmed in my findings (p. 133) after the interview. Shortt and Smith (2003) and Cooling et al. (2015) addressed some of the core issues, problems and tensions regarding limited teacher training to manage effectively the conflict of personal values and beliefs in professional practice with strategies for implementing and integrating Christian faith in practice.

I found from my study that participants after the interviews (chapter 4 findings) not only bear these out, but further extended, illuminated and highlighted those critical moments of tension, conflict, compromise and transition. The published literature did not seem to relate this to the needs, insecurities, wrestling and concerns of the Christian PSHE teachers. I found that studies seem to address general strategies to deal with sensitive and controversial issues but after my research, I now know that the literature and previous research had not addressed the issues from a perspective of Christian PSHE teachers (for example, Oulton et al. 2004; DfE (2011); Ofsted (2005, 2010, 2012); PSHE Association (2010); or individual

authors (Jones, 2003; Mead, 2004) neither did they utilise a life history approach to address the in-depth life stories, perceptions, insights and experiences of Christian PSHE teachers regarding their personal values and beliefs and the impact on their practice as I have done.

6.6 Making my findings more prominent

From my findings in Chapter 4, I want to make my participants say more and to emphasize and make the life and school events they shared more prominent and explicit. These represent some significant findings after the interviews that will augment my contribution and conclusions. From the timeline stories in the interviews, I found that through primary socialisation teachers generally seemed to undergo processes of formation, transformation, growth, transitioning, and modelling in negotiating and transitioning in the application of their personal values and faith to their professional practice. Their family religious traditions reflected a link in how they later interpreted and lived out their Christian faith (Hanson, 1997, p.5). This seems to have transpired for them in different ways and to various extents, as life's experiences helped them to challenge their previously held assumptions thus developing core values and owning their personal faith. These experiences and processes for some, occurred through gaining exposure, dealing with the consequences of decisions and choices, as well as through childrearing and educational pursuits. From the interview data, they contributed to teachers generally adopting values of love, care, compassion, empathy, non-judgementalism, tolerance and selflessness which inform their strategy of faith integration in their professional practice.

Additionally, my findings show that some teachers stated that they became more self-assured and confident in their faith as it developed and reflected deeper personal conviction as personal faith was worked out in life's situations. So despite how they self-identified regarding their religious traditions (liberal or evangelical), my findings suggested that on the whole, regardless of the processes or reasons, they became more opened, less dogmatic and subjective and learned as in Jim's account, to challenge narrow, racist or prejudicial issues. Thus, they seemed to have challenged assumptions and changed attitudes as well as adopted wider

interpretations of Scripture to life's contentious issues as well as developed a more stable faith despite life's vicissitudes.

It is significant that some teachers especially Adele and Esther placed much emphasis on the need to find clarity and eventually 'own' their personal faith and not to unquestioningly accept those of their parents. This transition process demonstrated a progression which contributed to a 'reworking' or adaptation and ownership of their personal faith, not merely professing but a possessing faith. By this they suggest not merely giving mental assent or viewing Christianity simply as cultural identity, but embracing a deep and personal relationship with Jesus Christ within an ethical and theological framework which is wholly compatible with and inseparable from their professional practice. In the words of Chrissy and Karen:

- *Remember that ultimately, faith is who we are…meant to be all of us…the whole part of us wherever we go, whatever we do (Chrissy)*

- *…I could not do my job without it (my faith) ...part of my identity (Karen)*

After the interviews I found that the development and application of Christian faith to the professional practice of the teachers as a whole reflected a process from exploration, through enlightenment, adaptation and ownership, whether or not they had a religious upbringing. They subsequently developed and gained new confidence, openness, childlike faith and deeper conviction. A broader interpretation to and application of faith to sensitive and controversial issues, subjectivity, as well as helping them to challenge narrow views of issues, yet, maintaining their core Christian beliefs seem also to have transpired (page 41).

Possessing core beliefs and non-negotiable values however, presented an opportunity for tensions when dealing with controversial issues in practice. The disciplinary action taken against Jim (chapter 4), for professional misconduct when he inadvertently shared his personal views caused him to adopt, rather reluctantly, a strictly professional approach to his job, as well as now teaching as it 'simply pays the bills'. All teachers (except Jim) adopted a ministry, vocational and calling

understanding and interpretation to their professional practice, informed such practice reflecting or even resulting in a deep passion and conviction. This translated in their work through demonstrating respect and justice in teaching, managing behaviour effectively, valuing students, demonstrating compassion, sensitivity and tolerance, forgiveness, care, sympathy, building relationships, using and modelling positive language, acceptance and love, covert prayers, being a good listener and being available to give support to students especially outside of lessons as and when required, except now, especially for Jim, being more aware of those unguarded moments.

However, despite potential for conflict, I found that they were resourceful and sought to model their faith, demonstrate authenticity and sensitivity 'without preaching' in order to develop critical thinking skills and respect for others' beliefs and opinions in pupils. From the overall data in the transcripts, teachers during critical moments of tensions in their work, also developed and modelled acceptance, commitment, teamwork, openness, honesty, genuineness, empathy, selflessness, care, perseverance, security, love, charity; and sought to develop in students a range of values including aspiration, deferred gratification, meritocracy, resilience and critical thinking skills that they integrated in their professional practice.

The extent to which honest Christian views expressed cause offense was one issue that Jim flagged up as being significant to the debate of inconsistency in how the relationship between faith and professionalism is handled both in education and beyond. There seemed to be a perception that government intervention restricted teacher voice and the ease with which faith views once expressed appeared to be dismissed. More significant is the extent to which freedom of speech and expression were seen to be unfairly interpreted when representing Christian faith, resulting in Christian teachers and professionals maintaining a dignified silence on issues of faith and controversy, which seems to be a price of truth, Christian faith and professional honesty. Both Jim and Simon concluded that '*everybody is an evangelist for something...*'

The possibility for clashes or conflict between the religious and the secular increases as the practices of faith communities are subject to state restriction or regulation for example the Discrimination law, now extended to age, disability, religion and sexual orientation' (Cumper and Lewis 2012, p.52). My research findings suggest that laws, policies and guidance documents relevant to PSHE were seen generally as having a twofold effect: firstly, by complementing their practice thereby providing scope for balance, creativity, inclusivity, objectivity whilst protecting the rights and freedoms of those involved, particularly the students. Secondly, however, they had potential for inconsistencies, favouring a liberal and secular agenda, while providing scope for ambiguous interpretations and applications. For Norman (2003), 'Christian teachings constitute part of national heritage' (p. 44) and Simon, after his interview added that to redress this imbalance, the Christian community could,

Flag up the positive aspects and contributions of Christianity to the country, for example, laws, traditions and community spirit (Simon)

Prior to my research the place of Christian PSHE teachers' tensions in practice was not prominent; however, the life history interview data I gathered illuminated the significance of teachers' participation in my research. Combining all their responses yielded rich and insightful life history data on the perceived significance of their contribution to the faith in professional practice debate. These include identifying tensions in practice (RQ1), (see also pp. 93-95); raising an awareness of the issues addressed, providing possibilities for teacher training input, being of academic and professional relevance and potentially encouraging other Christians to speak out. Furthermore, their participation could exhibit solidarity with and empathy for other Christians in Education and beyond, encourage legitimacy and the integration of faith in practice especially in secular contexts. This could challenge the myth of faith compartmentalisation whilst accepting the reality and existence of tension, conflict and controversy. Here, respectful dialogue, critical reflection and debate could also be encouraged.

Overall, the significance of sharing their stories and participating in this research could be summarised as having the potential to:

- Illuminate the issue of contentious and divisive issues in practice from a faith perspective
- encourage and support other Christian colleagues in Education and beyond
- be available as a resource for teacher training academically and professionally

6.7 An overview of the literature and originality

Debates on the specific conflict that Christian PSHE teachers encounter that conflict their faith and practice is not prominent in the literature reviewed. Studies have addressed RE teachers (for example, Revell and Walters, 2010; Sikes and Everington, 2001, 2003), applying Biblical principles to teaching (Shortt and Smith, 2003; Cooling, Green and Revell 2015; Cooling et al. 2015), albeit not specific to PSHE. When I reviewed the PSHE literature, reports and the debates, I found that issues of sensitivity and controversy in PSHE delivery was already addressed (DfE, 2011; Ofsted, 2013; Jones, 2003; Mead, 2004; Equalities Act, 2010; Willes and Wolstenholme, 2016).

There were some consistent themes in the materials I found. These primarily related to PSHE as a subject in the curriculum and teachers' lack of training, under-confidence in teaching sensitive and controversial issues; however, the strategies employed by particular Christian PSHE teachers in moments of critical incidence in their working lives were not addressed. Although I could have been more focused in my conceptual framework (Appendices A, B), to present a more extensive literature, for example on the place of values, beliefs and evangelicalism among other groups beyond PSHE Christian teachers, I did establish and justify my literature boundary in chapter 2, page 26. Nevertheless, the limited literature and underexplored area of Christian PSHE teachers wrestling with sensitive and controversial areas, as they adopted coping strategies during these critical moments of tension meant that a gap existed to extend the work of others with similar studies and themes, for example, further exploring the personal and professional or how we should support the negotiating of these domains.

Whereas the knowledge I presented may not necessarily be first of its kind in the sense of 'originality', it does 'represent freshly developed knowledge' illuminating

pre-existing understanding as well as presenting a conceptual or an 'unusual solution to a problem in the manner of my 'exploring a new area' (Oliver 2014, p.183). Doing this kind of study with this group of teachers is distinctive, original and first of its kind. Thus, as Trafford and Leshem (2008) suggest, 'making an original contribution to knowledge here implies developing theory (p.49), through an inductive research. My research design based on the conceptual assumptions suggests that I created 'new understandings from existing issues' and extended the work of others (for example, Revell and Walters 2010 and Revell and Bryan, 2017), through…'identification of new and emerging issues worthy of exploration and illumination' (Trafford and Leshem 2008, p.141).

My study contributed to creating new understandings specifically of Christian PSHE teachers and extended the work of others (for example Revell and Walters (2010) who researched RE PGCE student teachers and their response to their perceptions of integrating their faith in their teaching. Oulton et al. (2004) explored some issues in Citizenship, but not from a perspective of Christian PSHE teachers, as outlined in chapter 2. I deviated from, and subsequently extended these studies by targeting specifically Christian PSHE teachers, locating my research in the south east of England, used a sample of 13 teachers (including 2 pilot studies) and employed a life history approach. I identified new and emerging issues from my interview schedule and transcript data (Appendices N, O, Q, U) 'worthy of exploration' (Trafford and Leshem 2008, p.17) and analysed from teachers' life stories, unique perceptions and experiences represented in this analysis and conclusions drawn (chapter 6). Building on the (literature, research and reports findings), my study addresses a current problem substantiated by its significant contribution in the answers it provides and illuminates. Thus, it provides an opportunity to extend the forefront of my discipline through advanced scholarship and making an original contribution to knowledge.

These specific new understandings illuminated some challenges that teachers experienced in seeking to integrate their personal convictions with the requirements of teaching PSHE, with my contribution lying in the discussion of the different strategies that they adopted during these critical incidences. Furthermore, I demonstrated how they perceived a connection or relationship between their

personal principles, morals and standards and Christian beliefs as they managed sensitive and controversial topics in their teaching. This is significant because as mentioned, it has implications for Christian teachers of other subjects as well as for Christian professionals beyond. The new insights, which emerged from the analysis of their life stories (life history data), constitute new and emerging theory and knowledge with further research implications (Anderson and Arsenault, 2002). It also illuminates the specific experiences of teachers of PSHE with strong Christian beliefs and convictions, which may reflect aspects of their primary socialisation, yet they are in processes of transition; and this sometimes presented them with dilemmas in their professional practice. Through my research questions, I found and illuminated those moments and brought illustrations of critical incidences when silence and restraint came into play. An overriding claim, however is that this research demonstrates the way Christian PSHE teachers are in a period of transition understanding their faith as a holistic quality and not a compartmentalised entity.

6.8 My reflections

Shifting my original focus from one which explicitly involve an auto/biographical dimension (Merrill and West, 2009), to a life history method to include 13 teachers, allowed me to expand and further illuminate my exploration of the issues. I ascertained how particular others also negotiated and navigated their way through this complex interweaving process of professional, ethical and theological issues. However, my insider/outsider role as a Christian PSHE teacher and researcher had validity implications regarding its potential for researcher bias through my assumptions, experiences, education, and preconceived ideas (Simon, 2006; Bell, 2010). For me, this measure of familiarity with the issues and settings embedded a deep measure of complexity in making this familiar context strange (Hammersley and Atkinson, 1995), in order to avoid being too native or providing over-sympathetic conclusions. Thus, I developed the willingness to trust the data evidence rather than simply reinforce my own beliefs, assumptions, and interpretations. Yet the 'reflexive, problematic and at times, contradictory nature of data…with the tremendous influence of the researcher as author' need be recognized (Denzin and Lincoln, 2000, p.661).

Having revisited and evaluated my own life story, challenged me to likewise clarify and own my personal values and Christian belief position and their relationship to strategies for teaching sensitive and controversial issues (Tackling tricky topics in PSHE, 2011; PSHE Association, 2012). I employ a metaphorical and modelling approach professionally, balancing compliance and pragmatism while maintaining a ministry-vocational underpinning. I acknowledge the profound impact of engaging with and embarking on a research of this scale (Hart 1995; Burgess et al. 2006). Furthermore, I developed a deeper sense of awareness and respect for the depth of academic rigor enshrined within the voluminous and complex work required for doctoral studies with deeper levels of conceptualization. Another significant development for me personally that substantiates this claim was the publishing of my chapter 5 in the book, *Being Christian in Education* (Bryan and Worsley, 2015, pp. 71-88), (referenced in chapters 1 and 2).

The Doctorate in Education (EdD) programme has:

- Informed the development of my thinking and specifically challenged my understanding and perceptions on the complexities of faith in professional practice.
- Provided unique opportunities to build positive relationships with cohort colleagues and staff. I benefited tremendously from the expertise of supervisors, review panel chair, peer reviews and viva examiners' feedback.
- Provided an opportunity to extend the forefront of my discipline through advanced scholarship and making an original contribution to knowledge with scope for publication and local and international conference presentations.

6.9 Suggestions for further research

Both research strengths and limitations provide opportunities for further exploration in the thinking underpinning the theme of beliefs and values in professional practice. For instance, policy developers and particularly postgraduate students could gain insights on possible themes and topics (Creswell, 1998). My findings are extensive however; others can build on my research (Anderson and Arsenault, 2002). For example, using a bigger sample and including a broader geographical area to provide further detailed insights into the experiences and perceptions of more PSHE teachers. Using anonymous open-ended questionnaires could yield more valid and

authentic responses. Likewise, the use of observations of PSHE lessons could also yield such data, considering ethical issues particularly if covert. Such research could include the experiences and perceptions of students, parents, and other stakeholders to ascertain also whether other religious groups experience similar changes.

The conceptual conclusions drawn yielded some surprises and further pose interesting research possibilities including:

- A perception that silence is a price to pay for having a Cristian faith
- Secular Christians: conservative and fundamental faith traditions in PSHE
- Teacher training and issues of sensitivity and controversy from a faith perspective: respecting students' rights, freedoms and autonomy.
- Safe places for Christian teachers to vent, exploring professional boundaries and religious freedoms

Other key concepts arising are also worthy of further exploration and illumination. These include balancing the implications and consequences of professional honesty, freedom of speech, restrictions and policy and laws with implications for changes in teachers' behaviour reflecting professional, economic or legal expediency. This leads to tensions in managing ethical, pragmatic and theological aspects of professionalism in attempts to balance 'courageous restraint' (Cooling, 2012), with conflicting compromises resulting in a conflict of compliance, rebellion or pragmatism or disguising and integrating personal Christian beliefs in subtle and restrained theological language.

Further research could reflect a separation or comparative study of the issues in primary and secondary schools or of faith groups from a denominational (liberal/fundamental) standpoint since these posed significant issues. Additionally, as recommended by Adele, Christian students could be included in a similar research study to ascertain their views on the themes and issues explored. Research into the role of Head teachers as interpreters of the faith, stakeholders (see chapter 6), teachers of other subjects, students, head teachers, PSHE Leads (LA), policy

makers, parents and other stake holder groups, vicars/church or faith groups, could also yield valuable data into the theme and perceptions of faith and professional practice.

From my research evidence, I recommend that faith in practice should not be compartmentalised or marginalised. However, there must be respect, empathy and openness for others' views, of faith and none. The intensity of the debates on both sides makes this a complex ongoing issue. There is a perception that policy, guidance and legal documents need to reflect more fairness and consistency in their interpretation and application, as they are perceived to reflect an advancing secular agenda. This for some teachers contributed to their perception of faith marginalisation.

6.10 Conclusion

There are no easy answers or solutions to these complex contentious and divisive issues, especially so as my teacher-participants navigated a path of transition in an advancing liberal secular, post Christian and post secular society. Perhaps a shift in thinking could reflect learning as promoting insightful interpretation drawing on theological discipline of hermeneutics rather than an apologetic one based on persuasion, while still embracing the Bible authoritatively as God's word (Morris, 2013). I set out to illuminate and problematize this complex interweaving and attempted balancing of personal values and Christian faith, conscience and controversy, religious freedoms and professional legal restrictions, compromises and 'courageous restraint' (Cooling, 2012), with professional responsibilities to students.

Thus, with different upbringings, values, beliefs (liberal, secular, evangelical and conservative Christian faith traditions), embraced and related to practice with sometimes-dissimilar views expressed by my teacher participants, I cannot certainly present definitive or conclusive answers to these issues explored. The debate continues…

The group 'Christians in Parliament' sums it up well in their research findings:

> …there is a problem with how Christianity is understood and handled in Britain today. This problem is legal and cultural. It plays out on a national,

local and personal level through laws, policies and regulations that restrict the freedom of Christians to articulate and live out their beliefs.

(Clearing the ground, 2012, p.2)

Despite this, ultimately in the interest of student's freedom, any suffering that the Christian PSHE teacher undergoes seems simply a requirement of professional life.

In the next chapter, I will identify and discuss the significant issues and study implications emanating from my analysis (chapter 5), conclusions (chapter 6), and research evidence to theorise, speculate and suggest recommendations for possible future actions to extend my research. I have also identified pertinent stakeholders and noted their potential roles in addressing these key issues.

CHAPTER 7

Implications and recommendations

7.1 Introduction

In my study, primary socialisation plays a pivotal role in the values formation of teachers, with implications for how these are later clarified and owned. Patterson (2007) argues that 'all values come from somewhere and are exposed by particular groups and individuals' (p.38), thus are prone to 'partiality, ignorance, confusion and ambiguity' (p.39). From the life history data, this suggests that, regardless of their upbringing: nurturing or neglectful, religious or secular, my participants demonstrated resilience and determination in overcoming significant personal and professional obstacles. For example, whilst all the life stories reflected compelling elements, both Karen and Emma expressed strongly how initially, unhappiness, control, hypocrisy and inner tensions adversely affected their lives. However, through various challenging experiences and processes, they all later clarified, adopted and owned their personal set of principles, morals and standards that now guide their lives.

These are underpinned by Christian values which were accepted as compatible with teaching PSHE topics albeit, within legal and professional boundaries. This generally perceived restrictive aspect of their pedagogy resulted in significant burden on them as they navigated and made sense of Christian identity along the trajectory of faith and professional practice. Irrespective of intrinsic tensions, whether presented through students' pre-existing values and attitudes, professional incompatibilities, legal restrictions or personal situations and assumptions, teachers adjusted their positions and employed strategies of respect, tolerance, inclusivity and openness as part of their coping mechanism to manage appropriately these issues. This process however, often left them conflicted. According to Riessman (2008) '…matters of conscience and controversy can disrupt teachers' life courses. These 'biographical disruptions' can necessitate 'narrative reconstruction' as well as the development by some teachers of a 'cognitive and theological, ethical reorganisation' (p.55). This process of disruption and reorganisation varied for individual teachers and suggested a gradual development of faith over time with changes in life's circumstances often and potentially reflecting such changes (Guite, 2006). So whilst

'our past affect our attitudes, so can new experiences' (ibid, p.8), which are interpreted and contextualised within these past experiences (Heywood, 2004).

From this evidence in chapter 4, it is obvious that the coping strategies adopted to manage the tensions sometimes represent, imply and suggest 'a cry for help' of sorts, a manifestation of inner conflicts, frustration, rebellion or compliance. For instance, while Nathan resorted to the use of textbooks in order to avoid or minimise the possibilities for confrontation on contentious issues, Adele used discreet theological expressions in practice to underpin, expound but also disguise her personal values or Christian beliefs. However, Hick (1985) argues that 'no one should inflict personal stories on anyone who does not wish to hear them…' (p. ix). For Jones (1999) on the contrary, belief must be a part of everyday life, in other words, 'belief necessitates practice' and practice designates the importance of belief, as it can adjust changes in behaviour (pp.15-17).

7.2 Negotiating values in practice – Implications for tensions

The process of transition for teachers was fraught with complexities. Part of this arguably related to the influences of many factors that a liberal, 'modern, pluralistic culture' presented (Lovin 2013, p.16). So whilst the 'values of Christianity' could influence 'community life profoundly' the converse could be true also, to this end Heywood (2004) argues that 'in plural societies the church faces the problem of competing loyalties' (p.84), reflecting on 'on-going dynamic process.' One such aspect related to the tensions participants experienced with pupils' beliefs and values on a range of issues. Therefore, it is important to note and respect the position of students' values, backgrounds, experiences and perceptions (Cole, 2002; Thacker et al. 1987; Haydon, 1997). Furthermore, with an appreciation of the professional and legal boundaries, the teacher even though seen as 'active agent' having knowledge as power, should not seek to merely deposit knowledge and facts, opinions or personal beliefs in students as 'empty, passive, powerless and patient learners' (Smidt 2014, p.68). This however, caused conflict as to whether the teacher should,

…transmit values, clarify values or provide a framework of core values within which children can securely reflect on and evaluate the range of values encountered in a pluralistic society.

(Mead 2013, p.40)

Here, Mead captures the complexity of the inherent challenge. However, much earlier Jarrett (1991) had argued that 'value judgements lie outside the realm of fact, truth, reason or knowledge' (p.18). Yet, teachers on occasions (see chapter 4) had to challenge prejudicial or discriminatory attitudes that perhaps reflected the values, beliefs and attitudes of their home environments (Carr, 2000). While teachers advanced their views, not necessarily as absolutes, they should also similarly subject the views of parents and students to critical scrutiny (Carrington and Troyna, 1988).

This is complex as teachers might have challenged these views from a purely professional stance whilst privately holding them or similar ones. One participant for example, with strong allegiance to a leading political party noted that socio-political issues posed similar conflicts as theological ones. Thus, the marginalisation of the poor on welfare benefits and the extent to which the impact of austerity and the recession affect them, result in her strongly held political views and values which could be deemed inappropriate for articulation professionally.

7.3 Navigating ethical, professional and theological aspects

Teachers needed to consider the ethical and professional implications of whatever strategies they employed, be they metaphors or the adoption of strategies where they modelled Christian faith (Smith and Shortt, 2003; Cooling, 2010; Cook, 1996), or more and deliberate clandestine methods. The possibility existed to take advantage of children's vulnerability (Downie, 1990; Copley, 2005), exercise undue influence as well as evangelise 'through the back door.' This implies a lack of regard for students as rational human beings who deserve to be listened to, express their views and be treated respectfully (Thacker et al. 1987; Bigger and Brown, 1999; The Prevent Strategy, 2011; Cooling, 2011). These rights are underpinned by the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC, 1989) and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR, 1948).

These metaphorical or even discreet approaches although sincerely employed seemed to be inextricably linked to teachers of an evangelical persuasion. They tended to 'draw their rationale from a view of revelation as an authoritative deposit of truth, usually in propositional form, thus the 'Protestant evangelical version…'' (Heywood 2004, p.171). Adele who self-identified as 'evangelical' disclosed that her faith 'massively influenced' her teaching and that she 'prayed covertly' before school on a range of issues including the wellbeing of her students. She and others adopted Carr's (2000) 'traditional custodian' perception of their professional role as a 'ministry, vocational and a calling 'as unto the Lord', for the 'all-round development and flourishing' (Bigger and Brown, 1999, p. vii) of students. Tensions abound however, as teachers willingly or otherwise, transitioned and embraced an 'element of resocialisation' of learning and unlearning the 'attitudes and values they first developed in the early stages of life' (Heywood, 2004, p.85); and managed these differences.

As teachers constructed their identities through narratives they developed their identities, however these were 'fluid' and Riessman (2008), describes these as a complex process of 'being and becoming, belonging and longing to belong' (p.8). However, given the inherent conflicts, it begs the question, *is it good teaching PSHE and having a Christian faith*? In addition, *can there be an authentic interweaving of Christian faith and professional practice?* As teachers struggled inwardly, the implications of this conflict affected them in different ways as they sought to successfully negotiate the complex terms of their subject delivery. Some teachers tended to be selective in teaching topics that were not, or less so sensitive or controversial. This has implications for them as well as for public professionals in a plural and diverse society. For instance, Norman (2003) argues that individual Christians seem oblivious to how secular their lives have become, by simply integrating with 'the encompassing social norms' (p.44); however, Hanson (1997) maintains that being aware of and reflecting a greater sense of interpretation in our theological thinking, demonstrates a process of growth and maturity (p.7). The impact of teachers' stories and journey to faith is therefore worthy of further consideration.

7.4 Christian believing – Implications for handling complex issues in teaching

From the evidence gathered through the life story time lines, teachers adopted a Christian faith primarily through their upbringing, academic pursuits, life's circumstances (sometimes traumatic), Christian fellowship and religious activities (chapter 4). As with personal values, teachers underwent their own unique processes to ultimately adopting, owning and applying a Christian faith to life and practice. This process of 'clarifying and owning' their faith as emphasised especially by Emma and Adele, is significant as it implies the basis for which the depth of conviction, sincerity and fervent devoutness are underpinned. Thus, their values connect and relate to Christian faith in that teachers were inclined to associate and identify them as *Christian values*. In a study by Bowie and Revell (2016), both Christian and British values were perceived to overlap, however the former were deemed 'higher' values (p.9).

Coping with life's experiences from the research evidence seemed to deepen the personal religious convictions teachers held. This however, can be problematic where they transferred or integrated that fervour into practice. Notwithstanding, professional practice in secular state schools seems to necessitate an adoption of a more open, liberal, broader interpretation and less fundamental underpinning of faith. This might be the case in order to reflect a broader and more diverse and plural society. It arguably embraces and projects a more advancing secular and liberal agenda (Copley, 2005), undergirded by professional and legislative restrictions and compounded by inherent tensions of a theological, ethical and professional nature. A process of adaptation due to legal, economic, personal and professional reasons demanded that teachers challenged their own previously held narrow and inflexible assumptions, compliantly or otherwise. Hanson (1997) writes, 'leaving the familiar beliefs and values of family…they (teachers) are plunged into a setting with a greater diversity in beliefs and values' (p.3). This calls for a delicate process of maintaining professionalism while professing faith; contending without condoning, coping without necessarily compromising, transforming without conforming (Romans 12:1 Bible) and integrating without inculcating values and beliefs that conflict their ethical or theological convictions.

7.5 The price of compliance, rebellion and pragmatism

Despite the discreet integration of religious views by a relatively small but significant minority, teachers through their regular practice were mainly concerned as outlined in Chapter 4, with exercising undue influence (8 responses), professional misconduct (8) and being untrue to the faith (4). Delving deeper into these issues further illuminated the motives for and implications of these concerns. Whilst these could reflect the ethical, professional or theological integrity of teachers, they could also be based on compliance and fear. Fears based on financial and economic expediency, for example, in Jim's case, teaching 'simply pays the bills' and no longer reflected his once firmly embraced calling, ministry and vocational underpinning to the profession.

In this context, teachers were compelled to adopt a variety of strategies for their economic, personal and professional survival in order to cope with the inherent tensions they identified. These tensions festered and simmered silently in a vastly ambiguous, inconsistent and often underexplore landscape, where these inner conflicts and deeply held concerns went unattended or addressed for fear of being gagged or disciplined for professional misconduct. While for some teachers their responses reflected compliance, rebellion, pragmatism, or they remained unchanged in their ethical and theological positions, there seemed to be a personal cost to them that is noteworthy but personal cost is outweighed by professional obligations.

7.6 Professional approaches and relationship of faith to practice

Based on the arguments I have put forward above, Christian faith and professional practice seem to link inextricably and are not mutually exclusive (Shortt and Smith, 2003; Cooling et al. 2015), (see chapter 2). However, there is consensus that in delivering sensitive and controversial issues, teachers clarified, identified and owned their personal views and provided opportunities for pupils to challenge such views (Alderman et al. 2004; Theissen, 2013). This encouraged critical thinking skills in pupils and protected their vulnerability. Jackson (2004) argues in support of '…religious tolerance; knowledge about religions, skills of criticism, independent thinking, dialogue and interaction' (p.57). This development of criticality could encourage respectful appreciation of others' views and develop transferable skills,

for example, in relationships, conflict resolutions and professional spheres. Claire and Holden (2007) put it this way,

> *It is also part of the preparation for living in a democratic society where controversial issues are debated and discussed without recourse to violence (p.7).*

This suggests the usefulness, relevance and application of PSHE issues to later life as the subject's aims require (PSHE Association, 2014). It further implies that teachers could benefit from expanded horizons, deeper appreciation and respect for others' views though '…understanding their convictions of religion and healthy commitments especially regarding controversial beliefs...thus being able to influence others ethically concerning values and beliefs' (Theissen, 2013, p.225). However, an integration of faith in professional practice could address a range of ethical issues, for example, civility, morality and encouraging right relationships with other people and with God (Lovin in Gill, 2013).

Teachers' professional roles extended to their expressed love for the wellbeing of their students and a sincere desire to build relationships with them with potential for long term future associations. This motivation, philosophy and practice transcended mere professional duties but included an integration of their Christian values, beliefs and faith as an uncompromisingly compatible and non-compartmentalisable part of their faith in practice. For Guite (2006), faith goes beyond mere belief and encompasses 'faithfulness, commitment and giving of one's self' (p.2); because 'people's actual faith shape their whole lives' including their 'interpretation of the world' (p.3). This is complex. First, as mentioned, it emanated from a deep Christian conviction; secondly, it generally disguised an explicit integration strategy in order to abide within legislative, policy and professional boundaries, limits and restrictions. Thirdly, it afforded a pragmatic approach whereby, teachers sometimes stifled, suppressed, overlooked matters of conscience and saw the greater good of the topic delivery. This they did even at the expense of their consciences.

7.7 Navigating faith beyond the educational scope

My research findings suggest that there is strong support that Christian believing is legitimate, compatible and related to professional practice in a wider context and to other spheres. This is corroborated by Guite (2006), who argues that 'another area

of concern for contemporary Christians is our relationship as a specie with the wider environment' (p.99), and 'narrative theory affords a social role of stories as they are connected to the flow of power in the wider world, 'mobilising others into action for social change' (Risessman, 2008, p.9). This connection is a significant characteristic feature of using the life history approach over others (Goodson and Choi, 2008; Goodley, 1996; Goodson, 2000). The issues of tension and conflicts explored, voiced and illuminated have implications for a range of careers and a broader context but are not generalizable or replicable to them.

The Evangelical Alliance Report (2012) seeks to afford those of a Christian faith influence and control to own, contend for and further illuminate the place of religious believing and Christian faith in a plural society. It also aims to de-secularise society of its rapidly advancing liberal agenda and even hostile reception to matters of faith, as secular areas of thought and activity gradually intrude into areas previously dominated by religious perceptions of reality (Gilbert, 1980). Among the All-Party Parliamentary Group (APPG's) key findings is that:

> *There is a high level of religious illiteracy which has led to many situations where religious belief is misunderstood and subsequently restricted. This comes from a social and cultural minimisation of Christianity in public life. Religious illiteracy has led to legal restrictions on the way that faith can be expressed. Recent changes have compelled Christians to provide services that they had never previously offered and which may be contrary to their beliefs.*

> (Clearing the ground, 2012, p.2)

At the macro-level therefore, the debate as to whether Britain is a Christian country and how is *secular* defined, is ongoing (Bruce, 2002; Copley, 2005). Some features of secularism identified include 'the declining importance, social standing of religion' in non-religious roles and institutions' as well as 'the extent to which people are religious' (Bruce, 2003, p.3). However, a criticism is that the 'secularisation paradigm exaggerates the importance of religion in the past' (ibid., p.60); and based on the Stark Theory, provided a connection is established between rewards and compensators, there will always be a place for religion, which can provide a greater compensator than secular alternatives hence 'enduring secularism is impossible' (p.60). Perhaps, as Gilbert (1980) had earlier argued, secularisation could be seen

as a 'metamorphosis of religion rather than a decline' (p.3). Bruce (2013) on the other hand, later argues that 'even the most generous estimates of new religious phenomena come nowhere close to filling the gap left by the collapse of Christianity' (p.382). Secularist critique depth mentioned in chapter 2, lies outside thesis scope.

7.8 Rethinking our understandings: Being 'Salt' and 'Light'

There is a suggestion that in light of my analysis, we may need to rethink our understandings of the notions of secularism and liberalism, and how they interconnect. A further rethink is also needed regarding the nature of the engagement and understanding of Christian professionals in the public sector and modern pluralistic society. Embedded secular assumptions reflect our lifestyles, which advance a continuing disappearance of the Christian landscape (Copley, 2005). For instance, as regards mothering Sunday, Sunday trading laws, Christmas and the extent to which some city councils have gone to 'decorate city centres with "Season's greetings" illuminations and no longer "Christmas greetings" '(p.41). Karen also alluded to this in chapter 4. For Copley though, there is a strong link between secularisation and commercialism, with an equally strong focus on *spirituality* might seem more appealing than being *religious*. Whereas religion requires a system of beliefs, actions and accountability, spirituality tend to embrace a more postmodern worldview of individualism, nebulousness and flexibility (ibid, p.83). Andrew Wright (2004) argues that,

> *…claiming access to knowledge that warrants only the status of belief, and insisting on the exclusivity and universality of such knowledge…directly challenge the moral order of liberalism (p.78).*

This challenge is not generally contested as some teachers who self-defined as 'liberal Christians' embraced a much broader view of tolerance and freedoms (Heywood, 2004) of beliefs on sensitive and controversial issues than their conservative counterparts. This reflects a level of intricacy the issue engenders, as Piper (2008) argues that 'controversy…is a painful groaning of the fallen age' and 'Christians often disagree with each other over serious matters' (p.30).

Policies and legislative frameworks even though not written from a religious standpoint could foster a greater sense of balance, fairness and consistency in both

interpretation and application. They should support inclusivity, openness, and protection of rights, freedoms, balance and respect for all (Cooling, 2011). Furthermore, an implication from my study data that there are inconsistencies and unfairness towards those of faith is a significant perception deeply held. Nevertheless, a significant minority of teachers (though sympathetic to those of such conviction), called for the 'church' or Christian community to be more open, liberal and less narrow. The speculation and suggestion here is that this level of association and integration will foster deeper and more meaningful integration with a secular society, thus reflecting more effectively the words and examples of Jesus Christ who asserts in His Sermon on the Mount (after The Beatitudes):

> *13. Ye are the salt of the earth: but if the salt has lost his savour, wherewith shall it be salted? it is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men.*

> *14. Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hid.*

> *15. Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house.*

> *16. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father, which is in heaven*

<div align="right">(Matthew 5: 13-16, Bible KJV).</div>

From these verses in the Bible, Christian love, mission and witness are not private entities (Cook, 1996; Hart, 1995; McGrath, 2008; Hazel and Revell, 2011; Carr, 2000; Smith and Shortt, 2003). Instead, they suggest and encourage, assert and even command that as 'salt' and 'light' in the earth, Christian faith should be sincerely practiced, demonstrated and modelled in tangible practical ways (in love), reflecting the values in the Beatitudes, despite a sharp existing contrast where these essential principles to faith are being prevented (Copley, 2005). Perhaps, Christians can take some comfort in the teachings of Jesus as outlined in the Beatitude, "Blessed are they who are persecuted for the sake of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven" (Matt. 5:10), and still shun any self-aggrandizing attitude.

Notwithstanding, *is our society ready for a more overt and prominent demonstration of faith?* Thiessen (2013), (in Smith and Cooling, 2013) argues that there is

opposition to evangelism in recent debate surrounding the question of how to treat controversial issues...' and 'neutrality is still seen by many as the ideal for teachers in the classroom' (pp.221-41). Bryan and Revell (2011) bear this out in their research findings. My research evidence and the literature suggest that the positive contributions of Christian input and influence nationally should be recognised and celebrated (see chapter 2). Selectively embracing aspects of Christianity especially in times of personal, community or national distress, whilst is welcomed, should not be the accepted default response (Chapter 5).

Instead, a broadening of the awareness and progressive appreciation of the legitimacy of personal faith in professional spheres could be encouraged. In the absence of this, at both micro and macro levels, there remains a deeply held perception and concern by a significant minority from this research, that an advancing secular agenda is reflected too prominently in attitudes, policies and laws. This, debatably projects inconsistencies, stifles free speech, promotes secularism and demonises strongly held Christian views incongruent with those held by mainstream society.

7.9 Silence: The price for faith?

Some teachers advanced this question within the wider context of complex, current, on-going issues in the national News media reflecting conscience versus controversy. This implication reflects and suggests a strong connection between the micro and macro levels of engagement regarding the place and legitimacy of personal values and Christian believing in the professional sphere. For instance, where free speech is stifled or where embracing strong Christian views (which are not in synchronisation with society's popular views), is perceived, a sense of marginalisation is harboured. For some Christian teachers and other professionals of faith, this can lead to a sense of resentment, injustice and unfairness, where merely lip service and patronising overtones are paid to values like freedom of speech and individual rights to religious freedoms, acceptance, tolerance and non-discrimination. With an advancing secular agenda comes an implication that religious beliefs and values are wholly private and personal void of influence in public life (Copley, 2005). Conversely, secularism actively seeks to impose its own worldview on the rest of society and neither ideology nor religion should do this (Evangelical Alliance, 2016).

Such suggestion points to a view that these otherwise worthy values and virtues enshrined in policies and legal frameworks, are simply there to protect the interests of a rapidly advancing secular and liberal majority at the expense of positions of conviction and conscience as reflected in Christian faith. This further implies a symbolic or literal gagging of those of faith where teachers and particular others without, are coerced into compliance, forced to adopt a more conservative stance or simply adopt those of mainstream society: essentially being forced into silence, a seemingly high price to pay for their faith. But a modern perspective according to Gray (1995) acknowledges liberty as a 'protected sphere of non-interference or independence under the rule of law' (p.3), yet within the 'liberal tradition' limitations to these rights and claims must be recognised (p.70).

7.10 Specific suggestions and implications for stakeholders

In the context of my discussion so far, I will now identify some stakeholders in PSHE and suggest strategies they might adopt to address these issues. Additionally, I examine the implications of my study findings for them. The speculations and suggestions from my research are multi-faceted, with implications for a range of stakeholders. I will now briefly address these areas, exploring and theorising their roles and reasons for caring about the issues and what might be the significance, importance and implications of my information and results.

7.10.1 PSHE Christian Teachers

The opportunity to study the actual stories of particular PSHE teachers using the life history method, with its multiple and complex implications (Sikes and Everington, 2001; Goodson and Sikes, 2001; Bailey, 1996; Atkinson, 1998), affords me a tremendous privilege and honour. Firstly, to interact with them on a personal level; secondly, to listen, explore and illuminate their constructed narratives and thirdly, to provide an opportunity for them to air some issues of deep concern to them.

A significant desire from teachers is a need for safe places in their practice to talk about the issues regularly. This could be addressed as Christian PSHE teachers in local 'clusters' (Local Authorities, LAs) or as varied subject teachers as a community of faith. Here, teachers of similar values, beliefs, ethical, personal, theological and professional understandings could explore the opportunities, challenges and fears

embedded in my research theme. It is possible that such gathering could be viewed with suspicion, as another attempt at faith segregation but it could also provide an opportunity for engagement of Christian teachers and by extension, of all faiths and none.

7.10.2 Other subject teachers

Training and development through CPD programmes and whole school inset days are some opportunities for safe, helpful and supportive environments to be provided for teachers of other subject areas to share. Subject leaders could provide these opportunities in their departments, which might prove less intimidating for such discussions. They could explore the challenges and opportunities of Christian believing in their practice. This could underpin more pupil engagement and inclusion, differentiation and diversity as well as developing greater appreciation of others' views through critical thinking skills.

However, my research evidence suggests that there are obstacles to open conversations of faith in and outside the classroom (Chapters 4 and 5). These include, professional repercussions, career implications, fear of undue influence, and accusation of evangelising, 'charges of absolutism and indoctrination' (Bailey, 2005, p. 11). These could result in gossip or online chatter which could put teachers in an unfavourable light among students, colleagues, parents, professionally and wider afield, that of being intolerant, fundamental, narrow and non-inclusive.

7.10.3 Parents and students

Students can and do on occasions reflect the attitudes of their home environments on sensitive and controversial issues for example, on sex, race or immigration as my research evidence suggests. Teachers can counteract some of the issues with parents by working closely with them using a variety of strategies and a range of collaborative approaches to handling sensitive and controversial issues (Digman and Soan, 2008).

Additionally, teachers could notify parents of topics, providing opportunities to engage with the teaching and learning process, specific training or skills, challenge

aspects of the provision, empower them to liaise with the school and PSHE teacher on circumstances in the child's life that could render some topics too sensitive and controversial; for example, 'SRE', 'Change and Loss', 'Death and Bereavement' or 'Divorce' (Appendix Q). Teachers could be sensitive in how they approach such topics (Oulton et al. 2004; Ofsted, 2013; Willis and Wolstenholme, 2016); or parents may request the removal of their child from that lesson if appropriate.

From my research findings, also a significant concern in this area is that of teachers being misconstrued. They have a tremendous responsibility to ensure that materials, resources and topics are age appropriate and that use of language and content are age specific. Therefore, teachers need to manage students' complaints sensitively and ensure that their beliefs are not undermined and undervalued whether secular or of faith. James (2015) in Religion in the Classroom: Dilemmas for Democratic Education' notes that 'parents do insert themselves into schools when they believe their children's experience may violate their private right to practice the religion of their choosing' (p.14).

7.10.4 Creating an inclusive environment: Implications for Head teachers

There is scope for schools to be more inclusive to teachers of faith (Cooling et al. 2015; Smith and Shortt, 2003; Revell and Walters, 2010), and by extension, Christian PSHE teachers. The values and beliefs of Head teachers can have a bearing on the PSHE curriculum provision, as well as how faith is represented generally in schools, for example, as in the case of daily acts of Christian worship in school assemblies. As interpreters of the faith, they have a responsibility along with school Governors to ensure that they protect the religious and spiritual dimension of schools and that this reflects and honours consistency and fairness (Cooling, 2012), in keeping with legal requirements. Additionally, they need to ensure and afford students adequate experiences, exposure and appreciation of a wide range of beliefs.

The extent to which other acts of spirituality are interpreted and presented, for example, in SMSC policy agenda (DfE, 2014) and (as outlined by Chrissy and Esther), or assemblies that are 'mainly or wholly Christian' in character are separate

but significant issues. Some Head teachers support the part played by the Gideon's in distributing New Testament Bibles in schools (particularly to Year 7 students), or the use of Christian or faith leaders to conduct assemblies. The group of Christians in Parliament suggest that,

> *It is evident that in some cases considerable effort is made to accommodate religious belief, with employers willing to make arrangements to ensure that employees do not have to participate in activities which would infringe their convictions. In many cases, there is a failure to achieve sufficient accommodation, and in some cases to even attempt to understand or accommodate belief and its manifestation.*

<div align="right">(Clearing the ground 2012, p. 2)</div>

Arguably, these attempts at accommodating religious beliefs can widen the scope and experiences of students and teachers thus exposing them to issues of spirituality or religion, although some may see it as imposition on their more secular stance. Providing opportunities for faith leaders of all major religions and none could be a partial answer to the issue of fairness, since some school assembly themes are already debatably secular.

The 1944 Education Act stated that 'the school day in every county school and every voluntary school shall begin with collective worship on the part of all the pupils in attendance.' Parents have the right to withdraw their children, perhaps in favour of separate arrangements. There seems to be some controversy and reluctance to engage in matters of faith especially regarding daily acts of Christian worship in school assemblies. From my research findings, primary schools' assemblies seem to have more of what could be considered 'Christian worship' in assemblies, even in secular state schools. Research shows that two-thirds of schools breaking the law by not having 'assemblies mainly or wholly Christian' (The Education Reform Act 1988). Unfortunately, some school assemblies tend to reflect mostly issues of academic concerns, behaviour expectations or wider socio-political ones. Where religion or matters of faith are allured to, Norman (2003) although not specifically referring to assemblies, argues that 'the presentation of religion is increasingly negative...' and Christianity is presented in 'television and journalism, and in schools as the author of many wrong attitudes in traditional society' (p.48).

It would seem that the fear of presenting Christian worship at the exclusion of other religions or secular beliefs could be part of the issue Head teachers probably face and fear. There are calls for the discontinuation of Christian worship in assemblies as they foster segregation and imposition of faith on others of a secular stance (British Humanist Society). The possibility for clashes or conflict between the religious and the secular increases as the practices of faith communities are subject to state restriction or regulation for example the Discrimination law, now extended to age, disability, religion and sexual orientation' (Cumper and Lewis 2012, p.52).

Notwithstanding, education does provide a space for Christian influence for example in RE, assemblies, faith schools, Christian Unions, subjects like Philosophy, Sociology, PSHE or integrated in policies for example, SMSC. Despite objections to faith in school assemblies (British Humanist Society), education still seems to provide a much more prominent space for faith than for example in Health, where objections to medical practitioners integrating faith in practice especially through prayers for patients has come under sharp scrutiny and fierce objection.

7.10.5 The role of Church leaders and faith groups

Some local churches and youth ministries especially those affiliated with evangelical churches tend to embark on conducting school assemblies as a significant dimension to their outreach programmes, Christian witness and ministry. Here, an effort is made to 'normalise faith' in the experiences of children, to counteract what Copley (2005) earlier referred to as 'indoctrinating children against religion (p.21), a point which Bruce (2013) followed up on but on a wider scope. Normalising faith in the lives of students could seek to broaden their horizons especially those of no faith, to expose them outside of RE lessons (which already emphasises major world religions), to other aspects of Christian faith. They can do this however, without seeking to convert. Instead, they can counteract the 'secularisation' of collective act of Christian worship manifested through a preponderance of socio-political issues embedded in the ethos of many school assemblies.

The church and faith groups can also seek to be more influential by representing a faith perspective on School Boards as Governors. Here, they can have a voice in helping the Head teachers to interpret faith, articulate and clarify positions of faith on issues as well as raise awareness of issues particularly those raised by this study to the Board. They could filter this down to staff, students and parents through various initiatives and policy inclusions to ensure that they represent fairly, consistently and adequately positions of faith (students and teachers) in all aspects of school life and policies.

Producing and presenting resources from a 'Christian perspective' is ambiguous and complex. Jones (1999) writes, 'the Bible comprises many individual texts, reflecting many different situations and communities that make its theological interpretation today a matter of great sensitivity' (p.71). As my research bears this out, Christian perspectives and interpretations of issues are not necessarily fixed or straightforward, as a range of perspectives maybe adopted based on ethical, theological, denominational or philosophical persuasions while still being *Christian*.

7.10.6 PSHE Leads, Health professionals and guest speakers

PSHE lead co-ordinators have tremendous influence in the development and dissemination of PSHE training and resources in their local LA cluster. As training personnel, they could benefit from my research study by being aware of the impact of these issues on teachers of faith and the tremendous burden on conscience these topics in the PSHE curriculum might cause. Furthermore, they could include or make recommendations for this aspect to be included or be more prominent in Guidance, policy documents and teaching resources.

Health professionals and guest speakers also need to recognise sensitive and controversial issues as such and making allowance for strategies to handle them in professional practice, bearing in mind the values and beliefs of teachers and the extent to which they have mixed feelings in aspects of their delivery is worth considering. This awareness could lead to introducing specific modules in the

training programmes to address these issues, both from a faith a secular perspective for objectivity, consistency and fairness (Cooling, 2012).

7.10.7 Policy-makers (Micro and macro levels)

My research speculations, suggestions, implications and recommendations represent tentative and modest suggestions especially as I reflect on policies at both school and wider levels. Given the sensitive and controversial issues in PSHE delivery, specific plans, programmes and strategies are required to ensure proper teacher consistency, competence and confidence (Oulton et al. 2004; Ofsted, 2013; Willis and Wolstenholme, 2016). Schools for instance, through department middle managers/subject leaders, Assistant or deputy Heads, Heads, School Governors or designated persons and or stakeholders may have an input into various policies. These include Equal opportunities, Sex and relationship policy, Drugs, Smoking and alcohol policies, SMSC development policy to name some, advocating respect for different people's faith, feelings and values (School Inspection Handbook, 2005), parents, cultural identities and national values though different to theirs. These present general elements of non-discrimination (sexual orientation, gender, religion, disability, race); particularly to protect students, however, the specific protection of those with faith predominantly Christian faith is not prominent. As such, there is a need for the expansion of policy documents to reflect these more.

7.11 Professional development and teacher training

In Chapter 2, I referred to the lack of Initial teacher training (ITT) programmes for PSHE teachers, which feature prominently in a number of research findings (Jones, 2003; Mead, 2004; PSHE Association, 2014, Willis and Wolstenholme, 2016). However, similarly conspicuous is the lack of specific training to teach sensitive and controversial issues in PSHE (Mead, 2013; Ofsted, 2013). This creates a substantial gap as well as an area of recommendation for action in training and further research to develop PSHE content, teacher confidence and competence (Ryder and Campbell, 1988; Claire and Holden, 2007). The findings from my study which corroborate with other research and Ofsted report findings (Oulton et al. 2004; Ofsted, 2012, 2013), suggest that this lack of training has resulted in teachers feeling

ill-prepared to tackle these contentious, divisive and debatable issues they inevitably confront in practice, more so in PSHE.

7.12 Implications wider afield – Christian believing in 'secular' contexts

From my research evidence, the place of faith in professional spheres should not be compartmentalised (Chapter 4), regardless of the context; be it in Law, Politics, Medicine, Hospitality, Education and the Military among others (Copley, 2005). Many cases have recently featured prominently in the national news to reflect stories of conflict of conscience and controversy leading to professional and or legal restrictions with some cases challenged in the Courts. In cases where Christians initiate or contemplate taking legal action, the group of Christians in Parliament issues this word of caution:

> *There is a growing need for churches and Christian organisations to take responsibility when their actions may have contributed to a perception that the scale of the problem facing Christians is greater than it is. Christians have and will always, experience tensions between their beliefs and the shifting values of the societies that they live in. To some extent, the present tensions should be seen as an encouragement of faithful witness. Ahead of bringing cases to court, Christians need to consider the potential impact their actions might have on politics, public opinion and the confidence of other Christians in their mission.*

(Clearing the ground, 2012, p. 2)

This presents the issue in a pragmatic and cautious way, being mindful of wider ramifications, which could present unintended consequences, even with a legal victory. An acceptance of the faith tension in a secular society is advanced and an insightful way of seeing and interpreting this tension is presented, provided it is not interpreted as a less resilient way of combatting prejudice and discrimination against faith. Nevertheless, some evangelicals admitted to experiencing a good level of freedom to express their faith publicly, despite some high-profile media cases (Evangelical Alliance, 2016).

7.13 International Human Rights implications

Both the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) 1948 in Article 14 and the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR) Article 10 identify the following as

basic entitlements for all human beings: 'Freedom from discrimination, respect for freedom of thought, conscience and religion; rights to own thoughts, ideas, free speech and expression, equality and prohibition of discrimination on the grounds of sex, race, colour, language, political opinion and religion.' Religious expressions are subject to legal restrictions, yet the protection of freedoms and rights is advocated. Therefore, it remains a legal, ethical and theological challenge in finding a delicate balance between individuals' rights and freedoms. This establishes a connection with my research theme and demonstrates the complexity inherent in exploring not only the tension of teaching sensitive and controversial issues but also that of Christian believing in a wider secularising context. Furthermore, the inevitability of plurality must be acknowledged. Jackson (2004) argues that this is not 'secularist' and that it can be 'supported by citizens with different religious and secular viewpoints', and that it is consistent with international codes of human rights supporting the principle of freedom of religion or belief (p.37).

7.14 Speculations and implications summarised

The implications from my life history study suggest that I have illuminated themes and issues noteworthy of academic exploration. I contextualised teachers' lives and accounts within a PSHE setting and related their stories to a multidisciplinary context, depicting complex issues and extensive current debates of faith in practice. Their 'stories offer a unique way of understanding development over time' (Atkinson, 1998, p.70).

Building on this, my study seeks to improve practice and the human condition (Altricher et al. 2008), in a number of ways. It fulfils social purposes by addressing national debates; arguably empowering and liberating teachers as interview conversations and research opportunity provided a safe place for them to vent. Awareness was raised of complex issues, illuminating Christian believing in professional spheres as opportunities were provided for reflection on practice (Schon, 1991). Thus, life history provides intimate details and context of life stories within wider professional practice, demonstrating that lives are not compartmentalised. Teachers' narratives therefore, provide meanings, insights theorises, speculations and explanations to my research questions and aims, thus

providing opportunities to explore, examine, investigate and analyse aims leading a contribution to the field.

7.15 Recommendations

From my research study, I advance the following suggestions for action in relation to my research problem, having contemplated the implications it presents. In doing so, I identify the relevant stakeholders and areas where the results of my research study maybe applicable and disseminated (Simon, 2006). These can help Christian professionals to develop greater confidence in their freedom to express their beliefs but within the professional and legal restrictions (UDHR, ECHR, and Evangelical Alliance).

Training and development

In schools, I recommend that,

- Training and resources be provided specifically for teachers of PSHE at all levels: ITT, Newly qualified Teachers (NQTs), PGCEs through CPD and PSHE seminars (which a certified PSHE teacher, Lead or Healthy Schools Co-ordinator or Health Professionals could facilitate)

- Schools provide nurturing and supportive teacher training in content, subject knowledge and strategies for handling potential embarrassment when teaching sensitive and controversial issues.

- Inset day training be provided for the general staff given the number of non-specialist teachers delivering the subject whether integrated in their subjects, taught in form time, drop down/focus or enrichment days or when asked to provide PSHE cover
- Peer mentoring or 'work shadowing' be implemented, where non-specialist teachers could observe lessons with PSHE certified staff and understudy them for good practice

Safety and venting
- Schools should provide safe and supportive environments and opportunities for teachers to talk about issues of Christian believing or faith in practice

- Department meetings, CPD sessions and inset days, peer mentoring, staff well-being sessions could provide such opportunities

Head teachers

- Make PSHE more prominent in the curriculum being sensitive to the issues of Christian faith and religious beliefs and their impact on practice.
- To interpret the faith by addressing some of these and other themes and issues as part of daily acts of Christian worship in assemblies to complement the RE provision and so 'normalise' the place of faith believing now and for later life
- Be fair, consistent and supportive of teachers who are affected by issues of professional identity, practice and personal faith

LA and School Boards

- Policy makers, guidance documents writers to aim for consistency, balance, clarity and respect for all belief positions.
- School Boards to recognise the place of religious beliefs in practice, supporting and providing guidance to Head teachers in ensuring the fair and consistent interpretation and application of professional and legal requirements on matters appropriate to faith in professional practice
- Promote greater involvement of teachers of other subjects, students, Head teachers, PSHE Leads (LEA), policy makers, parents and other stake holder groups, vicars/church or faith groups in assemblies or guest speakers in PSHE provisions.

Government departments and professional bodies

At a macro level, I find the recommendations advanced in *Clearing the ground* (2012) by the group, 'Christians in Parliament' to be specific and necessary steps, which are relevant to my study. Their inquiry recommends the need for
- Better guidance for local authorities on strategies for dealing with faith groups and professional bodies regarding freedoms, activities and religious identity.

- Government departments and professional bodies to not only assist in clarifying but also in accommodating the negotiation of religious beliefs in practice, addressing also a wider issue of religious illiteracy.

Individual Christians and faith groups

The wider Christian community also has a role to play. The Evangelical Alliance (2016) from their study, suggest that all Christians should earnestly contend for Biblical truth and as the Apostle Paul puts it 'defending and confirming the gospel' (Philippians 1:7, Bible NIV). However, this rallying cry is fraught with complexities as the concept of 'Biblical truth' is contentious and problematic. However, in a more reconciliatory tone they advocate that, Christians avoid personal hostility and abuse, and speak the truth in love and gentleness being mindful of personal failures or misconceptions.

This tone seems to reach across theological and faith traditions to encourage personal and collective reflection, humility, sensitivity, confidence and a measure of openness and subjectivity in our Scriptural interpretation. This however, should not be geared at avoiding potentially contentious issues. The process therefore, of 'working out one's own salvation…' (Philippian 2:12 Bible), (and perhaps helping others to do so), seems to be personal and an on-going journey.

7.16 Conclusion

There is a strong sense that professional and legislative boundaries contribute significantly to the ethical and theological burden imposed when teaching sensitive and controversial topics. This relates to the interpretation and inconsistent applications of Guidance, policy and Statutory requirements which is perceived to favor a more liberal and secular agenda. Despite this burden, Heywood (2004) concludes, '*both* the liberal and the traditional approaches to Christian education are correct then to an extent…and yet, *neither* is correct ….' (p.172).

My theory on the issues is that teachers might choose to respond compliantly, with some resistance or pragmatism. I speculate that they will continue to cope with and manage the relationship between their personal values, Christian beliefs and their professional practice by adopting a variety of strategies, struggling to find ways of

interweaving them together to maintain a semblance of professional, theological and personal balance. In light of this, I noted some implications and new themes and concepts that emerged from the life history data. These include, the use of silence as a price to pay for having a faith, balancing 'courageous restraint' with conflicting compromises and integrating and disguising personal Christian beliefs through discreet theological language.

A wider speculation is that a similar approach might be employed by Christian professionals in other spheres outside of education in an ever advancing secular plural context, where the challenge of balancing religious rights and freedoms with professional and legislative restrictions remain an ongoing contentious issue. I have advanced implications of these and possible courses of action for particular stakeholders.

7.17 Parting word

I deeply appreciate the participation and insightful life stories of all participants. Despite personal, professional and domestic obligations and responsibilities, they willingly gave of their time with a view to exploring and reflecting in and on practice (Schon, 1991). This enthusiasm to express their views and stories seems to legitimise my research. I remain deeply humbled by the trust, level of sacrifice that they made to accommodate me. I chose the closing heartfelt words from Karen's two-hour interview to end this research thesis:

> *I hope 40 years of teaching will be authentic, influential, also a source of encouragement as I follow Jesus' example…your stance is part of your Christian life. We are called to be the yeast in the dough. It's hard, really hard…emotionally…physically draining (pause reflectively)…giving of self… "For this I have Jesus."*

> *(Karen)*

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List of Appendices

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

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                    ┌─────────────────────┐
                    │   CHRISTIAN PSHE     │
                    │      TEACHER         │
                    └─────────────────────┘
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| PERSONAL VALUES | | CHRISTIAN BELIEFS |

| PSHE CURRICULUM | PROFESSIONALISM & TEACHING | SENSITIVE AND CONTROVERSIAL ISSUES |

RESEARCH QUESTION 1	RESEARCH QUESTION 2	RESEARCH QUESTION 3	RESEARCH QUESTION 4	RESEARCH QUESTION 5
DEFINITION OF & IMPLICATIONS FOR CONTROVER-SIAL ISSUES	CONFLICTS OF VALUES AND BELIEFS IN PRACTICE	STRATEGIES IN TEACHING SENSITIVE AND CONTROVER-SIAL ISSUES	RELATION-SHIP BETWEEN FAITH AND PROFES-SIONAL PRACTICE	WIDER CONTEXT: LEGAL, POLICY, MACRO-POLITICAL CONTEXT

Conceptual framework – Illuminating the issues/concepts   Appendix B

- Upbringing and life stories; Perceptions of conflicts, conscience and controversy, professional identity, faith sharing and relationship of faith in practice

- Defining values & beliefs, sources, religious tradition and cultural formation; faith sharing and relating faith to practice; values clarification and integration; Tensions in conscience & practice.

CHRISTIAN PSHE TEACHER IN SE UK

PERSONAL VALUES AND CHRISTIAN BELIEFS

SENSITIVE AND CONTROVERSIAL ISSUES

PROFESSIONAL IDENTITY AND WIDER CONTEXTS

- Identifyng and defining issues
- Implications of teaching sensitive & constroversial issues
- Managing tensions
- Relating these to personal faith, policies, laws and practice.

- Professional identity and practice. Professional Standards, requirements, policy and legal frameworks; PSHE Stakeholders, Topic selection, faith and beliefs in the professional sphere; Vocatioinal and Career aspects of teaching; Marginalisation, secularisation, liberal and Christian values.

THE PUBLISHED LITERATURE

FINDINGS	OFSTED REPORTS	RESEARCH WITH A CHRISTIAN CHARACTER

PSHE in secondary schools	Assessing sensitive & controversial issues	Good practice in sensitive & controversial issues	Central issues in sensitivity & controversy

211

Advisory Service Kent

This is to certify that

Mr Phillip J O'Connor

has attended the following event

PSHE Teacher Certification Programme

For session attendance during the period:
11 May 2006 to 01 March 2007

Course Director:
Mr Allan Foster

Kent
County
Council

Canterbury
Christ Church
University

CONSENT FORM

Title of Project (Doctorate in Education: Christianity and Faith in Education)

Title: Illuminating the place of personal values and Christian beliefs in teaching sensitive and controversial issues in Personal Social Health Education (PSHE) in South East England: A Life History Approach.

Name of Researcher: **PHILLIP JOHN O'CONNOR**

Contact details:

Address:

Tel:

Email:

Please initial box

1. I confirm that I have read and understand the information sheet for the above study and have had the opportunity to ask questions.

2. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time, without giving any reason.

3. I understand that any personal information that I provide to the researchers will be kept strictly confidential

4. I agree to take part in the above study.

$\Box$

_____   _____   _____
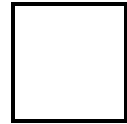
Name of Participant   Date   Signature

PHILLIP J. O'CONNOR   _____   _____

Researcher   Date   Signature

Canterbury
Christ Church
University

Education Faculty Research Ethics Review

Application for full review

For Faculty Office use only	
FREC Protocol No:	Date received:

*Your application **must** comprise the following documents (please tick the boxes below to indicate that they are attached):*

Application Form	√
Peer Review Form	√

Copies of any documents to be used in the study:

Participant Information Sheet(s)	√
Consent Form(s)	√
Introductory letter(s)	√
Questionnaire (Interview Schedule)	√
Focus Group Guidelines	*N/A*

Education Faculty Research Ethics Review

Application for full review

1. PROJECT DETAILS

MAIN RESEARCHER	PHILLIP JOHN O'CONNOR
E-MAIL	P.j.oconnor6@canterbury.ac.uk
POSITION WITHIN CCCU	DOCTORAL STUDENT
POSITION OUTSIDE CCCU	PSHE CO-ORDINATOR/TEACHER
COURSE (students only)	DOCTORATE IN EDUCATION: CHRISTIANITY AND FAITH IN EDUCATION (JUBILEE COHORT)
DEPARTMENT (staff only)	N/A
PROJECT TITLE	Illuminating the Place of Personal Values and Christian Beliefs in Teaching Sensitive and Controversial Issues in Personal Social Health Education *(PSHE)* in South East England: A Life History Approach
TUTOR/SUPERVISOR: NAME	DRS BOB BOWIE AND LYNN REVELL
TUTOR/SUPERVISOR: E-MAIL	Bob.bowie@canterbury.ac.uk Lynn.revell@canterbury.ac.uk
DURATION OF PROJECT (start & end dates)	JUNE 2014 – JUNE 2016.

OTHER RESEARCHERS	N/A

2. OUTLINE THE ETHICAL ISSUES THAT YOU THINK ARE INVOLVED IN THE PROJECT.

- I will be talking to teachers about aspects of their Christian faith and personal values as they relate to their teaching approaches. This is highly personal and requires care and sensitivity in drafting the interview schedule. I will also need to be thoughtful during the interview process by being thoughtful and remaining objective when presenting the questions during the interviews.

- Teachers' beliefs about their reasons for adopting certain teaching approaches, is also highly personal; this relates directly to their subject knowledge, professional identity and conduct. This carries a potential risk of loss of professional standing if views are known and are deemed to contravene school or national Policy Guidelines or Statutory requirements. This could also result in them being exposed, discriminated against, reprimanded for professional misconduct or threats made to their jobs.

- Additionally, they relate to Informed consent, confidentiality and anonymity/privacy benefits to informants. This is crucial as damage can be done to teachers' reputation and more so, professional careers, if responses are traced back to them. Therefore, I will use a coding system, which will be kept secret and separate when transcribing and interpreting data so teacher cannot be identified.

- There are also ethical concerns for the teacher, CCCU and partner schools. If selected teachers were from schools in partnership with the university and therefore are colleagues, revealing or discovering their identities and views could be in conflict; thus I need to protect their anonymity. I will ensure that no connection can be made between my informants and supervisors through the code system I will employ which will also keep teachers' identities from my supervisors at CCCU.

- Initially, data can only be accessed by my supervisors and me as researcher. I will not store data on CCCU or school servers. The code will be kept separate from the data to prevent access to and connections of what teachers say in the interview and their identity. This disclosure could cause professional

harm to the teacher and damage the reputation and credibility of the university.

- Researcher and informants' biases must also be acknowledged as both can be sympathetic to the cause and subject being researched.

- It is also possible that the views shared by teachers are not totally accurate. Also as researcher, I must avoid suggesting possible answers to the questions (verbally or non-verbally); or to misrepresent the teachers' views in my interpretation of their stories in what I select to report.

- After completion of the study, I will ensure that all data will be made anonymous (i.e. all personal information associated with the data will be removed).

2. **GIVE A BRIEF OUTLINE OF THE PROJECT** in no more than 100 words. (*Include, for example, sample selection, recruitment procedures, data collection, data analysis and expected outcomes.*) Please ensure that your description will be understood by the lay members of the Committee.

I will select my sample of ten teachers; firstly, by using the internet to obtain schools within the South East region. Afterwards (pending Ethical approval), i will contact the PSHE teachers identified directly through email, phone and letters. They will be selected because of their experiences and direct involvement in my area of research. After Ethics approval, I intend to ask them to suggest other suitably qualified, willing and available teachers. Data will be collected mainly through interviewing these teachers. I will then record, transcribe and interpret this information. I might use computer software packages (like Nvivo), to help me analyse the data collected. I expect teachers' responses to reflect a range of different experiences, approaches and even belief positions.

4. How many participants will be recruited?	Approximately 10 PSHE teachers and 3 for the pilot study.
5. Will you be recruiting STAFF or STUDENTS from another faculty?	**NO** I will take care to ensure that colleagues in project or training; or CCCU teachers are prohibited. (Nevertheless, I will still ensure that transcripts are coded and that teachers' identities are kept secret e.g. from colleagues, Head teachers, CCCU supervisors etc)
6. Will participants include minors, people with learning difficulties or other vulnerable people?	**NO**

7. Potential risks for participants: - Emotional harm/hurt	**YES**: **Professional risks:** • Views held and expressed may contradict professional and statutory policies and Guidance. Disclosing such views could result in disciplinary action including dismissal for professional misconduct. • Also teachers' reputation could be damaged • Teaching approach could be seen as indoctrinating or imposing his or her views onto the students. • Teachers could be put under

	'surveillance' or be discriminated against or marginalised.
	• Matters of belief relating to teachers' professional lives and their approaches to teaching are personal. Therefore, the greater potential risk to teachers is professional rather than emotional harm.
	• Risk of their participation in the research going back to colleagues or their Superiors at their schools or CCCU.
- Physical harm/hurt	**NO**
- Risk of disclosure	**YES**
- Other (please specify)	
*Please note that this includes any sensitive areas, feelings etc., however mild they may seem.	
8. How are these risks to be addressed?	• By protecting teachers from professional harm ensuring confidentiality and anonymity; I can avoid names on transcripts and use codes stored separately and not disclose my sources or make connections that could identify them. This will ensure that their views remain private thus protecting their reputations.
	• The participants will be able to read what has been written and provide clarifications. They will also contribute to the analysis which implies that they can modify anything that they said so any contested

	comment in relation to their professional lives can be deleted.
	• Regarding sharing on issues of faith, I can use sensitive questioning with awareness of even potentially mild emotional harm discussing Christian beliefs might trigger for some. • I will provide Participant Information Sheet, obtaining informed consent, written/signed consent forms, supplying researcher contact details, obtaining permission to record interviews.

9. Potential benefits for participants:
 	
  - Improved services
 	
  - Improved participant understanding
 	
  - Opportunities for participants to have their views heard.
 	
  - Other (please specify)
	YES
	
	YES
	
	YES
	
	The contribution of Christian approaches to education will hopefully inspire and illuminate teachers' perceptions, lived experiences as well as some of the tensions inherent in religious believing within a secularising context.

10. How, when and by whom will participants be approached? Will they be recruited individually or en bloc?	• I will make initial enquiries and approaches (through phone calls, emails and letters) individually. Subject to Ethics approval, I will then ask available participants to suggest others who meet the

	research criteria and are willing and available to participate
	• Follow up on contacts recommended will then be done. They will be recruited individually, hopefully by January – February 2015, and subject to Ethics approval.
	• Given the confidentiality and anonymity safeguards to be introduced, there should not be any significant impact on the university partnerships.
11. Are participants likely to feel under pressure to consent / assent to participation?	• I am not in any position of authority or control over the informants and they will be participating freely. Furthermore, I will not in any way seek to pressurise them in making responses. Their information sheets will outline the ethical aspects, rights, responsibilities, expectations and entitlements including their right to opt out at any time without explanation or to participate without inducements, coercion or payments. Yet, as PSHE colleagues, the desire to please and be of help might inadvertently and implicitly add pressure to consent. But through the above strategies outlined, I will ensure that participation is embarked upon freely.
12. How will voluntary informed consent be obtained from individual participants or those with a right to consent for them? Introductory letter - Phone call	Please indicate all those that apply and add examples in an appendix. **YES**/NO **YES/**NO

- Email - Other (please specify)	**YES**/NO Mutually signed consent forms by researcher and informants to be done.

13. How will permission be sought from those responsible for institutions / organisations hosting the study?
 	
    - Introductory letter
    - Phone call
    - Email
 	
    - Other (please specify)
	Please indicate all those that apply and add examples in an appendix.
	
	YES/NO
	
	YES/NO
	
	YES/NO **(N/A)**
	
	- After Ethics approval is granted, I intend to contact Individual teachers through emails, phone and introductory letters. This individual contact will be away from the schools' premises or properties, or in school time. Therefore, the 'institutions/gate-keepers' (Head teachers) will not be consulted or informed. I will ensure that locations selected for the interviews are away from the schools concerned and knowledge of participation might remain private.

14. How will the privacy and confidentiality of participants be safeguarded? (Please give brief details).	- Privacy and confidentiality will be safeguarded. To do this I will keep all materials in a secure location, separating identifying markers/codes from the data to protect informants' identity, data, titles, institutions, positions and presentations of life story interpretations.

	• I will not disclose the names of my teachers or make available the transcripts or audio recording of their interviews. • As mentioned earlier, I will conduct interviews away from participants' schools, in a safe, quiet location and private space; taking care that answers provided by teachers cannot be overheard by passers-by.

15. What steps will be taken to comply with the Data Protection Act?
 	
    - Safe storage of data
 	
    - Anonymization of data
 	
    - Destruction of data after 5 years
 	
    - Other (please specify)
	Please indicate all those that apply.
	
	YES/NO
	
	YES/NO
	
	YES/NO

16. How will participants be made aware of the results of the study?	• I intend to include them at different stages of data collection: transcription, analysis and interpretation (They will have • an opportunity to review the transcript should they request it and they will be told of this). • Additionally, the interview audio recording if requested will be made available to them by me; (a note to this effect could be added to Interview schedule or I could write to them and ask if they wish to have these). • Also write to notify participants of the final research publication. Public access at appropriate time online or in CCCU library.
17. What steps will be taken to allow participants to retain control over audio-visual records of them and over their creative products and items of a personal nature?	• Copies of audio-visual records along with transcripts can be mailed to participants. • As researcher, I will take care to avoid leaving electronic footprints and further ensure that data cannot be traced back to their original sources. • Initially, I will seek permission as to whether transcripts be made and/or interviews recorded. (Option to discontinue recording if requested to do so)

18. Give the qualifications and/or experience of the researcher and/or supervisor in this form of research. (Brief answer only)	I have completed a Masters degree in Leadership and Management at CCCU with Distinction and have completed an Action Research with 182 respondents. My current superiors are Drs Lynn Revell and Bob Bowie who are both are providing invaluable guidance.
19. If you are NOT a member of CCCU academic staff or a registered CCCU postgraduate student, what insurance arrangements are in place to meet liability incurred in the conduct of this research?	I am a registered post graduate student of CCCU.

Attach any:

> *Participant information sheets and letters*
>
> *Consent forms*
>
> *Data collection instruments*
>
> *Peer review comments*

DECLARATION

- I certify that the information in this form is accurate to the best of my knowledge and belief and I take full responsibility for it.
- I certify that a risk assessment for this study has been carried out in compliance with the University's Health and Safety policy.
- I certify that any required CRB/VBS check has been carried out.
- I undertake to carry out this project under the terms specified in the Canterbury Christ Church University Research Governance Handbook.

- I undertake to inform the relevant Faculty Research Ethics Committee of any significant change in the question, design or conduct of the study over the course of the study. I understand that such changes may require a new application for ethics approval.

- I undertake to inform the Research Governance Manager in the Graduate School and Research Office when the proposed study has been completed.

- I am aware of my responsibility to comply with the requirements of the law and appropriate University guidelines relating to the security and confidentiality of participant or other personal data.

- I understand that project records/data may be subject to inspection for audit purposes if required in future and that project records should be kept securely for five years or other specified period.

- I understand that the personal data about me contained in this application will be held by the Research Office and that this will be managed according to the principles established in the Data Protection Act.

Researcher's Name: PHILLIP JOHN O'CONNOR

Date: DECEMBER 8, 2014.

FOR STUDENT APPLICATION ONLY

I have read the research proposal and application form, and support this submission to the FREC.

Supervisor's Name: DR BOB BOWIE AND DR. LYNN REVELL

Date:

CONDITIONS ATTACHED TO APPROVAL BY THE COURSE RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE

	NAME	DATE

Approved by Course Committee		
Checked by Faculty Committee		

CONDITIONS ATTACHED TO APPROVAL BY THE EDUCATION FACULTY RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE

	NAME	DATE
Approved by Faculty Committee		

For Research Office Use
Checklist No:
Date Received:

ETHICS REVIEW CHECKLIST

Sections A and B of this checklist must be completed for <u>every</u> research or knowledge transfer project that involves human or animal[1] participants. These sections serve as a toolkit that will identify whether a full application for ethics approval needs to be submitted.

If the toolkit shows that there is **no need for a full ethical review**, Sections D, E and F should be completed and the checklist forwarded to the Research Governance Manager as described in Section C.

If the toolkit shows that **a full application is required**, this checklist should be set aside and an *Application for Faculty Research Ethics Committee Approval Form* – or an appropriate external application form – should be completed and submitted. **There is no need to complete both documents.**

> **Before completing this checklist, please refer to** *Ethics Policy for Research Involving Human Participants* **in the University Research Governance Handbook.**

The principal researcher/project leader (or, where the principal researcher/project leader is a student, their supervisor) is responsible for exercising appropriate professional judgement in this review.

Type of Project – please mark (x) as appropriate			
Research	X	Knowledge Exchange	

Section A: Applicant Details

A1. Name of applicant:	**PHILLIP JOHN O'CONNOR**
A2. Status (please	Undergraduate Student **/ Postgraduate Student**/Staff
A3. Email address:	p.j.oconnor6@canterbury.ac.uk or
A4. Contact address:	c/o Canterbury Christ Church University North Holmes Road Canterbury CT1 1QU
A5. Telephone number	

1 Sentient animals, generally all vertebrates and certain invertebrates such as cephalopods and crustaceans

Section B: Ethics Checklist

Please answer each question by marking (X) in the appropriate box:

<table>
<tr><th></th><th></th><th>Yes</th><th>No</th></tr>
<tr><td>1.</td><td>Does the study involve participants who are particularly vulnerable or unable to give informed consent (e.g. children, people with learning disabilities), or in unequal relationships (e.g. people in prison, your own staff or students)?</td><td></td><td>X</td></tr>
<tr><td>2.</td><td>Will the study require the co-operation of a gatekeeper for initial access to the vulnerable groups or individuals to be recruited (e.g. students at school, members of self-help groups, and residents of nursing home)?</td><td></td><td>X</td></tr>
<tr><td>3.</td><td>Will it be necessary for participants to take part in the study without usual informed consent procedures having been implemented in advance (e.g. covert observation, certain ethnographic studies)?</td><td></td><td>X</td></tr>
<tr><td>4.</td><td>Will the study use deliberate deception (this does <i><u>not</u></i> include randomly assigning participants to groups in an experimental design)?</td><td></td><td>X</td></tr>
<tr><td>5.</td><td>Will the study involve discussion of, or collection of information on, sensitive topics (e.g. sexual activity, drug use)? NB: Interview-conversation questions will be restricted to matters of belief and the curriculum (approaches to teaching controversial issues in PSHE); rather than individuals' personal conduct, personal preferences or activities.*</td><td></td><td>X*</td></tr>
<tr><td>6.</td><td>Are drugs, placebos or other substances (e.g. food substances, vitamins) to be administered to human or animal participants?</td><td></td><td>X</td></tr>
<tr><td>7.</td><td>Does the study involve invasive or intrusive procedures such as blood taking or muscle biopsy from human or animal participants?</td><td></td><td>X</td></tr>
<tr><td>8.</td><td>Is physiological stress, pain, or more than mild discomfort to humans or animals likely to result from the study?</td><td></td><td>X</td></tr>
<tr><td>9.</td><td>Could the study induce psychological stress or anxiety or cause</td><td></td><td>X</td></tr>
</table>

	harm or negative consequences in humans (including the researcher) or animals beyond the risks encountered in normal life?		
10.	Will the study involve **interaction** with animals? (If you are simply observing them – e.g. in a zoo or in their natural habitat – without having any contact at all, you can answer "No")		X
11.	Will the study involve prolonged or repetitive testing?		X
12.	Will financial inducements (other than reasonable expenses and compensation for time) be offered to participants?		X
13.	Is the study a survey that involves University–wide recruitment of students from Canterbury Christ Church University?		X
14.	Will the study involve recruitment of adult participants (aged 16 and over) who are unable to make decisions for themselves, i.e. lack capacity, and come under the jurisdiction of the Mental Capacity Act (2005)?		X
15.	Will the study involve recruitment of participants (**excluding staff**) through the **NHS** or the **Department of Social Services** of a Local Authority (e.g. Kent County Council)?		X

Now please assess outcomes and actions by referring to Section C ➲

Section C: How to Proceed

C1.   If you have answered 'NO' to *all* the questions in Section B, you should complete Sections D–F as appropriate and send the completed and signed Checklist to the Research Governance Manager in the Research Office for the record. <u>That is all you need to do</u>. **You will receive a letter confirming compliance with University Research Governance procedures.**

[*Master's students should retain copies of the form and letter; the letter should be submitted with their research report or dissertation (bound in at the beginning). Work that is submitted without this document will be returned un–assessed.*]

C2. If you have answered **'YES'** to *any* of the questions in Section B, you will need to describe more fully how you plan to deal with the ethical issues raised by your project. This does not mean that you cannot do the study, only that your proposal will need to be approved by a Research Ethics Committee**. Depending upon which questions you answered 'YES' to, you should proceed as follows**

(a) If you answered '**YES**' to any of *questions 1 – 12 ONLY* (i.e. not questions 13,14 or 15), you will have to submit an application to your Faculty Research Ethics Committee (FREC) using your Faculty's version of the *Application for Faculty Research Ethics Committee Approval Form*. This should be submitted as directed on the form. The *Application for Faculty Research Ethics Committee Approval Form* can be obtained from the Governance and Ethics pages of the Research section on the University web site.

(b) If you answered '**YES**' to *question 13* you have two options:

(i) If you answered '**YES**' to *question 13 ONLY* you must send copies of this checklist to the Student Survey Unit. Subject to their approval you may then proceed as at C1 above.

(ii) If you answered '**YES**' to *question 13 PLUS any other of questions 1 – 12*, you must proceed as at C2(b)(i) above and then submit an application to your Faculty Research Ethics Committee (FREC) as at C2(a).

(c) If you answered '**YES**' to *question 14* you do <u>not</u> need to submit an application to your Faculty Research Ethics Committee.   *INSTEAD*, you <u>must</u> submit an application to the appropriate external NHS Research Ethics Committee [see C2(d) below].

(d) If you answered '**YES**' to *question 15* you do <u>not</u> need to submit an application to your Faculty Research Ethics Committee.   *INSTEAD*, you must submit an application to the appropriate external NHS Research Ethics Committee (REC) or Local Authority REC, *after* your proposal has received a satisfactory Peer Review (see *Research Governance Handbook*). Applications to an NHS REC or a Local Authority REC <u>must</u> be signed by the appropriate Faculty Director of Research or Faculty representative before they are submitted.

IMPORTANT

Please note that it is your responsibility in the conduct of your study to follow the policies and procedures set out in the University's Research Governance Handbook, and any relevant academic or professional guidelines.   This includes providing

appropriate information sheets and consent forms, and ensuring confidentiality in the storage and use of data. Any significant change in the question, design or conduct over the course of the study should be notified to the **Faculty and/or other Research Ethics Committee** that received your original proposal. Depending on the nature of the changes, a new application for ethics approval may be required.

Section D: Project Details

D1. Project title:	Illuminating the place of personal values and Christian beliefs in teaching sensitive and controversial issues in Personal Social Health Education (PSHE) in South East England.
D2. Start date D3. End date	June 2014 June 2016
D4. Lay summary (max 300 words *which __must__ include a brief description of the methodology to be used for gathering your data*)	**Research Theme:** Faith, beliefs and values in education/Professional Identity **Aim:** To explore unique insights/interpretations into the constructed narratives of teachers' lives in order to develop an in-depth understanding of the relationship between personal faith and approaches to teaching sensitive and controversial PSHE issues. **Location:** South East England **Importance** Despite policies and research into various aspects of values, beliefs, curriculum, professionalism, the place, position and Christian perspective of teachers' life stories are not prominent or fully explored. PSHE recommendations suggest that further support for teachers is needed as 42% Primary and 38% Secondary teachers lack expertise in teaching sensitive and controversial issues (DfE 2013). This study broadly relates to complex, extensive, timely, relevant issues and

discussions regarding the compatibility of values, Christian beliefs and professional identity in locating 'teachers' own life stories alongside a broader contextual analysis' (Sikes 2006).

Methodological Framework/Methods/Ethics

Ontologically, this research views the world and social reality as functions of human thought, analysis and perception, hence subjective and idiographic. Thus it is interpretive in its epistemology, as the nature of sensitive and controversial issues justifies diverse, subjective perceptions, experiences, accounts, attitudes and explanations. Paradigms – Interpretivism, constructivism and post-modernism.

The chosen Life History approach (useful in 'illuminating subjective teacher experiences in social historical contexts...'Goodson, 2008), will use a small sample of approximately 10 teachers (selected through purposive, opportunistic and snowball sampling techniques); that will story and explore their lived accounts, perceptions and experiences 'within a wider context': that of Christian faith in public life/education. With no intention to generalise, it will appropriately address the research questions, aims, research purposes and conceptual framework.

Ethical aspects: Information Sheets will be provided. Recognising the potentially emotive and sensitive issues associated with life history methodology involving intimately working with informants; there maybe scope; arguably, to evoke painful memories, social, emotional, professional and psychological distress, however mild. Issues of confidentiality and anonymity, ownership of tapes and transcripts, informants' right to change, opt out, comment on, contribute to analysis; respondent validation and presentation of findings' will be recognised and addressed (Goodson and Sikes, 2001, 27, 36).

Data collection/analysis/Interpretation and Reporting

Data will be collected by Life History interviews and by assembling documentary evidence for analysis; including Policies and schemes of work. Face-to-face, one-to-one semi-structured Interviews-conversations will be held within a year period, done over 2 occasions to 'explore 'the legitimacy/authenticity of being a PSHCE teacher; the direct conflict this brings against being a Christian and whether the two can be interwoven in a way which satisfies both.' Informants' life stories will be recorded, transcribed and thematically categorised for induction and interpretation.

Interpretations of given Life stories will help 'craft a narrative that links together events, experiences and perceptions' and will 'further the universal sum of knowledge, making better informed sense' of teacher's values, beliefs and Christian faith, management strategies in teaching PSHE topics; by 'interpreting and then re-presenting' life stories in order to 'understand better...to develop personal and professional development strategies to further teaching and learning' (Sikes and Everington, 2006, p15); within PSHE from a faith perspective as ideas, themes, thoughts are interrogated, analysed, interpreted, compared, explained and reported using concepts, categories; thematic, discourse or content analysis, narrative cases backed by theoretical underpinning. Through respondent validation and fulfilment of degree assessment procedures, findings will be checked, reported and defended.

Section E1: For Students Only

E1. Module name and number or course and Department:	Doctorate in Education, Christianity and Faith (Jubilee Cohort)
E2. Name of Supervisor or module leader	DR. BOB BOWIE AND DR. LYNN REVELL
E3. Email address of Supervisor or Module leader	Bob.bowie@canterbury.ac.uk Lynn.revell@canterbury.ac.uk
E4. Contact address:	Canterbury Christ Church University North Homes Road, Canterbury, Kent CT1 1QU, United Kingdom.

Section E2: For Supervisors

Please tick the appropriate boxes. The study should not begin until all boxes are ticked:

The student has read the relevant sections of the University's Research Governance Handbook, available on University Research web pages at:	☐
The topic merits further investigation	☐
The student has the skills to carry out the study	☐
The participant information sheet or leaflet is appropriate	☐

The procedures for recruitment and obtaining informed consent are	
If a CRB/VBS check is required, this has been carried out	

Comments from supervisor:

Section F: Signatures

- I certify that the information in this form is accurate to the best of my knowledge and belief and I take full responsibility for it.

- I certify that a risk assessment for this study has been carried out in compliance with the University's Health and Safety policy.

- I certify that any required CRB/VBS check has been carried out.

- I undertake to carry out this project under the terms specified in the Canterbury Christ Church University Research Governance Handbook.

- I undertake to inform the relevant Faculty Research Ethics Committee of any significant change in the question, design or conduct of the study over the course of the study. I understand that such changes may require a new application for ethics approval.

- I undertake to inform the Research Governance Manager in the Graduate School and Research Office when the proposed study has been completed.

- I am aware of my responsibility to comply with the requirements of the law and appropriate University guidelines relating to the security and confidentiality of participant or other personal data.

- I understand that project records/data may be subject to inspection for audit purposes if required in future and that project records should be kept securely for five years or other specified period.

- I understand that the personal data about me contained in this application will be held by the Research Office and that this will be managed according to the principles established in the Data Protection Act.

Principal Investigator	Supervisor or module leader (as appropriate)
Name: Date:	Name: Date:

Section G: Submission

This form should be returned, as an attachment to a covering email, to the Research Governance Manager at roger.bone@canterbury.ac.uk

N.B. YOU MUST include copies of the Participant Information Sheet and Consent Form that you will be using in your study (Model versions on which to base these are appended to this checklist for your convenience). Also copies of any data gathering tools such as questionnaires.

Providing the covering email is from a verifiable address, there is no longer a need to submit a signed hard copy version.

<u>**PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET/INTRODUCTORY LETTER**</u>

A research study is being conducted at Canterbury Christ Church University (CCCU) by Phillip O'Connor.

TITLE OF RESEARCH PROJECT

Illuminating the Place of Personal Values and Christian Beliefs in Teaching Sensitive and Controversial Issues in Personal Social Health Education *(PSHE)* in South East England.

<u>Background</u>

I am a full time teacher of Personal Social Health Education (PSHE) and A Level Sociology at a Grammar School in Kent. I have been teaching for approximately thirty years in three countries. For the last 13 years I have been teaching in the UK, having served as Head of PSHE for five years.

I am also doing a Doctorate in Education: Christianity and Faith in Education degree on a part time basis; now at the research/thesis writing stage, at Canterbury Christ Church University. I need your help as I embark on this extremely challenging stage of my academic pursuit. I am writing to ask kindly if you would be willing and available to participate in this study. Admittedly, involvement will require some commitment on your part.

As a PSHE teacher with Christian faith I have to manage carefully the demands of personal values and beliefs in teaching topics that might be considered sensitive and often controversial. The inherent tension between personal faith and professional identity is well documented and is situated within a wider context of current debates, research and literature regarding the place of faith in public life. Thus, this research seeks to explore and illuminate the legitimacy of being a PSHE teacher; the direct conflict this brings against being a Christian and whether the two can be interwoven in a way which satisfies both. It relates to complex and extensive discussions regarding the compatibility of values, Christian beliefs and professional identity.

Research Information

Aim: To explore unique insights/interpretations into the constructed narratives of teachers' lives in order to develop an in-depth understanding of the relationship between personal faith and approaches to teaching sensitive and controversial PSHE issues.

What will you be required to do?

I will use a Life History approach/methodology to answer my research questions. Informal one-to-one, face-to-face semi-structured interviews/conversations will also be employed to obtain your detailed experiences, perceptions and interpretations of the issues. Furthermore, questions will basically focus in-depth around the research questions of:

- What issues and tensions do Christian teachers identify in teaching sensitive and controversial topics in personal social health education?

- Why do they identify such issues and topics as sensitive and controversial?

- How do they manage the personal and professional challenges arising out of teaching these issues/topics?

- What relationship exists between personal values, Christian beliefs and the approaches employed in teaching these issues?

To participate in this research you must:

- Be a PSHE teacher involved in its delivery (either through discrete subject, form time, integrated in other subjects, Enrichment or Focus days); and professing a Christian faith.

- Be willing and available to be interviewed

- Be prepared to provide detailed insights into your perception, experiences and life story on the research title through the lens of your unique personal, social, historical, geographical, political or religious contexts.

Procedures

You will be asked to:

- Read the Participant Information Sheet provided and sign the Consent form (should you decide to participate)
- Complete on separate occasions, 2 one-to-one interview/conversations each lasting about an hour or as you dictate; at a time and place mutually agreed.
- Provide copies of any documentary evidence you might have that can contribute to clarifying any issue raised e.g. schemes of work, policies, work samples etc

Feedback

Effort will be made to ensure that the interpretation of your experiences, stories and perceptions are credible. Thus, for *respondent validation*, you will be asked for your views on my analyses or written accounts and have access to field notes, recordings and transcripts. They will be referred to and quoted in the writing up and analysis in the Thesis.

Confidentiality

All data and personal information will be stored securely within Canterbury Christ Church University's (CCCU) premises in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998 and the University's own Ethical Procedures for the Conduct of Research Involving Human

Participants (2007). Data can only be accessed by CCCU and me as researcher. After completion of the study, all data will be made anonymous (i.e. all personal information associated with the data will be removed).

You have the right to opt out and change your mind at any time without explanation; to comment on, contribute to analysis and the presentation of my work; as well as location and, nature and times of interviews. Interviews conversations, to which you will have full access, will be recorded and transcribed for later analysis; however, you will be consulted for your permission on this.

Dissemination of results

This work will be presented as an assessed academic qualification - Doctorate in Education. Findings will be presented to Canterbury Christ Church University (CCCU) as a Thesis and Oral examination. Anonymised copy of thesis might be later available in the Library and online.

Deciding whether to participate

If you have any questions or concerns about the nature, procedures or requirements for participation, please do not hesitate to contact me. Remember, your participation is optional. If you agree, you will be in control of the length and depth of conversations. We will mutually agree on how anonymity is assured and your overall wellbeing is protected.

Should you be willing and available to join me in this challenging yet exciting journey, please sign the form below. Thanks and look forward to sharing our life stories together!

Any questions?

Please contact **Phillip O'Connor on** email contact details:

p.j.oconnor6@canterbury.ac.uk.

Canterbury Christ Church University:

Dr Bob Bowie and Dr Lynn Revell (Supervisors)

Canterbury Christ Church University

North Homes Road, Canterbury,

Kent CT1 1QU,

United Kingdom.

Canterbury Christ Church University

PEER REVIEW REPORT

Name of Researcher(s):

Project title:

Project number:

REVIEWER

Name:

Address:

Date sent to referee:

Date received by referee:

Date to be returned by:

Please return signed copy to:

Emailed copy to:

PLEASE ENSURE THAT YOU HAVE COMMENTED ON EACH OF THE SECTIONS LISTED HERE

1.	**Is the research problem clearly defined and appropriate to the level of study?** Yes ☐ No ☐ Needs further clarification ☐ **If further development or clarification is required please give details below**:
2.	**Please comment on the research aims and/or objectives. Are they, for example, clearly stated? Appropriate? Relevant?**
3.	**Has the relevant literature, if any, been taken into account?** Yes ☐ No ☐ **If appropriate please comment on the current review and make suggestions about areas that have been omitted or need to be considered**

4.	**Is the study design sound and appropriate to the needs of the project? Is the rationale for the work clear? Is the selected design appropriate for the planned study? Please give your comments on each of these points.**

5.	Are the methods adequately developed and appropriate to the aims of the project?
	Yes ☐ No ☐ Need further clarification ☐
	Please comment on each of the aspects listed below:
	Sampling:
	Data collection techniques
	Data analysis:
	Please make additional comments below:

6. **Have relevant ethical issues been taken into account in the design of the project?**

Please comment on each of the areas identified below:

Informed consent:

Privacy and confidentiality:

Respect for vulnerable persons:

Assessment of potential harm to subjects:

Assessment of potential benefits to subjects:

Data Protection: Storage of data:

Data Protection: Retention of data:

Please make additional comments below:

7.	**Is the project worthwhile, innovative and/or timely?**
	Yes ☐ No ☐
	Please comment on each of the aspects listed below:
	Worthwhile:
	Innovative:
	Timely:
	Please make additional comments below:
8.	**Is the researcher appropriately trained to carry out this work? (see enclosed CV)**
	Yes ☐ No ☐
	If there are concerns about this please make your comments below:

9.	**If the answer to question 8 is 'No', does the project supervisor(s) have the appropriate skills and expertise to supervise the applicant? (see enclosed CV)** Yes ☐ No ☐ **Please comment below**:
10.	**Would you recommend that the proposal be:** a. Accepted Yes ☐ No ☐ b. Accepted subject to modification Yes ☐ No ☐ c. Rejected with comments and advice to guide future submissions Yes ☐ No ☐ d. Rejected Yes ☐ No ☐

Please make any additional comments here:

Signature of reviewer   _____

Name: _____

Date: _____

Canterbury
Christ Church
University

Dear ------------------,

Good day. I am a full time teacher of 'A' Level Sociology and Acting Head of Personal Social Health Education (PSHE) at a Grammar School in Kent. I am currently doing a Doctorate in Education: Christianity and Faith in Education degree on a part time basis, at Canterbury Christ Church University.

I am now at the research/thesis writing stage and need your help as I embark on this extremely challenging phase of my academic pursuit. Therefore, I am writing to ask kindly if you would be willing and available to participate in this Life History study. Admittedly, involvement will require some commitment on your part.

As a PSHE teacher with a Christian faith I have to manage carefully the demands of personal values and beliefs in teaching topics that might be considered sensitive and often controversial. The inherent tension between personal faith and professional identity is well documented and is situated within a wider context of current debates, research and literature regarding the place of faith in public life. Thus, this research seeks to explore and illuminate the legitimacy of being a PSHE teacher; the direct conflict this brings against being a Christian and whether the two can be interwoven in a way which satisfies both. It relates to complex and extensive discussions regarding the compatibility of values, Christian beliefs and professional identity.

I will use semi-structured interviews primarily to obtain data to answer my research questions. With your permission, these conversations will be audio recorded and transcribed. You will have full access to the transcripts as soon as they are written for your validation before I submit the chapters for examination. I will abide by the Ethical Guidelines of the university to ensure that your anonymity and confidentiality are protected.

A more detailed outline in the accompanying Participant's Information Sheet along with a consent form and a self-addressed envelope are available to you, should you be interested, willing and available to participate in this PSHE research. So then if you can join me in this venture, kindly complete and return using the self-addressed envelope, the Consent form. Thanks and I look forward to hearing from you.

Kind regards,

Signed: _____

Date: _____

Canterbury
Christ Church
University

PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET

Title of research project

Illuminating the place of personal values and Christian beliefs in teaching sensitive and controversial issues in Personal Social Health Education (PSHE) in South East England: A Life History Approach.

This research study is being conducted at Canterbury Christ Church University (CCCU) by Phillip O'Connor.

Background

I am a full time teacher of PSHE and A Level Sociology at a Grammar School in Kent. I have been teaching for the past approximately 30 years in three countries. For the last 13 years I have been teaching in the UK, having served as Head of PSHE for about 5 years. I am also doing a Doctorate in Education: Christianity and Faith in Education degree on a part time basis; now at the thesis writing stage, at Canterbury Christ Church University. I need your help as I embark on this extremely challenging stage of my academic pursuit. I am writing to ask kindly if you would be willing and available to participate in this study. Admittedly, involvement will require some commitment on your part.

As a PSHE teacher with Christian faith I have to manage carefully the demands of personal values and beliefs in teaching topics that might be considered sensitive and often controversial. The inherent tension between personal faith and professional identity is well documented and is situated within a wider context of current debates, research and literature regarding the place of faith in public life. Thus, this research seeks to explore the legitimacy of being a PSHE teacher; the direct conflict this brings against being a Christian and whether the two can be interwoven in a way which satisfies both. It relates to complex and extensive discussions regarding the compatibility of values, Christian beliefs and professional identity.

Research Aim: To explore unique insights/interpretations into the constructed narratives of teachers' lives in order to develop an in-depth understanding of the

relationship between personal faith and approaches to teaching sensitive and controversial PSHE issues.

What will you be required to do?

I will use a life history approach/method to answer my research questions. Informal semi-structured interviews/conversations will also be employed to obtain your experiences, perceptions and interpretations of the issues. Questions will basically focus in-depth around the following research questions:

1. Why do Christian PSHE teachers identify sensitive and controversial issues and topics as such?

2. What issues and tensions do they identify in/when teaching these topics?

3. How do they manage the personal and professional challenges arising out of teaching these issues/topics?

4. What relationship exists between personal values, Christian beliefs and the approaches employed in teaching these issues?

5. What are the wider macro-political implications for Christian faith and professional identity and practice?

To participate in this research you must:

- Be a PSHE teacher involved in its delivery and professing a Christian faith.

- Be willing and available to be interviewed (one-to-one interview-conversation)

- Be prepared to provide detailed insights into your perception, experiences and life story on the research title through the lens of your unique personal, social, historical, geographical, political or religious contexts.

Procedures

You will be asked to:

- Complete on separate occasions, 2 one-to-one interview/conversations each lasting about an hour or as you dictate; at a time and place mutually agreed.
- Provide copies of any document you might have that can contribute to clarifying any issue raised e.g. schemes of work, policies, work samples etc

Feedback

Effort will be made to ensure that the interpretation of your experiences, stories and perceptions are credible. For *respondent validation*, you will be asked for your views on my analyses or written accounts and have access to field notes and transcripts. They will be referred to and quoted in the writing up and analysis in the Thesis.

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 You have the right to opt out and change your mind at any time without explanation, comment on, contribute to analysis and the presentation of my work; as well as location and times of interviews. In the interviews the conversations, to which you will have full access, will be recorded and transcribed for later analysis; however, you will be consulted for your permission on this.

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If you have any questions or concerns about the nature, procedures or requirements for participation do not hesitate to contact me. Remember, your participation is optional. If you agree, you will be in control of the length and depth of conversations. We will mutually agree on how anonymity is assured and your overall wellbeing is protected.

Should you be willing and available to join me in this challenging yet exciting journey, please sign the form below. Thanks and look forward to sharing our life stories together!

Any questions?

Please contact **Phillip O'Connor -** email contact details:

p.j.oconnor6@canterbury.ac.uk.

Canterbury Christ Church University:

Dr Bob Bowie and Dr Lynn Revell (Supervisors)

Canterbury Christ Church University

North Homes Road, Canterbury,

Kent CT1 1QU,

United Kingdom.

Canterbury
Christ Church
University

Good day. I hope you are well.

This is to once again thank you for your kind offer to participate in my research study. I deeply appreciate this. By way of an update, I am still awaiting the official approval from the university's Ethics Committee. My supervisors will advise me of this.

Realistically speaking, I think our interviews should go ahead early in the New Year. Again, thank you for your patience and willingness and availability to participate. However, as I still need a few more participants, should you know of anyone who meets the research criteria below and would like to recommend or refer them to me then that also would be kindly appreciated:

- Be a PSHE teacher involved in some way in its delivery and professing a Christian faith.

- Be willing and available to be interviewed (one-to-one interview-conversations)

- Be prepared to provide detailed insights into your perception, experiences and life story on the research title through the lens of your unique personal, social, historical, geographical, political or religious contexts.

Thanks again, and I will be in touch as soon as Ethical Approval is granted.

Kind regards,

…………………

Phillip O'Connor

Canterbury
Christ Church
University

October 12, 2015.

Good day. I hope you are well.

I would like to once again thank you for your kind offer to participate in my research study. I deeply appreciate this. Since I first contacted you, it has been a long and tedious process to obtain Ethics approval as well as the full 'blessings' of my Review committee to carry on with the interviews. Thankfully, the way is now clear for me to proceed.

Again, thank you for your patience, willingness and availability to participate in this interview process. Could you kindly advise me of a time and place of your choosing when you would like your interview to be done? I would appreciate if this could be done preferably before or by   Saturday, November 21, 2015. Please reply as soon as possible with a suggested date and time. Your interview should take less, but no more than 90 minutes.

As I still need a few more participants, should you know of anyone who meets my research criteria below and would like to recommend or refer them to me then that also would be kindly appreciated:

- Be a PSHE teacher involved in some way in the delivery of PSHE and professing a Christian faith.

- Be willing and available to be interviewed

- Be prepared to provide detailed insights into how their personal values and Christian beliefs relate to the approaches used to teach sensitive and controversial issues in PSHE.

Thanks again. I understand that this is a big commitment on your part for which I am truly grateful.

Kind regards,

……………………

Phillip O'Connor

Canterbury
Christ Church
University

12th February 2015

Ref: 14/EDU/027

Dear Mr. O'Connor

Project Title: Illuminating the place of personal values and Christian beliefs in teaching sensitive and controversial issues in Personal Social Health Education (PSHE) in South East England: a life history approach

Your amended application has been reviewed by members of the committee who are content that the amendments and clarifications submitted meet the requirements. I am therefore writing to confirm formally that your application has been approved under Chair's Action and you can commence your research. Please notify me of any significant change in the question, design or conduct of the study over its course.

This approval is conditional on you informing me once your research has been completed.

With best wishes for a successful project.

Yours sincerely

Professor Petra Engelbrecht

Chair, Faculty of Education Research Ethics Committee

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Tel +44 (0)1227 767700 Fax +44 (0)1227 470442

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Professor Rama Thirunamachandran, Vice-Chancellor and Principal

256

Canterbury
Christ Church
University

REVISED INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

PART ONE

Introduction (Welcome, Objectives, Value, length, Ethical aspects)

Pseudonym/code_____Remarks_____

Place of Interview _____Date _____

Good day and thank you for agreeing to participate in this interview.

I am interested in exploring the relationship between your personal values and faith and your approaches to teaching sensitive and controversial PSHE issues to be set in a wider context. My questions will cover themes including aspects of your upbringing, personal values and Christian beliefs. There are no right or wrong answers to my questions. The interview is for research purposes only, and its main goal is simply to hear your story about some of the most important things that have happened in your life as they relate to your principles, personal faith as well as professional identity and practice. Ethical procedures are in place to protect your anonymity and ensure confidentiality.

I will guide you through this first segment of the interview process which should take about an hour or so. Are you available to respond to my questions within this timeframe? I intend to audio record this interview to assist me with the accurate interpretation, transcription and analysis of your story. Do I have your permission for this? A copy of this will be available to you if you so desire. A copy of the transcript of this interview will also be made available to you for checking to ensure that I have accurately transcribed what you have said as well as for you to amend if needed.

Thank you.

SECTION ONE: PERSONAL ASPECTS

2. Please construct a timeline of the key events in your life

(Time-line information could include: date and place of birth; family background, parents', extended family and siblings' info (e.g. occupation, character, interests etc); Childhood experiences, community, educational experiences and achievements, occupation – work history, positions, marital status and family life, dates and location, other interests and pursuits; future ambitions and aspirations

(Goodson and Sikes, 2001, p30)

3. What would you consider the most significant event/s in your life?

Childhood Context

4. How would you describe the influence your parents/guardians had on you and any particular lessons you have learnt from your upbringing?

   _____
   _____
   _____
   _____

5. Reflecting on your life story to date, what central theme would you say runs throughout your story?

   _____
   _____
   _____

6. What are some core principles, standards or morals that have guided your life?

   _____
   _____
   _____

7. How would you describe your future aspirations?

_____

_____

_____

Personal values

8. How would you describe the process leading to you adopting your core values of education and life in general?

_____

_____

_____

9. Would you say that your values have changed over time? If so, how and why?

_____

_____

_____

_____

10. Can you identify and outline a situation in your teaching when you were inwardly conflicted about the place of your personal values *(moral, standards or principles)*?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

11. Please share an incident in your teaching when you disagreed with a student on an issue, what happened and how was it resolved?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

12. Should teachers transmit their personal values in teaching or let pupils identify and clarify their own?

_____
_____
_____

Section 2

Christian beliefs

13. Did you have a Christian upbringing? If not, how did you come to faith? Tell me your story.

_____
_____
_____

14. How would you describe your early experiences of Christian faith e.g. Sunday school, youth meetings, Camp, Vacation Bible School, family prayers etc?

_____
_____
_____
_____

15. Please describe your current Christian beliefs/denomination (evangelical, Pentecostal etc) and further explain your present involvement in any church/religious activities or ministries.

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

16. Would you consider your understanding of the Bible to be fixed or opened to different interpretations, contexts or situations?

_____
_____
_____

17. In your teaching, a student asks you to share your Christian belief position on a controversial issue; describe your approach and possible response.

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

18. Please tell me how your Christian beliefs have developed or even changed over time.

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

19. What additionally can you add that would help me better understand how you interpret and apply the Bible to life's complex and divisive issues.

_____
_____
_____
_____

Section 3:

PSHE Teaching

20. Can you outline your experiences of being taught PSHE (or its equivalent e.g. Life Skills or Moral Education) in school – _(e.g. Non-specialists, PSHE Certified, discrete or integrated lessons, form time, Focus days? Others?)._

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

21. Please share with me your journey to becoming a PSHE teacher – tell me your story and include your teaching date started, context _(e.g. type of school,_

grade levels, position in dept, delivery strategy e.g. discrete, integrated lessons form time, specialists, focus days etc?)

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

22. How would you describe the personal qualities and perceptions held by others as necessary to be a PSHE teacher?

_____

_____

_____

_____

23. To what extent, if at all would you say that your Christian beliefs and personal values play a part in your professional practice?

_____

_____

_____

_____

PART TWO – Specific Research Questions Underpinning Themes
Section 4

Research Question 1: "Why do Christian PSHE teachers identify sensitive and controversial issues as such?" (Revised after viva)

Theme: Identifying and Defining Sensitive and Controversial Issues

24. Please explain how your PSHE topics are selected.

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

25. How would you define a sensitive issue? Please share some specific examples of such topics or issues in your teaching.

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

26. What makes an issue controversial? Please share some topics/issues you would consider to be controversial (divisive, debatable or contestable).

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

27. Why do you identify these as such and what might be some implications in your teaching for doing so?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

28. Who should deliver these topics to pupils: home, school, government, others?

_____

_____

_____

Research Question 2

"What issues and tensions do they identify when teaching sensitive and controversial issues?"

263

Theme: Professional and personal identity: Identifying Issues and Tensions

29. Can you identify and share a story that highlights some issues and tensions in your teaching associated with these issues?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

30. If applicable, can you share an incident or story of how you struggled with issues of conscience and controversy in your teaching?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

31. What are your views on Christian PSHE teachers sharing their personal beliefs in their teaching?

_____

_____

_____

_____

32. Is there a tension/conflict for you teaching these issues: Personally, professionally or in your faith?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

33. What specifically are the issues causing such conflict? (for example)

    a. fear of professional misconduct _____

b. fear of indoctrinating or evangelising_____

c. exercising undue influence_____

d. personal conviction_____

e. breaking the law_____

f. untrue to the faith_____

g. Other_____ Please specify _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

34. Would you say that your personal values and Christian beliefs have or could potentially influence your teaching of these topics? How?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Question 3

"How do they manage (cope or deal with) the personal, professional challenges arising from teaching these issues?"

Theme: Managing personal, Conscience and Professional Issues

35. Would you kindly explain the strategies you use to manage or deal with the challenges (Personally, professionally, faith tensions) arising from teaching these issues. (eg Metaphors, unfinished play, Devil's advocate, evade or avoid questions/topics, role play, DVDs, respectful discussions, Guest speakers), neutrality , courageous restraints approach, etc

_____

_____

_____
_____
_____
_____

36. Why do you adopt these strategies?

_____
_____
_____
_____

37. Should your personal values and Biblical beliefs then inform your teaching, If so what strategies get this done without undue influence or even indoctrination?

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

38. Would you see sharing your faith in the classroom as evangelising or indoctrinating pupils?

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

Research Question 4

Theme: Connection between Christian Beliefs and Teaching approaches

"What relationship or connection exists between their Christian beliefs and the approaches employed in teaching these topics/issues?"

39. What association or connection would you say exists between your personal values, Christian beliefs and the approaches you employ in teaching issues of a sensitive and controversial nature?

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

40. Does your Christian faith play a part in the strategy you use in your delivery of the topics? Please explain giving examples.

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

41. Should your Christian faith then be included in your professional life or be compartmentalised and remain outside the classroom as a private entity?

_____
_____
_____
_____

42. Would you consider secular worldviews appropriate to inform teaching sensitive and controversial topics?

_____
_____
_____
_____

43. Can your personal faith, professional identity and practice be integrated?

_____
_____
_____

44. How would you describe your perception of teaching? ... as a vocation, ministry or calling or as a professional career/job? What motives you to continue teaching?

_____
_____
_____
_____

Research Question 5:

Theme: Wider context and Implications

Question: "What are the macro-political implications for Christian beliefs and professional identity and practice?

Government Policies, Documents and Statutory Guidelines (Equalities Act for Schools 2010) regarding tolerance, equality, non-judgementalism and non-discrimination are relevant in delivering sensitive and controversial PSHE topics e.g. Sex education;

45. Would you consider these to be compatible with a faith position? ....can these and your faith co-exist or be interwoven in a way which satisfies both?

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

46. Would you say that your personal experiences as a Christian PSHE teacher conflict or complement these policies, laws? What are some Implications?

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

47. (In today's society), would you say that a faith position (in professional life) is marginalised (i.e. denied attention, influence or power) and how could this be addressed?

_____
_____
_____
_____

48. What would you consider to be some wider implications for Christian believing and professional identity and practice across other disciplines and careers? (e.g. in Medicine/health care, Politics, Law, Hospitality, Science, Government agencies).

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

49. How might policies, practices and procedures across subjects, jobs, fields or disciplines be influenced by you simply sharing your story on these issues? (or what might be the significance of your story?)

50. In conclusion, what is your overall stance regarding the place of personal values and Christian beliefs in the professional sphere; that is to say, Christian believing in any secular context?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

51. Is there anything else you would like to add?

_____

_____

_____

_____

Conclusion: (Summarize, Next course of action, Acknowledgements)

Well, thank you so much for taking the time from your extremely busy schedule to take part in this interview. I appreciate it. The next step will be for me to transcribe your story and then to meet up with you briefly to give you an opportunity to check and validate that what I have recorded accurately represents your views, comments and story. Ethical procedures are in place to protect your anonymity and ensure confidentiality.

AUDIO RECORDING

Please indicate by circling *Yes or No* to indicate your preference:

I would like to have a CD audio copy of this interview sent to me   (Yes/No)

I would like a paper copy of my transcript of this interview   (Yes/No)

Thank you, P. O'Connor

Initial Issues / Themes from Pilot
"TIM" — Pseudonym

- Atheistic back ground / but wife had Christian upbringing
- Became Christian after 9/11; affected by issues / fear

- The Place of faith (personal) in adversity
- A father, teacher & Christian → major impact on life
- Finding God — BIGGEST " "
- Moral upbringing, believing in something → upbringing as humanist but with values & morals
  → Central Theme in life story; "Love"; fatherhood, Golden Rule love for students
  → Guiding Values:- selflessness, love, empathy, care
     (a) helping students to clarify their values avoid selfishness, anti-immigration, homophobia
  → Need to enjoy the moment not worry about future.
  → Conflict in teaching: Islamic extremism high
     (a) How to be balanced / fair even though Christian values of fairness
        · Conflict of history of Catholics engaging in violence, Old testament
     (b) Homosexuality & gay marriage — Disagree with it as a Christian. But God is a God of love regardless of — let God judge (Sister & fostered child — gay) Need for tolerance ⇒ love all inspite off. Feels Conflicted / conscience; how to be neutral without promoting

  → Teaching: Acceptance, non-judgementalism
  → Area of conflict with students: Immigration Pupils' attitudes to them; Developing empathy.
- Early Christian Experience :- Scouting; Came to faith in 30ies

- Biblical truth
  (c) Subjective ; should be applied to life
  (d) Was initially embarrassed to publicly claim Christ
      but slowly overcoming it.
- Development of Christian beliefs/values; Changes
  · More faith, tolerance,
  · more awareness of shortcomings & their impact
  · Was more intolerant ... - but now more compromising & loving
  · Greater understanding of God/Christianity; Reconciling God
     of Old & New testament
  · Gay marriage still a struggle/conflict; social pressure

PART 2 (Teaching)
- Teaching sensitive issue sexual health, homosexuality
  should be fun/humor, do it in a way to avoid embarrassment
- Strategies, teaching styles
  (a) humor, (b) Respect mutually (c) Develop critical
      thinking (d) Group work (e) Q & A (f) Devil's advocate
  (f) Show fairness, tolerance, love — Not announce faith, position
  (g) WWJD principle

Controversial topics
Selection (i) RE
  (ii) Radicalisation, child protection/abuse Sex, Bullying
       sexting; Abortion, Politics, drug abusers, capital punishment
Personal struggle/Conflict
  (i) Gay marriage ; LGBT; Gender identity tensions

Teaching Sharing own views
- Not wrong; muslims have unfair advantage
- Teachers should defend/contend for the faith
- Teacher should not convert others;
  express faith but give options to others for their lives

Section 6
- Yes Conflict,
- Teacher have to teach things they dont
agree with. Keep mouth shut, Compromise
- Compromise needed but God understands

Christian faith Marginalised
  (i) afraid of offending
  (ii) Christianity not treated fairly compared to
     say Islam; a Christian country.
Wider Implications for other professions
  - Hospital
  - Bakery
  - Medicine Doctors praying for patients? suitch off
    Christianity. Suggest other alternative
    - If there's a 13 yrs old then yes do
      abortion. Society & faith have Conflicts but
      Compromise needed. Pray about it &
      Seek forgiveness

Police, Practice Procedures - Influence of personal Story
  @ Christians in work place should follow govt
    dont always have a choice - God understands
  @ God understands after difficult decision which
    may be wrong or right, tough decision
  ③

Overall Stance Christian place in Secular Society
  , we want to prevent religious war
  ' But Speak up', we need care
  , Good religious (Jews Christian Muslim / to

272

Canterbury
Christ Church
University

REVISED INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

PART ONE

Introduction (Welcome, Objectives, Value, length, Ethical aspects)

Pseudonym _____ (Jim)_____ Remarks _____

Place of Interview _Internal Hall._ Date _28/11/12_

Good day and thank you for agreeing to participate in this interview.

I am interested in exploring the relationship between your personal values and faith and your approaches to teaching sensitive and controversial PSHE issues to be set in a wider context. My questions will cover themes including aspects of your upbringing, personal values and Christian beliefs. There are no right or wrong answers to my questions. The interview is for research purposes only, and its main goal is simply to hear your story about some of the most important things that have happened in your life as they relate to your principles, personal faith as well as professional identity and practice. Ethical procedures are in place to protect your anonymity and ensure confidentiality.

I will guide you through this first segment of the interview process which should take about an hour or so. Are you available to respond to my questions within this timeframe? I intend to audio record this interview to assist me with the accurate interpretation, transcription and analysis of your story. Do I have your permission for this? A copy of this will be available to you if you so desire. A copy of the transcript of this interview will also be made available to you for checking to ensure that I have accurately transcribed what you have said as well as for you to amend if needed. .

Thank you.

[handwritten annotations at top:] 1978 – South African. Dad – Fire Chief – moved around. – was bullied. Dad's business went Bankrupt, went to South America – sold on street to support family; lost 2 yrs in there.

SECTION ONE: PERSONAL ASPECTS

[handwritten:] Returned to South Africa; Delusion for Christ at the School. Baptised before leaving school. University in Pretoria

1. Please construct a timeline of the key events in your life

[handwritten:] Jan 2006 → in 2006 (UK) married Mined 2007;

(Time-line information could include: date and place of birth; family background, parents', extended family and siblings' info (e.g. occupation, character, interests etc); Childhood experiences, community, educational experiences and achievements, occupation – work history, positions, marital status and family life, dates and location, other interests and pursuits; future ambitions and aspirations

(Goodson and Sikes, 2001, p30)

[handwritten:] – Divorce then Remarried ... to yr 9 ... PRUE/math

2. What would you consider the most significant event/s in your life?

Childhood Context

3. How would you describe the influence your parents/guardians had on you and any particular lessons you have learnt from your upbringing?

[handwritten:] Very Conservative in views, so very Conservative too. Spent time unlearning what they taught eg racism. To see people as people, avoiding preconceptions.

4. Reflecting on your life story to date, what central theme would you say runs throughout your story?

[handwritten:] Murphy's Law: Anything that can go wrong will go wrong

5. What are some core principles, standards or morals that have guided your life?

[handwritten:] – Make decisions based on God's will; live according to principles in Scriptures eg love, place God first then others.

6. How would you describe your future aspirations?

[handwritten:] – To change Careers – Theology but may not happen.

Personal values

7. How would you describe the process leading to you adopting your core values of education and life in general? *[handwritten:]* — Scriptural upbringing. Read Bible from young. Sees Bible as authoritative. What God says goes.

274

8. Would you say that your values have changed over time? If so, how and why?

Some have eg in some way become more liberal and yet so conservative (conflict). Grown to accept people unconditionally. But less willing to compromise on peoples action when they contradict scripture.

9. Can you identify and outline a situation in your teaching when you were inwardly conflicted about the place of your personal values (moral, standards or principles)?

PSHE → Sex education to year 9. The Resources given was focused on safe sex & condom use & its risks; but made no reference to abstinence its virtues. I ignored the material.
I told students about physical & emotional safety; STIs; emotional protection of abstinence.

10. Please share an incident in your teaching when you disagreed with a student on an issue, what happened and how was it resolved?

— We had strong disagreement with some student — since I was in a boys' school — they rejected the abstinence message. I gave info & leave them to make informed life choices. I tell pupils it's ok to disagree — we can debate.

11. Should teachers transmit their personal values in teaching or let pupils identify and clarify their own?

As a Christian that's who I am. I have been told to leave my faith at home. Can't do that! It's who I am. Method of delivery is one of informed consent. Focus is to make disciple of all people. I'm a Christian b4 a teacher. Values can be shared in an appropriate manner → considering age of pupil. Teachers cannot operate without values — were people!

Section 2

Christian beliefs

12. Did you have a Christian upbringing? If not, how did you come to faith? Tell me your story.

— Yes ↑ Grew up in Dutch Reformed Church — Conservative. Emphasis on God's wrath. Had good scriptural background but was lacking theologically. Good friend churched me @ 19 to Church. Responded.

13. How would you describe your early experiences of Christian faith e.g. Sunday school, youth meetings, Camp, Vacation Bible School, family prayers etc?

Family dinners; — not Routine. Went to a charismatic cathedral of 1,200 seats, powerful place, youth conferences packed out on friday nights. Heavily charismatic like being slain in the Spirit → I question some of this manifestation. I find this conflicting.

[left margin notes, partly illegible:]
not pregnant with age after bankruptcy no support for Church fund. Still had faith but not across but not of God.

275

14. Please describe your current Christian beliefs/denomination (evangelical, Pentecostal etc) and further explain your present involvement in any church/religious activities or ministries.

[margin note: In the past @ Church led Commcel... prayer... the past to good... who invited to preach over but declined bury @ work for...]

[answer: → not at the moment.]

Very Conservative in my beliefs. I can see the good in all denominations. I attended a Catholic for 9 months. Closest now to Salvation army. All Church should make disciples

15. Would you consider your understanding of the Bible to be fixed or opened to different interpretations, contexts or situations? — Somewhere in between. Some things are direct, instruction - hence unchangeable. But some things / parts are contextual eg women in Ministry

16. In your teaching, a student asks you to share your Christian belief position on a controversial issue; describe your approach and possible response.

— My approach now is different from 2 years ago. Make it clear it's my view! phrased respectfully & does it cause offence - This should happen! Now I would tell them that I could be Sacked

17. Please tell me how your Christian beliefs have developed or even changed over time. — When we were in Paraguay or b4 parents were right-winged, racist. I adopted these. But Selling in Paraguay I had to adopt to sell cakes - I had long conversations with a black mom; started to accept people. Now I question upbringing; values; Accepting people how they think - Being respectful

18. What additionally can you add that would help me better understand how you interpret and apply the Bible to life's complex and divisive issues.

Homo Sexuality & gay marriage - Bible condemns this, However,

Section 3:

PSHE Teaching

19. Can you outline your experiences of being taught PSHE (or its equivalent e.g. Life Skills or Moral Education) in school – (e.g. Non-specialists, PSHE Certified, discrete or integrated lessons, form time, Focus days? Others?).

Didn't have a lesson on PSHE. We had Bible study - waste of time (specific Bible Stories). Moral education happened in Context as things occured in Class. One focus day but not improving

20. Please share with me your journey to becoming a PSHE teacher – tell me your story and include your teaching date started, context (e.g. type of school, grade levels, position in dept, delivery strategy e.g. discrete, integrated lessons form time, specialists, focus days etc?) — *2nd yr of teaching in S Africa*

I taught "Life Orientation" as a compulsory subject eg Personal hygiene. Spent time also on SRE, Mental Health (Stigmatised). I had freedom to choose topics as appropriate. Here I had gap in time table. Use text book. Discrete lessons. Ignored text book & use my resources.

21. How would you describe the personal qualities and perceptions held by others as necessary to be a PSHE teacher? → *Empathy, to understand students (seeing them regularly makes this a problem) — Some topics are sensitive thus easier to offend & affect them. ability to lead sensitively with students you dont know well. Said lack of respect for the subject (save for RE) See it as a waste of time. But PSHE etc can be relevant/applicable to history etc applicable skills*

22. To what extent, if at all would you say that your Christian beliefs and personal values play a part in your professional practice? ⟵

After incident last year. I try to make no connection. I was in classroom 3 boys came to see me in Gay marriage — I told pupils that scripture condemns it. I explained scenarios & laws/EU etc — Pupils discussed this (one was gay) on line. Was gagged & threatened with dismissal. Had to choose to keep beliefs to self.

PART TWO – Specific Research Questions Underpinning Themes

Section 4

Research Question 1: "Why do Christian PSHE teachers identify sensitive and controversial issues as such?"

Theme: Identifying and Defining Sensitive and Controversial Issues

23. Please explain how your PSHE topics are selected.

- Text book given to work through
- In some case I ignored it because text book was boring etc

24. How would you define a sensitive issue? Please share some specific examples of such topics or issues in your teaching. → *Any issue that may bring or imply discomfort of mental Health of if a parent or pupil is affected;*

→ *Immigration; multiculturalism, Stereotypes racism SRE;*

25. What makes an issue controversial? Please share some topics/issues you would consider to be controversial (divisive, debatable or contestable).

No issue is inherently controversial but having a view that different from the norms of society will forge its controversial eg gay marriage. Immigration

26. Why do you identify these as such and what might be some implications in your teaching for doing so?

If pupil has personal experience or we need to know about it?

— *Sensitivity required as pupil*
— *Scope for different views obvious — liberal society takes presidence*
→ *Pupil knowledge / background / skipping a topic if it would cause a problem 'avoid' it.*

27. Who should deliver these topics to pupils: home, school, government, others?

all the above; Primary school is Key. Home must always carry primary responsibilities. Secondary education important since not all parent do. Parents breed perpetuate, intolerant views so school could give critical thinking for informed life choices

Research Question 2:
"What issues and tensions do they identify when teaching sensitive and controversial issues?"

Theme: Professional and personal identity: Identifying Issues and Tensions

28. Can you identify and share a story that highlights some issues and tensions in your teaching associated with these issues?

A students mom was severely ill with mental health, so I use a julia vested of text book. I moved away from the emic sensitive to be particular students looking @ other forms of mental health; not only depression. Donie and the topic not a vered

29. If applicable, can you share an incident or story of how you struggled with issues of conscience and controversy in your teaching? — *I came into teaching for a Vocation now I do it to collect a cheque to support family. I've no affinity for teaching. I'd leave it now. — Incident of gay marriage with student — carefully phrased but student, the gay student too sensitive.*

30. What are your views on Christian PSHE teachers sharing their personal beliefs in their teaching? *It should happen; but in current environment of secularism it's a matter of time will be taken away → future concerns verses providing for family soon; will only be delivering your terms → propaganda*

31. Is there a tension/conflict for you teaching these issues: Personally, professionally or in your faith? — *There was for me. I was understanding that My views/beliefs were were not generally those of society; so I've always been careful. Because a faith view is readily dismissed. I enjoyed the challenge of talking with those who disagreed with me.*

32. What specifically are the issues causing such conflict? (for example)

   a. fear of professional misconduct ✓✓ *but I disagreed with the threat.*

   b. fear of indoctrinating or evangelising ✗ *but I entered education to evangelise covertly* ✗

   c. exercising undue influence ✗

   d. personal conviction ✓

   e. breaking the law ✗

   f. untrue to the faith ✓✓ *by being quiet. But I can do this or be sacked, but need money.*

   g. Other_____ Please specify _____

   _____

   _____

   _____

   _____

33. Would you say that your personal values and Christian beliefs have or could potentially influence your teaching of these topics? How?

They did; This brought me into teaching.

Question 3

"How do they manage (cope or deal with) the personal, professional challenges arising from teaching these issues?"

Theme: Managing personal, Conscience and Professional Issues

34. Would you kindly explain the strategies you use to manage or deal with the challenges (Personally, professionally, faith tensions) arising from teaching these issues. (eg Metaphors, unfinished play, Devil's advocate, evade or avoid questions/topics, role play, DVDs, respectful discussions, Guest speakers), neutrality , courageous restraints approach, etc

→ _Use Devil's advocate to generate discussion to engender Critical Thinking_
→ _Tweaked some topics to address context of students' Would have used guest speakers_

35. Why do you adopt these strategies?

— to avoid hurt, discomfort.
— to generate discuss
Encourage critical

36. Should your personal values and Biblical beliefs then inform your teaching, If so what strategies get this done without undue influence or even indoctrination?

Teacher should be open about things
— Can say these are my personal values — I share that I am Christian eg on gay marriage, you can be accused at any time. I make it very clear my view; decide on how to deliver base on my audience are appropriate.

37. Would you see sharing your faith in the classroom as evangelising or indoctrinating pupils?

— Depends how it's done. If I preach @ pupils, If they ask a ques do; and I answer them honestly & respectfully then there's no issue faith issues should not be tabooed

Research Question 4

Theme: Connection between Christian Beliefs and Teaching approaches

"What relationship or connection exists between their Christian beliefs and the approaches employed in teaching these topics/issues?"

38. What association or connection would you say exists between your personal values, Christian beliefs and the approaches you employ in teaching issues of a sensitive and controversial nature? *As a Christian it dictates who I am & How I feel. Do it is love (love comes from faith) Doing it sensitively stems from faith. So I don't leave faith @ home→*

39. Does your Christian faith play a part in the strategy you use in your delivery of the topics? Please explain giving examples.
Yes, Eg I love willingness to go extra mile to things for others even if its not part part of professional duties eg being available all times. My faith work! faith led me to do this.

40. Should your Christian faith then be included in your professional life or be compartmentalised and remain outside the classroom as a private entity?
I don't think its possible, faith is not a Sunday morning think; its not like one wing a bike to work & pray & car driving ! one who ... that is No Christian !

41. Would you consider secular worldviews appropriate to inform teaching sensitive and controversial topics? *Is there is no such view a neutral. Atheism is a Religious view. No one can prove non-existence of God, so its a world view. Atheist is seen as intellectual & critical thinking person but Christian is demonised. I stopped ... service for that reason!*

42. Can your personal faith, professional identity and practice be integrated?
They should be personal faith is part of personal identity & should not be separated I think its a amongt climate.

43. How would you describe your perception of teaching? ... as a vocation, ministry or calling or as a professional career/job? What motives you to continue teaching?
Depends. If I'm allowed to be who I Am, including as a Christian — its a ministry. If not then, I see it as a job. — It pays the bill.

Research Question 5:

Theme: Wider context and Implications

Question: "What are the macro-political implications for Christian beliefs and professional identity and practice?"

281

Government Policies, Documents and Statutory Guidelines (Equalities Act for Schools 2010) regarding tolerance, equality, non-judgementalism and non-discrimination are relevant in delivering sensitive and controversial PSHE topics e.g. Sex education;

44. Would you consider these to be compatible with a faith position? ....can these and your faith co-exist or be interwoven in a way which satisfies both?

Depends how honest they are. Is freedom of religion, speech, tolerance applying to all including Christians. Does tolerance include talking about and non prejudicelism means not rejecting people we disagree with / if I disagree. It's not the document itself its the interpretation & implementation.

45. Would you say that your personal experiences as a Christian PSHE teacher conflict or complement these policies, laws? What are some Implications?

— My experience conflict with them because they are not equally enforced. Not used for tools for discussion but used to shut opposing views into silence.

46. (In today's society), would you say that a faith position (in professional life) is marginalised (i.e. denied attention, influence or power) and how could this be addressed? *Completely agree — positions of faith / people of faith shunned by dominant faith — Rethink of "tolerance". What kind of society would be in order. Can faith really be left behind but home.*

① How significant a person's faith is to them ② people are simply discouraged from behaving in any of the promote of the frustrated. be great. marginalised files become angry — become a problem eg prophethood.

47. What would you consider to be some wider implications for Christian believing and professional identity and practice across other disciplines and careers? (e.g. in Medicine/health care, Politics, Law, Hospitality, Science, Government agencies). *— Christians are being put not positions of living our faith & professional right. & being equitably treated. Britain' has ? less respecting human Rights — leading to people being miserable, conflict. God's laws b4 man's laws.*

48. How might policies, practices and procedures across subjects, jobs, fields or disciplines be influenced by you simply sharing your story on these issues? (or what might be the significance of your story?) *— Impact depends on who reads what I write & are they willing to take my analysis of these stories. How will my readers hear? Will they affect changes? Would be disposed of in UK policy - makers etc make changes in favour of christian teachers eg value of human Rights, freedom of conscience, tolerance, religion & speech. → I would like to 'see people' being allowed to be who they are. In teaching people who disagree are*

...te person is marginalized. Students should learn from teacher not because of impeccable methodology but [because] an intellectual person who is respected. We need [teachers] [to be?] into teachers — — — !,

49. In conclusion, what is your overall stance regarding the place of personal values and Christian beliefs in the professional sphere; that is to say, Christian believing in any secular context?

Personal faith is part of who you are. Of child always be apparent in dealing with others but @ work professional [job] needs to be done. But as [they] can be [overcome] as one then good! Added values to content is good! not that I convert them to Christianity but values of integrity, care, respect.

50. Is there anything else you would like to add?

As above ,

Conclusion: (Summarize, Next course of action, Acknowledgements)

Well, thank you so much for taking the time from your extremely busy schedule to take part in this interview. I appreciate it. The next step will be for me to transcribe your story and then to meet up with you briefly to give you an opportunity to check and validate that what I have recorded accurately represents your views, comments and story. Ethical procedures are in place to protect your anonymity and ensure confidentiality.

AUDIO RECORDING

Please indicate by circling *Yes or No* to indicate your preference:

I would like to have a CD audio copy of this interview sent to me   (Yes/No)

I would like a paper copy of my transcript of this interview   (Yes/No)

Thank you,

April 11, 2018.

Dear Adele,

Good day.

I hope you are well. Thanks again for offering to review your transcript and anonymising it for me prior to final submission and ultimately publication.

Please take some time to ensure that all identifiable markers including names, dates, places etc. are removed and feel free to change any other thing you are either not happy with or that would jeopardise your anonymity of confidentiality. My examiners have asked that a copy of the transcript be included in the appendix. This means that a copy of your transcript will be included in the final thesis submission, a copy of which will be in the university library and online as well.

I know this is quite a demand on your time so as agreed, we could aim for on or before May 30, 2018 return. Should you need more time, then please feel free to let me know.

Thanks again for participating in my research project.

Kind regards,

P.O'Connor

Phillip O'Connor

Canterbury
Christ Church
University

TRANSCRIPT

PART ONE

Pseudonym: 'Adele'   Remarks: Interview done – Nov 21; transcribed Jan 9

Place of Interview: Adele's residence   Code: F/L   Date: Nov 21.

SECTION ONE: PERSONAL ASPECTS

PO:

1. ***Please construct a timeline of the key events in your life***

(Time-line information could include: date and place of birth; family background, parents', extended family and siblings' info (e.g. occupation, character, interests etc); Childhood experiences, community, educational experiences and achievements, occupation – work history, positions, marital status and family life, dates and location, other interests and pursuits; future ambitions and aspirations

(Goodson and Sikes, 2001, p30)

Adele: I was born abroad, my dad was in the army and I was born in a military hospital in 1972. My mum and dad are still together. They are both Christians and have been for their adult lives. I also have a brother and sister, 2 years younger than

me. They have children themselves, so my family now all live in the south east of England in various places and we are very close as a family. So, as I said, my dad was in the army an officer in the army. My mum has always been a teacher. She went into the specialism of dyslexia and special needs and held a deputy head post in a special needs secondary school. This is the area that they lived in when my dad retired from the army and they lived there for a good number of years. They have now moved to an area where they had lived before – they ended up going back to their roots and seeing that as their calling from God to be there. They are very hospitable and welcoming to all, especially those who find themselves here from different countries for training. So, I went to boarding school when I was 7 and my brother and sister followed 2 years after me and so I just went to 2 schools when I was younger: prep school until I was 13 and then my secondary school. I stayed there until 18 and gained GCSE and A level qualifications, left school when I was 18.My dad at the time was stationed abroad so I decided to take a gap year;I was going to go straight into university but it was too good an opportunity to miss, so I worked there as the sub editor for the Forces magazine My mum and dad in the meantime got called back to the UK so I stayed with a family friend; while I was there, that was where I met (name removed) my now (husband) and started going out with him. I came back to the UK to start teacher training …and I did a 4 year course in French as my degree gaining qualified teacher status. I spent my third year in Franceat teacher training college, teaching there. So, graduated and got married in the same yea (Both laughed) yes, (name removed) my husband was in the army as well

PO: Wow, I didn't know that

Adele: yes, (Husband) was in the Army as well. We got our first posting in Kent that was the only reason why we move to Kent. I got my first job locally, so stayed, in…(inaudible) and (Husband) was based locally too. We spent the first part of our married life with him being in the services…(with him being away quite a lot and me being at school, we were thinking of starting a family); he decided at that time that he wanted to leave the army and… not be away from his family as he was, so we then

took the decision that he would retire from the army and we would move to where we live now and I would be close to school and he could get a job, which he did

PO: Mm, wow,

Adele: should I carry on? My life could carry on forever! (Laughing).

PO: Ok, thanks, let's pop down to the other question

2. What would you consider the most significant event/s in your life?

Adele: Oh goodness gracious me!! I think going to boarding school was a massive event to me, I absolutely loved boarding school. People cannot believe that I went there from 7. For my parents I know it was hard but a decision to make and but it was the best decision

PO: Why would you say that?

Adele: erm, it was hard for them to make that decision because it meant that I was away from them but from my point of view and from their point of view, we had consistent educational friends because we had a consistent home. I have lived in 21 houses in my life! Laughing, so from that point of view it just gave us the stability that we needed and it also meant that (name siblings) my brother and sister were always with me while we were at school. So, I think that those were the big things. Another significant event, I think…well I don't think! My baptism was a significant event more so because I was brought up in a Christian home; I always knew what it meant to have God around but it was just a massive event for me because it was about my personal faith whereas before, I kind of lived everyone else's faith…(…) I was confirmed initially because I knew it was the right thing to do and we got married in church because we knew it was the right thing to do. During my years at Uni I really wasn't walking closely with God, I knew he was still there but I wasn't really walking that closely with him, so when I got married and when I had (daughter – name removed) that was very significant for me. I had a very difficult pregnancy and …I was drugged up to the eye balls with pain relief… I remember my mummy saying that daddy kept people at church and they are praying and praying and …the

287

decision was that I would have a caesarean section as it was becoming difficult for me and the baby. I then, in that half an hour gave birth naturally, so yeah that was a MASSIVELY significant thing because for me that was God's hand on my life bringing me back to Him and it was then not long after that, that I got baptised because I have good Christian friends around me who were sort of challenging me and saying 'you should be…you must!' and then it became important as my personal faith and that's been a massive change for me, you know and the significance is that I would never walk away from that; if you like,

Having (daughter – name removed) and (son – name removed) are massively significant events in our lives and lots of things which were….like I became an assistant Head; you know, things like that...big events,

PO: So how would you ….

Childhood Context

3. ***How would you describe the influence your parents/guardians had on you and any particular lessons you have learnt from your upbringing? What particular lessons you have learnt from***…

Adele: My parents have been instrumental. They are a massive influence in all of our lives, not just mine – the kids' lives, (husband's) life you know, it has been amazing really. Of course, the Christian background and the way that we were brought up in a Christian way, introducing us to God…instead of shying away from their faith. They have always been about standing up for their faith but they are not say …Christian parents who shy away from the world, so they are a very good witness, hard workers, both being in education in different ways – my dad being in the army and my mum in teaching, so I have been brought up in quite a military/education kind of Christian family and that's been…my grand dad was in the army my (10.55 secs) my other granny was a teacher, we had quite a military/education kind of background they basically taught me right from wrong, independence skills, hospitality, opening up my home to people and …a whole host of things…very level headed, very good at seeing both sides of things and very good listeners; my dad especially, my mom

can be a bit more like me…very vocal; but my dad is a very good listener. He would listen, he is a good reflector and both involved in lots of charity work and giving of their time, lots of…so they are a massive influence.

PO: But then what then would you say if the ….
   4. *…. central theme would you say runs throughout your story?*

Adele: I think stability is a central theme, I would also (and I don't know if this is a good thing or not) have an independent streak as a person and you know, perseverance and getting on with things and you know we're not here to sit around doing nothing…a sense of purpose I guess.

PO: Ok, thank you that's good..erm so what are…
   5. *What are some core principles, standards or morals that have guided your life?*

Adele: obviously I've got my Christian faith, I live my life very much I hope as God intended it to be I probably get it wrong a million times (laughing) but obviously I've got the biblical principles and core values upon which I base my life. My biggest one is to just love others and try to reach out to people and remember people and talk to people and listen and be there for people, I think those are big things for me

PO: Mmm

Adele: Giving people the time even when I am busy myself; I don't want to sound…but I like to put others before me

PO: Yes.

Adele: It's something that I think is important and to be trying to live my life as I feel God is prompting me to do…to act on what I would consider to be the prompting of the Holy Spirit to be guided by that spiritual element in my life and …to stand up for what I believe is the right thing while still hearing what other people have to say. I'm not a condemner. I might not like some of the things that people do but it's not about that, it's more about people

PO: Without being judgemental…

Adele: I'm sure I can be judgemental at times and I can get righteously angry about stuff. It comes from a place of hope, it's the things that I am cross about rather than the person, yeah

PO: Brilliant! So future aspirations then?
   6. How would you describe your future aspirations?

Adele: Oh my Gosh!! Laughing. I am very keen to become a deputy head from my point of view just career-wise; I am an assistant head at the moment and I think that for me…my head teacher thinks that I should just go directly for a headship, I'm not entirely sure that's where I feel I'm at the moment. I feel very led in education, for me it's incredibly important. For me it will make a massive difference as we all know the path of education is a tough one. It sometimes goes against everything that we believe is the right thing to do. There are all the targets and administration and all the kind of impersonal stuff of education which as educators we find very hard to deal with but I feel that I am somebody that can find a balance in both of those things and keep it all in perspective really. As a mother my aspirations would be just to see my kids grow up and become baptised themselves, have their own faith which they already have to a degree but to continue that into their lives and one day I hope maybe some grandchildren (Both laughed) who knows? Something like that, but for me I find my biggest aspiration…is finding my place within the field of education. I don't at the moment feel the pull towards anything else. There are times when I feel like I could use my skills in less deprived areas of the world that does always sit at the back of my mind. I feel I have a lot of good, solid and practical stuff that I could take out into the world…it does sit at the back of my mind but it would be good if (husband) and I could do something together but we are not in that place at the moment to be doing that practically at this time of life but maybe when I retire…I am very interested in charity work and you know, just giving of me…but that's beyond my career in some respects

PO: I guess (16.40 secs) some aspects of your career at the moment involves that
Adele: yes, but at the moment it's not something I can give my whole to…

PO: mm, so describing the process

Personal values

7. *How would you describe the process leading to you adopting your core values of education and life in general? You did mentioned your upbringing…*

Adele: sure that has had a monumental effect, I am just keen with my own children that they just don't see teaching as the only career path…not that my mum and dad did that to me but I have obviously got that within me and I was pulled towards that. If I hadn't gone into education, I would have gone into the army. At one point I was very poised to go into the army and teaching and doing foreign languages there. Both those things are very inherent in me.

PO: So the process leading to…

Adele: yes, the process leading to…obviously my upbringing and having exposure to Jesus, the bible, church very much from a young age whether my faith was personal or not my core values were very much expected in my family whether or not they were optional extras, so in that sense, education was always important in our family. From that point of view we were expected to work hard; none of us are the brains of Britain the three of us, but we have all worked hard and we were all good students, but none of us were A star students. But we know how important education is so I suppose then for me I felt pulled into being a teacher…I mean I was a teacher from when I was 4, I used to have my brother and sister who used to be in 'my class' most of the time in my bedroom 'Do these sums!' then they had to (Both laughed) bring them in to me and I would mark them. Bless their little hearts, it was a big class because I had them both there; so it's always been very inherent and from a Christian point of view I have taken that on to be my own if you like

PO: Thank you, so would you say…

8. *Would you say that your values have changed over time? If so, how and why?*

Adele: (18.43) Yes, I would say there was a time when I had a real wilderness point/ time, a time of transition; but I think it was a part of having a faith that I was brought up with. I often talk about this with my home group. I needed to have a faith that was my own so I had to go through that to a point where, you know, I had to think well I can do this. I do have an independent spirit so there is that element of me…I don't really need all of this and it wasn't really important to me

PO: Hmm

Adele: and in that time I met (husband) you know and I wouldn't be without him; to be fair, he is not a Christian. My values did change though; well did my values change? I don't know, my faith was fair but very varied; I don't know that my values have ever changed. I still live my life in a right way, whatever that is, but I don't think I was ever a 'bad' girl but maybe some of the priorities I now have in my life weren't there when I was in that sort of 'wilderness patch' so I would say now that my values are strong but they are strongly based on my Christian faith. I own them very strongly, I believe in them. So, I would say they are much stronger now, they have always been there, they are just a stronger version now because they are mine and not somebody else's

PO: Mmm, that's important. I had a pastor's son when I was in Cayman and…he re-baptized as a teenager when at university, person shocked then but he explained saying, 'I was baptised earlier for my parents now this is for me!'

Adele: Well, that would be my testimony totally because I was confirmed which is the church of England equivalent and I did that because I felt that I needed to then I got baptised because I wanted to

PO: You did that for you, that's important

Adele: Yes

PO: Ok, getting a bit specific in your teaching, can you …

9. *Can you identify and outline a situation in your teaching when you were inwardly conflicted about the place of your personal values (moral, standards or principles)?*

Adele: Yeah, its interesting (thinking) I know a couple, it's not PSHE, it's Science.. The curriculum has changed to include the teaching of evolution and while I am happy to teach it as a theory and I make that very, very specific there is obviously that side of me that says 'God created the earth' but I'm ok with that because I can understand that it's scientists trying to explain the amazing creation that God has created…that for me is not too much of a conflict but it's something that I have to think about how am I going to teach so that I am not putting across (my views) where as other people may not have that conflict, they might just teach it as it is

PO: *You mean teach it as evidence based..*

Adele: yeah, whereas I spend a lot of time when teaching…and I'm very conscious about some in my class. I had a lot of chats with their mum because they are Christians and all the children grew up…with certain Christian values and beliefs and I knew that that would be an issue with the evolution so I phoned home…but it's all absolutely fine, we have a good relationship because it important that from the outset they know that I have Christian faith and even though they may think that my Christian faith is a little bit liberal (smile and chuckle) erm the bottom line is that I have a love for the same God you have and I have been open with them. I think it helps because the other day I spoke with their mom and she was concerned that the evolution aspect was against what they believed as part of their faith and it was upsetting them.

PO: wow!

Adele..I always say that this is one idea about creation, the bible would say this and I put a lot in which is possibly more than other teachers would do which is what I think is as a Christian and she said to me 'I know you have been doing that because the boys have been coming back and telling me that which I'm really grateful for but I'm struggling with it.' So I asked her 'would it be ok if I sat the boys down and tell them about my faith and how I have to teach this as part of the national curriculum but I have to teach it from this point of view? She said that would be perfectly helpful so I had to ask my Head's permission if I could and she said that she as fine with that as long as mom had given permission. And so I sat down with the boys and I spoke honestly about my faith and I said, 'I like you believe in creation, I believe that God created the world but in the same way that I believe that I have to understand that

other people will try and explain their understandings of it' and I had a long chat with the boys explaining that while I was doing things in class I was not asking them to believe it…you put yourself in the role of the scientist and say 'what would they think?' – role play it! How do they understand it…so that is something quite recent, whether it compromises my personal values I am not entirely sure…because I don't feel it has a massive impact to be fair, there is nothing I have ever felt that I have not been able to speak out on, and I have always been in an environment where I have been outspoken about my faith and I think that people have been quite respectful of that.I am conscious that in a state education system I have to be careful of how much of that I share but but I don't think that I have been too inwardly conflicted about a lot of things, this is the biggest one from a curriculum point of view that I had to teach because I felt it needs a balance in how I was going to teach it, whereas others wouldn't. I was able to explain to another teacher why it's important to give both sides and why I felt strongly about this. So, they became more empathetic , because you can't teach these things without questioning them…you can't do that!

PO: So if I move on to the other one, you say there is an incident….

> 10. **Please share an incident in your teaching when you disagreed with a student on an issue, what happened and how was it resolved?**

Adele: I don't think at primary you get too much of this, I think you do more at secondary to be fair. We had an incident in PSHE which is a good example. We were doing some work on drugs and alcohol education with the older children which is part of the curriculum and interestingly I put up 6 pictures on the board of people who for whatever reason don't drink and one of the picture was a Muslim man which was very clear from what he was wearing. I work in a school where the parents often have quite traditional viewpoints and at the time it was near elections with a lot of UKIP kind of stuff you know …ethnic minority etc., you could just see some of the kind of things at home coming through in the children and one of the students referring to the Muslim picture said that 'he looks dodgy!' which upset one of my Muslim children in the class and I had to deal with that…I had to do a whole other lesson on prejudice

PO: wow…

Adele: So, I suppose in that respect, I resolved it. I was not happy with the initial attitude it's about respect for all, I've never had that attitude to anybody. Morally and spiritually I was fuming about it and of course the other day I had to speak to my head teacher about it and we agreed together, and I said I want to take the lead in addressing this and I asked the girl who is a Muslim, saying 'I know this would be far more powerful if comes from you than if it comes from me. Would you be brave enough to stand up in front of the class and say why that upset you?' and she was absolutely brilliant – she got tearful and really upset…she just said basically, 'don't tar us all with the same brush!'

PO: mm

Adele: '…..we are not all dodgy because we have a different faith' it had a massive impact on the children and it never happened again after that.

PO: It's a good story, I like that

Adele: Laughing

PO: So after what you have said to me then, would you say that..,

   11. **Should teachers transmit their personal values in teaching or let pupils identify and clarify their own?**

Adele: I think that with the evolution thing you should give a balanced view. I will share about my faith if I think I felt it was appropriate. So if I am teaching an RE lesson and erm, and I have personal experience of something that I felt the children would benefit from hearing because it enhances what we are doing, then I would say to the children, erm. I have often shared about my own life with the children about situations in my own life in PSHE…I think it is important to clarify that it is YOUR personal values

PO: mm, mm

Adele: and that they have a choice, that this is an aspect or a viewpoint to give another viewpoint and to give them an opportunity to express their viewpoints. I don't think it is right to go down a road that I think should be a parental role, of values and bringing children up. It's a partnership of home and education, its family life, it's society. Everybody has got a part to play and we are all part of that. It's about sharing a variety of view-points. I don't think there is anything wrong personally in

stating your own view point as long as it's balanced. So for the evolution one, I think it's really important and I said in all my planning sessions that it's important that the other point of view is presented, whether or not I know that there are children in my class who are Christians (or not) it doesn't matter; whether we as teachers are Christians or not, I think that both sides should be presented.

PO: that's amazing, that's good! Alright, we have looked at your personal values and now we are going to pop down to another theme of Christian beliefs, some of these you have answered already…

Adele (laughing), well you know me...I will just talk around most things!!

Section 2

Christian beliefs

12. *Did you have a Christian upbringing? If not, how did you come to faith? Tell me your story.*

PO: You did have a Christian upbringing you said, anything else you want to add to that? (31.13 secs)..erm, personalising your faith you did say and personal conviction when you came of age?

Adele: sure, sure

PO:

13. *How would you describe your early experiences of Christian faith e.g. Sunday school, youth meetings, Camp, Vacation Bible School, family prayers etc?*

Adele: what gave me such a good balanced view of Christian faith was that my mum and dad have lived in so many places so we have always worshipped in the local church. So whatever that church is, whether a fairly formal garrison church or whether a fairly charismatic church, we have always gone to church where we lived and I think that's really important.

I have been to Sunday school and youth groups; obviously when I was at boarding school we had chapel every day. My mum and dad chose schools that were based

on a Christian foundation and so I have always that and Christian union, well I was a little bit in and out of my faith but I have definitely been to a lot of Christian union. I have not been to big things like 'Soul Survivor' but we have been a family that prays together, we are not a family that prays together every day, wouldn't say and (laughing) we have been away from home but I would say when we are together we often pray together when I am with mom and dad, which I love, even now..

PO: Wow!

Adele: you know, if there is something that's going on we would just sit down and pray about it eg the children and so on. I have to say that I don't pray as much with my own children. They do a lot of praying with their peer group and they find that a lot easier, we do pray but not all the time, we won't sit with them every day and pray

PO: That's good. Ok moving on..

14. **Please describe your current Christian beliefs/denomination (evangelical, Pentecostal etc) and further explain your present involvement in any church/religious activities or ministries.**

Adele: ok, alright, so I do go to a Baptist church but I wouldn't say that I have a denomination as such. I am at this church because I believe that's what God wants me to do, it doesn't matter what kind of church it is so I don't know…if I were to say…evangelical. So I guess if you want to put me in a box but I'm not really a box person when it comes to church; I'm happy in any church situation.

Involvement: at my own church I am involved in …I was on the leadership team but I am just having some time out at the moment, and so I do help run the crèche, welcome team and I lead my own small group once a week… and I do support my children (laughing) but youth ministry is not my thing!

PO: Good and how can you forget music and hospitality of course.

Adele: Right, right

PO:

15. **Would you consider your understanding of the Bible to be fixed or opened to different interpretations, contextual, relativistic or this is the word of God abide by it, what would you say?**

Adele: That's a really good question! It's interesting. I am very much open to hearing different interpretations but I am somebody that feels that the Holy Spirit leads and convicts, so I will wrestle with things. I am not one to just accept things but I'm very happy to sit in a church service and listen to what is being said but I would be sitting there thinking…you know 'Lord, is this your word?' I don't get it right all the time – I do seem to have in my spirit, what I call my 'peace and my not peace' (chuckle) and I believe that's the Holy Spirit putting His seal of approval or not on something. So I'm not absolutely black and white when it comes to the Bible but there are certain principles that I feel very strongly about; things like the emotive things like, you know, can you be a gay Christian? Should we be allowing gay marriage? All these things are difficult to wrestle with …and even the Christian faith within the world can be so open to flow with public perception. So, I think it's a tough time to be a Christian…well it's never easy but, I very much try and wrestle with many things because I believe that the Enemy is very subtly trying to confuse and cause chaos but not in a way that is very open so that people in the end don't know what they are basing their belief on anymore. It can be the latest quote on face book and you know, 'that's good!' (chuckle) that's not what it's all about. I do believe in things being in the Bible and being firmly rooted in Scripture but obviously humans and any human will add their interpretation. But it is 'does that feel peaceful for me?' you know as an interpretation that's important.

PO: So you are teaching then and …

16. *In your teaching, a student asks you to share your Christian belief position on a controversial issue; describe your approach and possible response.*

Adele: So I will always start with, 'this is my viewpoint' and I will always clarify why it is; I won't ever say 'this is what you should believe' I think that is really important to say that everybody has to come to their own place of whatever it is- whether believing in something and not believing in something and having an opinion or not in something. So, I will always come from that point of view 'this is what I believe or

come to a conclusion on BECAUSE…der der der der der' and hopefully that will open up some kind of discussion point

PO: How do students normally respond to that approach would they press for a specific…?

Adele: That's interesting! It was the other day one of mine said to me when I was teaching evolution, 'So what do you believe' that was exactly what he said…so I said 'That's fair, I am a Christian, I go to church and understand where the Bible is coming from on the issue' and then I talk about faith. I talk about what faith is, according to how I understand it and what scientists are trying to prove you know, beyond any doubt, and that in itself will open up a debate, but I will never say to children 'this is what the answer it' because I just don't think it is helpful. I think it is important to give, always give, as much information and then state what you believe

PO: Where you are now compared to where you were in terms of your Christian beliefs,

Adele: mm, mm

PO: How would you say this has developed…

17. Please tell me how your Christian beliefs have developed or even changed over time.

Adele: well I would say, I am now much more assured of who I am and what I believe, …I used to regurgitate what other people believed and now you know, I go to a small group every week, I read the Bible, I study and I'm not saying that I am any great theologian, but what I am assured of now is that my faith is what I believe now rather than having the ability to just repeat the latest fad, bible verse or whatever or just trying to put that in a context for the sake of trying to argue a point. Over time I have definitely found out that you cannot be convincing to other people if you are just trying to regurgitate the latest stuff (laughing). A talk at church on the issue of euthanasia was addressed; she said if you don't know what you are talking about as a Christian, you can't argue the case! You know, you can't even start to share your faith. You know, she went on to ask what euthanasia means and none of us had the right definition of what it meant! So, you think you know what something is because it is quite current in the press or it's quite this, that and the other but you

have to be very sure about where things are coming from. So I think that's how things have changed for me. I am much more assured and also, if I think I have got there and that is really important I know there will always be more for me to be able to discover, find out..

PO: Brilliant! So is there anything else ..

18. *What additionally can you add that would help me better understand how you interpret and apply the Bible to life's complex and divisive issues.*

Adele: I think I have already said most of it but it is really about…for me, just reading my Bible and just asking God two questions when I read my Bible: 'God, what are you saying to me? And 'what does this mean for me?' and I think that is the main thing..Laughing ..I'm very simple in my faith! So these are very important, so God what are you saying through this verse or two and what impact does this have on my life, what are you saying and what is to be done to be more like you and I think those very two things are very simplistic but for me have developed into something very important in moving forward…

PO: Brilliant! So moving on to your actual teaching…

Section 3:

PSHE Teaching

19. *Can you outline your experiences of being taught PSHE (or its equivalent e.g. Life Skills or Moral Education) in school – (e.g. Non-specialists, PSHE Certified, discrete or integrated lessons, form time, Focus days? Others?). (42.38 sec)*

Adele: Ok, so is this me…when I was in school?

PO: Yes

Adele: Ok, when I was in school, PSHE was taught in and through other subjects because it was a boarding school things were slightly different: a lot of PSHE came through your house parent, through you know…out of curriculum…so it's kind of unique in that circumstance. You obviously had chapel, so a lot of it came through the RE side of things. We didn't have PSHE lessons but we had RE lessons and

PSHE came into that quite a bit and we obviously had church services and chapel everyday, moral guidance and we had prayers before bedtime every night. It came in a lot of different forms because it was a different set up…you are there all the time and so it would come through talks with house mistresses and masters, stuff like that... it was a mixture

PO: So you wouldn't say that these were necessarily trained?

Adele... I think we did have teachers who were definitely trained in RE but I don't remember …(reflecting)..ever having PSHE lessons but…it was long time now! (laughing)…I'm old now!

PO: You are too young! (both laughing)

Adele: I can't remember them as PSHE lessons but we did have citizenship and things like that ….but ….we did General studies…when I did A levels, we all had to take general studies and a lot of PSHE came through that; whether they were trained PSHE teachers (44.25) or not I'm not sure.

PO: When I did my time we had a subject called Civics which was probably similar to the General studies

Adele; yeah, yeah, we definitely did that

PO: Rights….So your journey to becoming a PSHE teacher….

20. **Please share with me your journey to becoming a PSHE teacher – tell me your story and include your teaching date started, context (e.g. type of school, grade levels, position in dept, delivery strategy e.g. discrete, integrated lessons form time, specialists, focus days etc?)**

Adele: sure, yea.So PSHE is obviously not compulsory at primary school but it's good practice to do PSHE but certain elements like SRE are certainly compulsory elements… as a primary school teacher, there are various parts of your course when you are doing your qualification that are PSHE led , and training at school, we are part of the PSHE association and we have a PSHE leader at school who sets up training or is someone you can talk to about PSHE curriculum, schemes of work., We follow and we try and develop skills and age appropriate …contents and topics. So it's quite structured in that sense so in primary school you are dealing with PSHE through so many things and that's what we get the children to understand that it's not

just PSHE lesson but for example we do have our 'respect medals' and those go through everything, respecting ourselves, others and our environment

PO: Values?

Adele: yes, our values, rules, etc. there are so many elements of PSHE in things, I mean our assembly times are PSHE led with values and morals and norms and things like that. So, we do have a PSHE lesson at the moment where we are doing SRE although not necessarily a dedicated lesson as such but because we are primary school teachers and are here we can be available at any time, so I guess it can be different from secondary

PO: and guess its similar in some ways like on Fridays I have an open door policy because as PSHE teachers, studies show that students are more comfortable talking to us than their parents so…we have to be available to them

Adele: Sure, Yeah, Oh absolutely, I totally agree. (47.51) so we do a lot of different things both discreet and integrated lessons, I guess you might not do so much at secondary; I don't know, but for example I said to you earlier, if there is an issue of 'race' I would give over time to deal with that, I won't ignore it. We do react to the current things that are happening, for example if students get involved in say calling each other names on the playground then we gather the school together and talk and deal with that issue

PO: Which leads me nicely into the next issue..
   21. *How would you describe the personal qualities and perceptions held by others as necessary to be a PSHE teacher?*

Adele: well the person I work with who is the Lead teacher, which is probably the nearest you get to it. The majority of primary school teachers have that kind of openness, selflessness where they are quite willing to give up their lunch time to deal with as issue or to talk with children. I think you need to have those qualities and be able to put others before yourself.

PO: Mmm, mm

Adele: and to give up a lot of their time which a lot of teachers, maybe say in secondary schools, may not feel like it's their place to do so. I think in primary schools it's different because we do feel that we have a responsibility to the moral development of our children; not that I'm saying that in secondary you don't but its more compartmentalised maybe, whereas we might feel like we are the PSHE teachers for our class because I think in primary school, so many things do come up and the class teacher is seen as the mother or father figure a little bit like that.

But certainly in my last school …. (our PSHE lead is not quite so strong but is developing really well)….but certainly in my last school they were brilliant! They were very good at thinking of different, innovate ways of engaging the children in PSHE. Interestingly, they are not a Christian, so it was from a very good moral point of view but necessarily a faith one… (49.55)

PO: Ok, brilliant, ….

> **22. To what extent, if at all would you say that your Christian beliefs and personal values play a part in your professional practice?**

Adele; Oh massively!! Whether it's from ayou may not know half the time but I prayed before I go to school, I pray in school, I pray for certain children (with passion) and so all that kind of stuff is 'under the radar' so to speak. Interestingly because I am open with my faith, I end up with some things that others might feel they cannot deal with. I often get involved in those sort of things. Obviously the conversation I have been having with this parent and I think that having a personal faith…a Christian faith gives you a MASSIVE advantage to understand both sides, as long as you have a Christian faith that ALLOWS you to see both. I think if it's too rigid, that can be dangerous too.

PO: mm, mm

Adele: but it gives you so many perspectives on so many things… interestingly, I am spending quite a lot of time with one of my colleagues, who is very much searching and quite confused at times in themselves. So, we were planning some RE a few weeks ago and you know they were saying something about church and I said it's important that we don't teach the children that church is just about dog collar and robes and sitting in pews etc because that's not what church is like nowadays for

many people. You know, I just felt that the children need to know. And they said 'tell me ' and we spent about two hours talking about my faith…which really challenged me…like this does...it really makes you reflect on what, what do I believe, what do I stand for? They were saying 'what is your purpose in life as a Christian? (laughing) this is hard going! But that all came from a planning session because all I did was to show them things like 'Hill song Church' and things like up in London …HTB is an Anglican church and look at ….(inaudibly) and they said 'is that what your church is like?' and I said (both laughing) 'Not quite, but maybe we'll get there!' But yeah it's important...we have people who come in like our local vicar from the local church ..and the other Christian organisations that come in and do assemblies. And we have people from local community churches as well. I think that as a Christian if you are strong enough to say put your head about the (water) and say 'this is who I am and this is what I stand for' and we respect everything that goes on here I think that's important. Believe me when I say that if things compromise my faith, I will say 'no'! That is important to me. I still have someone who says 'Jesus Christ' all the time in the staffroom, bless them, I don't think he gets it! (Laughing) no problem, they are lovely (laughing) and you know that's life, I might not like it, it breaks something in me every time, but that's life!

PO: Ok, so we have kind of looked at your background in terms of your upbringing, values, faith, teaching etc. erm, to help me with the study I have formulated 5 research questions which will help me, so one if the 5 questions I am contemplating Is why….

PART TWO – Specific Research Questions Underpinning Themes
Section 4

Research Question 1: "Why do Christian PSHE teachers identify sensitive and controversial issues as such?"

Theme: Identifying and Defining Sensitive and Controversial Issues

23. *So to begin with, I would ask, how your PSHE topics are selected.*

Adele: Yeah, we do have input into …you know there are recommended topics to do and Kent recommends the topics we do and within that we do have the discretion to do whatever we feel is right for e.g. SRE. We choose which aspects of SRE and we would invite the parents in to see which aspects and videos etc. etc. and they have the right to withdraw their children if they wanted to, although they rarely do. We have one who have been withdrawn...we have a hand full, that's 3 in the school. I'm amazed, it's absolutely brilliant what the children are telling me about this year. We have changed the curriculum to make it more relevant and it was good to hear that some children were discussing aspects with their parents.

PO: Wow!

Adele: because I think it is important that they do need to do the SRE because SRE in year 6 is about puberty, changes just the changes to our bodies, and I think it's important. It's scientific more than anything else; it's about what some of the pressures are that the world would put on us…and it's amazing and I couldn't believe when she wrote in to say that the boys had discussed things…anyway (rushing) that was by-the-way!!,

So we as a school have the choice as to what we want to do and we look at it developmentally and we look at topics and also we started to bring in things that that kids have to face in the world at the moment for example …a big thing for year 6 is e-safety, sexting you know, putting inappropriate things online… inappropriate things that could endanger online... all that so we have to almost adapt our PSHE to include current issues and I think that is important to include sensitive and controversial issues. We include ones that are relevant

PO: Indeed

Adele: Not keeping PSHE for the sake of keeping it but actually…yeah

PO: The bigger ones have had to add like revenge porn ..

Adele; yea, and also radicalisation – it's these things and we also have the RE side of things too. We don't get into the sexual side of stuff but it's very grey, the PSHE side of things and there are lots of things now that children are exposed to which we they were not to before; the whole internet stuff (loud sigh!) does my head in! (both laughing)

PO: So difficult to be a parent now

Adele: Very hard!

PO: So how would you define…

> 24. *How would you define a sensitive issue? Please share some specific examples of such topics or issues in your teaching.*

Adele: Yeah sensitive issues are those that have the potential to upset either parent or children, I think that one we were talking about like the perception of what different faiths are. The misconception that just because you are a Muslim you are involved in terrorism; those kind of issues for me are sensitive issues…growing up is a sensitive issue, body image, peer pressure, who we are, how we are made for a reason and how the world wants to make us clone like….so I think those are sensitive issues. I think anything around bullying…increasingly radicalisation and pressure to conform to a particular way of thinking; less so in primary. But to be fair, it depends on where you are now; some areas are

PO: Ok, jumping on then the controversial ones…

> 25. *What makes an issue controversial? Please share some topics/issues you would consider to be controversial (divisive, debatable or contestable).*

Adele: I think the whole area of Faith and yeah…kind of, sections of society are I think increasingly divisive...divisive, especially when you are teaching in areas where…like I am, where you have a majority of one type of demographic. It's hard. It's hard for children to see other's points of view and it's hard to address that in meaningful kinds of way for them.

PO: any other topics?

Adele: I think other topics like same sex relationships and being gay, I think that can be controversial. It can be difficult at primary because they don't have the life knowledge but they can band around these words 'Oh, you're gay!'

PO: mmm

Adele: They haven't got a clue what they are saying so I think those things can be controversial and debatable, what else? Probably in my remit those would be the

biggest ones I would say (reflecting) Can I put in there SRE/ Yes SRE can be controversial like I say depending on what you are doing the parents can be very wary, so yes, SRE

PO: and all the roads leading off like contraception etc

Adele: well we are not sort of dealing with that so much but even being bombarded with sexualisation. Some parents don't want to hear about these things…the controversy lies in parents having an attitude of 'my children would never do that or they are not…because they are only 10, they are still innocent with parents but it's naive and I think that you know that's where the controversy lies, it's not only the SRE per se it's the 'they could not possibly be doing that or hearing that word' (Laughing) Oh you would be surprised!!

PO: Ok,

26. *Why do you identify these topics you have identified as such and what might be some implications in your teaching for doing so?*

Adele: I think the implication for my teaching is that teaching has to be a balance and you need to be sure of your subject knowledge and if you are not sure...like lots of the e-safety things I pass on to our e-safety lead who is in charge of e-safety, that's a niche for him; they have done a lot of computing and e-safety. So, it's important to say if you haven't got the expertise behind you to deal with it then to refer it to some who does or deal with it together as a group of teachers and come to some conclusions or something. I identified them because I think they cause division, that's why. They cause division in society. Like faith or …the lifestyle you choose to live whatever you want to call...can cause division because it is not properly understood it causes division. I think there are a lot of things that people don't really understand..

PO: So who then should deliver them?

27. *Who should deliver these topics to pupils: home, school, government, others?*

Adele: Personally, I'm not sitting on the fence here. I think it should be a combination of everybody. It should not be one area; so, I think the school should involve the

home, parents, faith groups have a massive part to play; I would like to say Christians! (laugh) People of my own personal faith should be standing up for and know what they believe and be able to communicate that well. I think communication is key, so I think it should be an element of all sorts of things. I think the school cannot pass the responsibility to parents and parents cannot pass the responsibility solely to schools, the government cannot pass the responsibility solely to schools I think we all have a moral duty to be involved and to be sure of our approach whatever that is; so if the government is setting up Sure Start centres for families then I believe that the schools should be involved in that in some way. Obviously, the parents go along to it. There should be a spiritual element involved in that as well. But in an increasingly secular driven education system, that is hardly likely but if you say who should deliver? That's what I believe. In reality most people would say the school…

PO: Mend the ills of society…

Adele: If I'm absolutely honest everything is the fault of the school and I am…(smiling) 'HOLD ON A MINUTE!!' my own children are my responsibility and I have to work in partnership with the school and if I know that they are doing something that they shouldn't be doing then I will….I will take responsibility, they are my children! They will take responsibility…

PO: That's important

Adele: But I'm not in charge!! (Laughing)

PO: that's all good. Some aspects of this you might have answered before…

Research Question 2

"What issues and tensions do they identify when teaching sensitive and controversial issues?"

Theme: Professional and personal identity: Identifying Issues and Tensions

28. *Can you identify and share a story that highlights some issues and tensions in your teaching associated with these issues?*

Adele: I do find that because they are younger, we don't have so much but as a year 6 teacher we do have some more because we are right on the cusp of transition to secondary and there is a lot of interaction with children a lot older than them and I think some of the tensions with the children is that they hear stuff and they don't understand it and they don't really know what they are talking about. You know at my children's age of Y6, 10 and 11 years old we can have a lot of tensions at school…which can create a lot of bad feeling. I talked about the incident of the alcohol one and the Muslim man and why he should not drink. And this might be relevant to this bit…as a primary school teacher, I have to be very, very able to adapt at (snapped finger), the flick of a switch. I would never have seen that coming in that lesson and I had to deal with it there and then, so I think that is quite…you have to be very sure of yourself that you don't wobble around what you believe…

PO: Yea, thinking on your feet.

Adele: exactly, because you have always got to be dealing with stuff that you cannot always foresee in a lesson like that and I tell you I had NO idea that would have come out!

PO: Wow

Adele: Laughing

PO: that's amazing to be able to think on your feet! Ok, incident or story…

> ### 29. If applicable, can you share an incident or story of how you struggled with issues of conscience and controversy in your teaching, and this really is about you personally?

Adele: I struggled… (and this is completely confidential) in my last school with my Head teacher…before that I was very fortunate to have a Christian head teacher and before that a very moral head teacher so I have never really had any problem with say the ethical side of how we were treated as a staff. We had head teachers who really looked out for us as a staff and the wellbeing of the staff. The latest head teacher couldn't do that…had no kind of empathy I have never really had any issue with my conscience and controversy in my teaching. I am who I am and I know what I believe and I have always been able to articulate that so if there is a problem, I am good at going in straight away and dealing with that but there has never really been something where I felt that, I can never really teach that. We are not at that point in

the curriculum where there is anything that controversial and we are quite factual about some things so with some things like same-sex relationships, we don't really deal with at that level, particularly

PO: Mmm, MM

Adele: but with the issues of conscience just standing up for what is right, before I left I just asked for a meeting and I just stood up and said all the things that I really felt that morally were not right in the way that leadership was dealing with stuff in the school. I made sure I went to the head myself, I had a list of things and these are things that had been said at various times. I just felt that things could then be picked up on and that the governing body heard …that side of the issues. My conscience could not leave that school without having raised those issues. Sadly they are still there.

PO: You have done your part

Adele: I have done my part, so yeah. I don't know whether that has answered the question. But as I said before I cannot say that there is anything that I really cannot teach..

PO: Or if you are teaching and in the back of your mind you are saying 'am I true to the faith in saying this'

Adele: Well that would be the evolution side of things, but if if there is ever anything like that, I would always give the faith point of view of well and I think that as long as you can do it, you can never be accused of pushing your faith…as long as you do it with the balance of the alternate view. I think if all I said when I was teaching evolution was I don't believe this, creation is the way the world was formed I can't teach this, well in some respects should I actually be teaching evolution? I don't know but as a teacher I go beyond it and say, 'this is how man is trying to explain the world and then I don't have a problem with it.

PO: Ok wow!

Adele: You see what I am saying? Because I am not saying what I believe, I am saying 'this is what mankind is trying to do to explain the amazing world we live in. This is what Christians would do to explain that and so I have always been like that,

so I would not really struggle with these things but I think I would struggle at secondary school…much more.

PO: That's honest enough (Laughing)

Adele: well, I would, because I would find it incredible hard not to be wanting to say 'this is wrong!' Laughing. I don't know how you do it! (laughing)

PO: we don't know either..

Adele: and I think for the study we might find…I don't know how many primary school teachers you have versus secondary but there is a difference…I think there is

PO: Sighed…the issues are different and the levels at which you have to deal with them as well. Interesting, interesting… Erm, you have mentioned the extent to which personal values and beliefs should be shared. Can you remind me then about them..

30. **What are your views on Christian PSHE teachers sharing their personal beliefs in their teaching?**

Adele: I think as long as they do it in conjunction with another viewpoint then I think it's fine, I don't share my Christian faith with everything that's going on, I don't think it's relevant and necessary to share it on everything. I only share it when its relevant and to be fair, I have not shared my Christian faith with the SRE we have been doing over the past few weeks beyond what I feel, what I know…when we are doing things like 'body image' I have said that we are all uniquely made. For me I know what I am saying! (Smile) laughing that means that God made us all in His own image

PO: But you leave it at that..

Adele: yes, I leave it at that, I won't say that...so I say 'sneaky' is the wrong word but what I am trying to do is to bring in my moral values and my Christian beliefs and communicating them in a way that the world…it doesn't sound like that,bringing it into…yeah…you know what I mean…

PO: yeah, I know what you mean. (Laughing) so if I look at these ways…

31. *Is there a tension/conflict for you teaching these issues: Personally, professionally or in your faith*?

Adele: erm, erm (reflecting)…to a degree…I think it is not always, but internal conflict, I am just always conscious of… what will come first is my faith when I am teaching something. That will always come in first with what I'm about to teach? I will then try to give the alternative view. But a lot of the time there is not that internal conflict, but I think that faith is about action, it's about who you are as a person and I think you can just communicate your Christian beliefs through the person you are, I don't think that you always have to be saying anything, I think just the way you talk to people…just the way you….you know…live your life and the way I use my role in teaching and learning and mentoring. I would spend my time with those pupils who need my support whether it means I have to sit at until midnight marking the books or I have to spend two hours with someone else. I think that for me, that's sharing my Christian faith, it's about putting others first, loving other people in that sense. So, I think that a lot of what I do in my practice is not overtly Christian but I think it would be who I am…I hope. And I try and avoid getting into situations where my faith is going to be compromised in the sense that I know... even in the sense of classroom gossip or staffroom gossip and things like that…I don't get involved in things like that…I mean compromise, so I think…yeah...I probably doesn't answer that question at all..?

PO:…erm,,,it does, it does, there is a lot there, there is a lot there not to worry. Erm,

32. *What specifically are the issues causing such conflict? (e.g.*

    a. *fear of professional misconduct*

    b. *fear of indoctrination*

    c. *exercising undue influence*

    d. *personal conviction*

    e. *breaking the law*

    f. *untrue to the faith*

    g. *Others___ Please specify_____*

Adele: (1.16.41 secs) so I think that fear of professional misconduct I can get around that by saying like…if there is something I am going to do I would always check first so I think in the background, at the back of my mind is that 'I must not over step the mark.'

I don't have a fear of indoctrinating or evangelising because I feel that I give a very balanced viewpoint on everything…erm, I think...I don't think equally that I exercise undue influence…that comes under that same thing as having that balance… erm, erm…personal conviction…

PO: in terms of am I being true to the faith…am I contending for the faith

Adele: I like to think as far as is possible, that I am being true to the faith as there are times possibly when you have to compromise on that…because of the things above erm, but…Oh breaking the law? (silence)….I don't know whether I break the law or not (Laughing)

PO: I think we were discussing the thing of school assembly where most schools are not having daily acts of Christian worship..

Adele: we do…so I feel that we are not breaking the law from that point of view and we do RE …true to the faith? I go back to the way I live my life and it's not necessarily about what we say but how we do things and I think you …there are times when I am probably not the greatest Christian witness in the world but the majority of the time I am! (silence) I find it very difficult to answer sorry…

PO: Very difficult, thanks…(Laughing) they are meant to be complex. Alright, so would you …

33. *Would you say that your personal values and Christian beliefs have or could potentially influence your teaching of these topics? How?*

Adele: Totally yes I would say so, I think you can't help that with how I teach something...how I teach something would be different, say how I teach evolution would be different from how a non-Christian would teach evolution but I think there are some Christians who wouldn't teach evolution like I do either and I think that some would shy away from the fact that they should give that balanced viewpoint and like I

know I will have children in my class but I will do exactly the same whether I have strong Christians in my class or not. It's important to be consistent in your approach...it's not about who you are teaching it's about what you believe, so you shouldn't be influenced by who you have in front of you but I would say…yeah..Imean the way I live my life and my moral values which are based obviously on my Christian principles, so I can't help but share those because they underpin everything…so mutual respect for one another…love for one another, you know respect for our environment are all important for our school. I find it important too teaching PSHE because if people could get their heads around it, it's based on Christian principles!

PO: Its interesting that you say that…because to me I see PSHE as an extension of youth ministry

Adele: mm, Mm! yeah and I would say exactly the same. You cannot be teaching what we teach in PSHE without having that grounding in erm, biblical teaching!

PO: It's difficult

Adele: because somewhere along the line that's where it comes from…I believe strongly! So, I don't believe it is that difficult to be who you are because it just depends on how far you take it.

PO: and perhaps your upbringing

Adele: I believe that massively!

PO: Alright…thank you for sharing that, Question 3; I want to know how Christian teachers manage or cope…

Question 3

"How do they manage (cope or deal with) the personal, professional challenges arising from teaching these issues?"

Theme: Managing personal, Conscience and Professional Issues

34. *Would you kindly explain the strategies you use to manage or deal with the challenges (Personally, professionally, faith tensions) arising from teaching these issues. (eg Metaphors, unfinished play, Devil's advocate, evade or avoid questions/topics, role play, DVDs, respectful discussions, Guest speakers), neutrality , courageous restraints approach, etc*

Adele: wow, lots of different things really. Like playing devil's advocate...like saying what would it be like if erm, erm, erm. I think that's a good thing. We do a lot of what they call circle time, getting everybody to put their point across and not necessarily out loud. We do a lot of things on post its so e.g. SRE, instead of saying 'who wants to put their hand up and ask a question?' I give everyone a post it note and they put their questions on with their names which I won't mention. If they don't have a question, they write 'I don't have a question at this time' so EVERYBODY has to write something. It's things like that so that everyone feels comfortable and it's amazing how different that kind of discussion will be! And I know that if I just sat there in from of the class saying 'we've seen the video who wants to ask some questions? They would have been mortified! Whereas I have all the questions…I had looked through them all so I was able to frame my starting questions around the majority which we have to do in the period and then we can go from there. And there are couple of questions if I was not finished I could say I will be here till a quarter to if you or your friends would like to talk or if you feel like there is anything that we haven't touched on that you would really like to talk about then…it's being very open to different ways of doing things and I do think when children feel secure in the environment they are in and they trust you as a person…

PO: Mmm, Good words..

Adele…a lot of these strategies do help bring out the discussion points, I mean we do all sorts of things, like we have guest speakers come in to come and talk to the children from different faith groups; it's not just us ..and (1.24.16 secs) so that kind of approach of not being the font of all knowledge at the front of the class, but actually saying, 'you know what? There are other avenues that we can explore. Let's bring in somebody...let's look at a website …asking children to come up here and say why that hurt you so much…let's see what we can do. Primary teachers do all sorts of things!! (laughing)

PO: Oh you are flexible! (laughing) Any reasons in particularly why…

35. Why do you adopt these strategies?

Adele: mostly to have an openness, you just need to have an environment where pupils feel secure and able to discuss things; where they feel valued; where they will be heard not just by you but by others. Our ground rules are very important…like I

said today that confidentiality is really important where children feel that they can speak and it's not going to go out to the playground in 5 mins' time with obviously the caveat that if there is anything that is of concern to me I have the right to obviously take that up further but confidentiality with the kidsis really important.

PO: Ok, those are very important reasons, so should..

36. *Should your personal values and Biblical beliefs then inform your teaching, If so what strategies get this done without undue influence or even indoctrination?*

Adele: I think some of the things I have already said to be honest and just the ability to be who you are so the people you are dealing with don't have to ask anything really, they just pick up on the things that you are sharing and they don't necessarily need to know that they come from a Christian background but hopefully I mean, you know…by our actions we should be known..

PO: We should be known…Ok and the next one you have answered already about…

37. *Would you see sharing your faith in the classroom as evangelising or indoctrinating pupils?*

Adele: No, and I am very, very conscious about that. I just think it is really not my place...it is my place to be who God needs me to be in the world but it's not my place to convert those children to any kind of faith you know, what they do at home…where they go…that's very important that their parents have a massive influence in their lives you know. What I can do is give them the tools to find out further you know, it puts the questions in their minds and they go home and talk about 'we were talking today about creationism and evolution' you know, if they talk at home that's brilliant. I think it gives them the tools to further develop the issues without giving them all the answers all the time. I don't believe you have to give the answers for people to ask the questions

PO: well thank you, question 4, connecting Christian values…

Research Question 4

Theme: Relationship between Christian Beliefs and Teaching approaches

"What relationship or connection exists between their Christian beliefs and the approaches employed in teaching these topics/issues?"

38. *What association or connection would you say exists between your personal values, Christian beliefs and the approaches you employ in teaching issues of a sensitive and controversial nature? Is there a link between covertly/overtly?*

Adele: I think it depends if I'm honest on what you are doing, sometimes it can be more overt and sometimes it has to be more covert. For example like when I mentioned 'we are all uniquely made ' ..for me that's a covert way that's a covert way of saying God created us in His image

PO: mm, mm

Adele: we are the person that he created us to be but I'm not sure that anybody pick up on that as a Christian indoctrination…they would say, ;that's a good thing, we are all unique!' you know what I mean?

PO: mm, mm

Adele: But in my mind, I know what I am saying. So, there is that side of things and then there is the other side where I could just say, 'This is what I believe' but this is what others might believe. I think you have to be sensitive…really sensitive and be assured of why you are doing it…the motives are very important. My motives are not to ...you know…to bring all those children to the Lord and have an amazing conversion in the middle of my classroom. That is not my motive. You know what I mean? My motive is that these children are hearing good moral teaching and values and that they can question. I think that's my biggest motivation; that I am giving them the tools to question in their own eyes, what do I believe because it was only when I knew what I believed that I could be passionate about it. So, I think that's what important and finding ways to do that. So I am not about to convert the whole class but I would hope that through what I do, the way I behave, the things I say, whether

they are Christians or not they would go away and raise the questions. Even the silly things like I'm doing music assembly (1.29.43) and people ask me how do you know the songs? Well I know them because I sing them in church! That's the fact! But that actually raises the question that I like these songs so I might actually go to church to hear them, you know what I mean? So, I believe that if you fall behind your faith and you don't say a thing ever you might be seen as a good moral person but does it actually matter or not? I am not sure but actually but I find that if I get any opportunity to share my faith in a non-controversial way, eg I was doing 'Our God is a great big God' the other day and everyone was 'how do you know that song? Well I know it because I do it at church in Sunday school with the kids!' (laughing)

PO: wow

Adele: That's nothing and you can't get sacked for saying that

PO: and they asked

Adele: and they asked and they are like 'Whew, OK, I like that song! Well, maybe we can find a church one day!'

PO: Ok,

39. *Does your Christian faith play a part in the strategy you use in your delivery of the topics? Please explain giving examples.*

Answered already (Yes, can't help that. Be consistent in approach, values underpin teaching, mutual respect. Give pupils tools to formulate own values and beliefs. I am not out to convert through actions, words or values, just raise the questions).

PO: there is a gentle man who said that teachers should leave their beliefs at the classroom door. So ..

40. *Should your Christian faith then be included in your professional life or be compartmentalised and remain outside the classroom as a private entity?*

Adele: HOW DO YOU SAY THAT? Well don't ask because I might get…cross…how can you do that? How can you live your life like that!? Even if you don't overtly…How can you not…how can you have your Christian life as church and family and that and the minute you walk into your workplace you don't have it influence you? Aw, How can it be…that is the most ridiculous thing I have heard!! That's very judgemental sorry…it's not ridiculous, sorry but I cannot in fairness to him, whoever wrote this book, I am not sure what he is trying to get and I am being the devil's advocate and am sure he is trying to say that you should not be overtly sharing your faith so that's probably what he is trying to say. I don't know I haven't read the book. But there is no way I can come into my classroom and not pray, there is no way I can have something to do before hand and not pray, 'Holy Spirit help me with this 'or a conversation I have to have with another member of staff; you know. How can you leave that element and just say 'I don't need your help Lord in my workplace?' I don't know…I find that difficult, Bless him

PO: Would you consider then…

41. *Would you consider secular worldviews appropriate to inform teaching sensitive and controversial topics? Some people are saying it is not a level playing field as Christians we can't, we shouldn't we ought not to but a lot of what we do is secular anyway. So are we promoting a secular agenda here*

Adele: I think we are in danger of doing that…am I talking as a Christian here?

PO: Yes, so as a Christian would you say that the secular world views are appropriate?

Adele: I think there are a lot of secular world views that are based on good moral grounds. So, like with many things, you have to wrestle with these things…but you can't just slam everything that the world does. You know 'kick it to touch' because it isn't 'Christian' ..and in the same way the world cannot kick into touch everything that is not 'secular' it doesn't work like that. I believe once again that it's about having a balanced approach to everything and I believe, to be fair, there are quite a few secular viewpoints that I do understand…I understand where they coming

319

from. But I only understand because I have a Christian faith and I can understand where they have been based you know, where they have evolved from if you like and I think as a Christian…and I had an interesting conversation with a colleague and they said, 'do you think I am insensitive because as a Christian I can't see it from two points of view'? and they texted me... let me get the text because I think it might be quite relevant to that question…hold on (1.34.21) went to get mobile phone and read text.

Right I just think it is quite an interesting one, this was when we were talking about evolution, …so; Do you feel I can't understand how this boy feels because I am not religious?' and do I come across as intolerant of other people's views because I am not religious'? (Actual text message)

PO: That's wonderful

Adele: They are lovely but when this came up, they were at first a little bit dismissive but when they went home and reflected on it they texted me

PO: So you could say that even from a secular viewpoint they are showing some very good values! Empathy…

Adele: Totally! Exactly, but the reason they are able to say that to me is because they know that I have a faith and so we can have this conversation. They did not go to any other teacher and say it because they know they haven't got a faith. So, for them it is interesting to know and to say that they have both elements in their life…so does that mean that they were wrestling with the idea…that does not mean that they do not understand just because they don't have that faith background.

PO: mm, mm, that's significant

Adele: I think it is really significant! I think how many more people really worry about it and how many people don't care. It doesn't really register. They are a sensitive soul, this is the person I had the long conversation with and they do spend a lot of time reflecting….and I know the answer to their dilemma left right and centre: God! But you know it's an interesting concept and it bothered them (NB: Some secular views are based on moral values, so don't shun everything. Need for balanced worldview. Understand secular views because I am a Christian. Do secular people care and wrestle with issues too?)

PO: I have never had that before (laughing) that's important. Finally in this section and then we have just one more question, thank you so kindly

42. **Can your personal faith, professional identity and practice be integrated?**

    (answered elsewhere See Q40) Yes, even if you don't overtly…How can you not…how can you have your Christian life as church and family and that and the minute you walk into your workplace you don't have it influence you?

PO: So…

43. **How would you describe your perception of teaching? As a vocation, ministry or calling as unto the Lord or as a professional career/job? What motives you to continue teaching?**

Adele: Total calling and in a bigger sense a vocation if you like, it's not a professional career or job. The fact that I aspire to be a deputy Head teacher, it has nothing to do with that, it's because I feel that that's where God needs me to be but it has nothing to do with I want to climb the ladder about this that and the other…absolutely my vocation, my calling. I can't imagine myself doing anything else!

PO: wow! So what are the motives then?

Adele: For doing it? Because I feel that I make a difference I just feel I do, even in the midst of a load of rubbish (laughing) and all sorts of other things I think, I just know that even the smallest things make a difference. Like a child I had in year 4 coming through to year 6 now a completely different child and I know I had a part to play in that along with other people. I know I make a difference in the lives of other people like the understanding of a child's mum and where she is coming from and not dismissing her views as completely barking mad. You know I know I make a difference in people's and children's lives and that more than anything is what motivates me and the fact I create rounded citizens for the future and educating them at the same time... that's what motivates me. Not the rest…the data does not motivate me in the slightest…well it does...I want them to do well (laughing)

PO: But it plays a part

Adele: yes it plays a part

PO: Ok, now for the last question I have which has to do with…

Research Question 5:

Theme: Wider context and Implications

Question: "What are the macro-political implications for Christian beliefs and professional identity and practice?

Government Policies, Documents and Statutory Guidelines (Equalities Act for Schools 2010) regarding tolerance, equality, non-judgementalism and non-discrimination are relevant in delivering sensitive and controversial PSHE topics e.g. Sex education;

> 44. *Would you consider these to be compatible with a faith position? ....can these and your faith co-exist or be interwoven in a way which satisfies both?*

Adele: I think going back to what we were saying, a lot of PSHE is grounded in …somewhere along the line…some form of faith position and in this country, I would imagine it would be a Christian faith position. I think from a personal point of view that my faith can co-exist and be interwoven into it for the reasons I have said before. I think it will be a sad day if the Christian things like the daily acts of Christian worship were taken away…I mean I know that with things like RE we are on shaky ground as to whether it remains… is it compulsory?

PO: I think it's compulsory at some key stages…bit sure

Adele: But those sorts of things you know you can see little by little eroding away so I think…I think it depends on who you are. I am trying to say, for me I can find my way around anything to make it work yeah? To a play where I feel comfortable with what I am delivering, but is everyone able to do that or be convicted enough to do that, or feel …worried for fear of getting the sack or professional misconduct...I don't know. I will always find a creative way to make it work from my own faith perspective so I will make it do that. But if you are going to talk about it generally then absolutely I'm not

sure. I don't know (Laughing) sorry, I'm not sure because from my personal point of view…

PO: which is important, your r story is what we want to hear

Adele...I feel I can do with this… I mean to be fair, if it did not have one element of faith in it I would…that is what I am trying to say! Because that is what is important to me and I believe that is what is important to this world, so I believe that whichever which way I will find a way. Now if they completely ban singing Christian songs in schools and bringing in Christian visitors and the RE curriculum went completely and you were not ALLOWED to mention God in any way, shape or form as a Christian, I would then have to say it's through my actions, you see what I'm saying? So for me…you see policy is a policy...it matters in the sense that if it is compulsory then I need to teach it e.g. I won't stand there and say I won't teach evolution.

PO: yeah

Adele: you know some people might say I'm not going to teach evolution, I am a Christian, I am not going to teach it!' I don't know where they stand with that…maybe get somebody else to teach it for them. I would never do that…because I feel there is always a way to balance things. It's about being creative with your faith…not compromising your faith, you know what I mean by that…but being creative in the way you manage to include those elements of your faith I guess.

PO: so would you …

45. **Would you say that your personal experiences as a Christian PSHE teacher conflict or complement these policies, laws? What are some Implications?**

Adele: I think they complement them yes

PO: and the implications:

Adele: is that the children hear a balanced view…

PO: balanced view presented …wonderful. In today's society…

46. (In today's society), would you say that a faith position (in professional life) is marginalised (i.e. denied attention, influence or power) and how could this be addressed?

Adele: I think that a lot of policies are based on moral ground. I think of our attendance policy, our behaviour policy you know, our admissions policy it's about fairness, justice you know all those sort of things are based on good principles whether they are based on biblical principles, I'm not entirely sure but certainly based on moral principles. I can't think of any policy that is written that is not for the good of the children therefore by that definition they are morally right so from a moral point of view…from a faith point of view I think how you are marginalised now is that you have to be careful about what you say and how you say it so I think that in that sense you are marginalised in a sense because you cannot…I think nowadays you have to be more careful about the way you …careful; is that the right word? More discerning, more discerning about the way that you share your faith I think.

PO: Brilliant. Would you say, we discussed some of the wider interdisciplinary aspect of this topic…

47. What would you consider to be some wider implications for Christian believing and professional identity and practice across other disciplines and careers? (e.g. in Medicine/health care, Politics, Law, Hospitality, Science, Government agencies).

Adele: I think there are massive implications and to be fair I have never had to deal with them, let's say I had a head who said I could not wear a cross to work. Or who say eg I don't want any overt faith statements or symbols, I would then struggle with that a lot and need to think about how I would deal with that so in fairness to me, I have never come across these things. But when I went to that evening about 'euthanasia' talk she was talking about the whole idea of it being murder and as Christians you...whether doctor or not being able to cope with that as a concept so there are a lot of implications for Christian believing and I think in education there are certain things that could be controversial but in medical care the doctors…there are

lots of ethical decisions to take you know politics the same and judging and things like that…and Science as well; like the gene culture and cloning and …it's a massive minefield. I think in education we are fortunate enough to ..well certainly in the primary sector I don't know about the secondary sector but I have not come across too many issues so far that are deeply controversial but difficult when you think of what it could be

PO: so difficult question but you ..

48. **How might policies, practices and procedures across subjects, jobs, fields or disciplines be influenced by you simply sharing your story on these issues? (or what might be the significance of your story?)**

Adele: because I just think that if you are honest with people and just talk with people, I think it is the best way to just get things out in the open. So I think that the significance of my story is that we can naturally talk about my work and my faith in conjunction with one another and I would hope that people would respect that but if they were not able to and if I should ever been taken to task on it I would hope that I would have enough confidence in what I am saying to be able to show that the two can work together without there being any kind of radicalisation or hidden agenda or that kind of thing…if you have a faith, you have a faith and if you are at all times giving a balanced view and being sensitive to your clientele i.e. your children, or the people that you work with…if I share my story like this I would hope that everybody would understand it for what it is rather than you know,….we have the ability to co – exist alongside other people and have a faith, without that having any kind of detrimental effect on anything you know

PO: Wow, an finally, finally, finally.

49. **In conclusion, what is your overall stance regarding the place of personal values and Christian beliefs in the professional sphere; that is to say, Christian believing in any secular context?**

Adele: I mean I believe that anybody who is a Christian should have the ability to share their faith I think they should be able to talk about their faithwithout fear of condemnation. I think they should…however, also be sensitive to the views of

others. Not everyone will understand that and if you can't have the time to talk something through sometimes it's best not to do anything. I think also as a Christian when I talk about action you cannot underestimate the power of who you are and the way you act and I would never want my faith to be compromised by someone saying 'you are a Christian but look what you did' 'look how you acted in that situation, that's not a very Christian way of doing something, we are who we are. We have been sent into the world for a reason and we don't have to be preaching on the road from a soap box to be able to have an influence through our faith on other people, so I believe …that the world also need to be sensitive to the reasons why we believe what we believe and if we come across things that we are being convicted of by the Holy Spirit, as being not inconjunction with our biblical understanding and faith, then there should be the option to opt out and that should be taken into consideration in the same way as a parent if they want to take their children out of SRE for whatever reason. I respect that decision…it's that for me that is so important

PO: wow, I am finished! Unless

50. you want to add anything else?

Adele: Laughing, this probably took about 5 hours!!

Both laughing

PO: Just under 2 hours! But I will give you the opportunity to wind things up…

Adele: well, it's been REALLY great!! To reflect, to get the time to reflect, you do it but you get to talk it through and to have the opportunity to say 'why do I act in the way I do , why do I go about my professional like in the way that I do? What is it and it's been REALLY REALLY…I found it really cathartic to just sit and talk about it…it's really good! I really enjoyed it! I think it's really important and I think there is an element for me that as Christians in the workplace it's actually like supervision...an opportunity to talk about…if you have controversial issues like that…Where do I stand on this? It's good stuff..

PO: Is it a study worth doing?

Adele: I think it's brilliant! I think I would be really interested to see what your findings are at some point. I think it's very important very important.

PO: Thanks, as mentioned it starts with me and is I am struggling to what extent others might be as well

Adele: I don't know whether the issues are more prevalent in secondary schools but I think it would be an interesting find….

PO: So formally…

Conclusion: (Summarize, Next course of action, Acknowledgements)

Well, thank you so much for taking the time from your extremely busy schedule to take part in this interview. I appreciate it. The next step will be for me to transcribe your story and then to meet up with you briefly to give you an opportunity to check and validate that what I have recorded accurately represents your views, comments and story. Ethical procedures are in place to protect your anonymity and ensure confidentiality.

AUDIO RECORDING

Please indicate by circling *Yes or No* to indicate your preference:

I would like to have a CD audio copy of this interview sent to me   (Yes/No)I would like a paper copy of my transcript of this interview   (Yes/No)

Thank you,

P. O'Connor

Canterbury
Christ Church
University

Dear…………………:

Greetings to you and family, I hope you are all well. Thanks once again for participating in my research study. I appreciate it.

I have completed transcribing your interview. It is customary for researchers to provide you with an opportunity to check over your interview for the purposes of 'respondent validation' i.e. clarification, deletions, amendments and generally to ensure that you are comfortable with what you have said. Additionally, it affords me rigor in my work as well.

Please find attached a copy of your interview transcript. As part of my process to ensure academic rigor, I am passing these to you so that you can check for accuracy, changes, omission, clarifications, correct interpretation etc.

However, if you are happy with it then, please indicate the same. I can start the process of analysis for themes, issues and quotations relevant to my research questions; where I will remove all names of people, places etc and do all to protect your anonymity and confidentiality in my analysis of the data.

Again, if you wish that I simply carry on with my analysis of your interview data; being confident of what you have already said, and then also please indicate accordingly. Either option is totally your choice.

So then, no further action is required on your part if you so desired.

Thanks again and God bless,

Kind regards,

………………………

Phillip O'Connor

FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS SHEET 2

CATEGORIES	RESEARCH QUESTIONS/AIMS	THEMES EMERGING	REMARKS
Constructed narratives of teachers' lives	(Stories from their timelines, Aim 1)		
Tensions and conflicts/legitimacy of Christian believing in a secularising context	(Research Question: RQ2, 4, Aim 2)		
Professionalism: Pedagogical approaches, strategies and justifications	(RQ3, 4, Aim 3)		
Wider secular context	(RQ5, Aim 4)		

Emerging Themes from Interviews

Qs/Themes
Adele
Nathan
Janet
Emma
Simon
Nikki
Karen
Ester
Jim
Terry
Christy
Owen
Tim
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Reminded
Notes

THEMES	QUESTIONS	EMERGING THEMES / CONCEPTS	REMARKS
Section Brief (Contd) Chapter 17, 18	Development & change of /in character of Christians	- Become firm and more assured & based on deep convictions, worked out personal faith - More open, less subjective, become hard and rigid / confident more emphatic - A non-judgemental view more tolerant RE (11) non-adopts wider interpretation - Holds traditional views but stable (settled), More compromises, Respect different views - Faith is tested but stable (settled), More compromise, respect different views - Developing childlike, personal relationship with Jesus (Giles) if challenged my current views & assumptions, prejudices - highly experience of children led to empty - Conflict of faith its a process	
	(18) Additional Views on applying & interpreting Scriptures to S/C	- Read Bible, Pray for God's guidance/direction, to be more God-like, - Apply Bible to issues as the Word of God (Fiona) - Simon: if teaching homosexuality, only Bible opposes, give also secular, humanist views - Avoid serious integrity! Bible is a living Word - use correct context! - Use personal experiences to get them to reflect.	
Being Taught PHSE Personal Stories PHSE Teacher Qs 17-22	(19) Being Taught PHSE - Personal Stories	- Integrated, home parents in boarding school, chapel, RE; Vaguely recall but formative not as a T/T 6th form classes boring, focus opinion lacking resources - did properly, (These did drugs); Not spotted, only 2 yr 10 talk intro lesson Sex Ed of timetable 4 lessons yearly, None @ all only one afternoon with girls only. (JA)	Integrated - 3 None - 4 Not recall - 2
	(20) Personal journey to becoming a PHSE teacher & Delivery Strategies	- Part of primary School Curriculum ( ); PGCE/Saud with opportunity arose, etc - Taught PHSE Dissertation in Africa; Why PHSE Co-ordinator so did it as a Christian - Delivery; ITT provide some training; PHSE ATM, assemblies, PHSE Lead, consultations, 55 min lessons weekly & 6 focus days (Nathan); Form teacher, SEN; Tim's brother chosen trained for teaching for being a minister - Tutor time, RE, collapsed time.	Seem Informed - not organised or well rehearsed
	(21) Subject identity, Stereotypes & PHSE Teacher Qualities	- Openness, selflessness, scrupulous on moral grounds, Social skills, flexible facilitation, rapport, good Class Mgt, Model desired qualities, approachable, friendly (perceived difficulty by other teacher since we do no agreement); Engaging learning environment); Teacher persona; subject knowledge/applicability Discuss personal experiences, be a person (Karen); - other teachers culture PHSE teacher! Cross between pastoral / curriculum, Respect others views not embarrassed / pressed; empathy, sensitive, relevant, Pupil clarification God use to 21, informed life choices, non-judgemental	- Stereotypes (1) No treatment (in any stage) (2) Well respected to teach it! (3) Cross between Curricular / Pastoral
	(22) Place of Personal values/ beliefs in Practice (Qs 22, 33_)	- Massively influenced, Pray B4 school, worship, faith informs practice, expand faith (Adele); Relevance of life; These part of our identity, cant quash them on/off (Fiona); Staying prepared, adaptable, major pt at times, care, value pupils (Emma); They do, God calls as a huge (Simon); faith comes me to be a teacher; faith cannot be separated a left @ the door Karen → teacher is a whole person; faith helps me influence pupils morally what I rigid lessons!, we all teach our values, DO SO respectfully; Empathy, respect, model values, integrity	- Jim after being gagged I try to make no connection Of my views on homosexuality
Research Q 1 (Qs 23-27) Identifying / Defining S/C Issues	(23) Identify/Define S/C (Sensitive)	- Potential to upset, topics effect core identity, difficult to discuss, deep-rooted issues affect pupils, any topic can be Sensitive/C, They evoke difference opinions They contentious, invoke a response, arouse emotions, strong views, strong opinions relate to pupils! Situation, distress caused, Issues of political harm	
	(24) Controversial Issues	- Cause Conflict for the teacher, extreme views, debate, hard to appreciate S/C Common issues in the News, Cause for debate, conflict, pushing opposite Views contradictory, having a stance different from Society (Jim); Strong emotions Pupils have strong views opposing & hold an valid, range of opinions (Ashley)	
	(25) Topics, relevant strategies	- Teaching import, LEA, DUO, parents to select topics, PHSE Intro, term effort to ask, test basis staff regulations (SCA), SCAL choose topics, survey pupils, environment, preferences, Strategies; Topics include; Body image, Bullying, e Safety, Radical, Sexism, faith issues, Gay relationships, SEE, drugs, Nature on issues, Politics, genetics, Jun..., Alcohol, Smoking, in conversation, Mental Health, Porn, FM, Sexting, abortion, Race, Sex Climate change, promiscuity, abuse, wars, life issues, immigration, prostitution, trafficking terrorism.	→ Identify S/C topic (contd) Coordinator chooses, preferences Test like. → SET do pose for some teachers, press on opt out.
	(26) Reasons for identifying terms as such S/C See (Q 23 above) Implications to teaching Them	- Cause division in society, Need for balance, good subject knowledge (refer to HW) more planning / preparation needed, admit don't know, the reading for approval for thinner (Simon sensitive to children's needs due to their experiences; There is scope for lesson stand out might be lower in too comfortable that material contain debate (Simon); It requires objectivity / certainty, sensitivity; legal protection, potentially gagged delivery methods need couple consideration, they cause Conflict (pupil conflicts / prejudices Liberate views take precedence; strong emotions, hurt, harm, indoctrination, influence	
	(27) Delivery Responsibility of the Topics	- Home alone (1#); Govt alone ( ); churches ( ) - Home/School (111); guest speakers ( ); faith groups ( ) - all the above (4H) - all have normal duties, school alone cannot meet the ills of society (Adele) - Staff with expertise- Mainly School as home can furnish falseness? (Karen) - Trained teachers (well resourced); Home can be embarrassing, Govt should give guidance (2); framework	Parents ultimately responsible & all others (111) churches/schools has vital Role Home might be morose, pupils need wider scope to explore
Research Q 2 (Qs 28 - 33)	(28) Identifying issues & tensions (Narratives) of personal practice	- Limited @ primary level, mainly pupils misunderstand irony (Adele) - Gay marriage (a Student can't accept false positive, govt should inform but in church) Nathan - Abortion, anal sex, abortion (pupil objected when did and sex is not normal (Emma) - Immigration, Concerns (pupil agree/unformed NKK); Race issues, Mental health (a students mom was affected), Challenging, prejudice/discrimination (Terry); drugs, alcohol, sex	- Limited @ Primary levels (111) Full name open
	(29) Stories of personal inner struggles	- Need lacking empathy; Evolution (State Bible & Views/Defend faith Adele); Homosexuality Gay marriage prejudicially, equate to whole church as homophobic (Nathan); Porn, freedom of choice, extra-marital relationships, clothes - Should I share my views (Emma); Serious struggle is more political than religion for Giles - injustice, marginalised pupils; Motivated to teach as vocation now its only a job, now no conviction - Jim); Terry has a liberal attitude and challenged homophobic language in pupil	- Simon has no conflict I believe in Education e personal respect, empathy &
	(30) Perceptions of faith sharing in teaching	- Adele: Be objective, be relevant of covert disclosure in language, Important to share faith but fear limits or appropriateness (Nathan); Model/ love and faith only (Fiona); There is Conflict here; not appropriate to share yet they should be aware by personal (Emma); Great if appropriate I chose import, time, place, appropriateness, confidentiality, Wide choice, faith-sharing adds depth to teaching, open & honest responses (Karen); Be cautious its the about the students not the teacher, adopt a wide range of views (Giles); faith should be funneled but Govt propaganda, kind of wisdom whistles; Teachers not allowed to share, openly - yes but be clear on personal views; Give chance, be role model & avoid danger to restrictive teacher views (Christy)	
	(31) Is there tension in your teaching S/C	- Concious of them; feels intensely conflicted, be professional / objective but hard to faith (Adele); Yes due to propaganda, censoring; abortion (informers) prejudice - empathy needed, core indirectly non-judgemental, Pray to God - NKK); Wrestle with Conflict, teaching improves relationships, Indoctrinate students (Karen); Yes feels Conflict - I was gagged/ kill my values (always more less more for personal faith vs morality dominated (Jim); Struggle but I need to stay true / loyal	No - Conflict, Regularly conflicted through thought? - No, I give [Edwin] to share views, open to more. (Simon)
	(32) Specific Issues causing tension / conflict	- Fear of government amendment (4+111); Do I go too far - Compromise of personal conviction (1) - Adhere to the faith (LH#); personal conviction (1) guilt - Parental approvals, pupils misconstrued (111) - Breaking the law (11) - Exercise undue influence (111); I am the shepherd, I work for the many (Jim) - Evangelising / and Damnation (11)	- Simon (Representation overrides conflicts its the objective focus

APPENDIX

THEMES	QUESTIONS	EMERGING THEMES / CONCEPTS	REMARKS

334

THEMES	QUESTIONS	EMERGING THEMES / CONCEPTS	REMARKS ③
✓	(46) Marginalisation of Christian Faith	Yes it is – Christianity (not same for Islam) Christianity watered down [illegible] lost respect (Nathan); Christians are persecuted – doctors cannot pray for patients; Marginalised / stigmatized both Christianity & religion as a whole. Political correctness of Xmas, Winter lights, faith course [illegible] completely agree – faith [illegible] (Jim); yes [illegible] (Karen) [illegible] hard to leave faith at the door.	Marginalised (IIII II) yes " (III) no Depends (I) Simon – faith course [illegible] Home of Lords, Religious Statements are repeated) – Esther, NO, Christianity marginalising itself – too worried/[illegible] Chrissy – I apologise for Christian [illegible] – own fault, [illegible]
✓	(47) Implications of Christian Believing & Faith / Identity across other Spheres	Massive implications – what if no overt faith symbols allowed; faith deemed discriminatory of being forced to work on Sundays, but you can integrate them and pray privately (Janet); It's about personal choice eg case of B&B guys. Different churches treat the law – Tolerance needed, respect (post modern world) & small business should have the right to refuse gays eg B&B; women with crucifix; some people are gagged; difficult line to tread. God's laws vs Man-made laws, right [illegible] to all (Jim) Positive has faith is shared & lived out but there's still fear of indoctrination – Should not aggressively evangelise (Terry)	→ Society imposes a limited evangelical views to faith (Chrissy)
✓	(48) Impact / Significance of Life Story Insights	– Talking, sharing, reasoning, raising awareness; demonstrating compatibility (Adele) – Hope Christians will speak out on conflicts all [illegible] professions – have to have faith, this will encourage others (Janet); Help train PGCE students, CPD teams, support stakeholders, RME teachers (Emma); Academic relevance; a seed is sown/impact, challenge to ask questions, acknowledge the conflict, help others, stop separating faith / practice / identity (Nikki); – Hope 40 yrs teaching will be authentic / influential; Source of encouragement, follows Jesus' example; trust others more, instil British values; to be themselves not secular; Motivated / model Christian life in a secular world; Act of reflection & relationship with others	
✓	(49) Perceptions of Christian Believing in any Secular Context – Values, beliefs, practice, Identity	Any Christian should be able to show faith, Actions Model, Don't preach, Be authentic & sensitive (Adele); Any context – compatible, Prayer needed – Vital place for RME teachers esp [illegible] to model, model, model values (Janet) – Need for care/sensitivity, we [illegible] (Emma) [illegible] a good RME teacher. Simon states' Everybody is an evangelist for something; [illegible] (Simon); [illegible] separate faith/identity – faith – part of my identity – "for this I have Jesus" (Karen); [illegible] positive contribution of Christianity to the country [illegible] (Chrissy).	Simon – there's conflict
✓	(50) Final Word / Comment / Reflection on the Theme.	**Adele**: 'Great to reflect on the theme, motivation, rationale for teaching RME. I needed this opportunity [illegible] really enjoyed it!' **Nathan**: The process of interviewing is good. **Janet**: – Different for us in a secular world. The research highlights importance of faith & the difficulty of being a Christian in a secular world. **Emma**: "You have got me thinking in a positive way... so much to reflect on!" **Simon**: – 'Retain views outside to avoid undue influence ... but there's conflict' **Nikki**: See Script:- **Karen**: – "Your stance is part of your Christian life. We're called to be the yeast in the dough. It's hard, really hard... emotionally, physically draining, giving out of self ... " For this I have Jesus!" **Esther**: – Very grateful to be a research participant. [illegible] life **Jim**: See transcript. **Terry**: We are spiritual – we acknowledge God in [illegible] (eg [illegible] 'Pray for [illegible]'). **Chrissy**: 'Can't separate it God wants all our lives!' See page 2 of Data analysis Thematic Sheet for individual notes on the process of recruiting participants → Could use in methodology **	* Put this in Conclusion to end Thesis!

APPENDIX

Emerging Themes – Transcripts (DATA ANALYSIS)
— Explanation
— Reasons
— Influences

Personal Values (Adaptation, Clarification & Application)

- Significant impact of parental values
- Values Clarification, identification & ownership
- Meanings, assumptions, perspective on life engendered
  → Stability, independence, meritocracy, perseverance, purpose, charity, Christian Service; Care for the environment, Doing God's will, security, determination, empathy, Compassion, Care, aspirations, fairness, justice, tackling low aspirations

- Biblical, Moral & liberal values identified guiding life
  → Love, acceptance, non-judgementalism, co-operation, teamwork, openness, honesty, reason, resilience, freewill, perspective, modelling

- The process of adopting values through maturity,
- life's experiences, vississitudes, childrearing, education
- Appropriate sharing of personal values as & when appropriate
- Model Character values without undue influence
  — Caveats, distancing techniques, disclaimers, own views

- Counteracting prejudices of primary socialization

Themes & analysis

- Parental Values
- Values Clarification; process, adaptation, application, transmission
- Values impacting life's experiences
- Values sharing/integrating
- Relationship to practice
- Fundamental, Core; challenging assumptions
- Conflict of values (student, colleges, profession)

Christian Beliefs (Repetitions, Problems stated, Key issues)
— Causes
— Generalization
— Interpreting

- Christian upbringing underpins current faith (7)
- Pathways to personal faith: adversity, encouragement, life's experiences, church evangelism, friends/spouse, School assemblies, church activities
- Christian faith is lived out through activities & Christian fellowship, and witness
- Belief/denomination stance Impact beliefs (Evangel, COE, Baptist, pentecostal, Methodist, Catholic)
- Position on Scriptural authority – fixed but flexible, Spirit leads/convicts, opened (11); Bible as truth, Living applicable word, working document
- Concept of liberal Christian
- Processes of development & transformation in faith
  — Life's experiences, education, personal failures/..., leads to empathy/openness; childrearing – acceptance,
- Seek God's guidance & direction in accurately interpreting/applying Scriptures; Model faith

Themes / Analysis

- Upbringing – re Place of faith
- Adopting/owning personal faith
- Transitional faith – processes
- Current experiences of faith
- Position/denominational stance

Ontology → Constructionist → Qualitative practi
interpretivist epistemology (word, text, images)...

Research Question

* Potential to upset, affect core identity, difficult to discuss, debatable, engender strong, different & opposing views, relevant to pupils' life experiences/circumstances Evoke strong emotions, response, potential for distress, harm

- Controversial :- Cause conflict, potential for extreme views, debate, devisive, contententious, current topical issues, having a view that conflicts those of society; opposing views held as valid potential for a range of opinions, relevant

- lessons :- as above, cause division, scope for harm etc.
- Implications of identifying S/C - accept other valid view/reasons
  • Need balance, subject knowledge, more careful planning/preparation, Be ready for opposition, sensitivity; teacher training; maintaining lesson standard as S/C could be avoided etc, Debates inhibited; objectivity, criticality, knowledge of legal/professional restrictions Safety, counter prejudiced assumptions
- A range of providers can deliver S/C from home (parents) → School → guest speakers, other stakeholders
  • Caveat avoid bias, influence, prejudice assumption narrows restricted views from any provider including teachers.
  • Teach respectfully; Defend & input faith stance
  • Govt agenda to politicize provision
  • Schools can provide scope for exploration

→ Scope for embarrassment; tabood subject, division
→ What of freedom of speech?
→ Accept society's stance or remain constrained?

Identifying / Defining Sensitive & Controversial

Eg abortion, mental Health, Sexuality, Smoking freedom of speech, promiscuity & Risks, gay marriage

Themes & Analysis

- Defining, identifying Sensitive/controversial issues
- Implications
- Delivery personnels/channels
-

Research Question 2 — Issues & Tensions

Impinge of personal faith

- Inner conflicts: Evolution, over-emphasizing Sex/condoms anal, oral Sex, abortion, fluid sexuality, pupil apathy & indifference; pupils' prejudiced views (immigration, sexuality race, Same Sex Marriage, poor, Multiculturalism, abstinence, SLT lacking empathy; promiscuity & Risks, liberal views — professional integrity (teacher checked in class)
- Potential for tension limited @ primary level
- Conflict of professional vs vocational, ministry view of teaching. Views, beliefs intertwined in practice
- Political conflicts of marginalization of poor, race relations
- Teachers' liberal views challenged eg sexuality, immigration (euthanasia, abortion) by students.
- Gov't agenda inhibiting freedom of speech, thought, expression
- Professional integrity over-rides conflict scope
- Tensions through fear (unprofessional/conduct, undue influence, un free to faith/conviction compromise faith, evangelize, indoctrinate, being misunderstood, legal/professional restrictions Parents complain
- Boundaries of evangelising, indoctrinating & sharing faith
  - Empower pupils, claim personal views, encourage debate.
- Conflict of interest Head of RE/PSHE & students, Christian Union
- Not personally conflicted but empathize with others who do.
- Conflicted over students' casual attitudes to risks
- No teaching conflict but conflicted regularly!
- Professionalism, academic integrity outweighs conflict
  ☀ Need safe place to vent (p13) Simon (could link to courageous restraint).
- What's the price for having faith?
- Be non-judgemental, help students explore
- Personal conviction/professionalism or grey, conflicting issues
- Bible seen as "truth" vs be authentic, balancing interpretation

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yet empathizing & showing love as teacher/student
→ experiences are different

- "The truth sets me free" (Esther)
- Professional Restriction - Being gagged
  - Honest, respectful views cause offense
  - Gov't impositions restricts teacher voice/thought
  - Faith Views dismissed; private conversations misconstrued (Jim)
- School provides greater Scope for liberal exploration than Church — less restrictive (Christine)
- Media's portrayal of the church (homophobic etc); Hollie

THEMES / ANALYSIS / Categories

- Contentious issues & topics
- Career stance: Profession or Calling?
- Liberal / fundamental views
- Professionalism & academic integrity
- Professional & legal restrictions
- The Place of free speech, expression
- Professional integrity & conscience
- The "truth" of the word? (
- The Price of faith.
- Conflict of interest Head J & RE/ PSHE

FINDINGS

1. Downing personal faith (conviction, application, confidence).
2. Adopt a more liberal
3. Broader interpretation of Scripture
4. Develop stable/strong
5. Empathy for colleagues with views
6. No teaching but conflicted

Question 3 (Coping Strategies)

2.

- Guest speaker Caveats; make available resources without physically distributing them eg leaflet contains C-Cards.
- Provide facts (eg laws) to underpin subjective debates
- Provide training not only in content/Subject Knowledge but in openness, empathy, not being embarrassed.
- Model faith.

✓

THEMES / ANALYSIS

What works for me - coping strategies
The Place of faith in coping strategies
Justifying the position

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(1)

vetting.

- Seek SLT permission to teach opposing Christian views
- Self Restraint, teach from text BK
- Encourage courtesy, respect, critical thinking, safety debate
- Use disclaimers, distancing techniques, preface lesson, caveat own personal views, present alternative opposing views
- Be sensitive, Relevance to pupils.
- Adopt professional stance; embrace & defend faith empathize, care, pray, be honest, Develop relationships
- Teach with academic integrity (tolerance, balance, criticality etc)
- Establish ground rules, provide opt out opportunities
- Share personal stories/views if appropriate; clarify views
- Facilitating Role; Plan lessons well
- Sense of resignation - get on with it
- Avoid some topics/tweak others
- Faith Sharing (as appropriate, Caveats, own personal views balance, variety, Scope for opposition & challenge given protect vulnerability, age appropriate,
- Prayerfully apply faith; integrity, respect, give opposing views on controversial issues opposed by Scripture.
- Model faith, share if asked & is appropriate
- Topic Selection & Delivery Strategies
  - Include Students, PSHE curriculum, policing resources online gov't resources, PfE, PSHE Assn, SEAL, Dept select SOW with co-ordinator, SLT guidance &/or delivery (primary); DVD, staff expertise, guest speakers, devils' advocate, respectful
- Strategies? discussions, Q&A, Role play, Guest speakers(s); Chaplain
  Text books, avoid issues, Chaplain Services,

- Justification:- Scope for Openness, safety, valuing pupil critical Thinking, exposure, non-judging no undue influence value Clarification minimize potential for harm, embarrassment accountability, integrity, pupil exposure
  - Provides authentic inquiry/responses, safe place for pupils, respect, integrity,

Question 4 — Relationship between practice, value...

- Place of Personal Values, Beliefs in Practice
  • Practice influenced by beliefs & values
  • Covertly pray, intertwined through Love, care, empathy, valuing pupils
  • Its God's calling; faith & practice is connected to teachers' personal identity (inseparable)
  • Faith engenders creativity, engagement
  • Model values with empathy

Important to integrate faith with Caveat (covertly, modelling, appropriateness, timing, confidentiality, balance, courageous restraint, appropriate professional boundaries

Integrating faith underpins choice, adds depth provides honest, open debate & responses

→ Faith is shared through current connections, values of respect, justice, Behaviour mgt, valuing pupils, Compassion, Sensitivity, Safety, grace & forgiveness, leading to repentance, Respect, Care, empathy, building relationships, Authenticity, respectful Communications, model Christ's Love, discipline guidance, dignity for all, don't judge, critique, efficiency, professionalism, being available to students Being apart of their lives; School assemblies, ethos (more so i primary)

- Calling / Vocational understanding of practice.
- Hypocrisy of putting on an act (eg ofsted, SLT.) + holding strong views
- faith cannot be compartmentalized (Don't convert)
- Need for authenticity (faith is not on act); strong views expressed to recognize depth of convictions
- Secular approaches are useful for balance, exposure, reflect wider society, inclusivity, openness
- No such thing as neutral stance - acknowledge liberal secular stance as a view/belief position
- Secular views underpin laws, be inclusive of non-religious
- Secular views perceive faith as a Sunday thing/only.
- Inconsistency: Atheism celebrated as Scientific & intellectual, Christianity demonized. ✓

- Teachers (10) integrate faith into practice but remain conflicted; fearful (of restrictions, bound...
- Relationship between faith/practice is unde... by perception of teaching
  • Calling/Vocation (influence, make a difference...
  • Career, job, profession (rigid, target driven...
- Strong views expressed celebrating God's call ministry or vocational impact on pupils; but lamenting the restrictions & limitations on them an imposed professional worldview.
- Jesus talked to prostitutes, tax collectors, not avoiding Model Christ's Love
  • Be fair to all views, balance
  • Grow God's Kingdom, change lives, realize potential,...
  • Provide extra time help/fellowship to students
  • Bond with parents, students beyond faith

THEMES / ANALYSIS

- Methods of integration (faith, values, practice)
- Implications & Issues
- Professional or Calling/Vocational Stance (Perceptions of teaching...
- Hypocrisy (of compartmentalizing faith) → performances & Conf...
- Caveats & disclaimers
- Balance & Objectivity; Secular views & approaches
- Inconsistencies (by Secular, atheistic seen as Scientific, intel...
- The examples of Jesus' model (Samaritan etc)
- Consequences of integration (conflicts, restrictions, boundar... fears) ✓

↗ eg ECM Spiritual promote inclusivity

Question 5 (Wider Context) Compatibility of faith / Politics,

- PSHE is grounded in faith (can co-exist) yet conflict

- Conflict of compatibility, compromise, co-existence
  & interpretation of laws & policies; documents.

- Compatibility depends on honesty / fairness
  - Is freedom of speech, tolerance, applicable
    to all including Christians?
  - Unequal enforcement, used to silence opposing
    views not engender debate.
  - Can't compartmentalize — you hold remain balanced/check
    reckon balance — but conflicted.
  - Not always compatible — Religion is marginalized — across careers of GB.

- Laws, policies documents can complement, add balance,
  creativity & inclusion, respect for all groups.
- Religious statements are reported (good or ridicule)
- Postmodern times call for tolerance, respect, inclusivity eg gay couple
- Issues are complex eg Lord's Prayer Advert; gay adoption Magistrate
- Pragmatism: Is homosexuality worse sin than adultery etc?
- A liberal approach empower people to think, seek, explore.

- Perceptions of marginalization correlates with perceptions
  of faith; more liberal teachers disagrees; evangelicals
  supported marginalization of Christianity

- Impartiality, inconsistencies; need to stand up not be apathetic
- Respecting rights to opt out on grounds of conscience
- Marginalize atheism (atheism); — need equality;
- Respect all beliefs
- all careers, disciplines potentially are affected
  conflicted, posed with complexities of faith/practice
  - faith can be lived out but fears abound
  - Don't aggressively evangelize; tolerance, respect
  - Speak out; Having faith is challenging;
    a price to pay for faith? Silence?
  - Pursuit of faith opposes the law eg gay marriage
  - Christians should have right to refuse, opt out.
- Christianity marginalize itself → God loves all who seek truth
- Society reached out to Christian community in true to

- Faith contributions ① Food banks ② Soup Kitchens & Street
  Pastors.

- Impact of Stories! — Raise awareness of issues,
  encouragement, teacher training academically/professionally,
  Support stakeholders, academic relevance, CPD/
  challenge debate, acknowledge the conflict,
  help others, challenge proposed separation of
  faith & practice, promote authenticity, empathy,
  genuineness, Instil/promote Character; British values
  Support teachers to be themselves, model Christian
  life in a secular world, Reflection, solidarity
  with fellow Christians in other spheres.
  an important Seed — Story has power — God is interested
  (Christianity is experiential); Scope for exploring issues,
  spread message of non-compartmentalism; authenticity
- Faith form personal identity → Needed to do job
  this I have Jesus" — Jesus is the Way to God
- Faith's impact is underestimated, undermined, misunderstood
- Impact lies in application of my story. (PTO) ⇒
- Perceptions of Christian Behaving in secular

  - all Christians should be able to demonstrate faith
    & that its compatible with practice with confidence
  - Model faith, (covert ___); sensitivity, honesty,
    critical thinking, value/love people
  - Acknowledge Christian Contributions to law, trade,
    community spirit eg food Banks, Street Pastors
  - Everyone evangelizes something.
  - "Faith is who we are... meant to be all
    the whole part of us... wherever we go, whatever
    profession" (Chung); Part of our identity (
  - Inconsistency with other Religions eg Islam /
  - Faith provides answers to life complex questions
  - Fear of radicalization (Christian fundamentalism)
  - Fear of political correctness; Separate Christianity
  -

CATEGORIES/ANALYSIS (CONT'D)

Research AIMS

1. Explore & illuminate perceptions; insights and interpretations into the constructed narratives of teachers' lives in order to develop an indepth understanding of the relationship between their personal values, Christian beliefs and approaches employed in teaching S/C PSHE issues

2. Investigate the legitimacy/authenticity of being a PSHE teacher, direct conflict this brings against being a Christian and whether the two can be interwoven in a way which satisfies both.

3. To examine some pedagogical approaches adopted by Christian PSHE teachers to address the conflict of personal values, faith & prof. practice

4. To analyse & present some of the tension which seem inherent in Christian believing within a secular context & bring about greater understanding for Christians working in the multifaith and increasingly secularised & plural society.

Identifying Codes Ryan & Bernard (2003)

- Repetitions
- Metaphors/analogies
- Transitions (pause, isms)
- Similarities & differences
- Linguistic connectors — eg because, example; next, then
- Missing data (what is omitted)

"Coding pt 3 what can codes be about."

Inductive: Ideas of coding based on data for codes derive from → theory, literature, research Qs, interview

- Descriptive → Categories → analytic codes
- Content analysis → identify key words, property, themes
- Discourse " → Themes + the way degree expressed; actual
    " → identify concept, explore relationships between
- Relational
- use direct quotes to support.
→ Inductive approaches (bottom up) → Observations → Patterns → T
    to broader generalisations → Theory; Read transcripts (a word/2)
→ open coding → list all codes (similar & redundant codes) list of codes; constant comparison (go back to original data
    closed coding ie code the codes — delineate
- Final themes reflect research purpose, aims → find co
- Write up:- narrative from the themes, subthemes codes
    - Discussion of the relationships; & quotes transcript to support themes
    - Discussion of inter relationships
Principles — allow ideas to emerge, be systematic, transparent, c

Chapter 5

- What does it all Mean? (Analysis, broader context Contribution)
- Relevance, importance of findings; Why Care? So
- Relate to chapter ② Theory/Literature
- Interpret result/findings
- Return to original purpose/Aim; Problem — Contextualise
- Summarise all chapters; strengths/limitations of the study
- Recommendations for further study.
- Conclusion:- of entire study → review objectives; Justify
- Relate problem statement/complete story; RQs → find
- Include a separate Summary of chapters 1-4
- Include a separate Chapter Conclusion

- What's important in the findings? (Repetitions, Ke issues, problems highlighted ⇒ Interpret NOT Repea
- Explanations, Reasons, influences, interpretation, C generalisation, sense-making
- Contribution to Knowledge!

Question 5

- Inconsistencies (Does non-discrimination applies to Christians?)
  - Freedom of Speech, Conscience, religion / are Christians included? Are human rights respected?
  - Lack of equity in enforcement
  - Christian faith ridiculed! Could we try to understand what & why they believe instead?
  - People strongly discouraged from believing anything – be passionate discouraged – "be safe in grey" potentially correct
  - Christians put increasingly in position to choose between / Living out faith (fundamental human rights) / Security of employment (Tom)

Hard to encourage law, policy makers recognizing Christian position – human rights, freedom of conscience etc
- New emphasis / on sterile now professional Sterile
  - Need Respectful, interesting teaching,
  - Put Character back in teaching!
  - Relate faith but do the job – Don't Convert; have integrity

- We are moving away from Christianity (if by Christianity we mean 'Church')
  - Church can be non-inclusive, emphasize divisions etc Rather than unity –
  - Church needs to move on! I apologize for the Church sometimes (Chrissy) too narrow,

- Conflict affect moreso those with an Evangelical view

Significance of Story

- Opportunity to talk about issues (faith/practice)
- Some Careers restrict this more
- Opportunity to project a God who is all-embracing in Love; valuing people => Rather than being Condemned, judged, damned – believed by Some,

"faith is who we are are (identity) it's all of us wherever we go, Can't separate. God wants all of us."

THEMES / ANALYSIS Content

- Issues of honesty + interpretations
- Issues of fairness & Consistencies
- Conflict, complement & pragmatism
- Perceptions of Christian influence (Marginalisation)
- Complexities of faith in public sphere
- Impact/Significance of Life Stories
- .

, Findings / Results from Data ~~Part 1~~

✓ Time line (Personal aspects) (Qs 1-2)
- Summarize PILOT & all 11 participants

Q1 Childhood (Primary Socialization) Section 1 (Qs 3-6)
- Parental Influence & impact
- Central theme of upbringing
- Core values adoption.
- Aspirations (Q 6)

Q2 Personal Values Section 1 (Qs 7-11)
- Process of adopting values (Q 7)
- Changing values
→ - Incidence of inward value Conflict in teaching (Q9/10
- Value transmission or Clarification (Q 11)

Christian Beliefs (Qs 12-18) Section 2
- Story of coming to faith in Jesus
- Early experiences / activities of Christian Faith
- Current Ministry / Church involvement & Denomination
- The Authority of Scripture (Q15).
Q16 - Sharing Christian beliefs on S/C issues: Stories & strategies
- Development (including changes) of Christian Faith
Q18 - Additional Comments: Interpreting & applying Scriptures

PSHE Teaching (Section 3) Qs 19-22
- Personal stories of being taught PSHE.
- Journey to becoming a PSHE Teacher
- Subject identity Stereotypes / Personal Qualities Needed
(Q22/33) - Place of personal beliefs / values in practice

PART 2: Section 4 Research Qs (23-27)
Identifying + Defining Sensitive & Controversial topics
- - Topic Selection procedures
Theme - Definition & incidence of S/C issues in teaching.

Analysis of Themes from Data Interviews

Timeline: Meaning, interpretations, significance of stories,
+ QS   incidences; Relate to theory, chapter 2; use
              framework for analysis eg Critical Realism / Post modernism
Key Concepts emanating:- Enculturalisation, objectivity, neutrality,
non-propagation.

25 = Definition & topics identified as Controversial
26 = Reasons & Implications for identifying issues
            as Sensitive & Controversial
27 — Delivery Responsibility of these topics
RQ2 Identifying issues & Tensions (QS 28 — 33)
        → Narratives of tensions in teaching these (28/29)
        — Perceptions of faith-Sharing / belief in teaching
        → Stories of struggles; Conscience / controversy (30)
        → Is there a personal conflict for these issues?
Q32 — Specific issues causing such conflict
33 — Influence of Values / beliefs in these issues

Question 3   (QS 34 - 37)
      Theme :- Managing personal, Conscience &
                  Professional Issues.
      — Strategies employed   (Q34)
      — Reasons for adopting them   (Q 35
34 — Guaranteeing or Avoiding undue influence
Q37 — Where's the boundary? Evangelising / Indoctrinating?

Question 4   (QS 38 - 43)
      Theme: Christian Beliefs & Teaching approaches —
                  Is there a connection in your teaching?
38 — Association / Connection identified
39 — The Place of christian faith in teaching
40 — Faith as compassion...

(cont'd)

- appropriateness of teacher appraisal
  leadership s/Christian (q 41)
- Perceptions of integrating personal faith &
  professional identity (q 42)
- Perception of teaching / Motivation for
  teaching (Career, Ministry, Vocation)

Research Q5 (Qs 44 - 50)

Theme: Wider Context & Implications of the
Christian beliefs & professional identity/practice

- Compatibility of gov't policies / laws
  with a faith position
- Implication of Policies & Laws on
  personal experiences as a Christian Teacher
- Marginalisation of Christian faith in professional life
-
- Implications of Christian Believing &
  professional Identity / Practice across
  other Disciplines / Careers

- Impact & Significance of Personal Story

- Perception of Christian believing in any
  secular context / Personal value of
  Christian Believing in professional practice

- A final Word / Comment

Teachers' Standards

Department for Education

PREAMBLE

Teachers make the education of their pupils their first concern, and are accountable for achieving the highest possible standards in work and conduct. Teachers act with honesty and integrity; have strong subject knowledge, keep their knowledge and skills as teachers up-to-date and are self-critical; forge positive professional relationships; and work with parents in the best interests of their pupils.

PART ONE: TEACHING

A teacher must:

1 Set high expectations which inspire, motivate and challenge pupils

- establish a safe and stimulating environment for pupils, rooted in mutual respect
- set goals that stretch and challenge pupils of all backgrounds, abilities and dispositions
- demonstrate consistently the positive attitudes, values and behaviour which are expected of pupils.

2 Promote good progress and outcomes by pupils

- be accountable for pupils' attainment, progress and outcomes
- be aware of pupils' capabilities and their prior knowledge, and plan teaching to build on these
- guide pupils to reflect on the progress they have made and their emerging needs
- demonstrate knowledge and understanding of how pupils learn and how this impacts on teaching
- encourage pupils to take a responsible and conscientious attitude to their own work and study.

3 Demonstrate good subject and curriculum knowledge

- have a secure knowledge of the relevant subject(s) and curriculum areas, foster and maintain pupils' interest in the subject, and address misunderstandings
- demonstrate a critical understanding of developments in the subject and curriculum areas, and promote the value of scholarship
- demonstrate an understanding of and take responsibility for promoting high standards of literacy, articulacy and the correct use of standard English, whatever the teacher's specialist subject
- if teaching early reading, demonstrate a clear understanding of systematic synthetic phonics
- if teaching early mathematics, demonstrate a clear understanding of appropriate teaching strategies.

4 Plan and teach well structured lessons

- impart knowledge and develop understanding through effective use of lesson time
- promote a love of learning and children's intellectual curiosity
- set homework and plan other out-of-class activities to consolidate and extend the knowledge and understanding pupils have acquired
- reflect systematically on the effectiveness of lessons and approaches to teaching
- contribute to the design and provision of an engaging curriculum within the relevant subject area(s).

5 Adapt teaching to respond to the strengths and needs of all pupils

- know when and how to differentiate appropriately, using approaches which enable pupils to be taught effectively
- have a secure understanding of how a range of factors can inhibit pupils' ability to learn, and how best to overcome these
- demonstrate an awareness of the physical, social and intellectual development of children, and know how to adapt teaching to support pupils' education at different stages of development
- have a clear understanding of the needs of all pupils, including those with special educational needs; those of high ability; those with English as an additional language; those with disabilities; and be able to use and evaluate distinctive teaching approaches to engage and support them.

6 Make accurate and productive use of assessment

- know and understand how to assess the relevant subject and curriculum areas, including statutory assessment requirements
- make use of formative and summative assessment to secure pupils' progress
- use relevant data to monitor progress, set targets, and plan subsequent lessons
- give pupils regular feedback, both orally and through accurate marking, and encourage pupils to respond to the feedback.

7 Manage behaviour effectively to ensure a good and safe learning environment

- have clear rules and routines for behaviour in classrooms, and take responsibility for promoting good and courteous behaviour both in classrooms and around the school, in accordance with the school's behaviour policy
- have high expectations of behaviour, and establish a framework for discipline with a range of strategies, using praise, sanctions and rewards consistently and fairly
- manage classes effectively, using approaches which are appropriate to pupils' needs in order to involve and motivate them
- maintain good relationships with pupils, exercise appropriate authority, and act decisively when necessary.

8 Fulfil wider professional responsibilities

- make a positive contribution to the wider life and ethos of the school
- develop effective professional relationships with colleagues, knowing how and when to draw on advice and specialist support
- deploy support staff effectively
- take responsibility for improving teaching through appropriate professional development, responding to advice and feedback from colleagues
- communicate effectively with parents with regard to pupils' achievements and well-being.

PART TWO: PERSONAL AND PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT

A teacher is expected to demonstrate consistently high standards of personal and professional conduct. The following statements define the behaviour and attitudes which set the required standard for conduct throughout a teacher's career.

- Teachers uphold public trust in the profession and maintain high standards of ethics and behaviour, within and outside school, by:
  - treating pupils with dignity, building relationships rooted in mutual respect, and at all times observing proper boundaries appropriate to a teacher's professional position
  - having regard for the need to safeguard pupils' well-being, in accordance with statutory provisions
  - showing tolerance of and respect for the rights of others
  - not undermining fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect, and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs
  - ensuring that personal beliefs are not expressed in ways which exploit pupils' vulnerability or might lead them to break the law.

- Teachers must have proper and professional regard for the ethos, policies and practices of the school in which they teach, and maintain high standards in their own attendance and punctuality.

- Teachers must have an understanding of, and always act within, the statutory frameworks which set out their professional duties and responsibilities.

The Teachers' Standards can be found on the GOV.UK website: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/teachers-standards

Year 7 TOPIC PLAN

TOPICS		
Aims of PSHE, National Curriculum, Ofsted and ECM; Ground rules Adjusting to secondary school life - Discussion.		
Dealing with issues in friendships		
Dealing with bullying: Types, effects of bullying and getting help		
Strategies in resolving conflicts: Negotiation, compromise and persuasion		
Families: Definition, types, functions and pressures.		
Loss and Life's Changes		
Puberty and Human Reproduction		
Keeping healthy – Diet, exercise, rest and wellbeing		
Personal hygiene		
Personal safety		
Managing Money		
Giving and receiving compliments		
Emergency! (First Aid)		
Drugs Awareness (including alcohol and tobacco)		
Having your say – Democracy, Project/Presentation		
Rules to live by (Home, friendship, school & society's rules)		
Rights and responsibility		
Young people and the law, Juvenile crime		
Respecting differences in people.		
The Houses of Parliament		
Media influences on your		

PSHCE gives students the opportunities to discover things that promote good health and well-being. They will take part in group discussions covering topics from adolescence relationships to illegal substances and

bullying. Whilst encouraging students to make their own decisions about what is best for them, a balanced overview on ways to keep healthy is always promoted. We support and meet the standards defined in the National Healthy Schools Programme and Every Child Matters Agenda.

Aims of Personal Social Health & Citizenship Education

- To develop self-confidence and a sense of responsibility

- To enable informed life choices

- To help develop positive relationships in and outside of   school.

- To develop a healthy and safer lifestyle

- To respect differences between people

The Education Act, Section 351 (1996) states that PSHCE must:

- Promote the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of pupils

- Prepare pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life.

Every Child Matters (ECM) requires schools to contribute to five outcomes:

- Be healthy

- Stay safe

- Enjoy and achieve

- Make a positive contribution

- Achieve economic wellbeing

The Statutory Aims of the National Curriculum (PSHCE) require students to become:

- Successful learners, who enjoy learning, make progress and achieve.

- Confident individuals who are able to live safe, healthy and fulfilling lives.

- Responsible citizens who make a positive contribution to society.

The Ofsted Evaluation Framework (2009) for 'outstanding schools'...

- Pupils have an excellent understanding about what constitutes unsafe situations.

- Almost all groups of pupils have a great deal of knowledge and understanding of the factors affecting many aspects of their physical and mental health and emotional wellbeing

- Pupils are aspirational. Know precisely what they need to do and are determined to succeed.

- Wellbeing requirement

- The Children's Act (2004) define wellbeing as 'the promotion of physical and mental health; emotional wellbeing; social and economic wellbeing; education, training and recreation; recognition of the contribution made by children to society; and protection from harm and neglect.'

Year 8 TOPIC PLAN

LESSONS	TOPICS		
	Aims, Topics & Ground rules *(ECM, NC Ofsted Aims)* Lesson 1: A New School Year		
	Future hopes (Careers development)		
	The Nature of work (Changes in working practices)		
	Developing Healthy Relationships; characteristics of unhealthy relationships		
	RSE: Contraception and STIs – Keeping safe		
	Keeping safe – out and about, online (Personal Safety)		
	Habits for a lifetime: Healthy Eating		
	Emergency (First Aid)		
	Drugs - Knowing the law		
	Drugs education (including Tobacco and alcohol)		
	Consumer Rights		
	Marriage and family life		
	Respecting Groups in society – The Elderly and Religious		
	Kicking out racism		
	Local government		
	Government, Parliament and Elections – Youth voting trends		
	The Commonwealth		
	The European Union		
	Teaching tomorrow's adults (UNICEF)		
21	Being a part of the UK: Multiculturalism and Britishness		
22	PSHE year-end review: Impact, Relevance and Application.		

Year 9 TOPIC PLAN

LESSONS	TOPICS
	Aims of PSHE; ECM, NC, Ofsted requirements Lesson 1: Reflecting of year 8
	Target Setting and Career plans
	Subject and Job Choices
	Personal development plans
	SRE: Characteristics of healthy and unhealthy Relationship
	When a relationship breaks down: Related Issues
	Sexually Transmitted Infections and Teenage pregnancies
	Contraception and the effects of Pornography, sexting and revenge porn; online safety.
	Mental Health and Teen Depression (Emotional Well-Being)
	Work-related Issues – Rights, responsibilities, contracts, work ethic
	Drugs Awareness (including tobacco and alcohol)
	Media influences (on our values, choices and behaviours)
	Study skills and Learning to Learn
	Juvenile court & The Criminal Justice System
	Local Government Finances
	Managing the Country's Finances - The Budget and Economy
	Political Parties/Voting and young people
	How can I contribute? (Active Citizenship Project)
	A Global Community – Political and Economic
	A Global Community – Social and Environmental
	Future Plans – Aspirations and Personal Goals
	PSHE course review: Topic Impact, relevance and application.

Year 10: TOPIC PLAN

	TOPICS	Assessment Strategies
	The Aims, Strands, Principles of Citizenship	
	Aims of Citizenship: ECM, NC & Ofsted Requirements	
Theme 1	**Community Action and Active Citizenship**	
	What factors make for effective citizens?	
	Taking part in the democratic process	
	Community Involvement	
	PSHE Topic: *Healthy and unhealthy Relationships*	
Theme 2	**Being a Citizen in the UK: Democracy and Identity**	
	Belongings, Identities and Multiculturalism	
	The Role of Parliament and Government	
	The Media and its influences **PSHE:** *Sexually Transmitted Infections & Contraception*	
Theme 3	**Fairness and Justice**	
	Citizenship Issues in the workplace	
	Rights and Responsibilities	
	Criminal Justice System (CPS); Youth Crime	
	Laws that govern us (Types of Laws)	
	PSHE: Money Management – Budgeting, Loans and Debt	
Theme 4	**Global Issues and Making a Difference**	
	Understanding Conflict	
	The nature of the world' economic system	
	The UN, WTO, IMF, World Bank and G8	
	PSHE: *Goal and Target Setting*	
	Year End Evaluation: Topics' Impact, Relevance and Application	

TOPIC PLAN – Year 11

LESSONS	TOPICS		
	Aims of PSHE; *ECM, NC & Ofsted Requirements* Reflection, Personal Goal-setting and Career plans		
	Careers: Mock Interviews Preparations, CV Writing Completing Job Applications Forms; Interview skills		
	Relevance of Recession, Restructuring and Redundancies		
	Discussion – Young People and the Law: Civil/Criminal		
	Characteristics of healthy and unhealthy relationships		
	Types of love and relationship, consent and appropriate behaviour		
	Sex Education: STIs – Contraception & Teen pregnancies; condom demonstration		
	Pornography and Sexuality (Same-sex relationships)		
	Drugs Awareness Education (including tobacco & alcohol)		
	Study Skills and Exam Preparation techniques		
	Driving Awareness & Road Safety including Theory Test practice		
	Conflict resolution skills: Negotiation, Compromise, Persuasion.		
	Money Management (Budgeting, Savings and Investments)		
	Banking – Loans and Debts: Mortgages and University.		
	Coping Strategies: Change, Loss and Rejection – stress management		
	Healthy living and Emotional wellbeing – Use of Leisure		
	Labour market (Qualifications, personal qualities & Work ethic & attitudes, Youth unemployment & Job prospects)		
	Consumer rights		
	Reflection, Projections and Personal Direction Post 16 Careers Library Visit (University and Job Research)		
	Study skills, Exam pressures and coping strategies		

Certificate of Achievement

Mr Phillip O'Connor

has successfully completed

a

programme of professional development
and recognition of teaching

in

Personal, Social and Health Education

with

Drug Education

Through participation in the programme this individual has
provided evidence of effective teaching.
Assessment has been made against national criteria exemplified
from the Teachers' Standards Framework

Andrew Adonis
Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Schools

April 2007

department for
education and skills
creating opportunity, releasing potential, achieving excellence

DH Department of Health

Teenage
Pregnancy
Unit