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UNIVERSITY OF SURREY

THE SUNDAY SCHOOL IN AN EAST LONDON BOROUGH

A Thesis Submitted to the
Department of Sociology
at the
University of Surrey
for the Degree of Master of Philosophy

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JUNE 1983
SUMMARY

This thesis is a study of the white-led Protestant Sunday school in the inner city London Borough of Newham. The research accepts the basic premise that the contemporary Sunday school is in numerical decline and has lost the social significance it once had and attempts to examine some of the reasons for this. The study is set in an historical context, reviewing the development of the Sunday school movement over the past hundred years. This is set against the changing social patterns within society as a whole as these affect the child and the school, and special reference is made to the major characteristics of the London Borough of Newham. In particular, the distinction between the "rough" and the "respectable" working classes is noted, and the historic alienation of the "rough" working classes from institutional Christianity may also be observed in Newham.

Field work for the research was carried out in Newham in 1978. Initially, a survey was conducted with the superintendent in each of the white-led Protestant schools. As well as providing an overview of the current situation within the Sunday school, the results of this survey identified the theological orientation of the Sunday school and the geographic area in which the school was located taken as an indicator of socio-economic class as the two principal variables affecting the role and function of the inner city Sunday school. Based on these two variables, four schools were selected for in-depth study, using the techniques of participant observation and focussed interviewing with the children, parents, teaching staff and clergy in each of the four schools. The interviews examined in depth the children's personal goals or expectations in attending Sunday school, and compared these with the school's official goals as these related to religious education and socialisation. The major conclusion of the research is that the Sunday school today is seen by the children primarily as a recreational activity. In this respect, it functions as one of a number of alternative leisure-time pursuits for the child, often failing to draw the children who are accustomed to more attractive forms of recreation. Thus the official goals of the school are bypassed by the child, and he generally attends regularly only if his personal goals relating to sharing an enjoyable recreational activity with his friends are being fulfilled.
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PART I

INTRODUCTION
CHAPTER 1

BACKGROUND TO RESEARCH

Since the inception of the Sunday school in the latter half of the eighteenth century, almost in spite of the church in some respects, concern over the future viability of the Sunday school has come to occupy an increasingly significant role in the thinking of both the Established Church and non-conformist bodies to the present day. Its manifest and latent functions have changed considerably over the years just as the predominantly agrarian society of the mid-1700's in which the earliest Sunday schools arose has evolved into the highly industrialised and technological society of today. It is not the intention of this thesis to trace the origins and growth of the Sunday school although the discussion will be set in a historical context. Major historical aspects have been covered in a recent study of Sunday schools and the working class by Thomas W. Laqueur. Rather the intention is to examine the contemporary Sunday school, specifically the school in an inner city context.

In the past, the Sunday school was an institution of major social and religious significance, particularly in the nineteenth and early part of the twentieth century. Not only did it provide a basic education for children of the poor, but it also provided a wide range of social activities. Its proponents saw in it a charitable method of caring for the poor, a means of reformation of manners, a deterrent to crime. The Sunday school was

... not only a social disciplinary force, saving untold numbers of the common people from punishment under the cruel laws of the land, but an institution which strongly and beneficially influenced relationships within communities...
Its decline in recent years, both in terms of its social significance and in terms of adherents, is, therefore, of considerable interest to students studying the interaction of church and society. It was to have been expected that some fall-off would take place, once the provision of a basic education became the responsibility of the state. Furthermore, the extreme poverty which the Sunday schools sought to alleviate through amenities such as sickness, burial and clothing clubs, was eventually reduced through government legislation. However, comparatively little research has been undertaken to study the current situation within the Sunday school, itself - the structure and function of the school, and the goals, expectations, assumptions and motivations of the various participants within the school. What has been carried out has tended to be primarily of an empirical nature in terms of a collection of statistical data by denominational bodies. This is not to minimise the importance of such data. However, there has been very little analysis of a theoretical nature with regard to Sunday schools in the latter half of the twentieth century, nor any attempt to set such an analysis against the changing social and religious situation to be found in the wider society. As David Martin observes,

... there has been no hysterical anxiety among social scientists to study Sunday schools, but they have been institutions of first-rank importance and their decline is therefore interesting...5

As noted above, work amongst children continues to rank relatively high on the list of priorities in the various denominations. Churches run Sunday schools, midweek activities for children, youth clubs and various uniformed organisations as well as frequently hosting various sports clubs. Considerable effort has been injected into improving teaching methods and manuals within the Sunday school, and much thought has been given to updating the theoretical underpinning of the churches' ministry.
to children. However, the local Sunday school has often been only peripherally affected, or initial enthusiasm for new schemes has gradually worn off as the practical difficulties involved in implementing them have appeared insurmountable. There has been a steady decline in the size of the Sunday school since the first decade of this century as the following table indicates, although the actual decline in the percentage of the population of Great Britain enrolled in Sunday schools began even earlier in the 1880's.

### TABLE 1.1  Sunday school enrolments, density and religious affiliation distinguishing between Anglican and others for Great Britain 1851-1961.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>No. of Students</th>
<th>Percentage of population in England, Scotland and Wales enrolled in Sunday schools</th>
<th>Percentage of students in C. of E. schools</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1851</td>
<td>2,614,274</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1881</td>
<td>5,762,038</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1901</td>
<td>5,952,431</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1906</td>
<td>6,178,827</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1911</td>
<td>6,129,496</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1916</td>
<td>5,572,194</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1921</td>
<td>5,256,052</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1931</td>
<td>4,823,666</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1941</td>
<td>3,565,786</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1951</td>
<td>3,047,794</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1961</td>
<td>2,547,026</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Nor is there any reason to suppose that the trend is reversing. As David Martin points out, in 1964 only one child in seven attended Sunday school regularly, and if a church service is included, one child in four...  

In the London Borough of Newham in 1978 only 6% of the total population of children in the appropriate age range were enrolled in the Sunday schools and this was only 1.4% of the total population of 228,900.
The present study is located in the East London inner city Borough of Newham, which is a highly industrialised, multi-racial area in the forefront of urban decay, facing the concomitant problems of unemployment, juvenile crime, racial tensions, poor standards of housing and education. It is against a background of seven years of work amongst children in this Borough that the writer undertakes the present study. I was attached to the Newham Community Renewal Programme, a Christian community work organisation and a registered charity, which is funded from church, charitable trust and government sources. My area of work entailed considerable involvement in children's secular activities such as after school and holiday clubs, and work with the local play association, as well as in religious activities such as Sunday schools and church-run mid-week clubs. It also offered opportunities for extensive discussions with Christians, both clergy and lay, regarding the nature of the church's responsibility toward children and the difficulties attached to the carrying out of such responsibility. Based on my experience in this area, I undertook to produce in a pilot scheme curriculum material suitable for use in an inner city area such as Newham. This material, entitled 'Turning Point!' which was completed in 1980 was designed for children with no church background. It is experientially based, caters particularly for the non-reader, and attempts to start with the child's own experience. It also includes information booklets for teaching staff and clergy. It was while preparing this material that the lack of any detailed theoretical analysis of the Sunday school in general, and of the inner city Sunday school in particular, became apparent, and this led to my undertaking the present research.

It was originally intended that this research into Sunday schools in a working class area should take the form of a curriculum study in an attempt to understand the content of Christian education and the methods
by which it was being communicated to the children within the context of the Sunday school. This was to tie in with an analysis of secular education in a working class community investigating issues such as educational disadvantage, language and social class. Ideal-typical models of working class and middle class society were adopted in order to posit that education was essentially a middle class institution. Thus, it was observed that education was literacy-based and examination oriented, that it assumed a middle class socialisation of a child in which the educational value of his environment was maximised, and that it was a means of social control in that, for example, the definition of knowledge rested in the hands of the teaching staff who could then decide what aspects to communicate to the children.\footnote{11} Then drawing on Basil Bernstein's theory of "elaborated" and "restricted" codes in language use, and his analysis of the classification and framing of knowledge and the way in which this was transmitted to the student by means of the systems of curriculum, paedagogy and evaluation,\footnote{12} it was noted that difficulties would be encountered in making the educational institution function effectively in a working class community.

Transferring this analysis to the Sunday school situation, the hypothesis was that Christian education, like secular education, needed to understand and experiment with new methods of communication within the context of what Bernstein terms the "restricted code". Having done this it was anticipated that the significance of the Sunday school for the working class child might be increased.

However, these early studies led to findings which were crucial for the subsequent development of the research. In the first place, a study of the literature connected with Sunday school and, more important, analysis of the interviews carried out with 58 Sunday school superintendents in
in the Borough of Newham indicated that while the Sunday school curriculum was of some importance, it was only one factor among many if one was attempting to understand the current situation with regard to the Sunday school in an inner city working class area. Secondly, the interviews highlighted the necessity for a broadening of the theoretical perspectives underlying the study. It became apparent that an analysis of the structure and function of the Sunday school alone was inadequate for an understanding of the full range of situations and relationships to be found within the local school. Hence an interactionist perspective was adopted with respect to certain aspects of the school so that it could be studied both in terms of its structure and function as an institution in relation to the wider community, and in terms of the goals and expectations adopted within the institution and the behavioural patterns taking place between its various participants. Finally, and most importantly, these early studies indicated that for a study of the Sunday school in a working class area, the crucial dichotomy in terms of class was not between ideal-typical middle and working class types but between the "rough" and "respectable" working classes. This distinction between the "rough" and "respectable" working classes is made by Josephine Klein in her analysis of working class life. She notes that,

... what distinguishes the respectable traditional working class group from the rough is the effort they make to maintain standards, and not to let things slide...

and goes on to say,

... A person will be less attracted to situations where others are very divergent from him than to situations where others are very close to him. When a discrepancy exists, there will be a tendency to cease comparing oneself with those in the group who are very different from oneself...

Thus, it was apparent that the "respectable" working classes were closer in terms of values and aspirations to the middle classes than they were to the "rough" working classes. Both Wickham and Booth in speaking of the
alienation of the working classes or "poor" from the church, therefore, were referring to the "rough" working class. In terms of religious practice, the "respectable" working class tend to be more similar to the middle class.

Consequently, moving away from a curriculum study, the research broadened its base to take the form of a more general study of the institution of the Sunday school in a working class area and the position which the school occupies within the priorities of its participants. It accepts that the contemporary Sunday school is in numerical decline and has lost the religious and social significance it held in the latter part of the nineteenth century. Thus, the research examines on the one hand, the Sunday school in institutional terms: organisation, relationship with the adult Christian community, the children and their home background, teaching staff and curricula materials. On the other hand, the study explores the multiplicity of expectations and goals held by the various participants in the school: clergy, teachers, children and parents, reasons for their involvement or non-involvement, and the vested interests underlying their participation. Whilst the research recognises the significance of the historical origins and context, the principal aim is to inform the contemporary situation. Thus the study is of a cross-sectional rather than a longitudinal nature.

In chapter 3, an overview of the historical and social setting is presented. The chapter briefly outlines the historical origins of the Sunday school, and goes on to consider the Sunday school within a twentieth century urban context. The chapter then reviews the major social changes which have taken place since the last two decades of the nineteenth century when Sunday school attendance began to decline. This decline, with minor fluc-
tations, has continued to the present day. In particular, economic, social, educational and cultural changes are noted, and it will be seen that the contemporary social context within which the school functions, is vastly different to the social setting in which the Sunday school arose. It is argued that these social changes have inevitably affected the institution of the Sunday school and the volume of adherents. Chapter 4 localises the discussion with a brief study of the London Borough of Newham where the field work for the research was conducted.

Chapters 5 and 6 comprise the major part of the research with a study of the Sunday school in Newham. Chapter 5 presents an analysis of the first stage of the field work in which structured interviews were conducted with the superintendents of 58 Sunday schools in the Borough. The areas covered in these interviews included information on the structure of the school, teaching staff, teaching material, the theological orientation of the school, and the family background of the children. After summarising the data, this chapter presents an overview of the current Sunday school situation in Newham. It will be shown that the theological orientation of the Sunday school is a significant factor in causing variations in the structure of the schools, in the materials used and in the teaching styles employed. Also, the area of the Borough in which the school lies - the "respectable", predominantly owner/occupier area, or the "rough", predominantly council house area - plays a significant role in determining the numbers of children attending and their family background. It will be argued that these two variables: theological orientation and geographical area, are the key variables in determining the structure and methodology and composition of the schools. They provided the basis for the selection of the four schools for in-depth study.

Chapter 6 presents the second stage of the field work: in depth studies of four Sunday schools involving participant observation in the schools and interviews with the participants in the schools: clergy, teachers,
children and parents. Following the presentation of the findings from the four case studies, there is an analysis of the various goals and expectations to be found amongst the participants. It will be argued that where the goals of the institution are not clearly defined, not effectively communicated, or are at variance with the expectations of the client or the child, the institution will be less than fully effective as a socialising agency, its effectiveness decreasing as variance with the goals of the client increases.

In conclusion, Chapter 7 carries this argument one step further. Following the analysis of the goals in Chapter 6, it will be argued that in the majority of instances the goals of the institution are not co-terminal with the goals of the client; indeed, they are frequently widely divergent. It will be shown that the client - the child - sees the Sunday school primarily in terms of meeting his/her needs for a leisure time/recreational pursuit, whereas, whilst there are many individual variations, the Sunday school staff generally have as their primary goal some form of inculcation or communication of the basics of faith and knowledge of Christian teaching. It will be argued that in order for the school to be effective as a socialising agency, the staff must take cognizance of the fact that the school is a voluntary organisation, and therefore the goals of the child must be incorporated into the goals of the institution, to a degree and in a manner unnecessary in a compulsory day school situation.

Having broadly outlined the content of the thesis, Chapter 2 will outline the two principal parts of the study: the survey of superintendents and in-depth case studies, and will consider certain aspects of the research methodology.
In common with other inner city areas, Sunday schools in the London Borough of Newham face particular problems which make their situation distinct from that of the suburban or rural Sunday school. Changing patterns in industry, housing, education, and community relations have affected the church scene considerably, both directly and indirectly. With the decline of the docks and allied industries, and the movement away from the area of numerous other firms, there has been considerable unemployment. The new London Docklands Development Corporation has yet to make any significant impact in terms of attracting new industry to the area. Whilst new building programmes are underway in parts of the Borough, in other areas there remains a high proportion of old and substandard housing. This, together with factors such as the lack of employment, and low standards of education have encouraged those most socially mobile, particularly first-time buyers with young families, to move north and east to more desirable suburban areas.

Successive waves of immigrants, first from the West Indies, followed by those from East Africa and Asia, have resulted in a multi-cultural community which lacks homogeneity in language, culture or religion and has led to a tense and difficult community relations situation. Within the traditional churches, social changes have led to diminishing congregations and the loss of leadership, leading in many cases to closure of the church. In other cases, the remaining congregation is predominantly elderly or very young, and a strong contingent in the thirty to forty age range is lacking. It is interesting to note that these changes have also given rise to a number of black-led churches, some of considerable strength and potential.
Against such a changing backdrop, it was expected that there would be many different expectations amongst those connected with the church and the Sunday school regarding the role and purpose of the contemporary Sunday school within the institutional church in an inner city industrialised area. In order to obtain information regarding the current position of the school, two principal methods of data collection were undertaken: (1) a survey of Sunday school superintendents, and (2) in-depth case studies in four selected schools. The field work for this research was carried out in the London Borough of Newham.

2.1 Principal Methods of Data Collection

In the first instance, an interview was conducted with the superintendent or key individual in each Sunday school, and an analysis of these interviews forms the first main part of the research. The specific areas covered in the interviews will be noted below, but the principal aim of this survey was to obtain a general picture of the contemporary inner city Sunday school, using Newham as an example. The use of a structured interview schedule was selected in preference to a simple questionnaire as it virtually ensured a 100% response on all questions and also enabled a rapport to be established with these key informants. This was particularly useful since the area of religious belief and practice can prove to be a very sensitive area with some individuals, since it is a highly personal and subjective realm. This approach also created a basis of understanding for possible future cooperation in the event that the Sunday school was selected for in-depth observation. Furthermore, face to face contact
enabled the interviewer to probe on certain questions to an extent which would not have been possible with a self-completion questionnaire.

However, the scope of an interview schedule, although useful in gathering certain types of data, is inevitably limited in that it is highly structured, with the result that it does not permit the informant to digress or to elaborate upon a particular area. Also, in the present study, data about Sunday schools were only obtained from a single informant in the case of each Sunday school, and this viewpoint was likely to be coloured by the fact that the informant was a key official in the Sunday school. Therefore, in order to obtain a more comprehensive picture, in-depth studies were carried out in addition in four selected Sunday schools, and the analysis of these four studies forms the second main part of the research. In this part of the study there was not only first-hand observation of the principles and practice within the school, but there were also opportunities to speak with the various participants within the school: clergy, teachers, children and parents. Thus a wider perspective of the role and function of the Sunday school in an inner city area was obtained.

2.2 Survey of Superintendents

2.2.1 Aims and Design of the Interview Schedule

The interview schedule was designed with a two-fold aim. First, it was so structured as to obtain an overview of the current situation within the Sunday schools of the white-led Protestant churches in Newham. This was primarily intended as a means of gathering data regarding such aspects as the organisation of the Sunday school, and
the characteristics of its children and teachers. In view of the
dearth of any substantial empirical data on current trends within
the Sunday school, this was seen to be an important aspect of the
study. Secondly, the interviews were designed to identify certain
key variables which had the greatest effect on the structure and
teaching styles within the Sunday school. An analysis of these
variables then provided the basis on which to select the four
Sunday schools for the subsequent in-depth observation.

With these aims in mind, the interview schedule covered questions
in five areas.

1. General Information
   - empirical data relating to the size and structure of the Sunday
     school.

2. Family Background
   - information on the ethnic origins of the children, parental
     occupations and involvement in the church, housing, etc.

3. Theological Orientation
   - data relating to the aims and philosophy underlying the Sunday
     school.

4. Teaching Material
   - information regarding the nature of the material used and its
     effectiveness/limitations.

5. Teaching Staff
   - empirical data relating to the staff, qualifications, experience,
     etc.

It was felt that these areas covered the basic information necessary
for obtaining a broad picture of the Sunday schools, and also provided
a useful introduction to undertaking the in-depth observations.
A pilot study was carried out in a neighbouring Borough, similar in many respects to Newham, necessitating a few minor alterations to the interview schedule. More importantly, it highlighted an issue that reappeared several times during the subsequent interviews, viz., that the majority of teachers had little specific knowledge as to the home situation of the children and as to family occupation. Hence, in several questions, requests for specific numbers were dropped and general impressions sought. Insofar as these were only impressions, the value of these questions in providing hard data was considerably limited. A copy of the interview schedule is given in Appendix I.

2.2.2 The Sunday Schools

The interviews were carried out in the autumn of 1977 and the spring of 1978 with the superintendent or other key individual in 58 white-led Protestant Sunday schools in Newham. Initially, the intention was also to interview four of the largest black-led churches from the major black pentecostal sects. However, insofar as there are numerous historical and cultural differences between black and white churches in terms of teaching styles, material and organisation, it was decided that their inclusion would introduce too many variables and limit the effectiveness of the present research in its attempt to study the changing role of the traditional white-led Sunday schools. In addition, since all white led churches were contacted, it would have been necessary to include all black-led churches, of which there are some twenty in the Borough. This was not possible in the time available.
Churches of the Roman Catholic tradition were not included because they do not hold a Sunday school for Christian education in the same sense as do the Protestant churches. The bulk of their religious education takes place in the day school situation. Thus the churches contacted were drawn from the four major Protestant traditions: Church of England, Baptist, Methodist and United Reformed Church. In addition, one congregation was of the Moravian tradition and the remainder (classed below as sects) included Brethren, London City Missions, Salvation Army, Elim, Assemblies of God, and those affiliated to the Federation of Independent Evangelical Churches (F.I.E.C.).

The following table gives the total number of churches and of Sunday schools in Newham by denomination. It will be noted that six churches no longer run Sunday schools. This has been due to a drop both in the number of children and in the teachers available to staff the schools, although which was causal is difficult to assess. In some instances, other children's activities, such as scouts and guides, still take place on church premises although such clubs are often not run by church members.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Affiliation</th>
<th>N. of Congregations</th>
<th>N. of Congs. with Sunday Schools</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Church of England</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baptist</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Methodist</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United Reformed Church</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sects</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>67</strong></td>
<td><strong>61</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Initial contact with the churches was made with the minister in charge who then referred the enquiry to the superintendent (or other key person as the superintendent was not necessarily the individual with the most concern for and interest in the Sunday school). A relatively low profile approach was adopted in the interviews as it was felt that the use of the terms "survey" or "questionnaire" would lead to informant resistance and might also militate against the building up of rapport. Hence, the interviewer entered the situation from the position of one with a concern for children's work and an interest in learning as much as possible about Sunday schools. Despite such a low-key approach, the problem of non-response was encountered in two cases, and a third case produced only a partial response. In the first instance a Church of England vicar insisted that the affairs of his Sunday school were the church's own domestic concern and further attempts to reach him were blocked by his housekeeper. It is worth noting that this vicar is known even amongst his fellow clergy as a "loner" who refuses to become involved in issues which he does not consider to be of direct relevance to his own church.

In the second instance, no response was forthcoming from a United Reformed Church minister despite three personal contacts and a letter stating in outline the purpose of the enquiry and the information required. In the third case, a Sunday school of the exclusive Brethren sect, the elder refused to give specific information regarding his local situation although a number of "safe" items of general information, such as Sunday school structure and material used, were elicited.
Generally the interest and cooperation from the various ministers and individuals involved in the Sunday schools was excellent. Particularly significant was the fact that some of the questions led the informant to digress on to an aspect of the school that was of particular concern to him/her such as the future of the school, parent-school relationships, objectives or teaching methods. Thus, although on average each interview lasted approximately one and a half hours, some extended to three hours when the informant took full opportunity of sharing his/her concerns. Such digressions indicated that there was considerable concern at a local level regarding Sunday schools - certainly among the leaders if not among other teachers - thus confirming the value of data collection at such a level, rather than relying primarily upon statistics and other material available at a national level.

2.3 **In-Depth Case Studies**

2.3.1 **Basis for the Selection of the Sunday Schools for the In-Depth Studies**

As noted above, the information obtained by means of the interviews with the Sunday school superintendents necessarily represented a very limited perspective of the school. Thus it was decided to select four representative schools for in-depth study. The analysis of the data collected in the Survey of Superintendents indicated that there were two variables which were of major significance in determining the structure, composition and methodology of the Sunday schools. These were the theological orientation of the school and the geographical area in which the Sunday school was located taken as a broad indicator
of social class. It was at first thought that other variables such as the size of the Sunday school or denominational affiliation might also be major determinants in terms of such factors as the format of the Sunday school, visiting patterns, parental involvement, age and experience of teachers, training, preparation and so on. However, data obtained from the interviews with the superintendents indicated that while size and denomination were of some importance, the two factors that were significantly related to the majority of variables were theological orientation and area as an indicator of social class. In view of this finding, the selection of the four Sunday schools for in-depth study was based on a scale of theological orientation and one of socio-economic class.

2.3.1.1 Theological Orientation

The principal dichotomy among the churches visited in terms of theological orientation was between the theologically conservative and the theologically liberal. Historically, this dichotomy arose during the last century, as Biblical scholars increasingly broke away from dogmatics and concentrated on Biblical theology. In dogmatics, the focus was wholly on church tradition, 'no freedom of interpretation was allowed to the individual scholar, exegesis was non-existent and ecclesiastical teaching never challenged'. The break away from this emphasis led to a greater concentration on the Biblical text rather than the church as the authority, encouraged the study of Biblical languages, encouraged exegesis, and stressed the importance of adopting a historical approach towards the study of the Bible. In its infancy, this approach was still very conservative, using the newly-found knowledge to support particular doctrinal stands. How-
ever, as this modern critical period progressed into the early twentieth century, numerous theologians - particularly those of German origin - challenged the traditional approaches still further. In particular, those stressing the importance of an historical approach 'found an able exponent in Holtzmann, whose work on New Testament theology may be regarded as the classic statement of "liberal" thinking. He definitely rejected any approach to New Testament theology based on a dogmatic framework and also rejected the idea of revelation'. The rise of form criticism of which Bultmann was a major proponent challenged the historicity of Jesus still further. This critical approach called for a re-examination of each verse of scripture in order to determine its origins and authenticity. Thus a simple literal acceptance of the Bible was discarded and a reanalysis of the validity of certain passages of scripture and their interpretation resulted.

In recent years, the liberal school of thought has questioned more and more aspects of the Bible such as the historicity of men such as Jonah and Job, the authorship of the books of the Bible, the virgin birth, the incarnation, and even the reality of the resurrection and the existence of God. Hence, there was the "God is dead" movement of the early seventies, and more recently books such as The Myth of God Incarnate which calls into question the divinity of Jesus. This movement has reached its logical conclusion in the work of theologians such as Don Cupitt who, in his book Taking Leave of God, discounts all revelation because man has "come of age".

In the practical working out of this approach, the liberal Sunday school will place comparatively little emphasis on systematic learning
and understanding of Biblical stories. Use of the Old Testament is generally discouraged as many teachers feel that the God revealed there is incompatible with the Jesus of the New Testament. In the New Testament, miracle and healing situations are discussed but the miraculous element is often ignored or glossed over. The learning of memory verses is not a high priority if indeed it is practised at all. Rather the child's focus is directed towards an ethical understanding of the Bible and children are encouraged towards growth into law-abiding and morally upright citizens.

Over and against this, the theologically conservative uphold the whole Bible as the inspired Word of God. This is based on the statement in II Timothy 3.16, "All scripture is inspired by God and is profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction and for training in righteousness". They view the Bible as the final source of authority in all matters of religious and moral teaching. Some ultra-orthodox hold to the verbal inspiration of the scriptures, believing that every word in the original texts was God-inspired. Conservatives generally uphold the traditional authorship of the books of the Bible as represented in the King James version. Thus they tend to reject modern Biblical criticism when it calls into question authorship and source material which has the effect of bringing into question the textual veracity and the interpretation of the Bible.

The conservative Sunday school thus places a high value on the importance of teaching Bible stories and of encouraging children to understand what these stories reveal about the nature of God and his commands to man. The Old Testament is considered to be as im-
important as the New, and the learning of memory verses is generally stressed. Most conservative Sunday schools believe in the need for a conversionist experience and thus they encourage the children to make a personal commitment to God, although the way this is handled varies from school to school.

There are, of course, many different strands in conservatism just as there are in liberalism. For example, the social action strand emphasising the need for Christians to become involved in social issues is generally located within the liberal tradition. There is today, however, a trend amongst conservative evangelical Christians towards a greater involvement in society which they see to be in accordance with Biblical teaching. This has had the effect of blurring the distinctions between certain strands within these two schools of thought.

Within the Sunday schools, liberalism and conservatism in terms of theology should not be confused with what is meant by liberalism and conservatism in terms of teaching methods. Thus a very conservative school with regard to theology could quite conceivably be liberal in terms of teaching methods. Often a liberal approach to teaching methods indicates that a Sunday school has taken recognition of some of the realities of the social situation it faces. For example, a theologically conservative school with liberal teaching methods may not encourage children to bring their own Bibles to Sunday school knowing that many children do not possess a Bible of their own. They may not encourage reading from the Bible knowing
that some of the children cannot read at all well. They may not stress memory verses knowing that the child will receive no home encouragement to learn or recall the verse. They may encourage a more experientially-based approach to teaching with many craft activities and a minimum of sitting and listening. However, they are still conservative in terms of their theology. On the other hand, a theologically conservative school with conservative teaching methods will probably not engage in any craft activities, it will use the Authorised Version or possibly the Revised Standard Version, children will sit in rows and the need for quietness and attention will be emphasised, traditional children's hymns will be sung, and the teachers will hold very closely to the Bible story. Obviously there is much overlap of methods between the various Sunday schools although this presents a fairly typical picture. It is more common to find a conservative Sunday school with liberal teaching methods than a liberal Sunday school with conservative methods, although this can occur.

The following scaling of the Sunday schools in terms of theological orientation has attempted to take into account conservatism both in terms of teaching methods and of theology, although clearly a precise division cannot be established because of the great variation in theology and method. Furthermore, the implicit values which underlie the interpretation and working out of theology and method obviously vary from school to school.
Variables Used in Scaling

Seven variables were originally used as a basis for establishing a scale of theological orientation. A discussion of these variables follows and the original frequencies for the responses have been indicated.

1. How important is the Bible in the teaching given in the Sunday school?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Responses</th>
<th>Frequencies</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. very important</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. fairly important</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. not very important</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. not used</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total N. of schools: 58

Extensive use of the Bible through reading it, having it available for reference, learning verses from it, and generally using it as a focal point of the lesson is considered to be a reliable indicator of a theologically conservative Sunday school. It is unlikely that any school which could be classed as theologically conservative according to the other indicators would concede that the Bible was only peripherally important or not used at all. Some Sunday schools, however, which appear to be less conservative might consider the Bible to be important in the teaching given, although methodologically this importance would probably be worked out in a different way to the more theologically conservative schools.
2. Which version is used?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Responses</th>
<th>Frequencies</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Authorised Version</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Revised Standard Version</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Living Bible</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Today's English Version</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. New English Bible</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total N. of Schools: 52

Missing values: 6

As indicated above, considerable reliance may be placed on the fact that schools using the Authorised or Revised Standard Versions are the most theologically conservative. It is, however, not possible to draw the opposite conclusion, namely, that those using other versions are necessarily liberal. Some Sunday schools, for example, which are theologically conservative in terms of the other indicators, regard the use of a modern translation as an essential educational tool for communicating the scriptures to children. Hence this question appears to indicate those schools which are conservative in terms of both theology and method.

3. Are the children encouraged to bring their own Bibles to Sunday school?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Responses</th>
<th>Frequencies</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. yes</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. no</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total N. of schools: 57

Missing value: 1

The reason this question was asked was to give further information.
regarding teaching methods. Although it gives an indication as to the theological orientation of the Sunday school, its limitations in this respect must be recognised as was indicated above. This question has to be understood within the context of the culture and social class of the area. For example, a high priority is not placed on reading in an area such as Newham. This fact has been amply documented in a comparative study of the reading habits of children in a suburban and inner city area. In terms of the Sunday school, those which encourage the children to bring their own Bibles indicate a degree of conservatism in both theology and in teaching methods. In the same context, it must be recognised that schools which do not encourage the children to bring Bibles may simply be aware of the realities of the cultural situation and may not necessarily be liberal in terms of theology.

4. What do you as the Sunday school superintendent see as the aim of the Sunday school?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Responses</th>
<th>Frequencies</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. bringing children into a relationship with God</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. religious education (knowledge of the Bible)</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. moral education (growing into useful citizens)</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. making converts (church membership)</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. promoting fellowship (interpersonal relationships)</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. keeping children off the streets</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total N. of schools: 58

The response, "bringing children into a relationship with God" may be taken as a reliable indicator of theological conservatism in that it expresses a purely religious aim in terms of a conversion experience. By contrast, all the other aims contain an element which is not
necessarily specifically related to religious belief or practice. For example, moral education need have no religious basis and can simply be instruction in the norms of society. Promoting fellowship and keeping the children off the streets are primarily social purposes. The aim of making converts with a view to church membership represents a desire to bring children into an institutional structure and it may be argued that this does not necessarily involve a personal religious experience. A person may, therefore, join a religious institution without necessarily having a religious experience. Even an emphasis on knowledge of the Bible may simply indicate an academic interest.

The conservative Sunday schools, by contrast, would insist on a personal conversion experience as the basis of faith. This experience forms the foundation for subsequent growth, learning and maturation within the Christian community.

5. What teaching material is currently used in your Sunday school?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Responses</th>
<th>Frequencies</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Bible only</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Go Teach and others, e.g. Salvation Army and Assemblies of God material</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Scripture Press/Gospel Light</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Scripture Union</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Partners in Learning</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Alive in God's World, Altogether One</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Own material</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total N. of schools: 57

Missing value: 1

A brief description of these materials will be given in Chapter 5,
with some indication of their theological orientation. Frequencies were obtained in respect of each category of teaching material as noted above. Based on these frequencies, a dichotomy was formulated broadly using a 50/50 cut-off point but placing the Scripture Union category within the conservative division. This decision was based on the results of a correlation matrix in which the correlation coefficients were very low between material and other variables in the theological orientation scale when Scripture Union was classed as liberal.

Using this information it is possible tentatively to posit a continuum for teaching material along the following lines.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Bible only</th>
<th>Go Teach</th>
<th>Scripture Press</th>
<th>Scripture Partners in CIO Own et. al.</th>
<th>Gospel Light</th>
<th>Scripture Union</th>
<th>Learning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Conservative    Liberal

This continuum is being suggested on the basis of the foregoing argument with additional support from an analysis of the content of the material itself. Thus such factors as the amount of Biblical input, whether lessons are Bible story or theme based, usage of Old Testament material, type of music recommended, which versions of the Bible are quoted, whether memory verses are emphasised and so on, were all taken into account.

6. Are the children encouraged to learn memory verses?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Responses</th>
<th>Frequencies</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. yes</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. no</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total N. of schools:</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
This question also relates to teaching methods. Thus while the learning of memory verses indicates both a theologically and methodologically conservative school, those who do not encourage the learning of memory verses may appear nevertheless to be conservative theologically although more liberal in terms of teaching methods adopted.

7. Does your Sunday school take part in the Scripture Exam?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Responses</th>
<th>Frequencies</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. yes</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. no</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total N. of schools: 58

The Scripture Exam is an annual event sponsored by the National Christian Education Council which tests the children's Bible knowledge on a particular subject or book of the Bible. This again has to be taken against the educational problems of the area. Most children are not oriented towards taking exams unless required to do so in a school situation, and this exam is particularly difficult. Consequently, comparatively few Sunday schools actually took part in it, recognizing that it would be beyond the capabilities and outside the interest of many of their children.

Derivation of the Theological Orientation Scale

Originally an intercorrelation matrix was established based on the full coding of each of the seven variables indicated above. This produced, however, several very low correlations, including one which was negative, which were attributed to the unequal weighting given to each variable by the use of the full coding. In particular, there was a seven point scale for material, a six point scale for aim,
five for version, four for Bible, and only a two point scale for own, memory and exam.

In view of these low correlations, it was decided to recode and, by equalising the weighting, broadly dichotomise the responses as near a 50/50 split as possible but consistent with the theoretical isolation of those responses which were the most conservative. Thus, those coded "1" were classed as conservative and those coded "2" as liberal. Frequencies for the recoded responses were as follows.

1. How important is the Bible in the teaching given in the Sunday school?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Responses</th>
<th>Frequencies</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. very important</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. all others</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total:</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. Which version is used?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Responses</th>
<th>Frequencies</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Authorised Version</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Revised Standard Version</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. All others</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total:</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Missing values: 6
3. Are the children encouraged to bring their own Bible to Sunday school?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Responses</th>
<th>Frequencies</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. yes</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. no</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total:</strong></td>
<td><strong>57</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Missing values: 1

4. What do you as the Sunday school superintendent see as the aim of the school?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Responses</th>
<th>Frequencies</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. bringing children into a relationship with God</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. all others</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total:</strong></td>
<td><strong>58</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5. What teaching material is currently used in your Sunday school?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Responses</th>
<th>Frequencies</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Bible only</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Go Teach et. al.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scripture Press/Gospel Light</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scripture Union</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. All others</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total:</strong></td>
<td><strong>57</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

6. Are the children encouraged to learn memory verses?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Responses</th>
<th>Frequencies</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. yes</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. no</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total:</strong></td>
<td><strong>58</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
7. Does your Sunday school take part in the Scripture Exam?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Responses</th>
<th>Frequencies</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. yes</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. no</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total:</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Based on the dichotomised responses a second intercorrelation matrix was then established (Table 2.2).

**TABLE 2.2 Unweighted Intercorrelation Matrix Based on Dichotomised Responses**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Bible</th>
<th>Version</th>
<th>Own</th>
<th>Aim</th>
<th>Material</th>
<th>Memory Verse</th>
<th>Scripture Exam</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bible</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Version</td>
<td>.11</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Own</td>
<td>.43</td>
<td>.20</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aim</td>
<td>.51</td>
<td>.07</td>
<td>.32</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Material</td>
<td>.41</td>
<td>.24</td>
<td>.36</td>
<td>.43</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mem. Vs.</td>
<td>.15</td>
<td>.24</td>
<td>.12</td>
<td>.22</td>
<td>.48</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scrip. Ex.</td>
<td>.17</td>
<td>.11</td>
<td>.31</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td>.22</td>
<td>.33</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

N = 52
Missing values: 6

In this matrix, the correlation coefficients for the variables version, memory verse and scripture exam proved to be low compared with those for the other four variables. This would appear to relate to the fact that some Sunday schools were conservative in theological content but liberal in respect of teaching methods, having an understanding of the cultural issues facing them.
Thus it would appear that these three variables limited the usefulness of the scale as a measure of theological orientation alone. In order, therefore, to raise the reliability of the scale, it was decided to restrict it to the other four variables. For this scale the average inter-item correlation (r) was .41 and the coefficient of reliability (α) with four items was .74.7

Thus the scale of theological orientation was established on the basis of the following four variables, dichotomised as indicated above:

1. Importance of the Bible in the teaching given in the Sunday school.
2. Whether or not the children are encouraged to bring their Bibles to the school.
3. The aim of the Sunday school as seen by the superintendent.
4. The teaching material used in the school.

Scoring on the scale ranged from 4 (conservative) to 8 (liberal) and a broad 50/50 cut-off point was taken between scale scores 4 and 5. The frequency distribution and scaling of the Sunday schools may be seen in Table 2.3.

**TABLE 2.3 Frequency Distribution of the Sunday schools on the Theological Orientation Scale Compared by Area.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scale Scores for Theological Orientation</th>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Conservative 4</td>
<td>West Ham 9</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liberal 8</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>East Ham</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

N = 56

Missing Values: 2

Total Number of Conservative Schools: 23
Total Number of Liberal Schools: 33
Major Characteristics of the Sunday Schools in the Four Cells of the Matrix

### Cell 1 (Conservative - West Ham)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of Sunday schools</th>
<th>9</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Denominational Distribution</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Church of England</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baptist</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Methodist</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U.R.C.</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sects</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Range in Sunday school size</td>
<td>12 - 80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average Sunday school size</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sunday school time (mode)</td>
<td>afternoon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teaching materials distribution</td>
<td>Bible</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Go Teach/S.A. et.al.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Scripture Union</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Cell 2 (Conservative - East Ham)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of Sunday schools</th>
<th>14</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Denominational distribution</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Church of England</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baptist</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Methodist</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U.R.C.</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sects</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Range in Sunday school size</td>
<td>8 - 166</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average Sunday school size</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average Sunday school size (excluding maximum)</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sunday school time (mode)</td>
<td>morning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teaching materials distribution</td>
<td>Bible</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Go Teach/S.A. et.al.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Scripture Press et.al</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Scripture Union</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Cell 3 (Liberal - West Ham)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of Sunday schools:</th>
<th>16</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Denominational distribution: | Church of England 9  
Baptist 2  
Methodist 2  
U.R.C. 1  
Sects 2 |
| Range in Sunday school size: | 7 - 145 |
| Average Sunday school size: | 34 |
| Average Sunday school size (excluding maximum): | 26 |
| Sunday school time (mode): | morning |
| Teaching material distribution: | Bible 1  
Scripture Press et.al 1  
Scripture Union 6  
Partners in Learning 4  
C.I.O. 1  
Own 3 |

### Cell 4 (Liberal - East Ham)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of Sunday schools:</th>
<th>17</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Denominational distribution: | Church of England 9  
Baptist 4  
Methodist 2  
U.R.C. 0  
Sects 2 |
| Range in Sunday school size: | 6 - 85 |
| Average Sunday school size: | 28 |
| Sunday school time (mode): | morning |
| Teaching material distribution: | Bible 1  
Go Teach/S.A. et.al 1  
Scripture Press et.al 1  
Scripture Union 8  
Partners in Learning 2  
C.I.O. 3  
Own 1 |
Other characteristics were fairly evenly distributed over the four cells as may be seen in Appendix II, excluding geographical variations which are reflected in such aspects as housing and ethnic origins.

2.3.1.2 Socio Economic Factors

The second variable adopted as a means of selecting Sunday schools for in-depth study was the area in which the church was located, not as significant in itself, but as an indicator of social class.

The Borough of Newham is divided into six main areas: East Ham, Manor Park and Forest Gate which comprised the old London County Borough of East Ham, and Canning Town, Stratford and Plaistow lying in the area previously known as the Borough of West Ham. Newham, itself, was created in 1965 from these Boroughs of East Ham and West Ham. (See Appendix VI) Traditionally West Ham has been the area of heavy industry including the docks and associated occupations. Consequently the area has housed many unskilled manual workers. Compared with East Ham, standards of housing and education have been lower. East Ham, on the other hand, accommodated mainly light industries and was primarily a residential area. Its grammar schools had a very good academic record and are still referred to with pride by many older East Ham residents.

However, long before the reorganisation of London Boroughs which produced Newham, the situation was changing. The commuter belt for London moved further north and east to new areas, and new towns such
as Dagenham and later Harlow, Stamford-le-Hope and Debden in Essex were developed. The departure of the more able and socially mobile inevitably has left a population with a higher proportion of socially dependent residents including the elderly, the unemployed or those without the industrial skills or education required in the new towns. In addition, since the 1950s the area has absorbed successive waves of immigrants, first from the West Indies, then from India, Pakistan and East Africa. (See Appendix V.) Many of those from the West Indies and Africa have settled in the Forest Gate area where the large houses which used to belong to the middle classes are suitable for multi-occupation. Those of Asian origin have primarily settled in the Manor Park area and in Plaistow. Many of those with entrepreneurial skills have become proprietors of small retail businesses. The Little Ilford area of Manor Park faced a massive slum clearance programme after the war resulting in the building of large estates of council housing including tower blocks and maisonettes.

Canning Town has also undergone a large-scale government financed rebuilding programme since the war, but it is a significant area in sociological terms in that it has remained almost totally white, still maintaining its strong links with the docks. Furthermore, in some areas of Canning Town the old "village" sense has remained to a large extent with several close-knit traditional East End communities of the type analysed by Willmott and Young. However, the large council estates and accompanying rehousing policy have largely eroded the old sense of community.

Like Canning Town, Stratford has also accommodated many of the heavy
industries of the old West Ham area. Immigrants have filtered into this part of the Borough also and, in addition, sections of the housing could be classified as sub-standard and are in the process of being rebuilt. Stratford is also a commercial area in that it now houses a large new shopping precinct. In addition, the old Borough offices of West Ham were located here and it now boasts a newly completed Town Hall which centralises the housing and finance departments for the entire Borough of Newham.

East Ham remains the more "respectable" half of Newham, still predominantly residential with good quality housing in the private sector of accommodation. In certain area bordering on Manor Park and Forest Gate there has been a large influx of immigrants, particularly Asians, who, as in Manor Park, are becoming the proprietors of small shops and are purchasing houses as they come onto the market. The old East Ham Town Hall is located in this district and houses many of the administrative services for Newham. As has been the case with other grammar schools in the area, East Ham Grammar School has now become comprehensive and there has been a resultant drop in the proportion of university entrants per year. Many old East Hamians attribute the general decline in standards of housing, industry, quality of the area, even education to the amalgamation with West Ham, although in fact succeeding local and national government policies on housing, industry and education, as well as immigration and increased social mobility have all played their part in forming the Newham of today.

For the purposes of creating a two by two matrix for the selection
of four Sunday schools for in-depth studies, the variable "area" as an indicator of social class was dichotomised into the area of East Ham, the "respectable" or upper working class and middle class aspirant area of the Borough, and West Ham, the "rough" or lower working class area. This dichotomy was made on the basis of census data relating to occupation and housing as Tables 2.4 and 2.5 indicate.

### TABLE 2.4 Socio-Economic Groups by Area
(Numbers per 1000 economically active males)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Socio-Economic Groups</th>
<th>Area</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>West Ham</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional workers, employers, managers</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other self-employed, skilled, non-manual</td>
<td>530</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Semi-skilled, unskilled</td>
<td>363</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


### TABLE 2.5 Tenure by Area
(Number per 1000 households)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tenure</th>
<th>Area</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>West Ham</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Owner Occupier</td>
<td>205</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Council Housing</td>
<td>417</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Privately Rented</td>
<td>372</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As Table 2.4 indicates, the East Ham area has a higher proportion of professional workers, whereas West Ham and in particular Canning Town has more semi-skilled and unskilled workers. (See Appendices III and IV for fuller figures with area differentiation.) With reference to housing, Table 2.5 indicates that East Ham has a much higher proportion of owner/occupier accommodation while West Ham has a higher proportion of council housing. Privately rented accommodation is fairly evenly divided between the two areas.

2.3.2 Selection of Schools for In-Depth studies

On the basis of these scales which assess the Sunday school in terms of theological orientation and socio-economic variables, four Sunday schools were selected for in-depth observation. One school was selected from each of the four cells of the matrix; 
(a) theologically conservative - West Ham; (b) theologically conservative - East Ham; (c) theologically liberal - West Ham; (d) theologically liberal - East Ham. In addition to selection on the basis of these two key variables, the attempt was made to ensure that the Sunday schools selected should be as representative as possible in terms of other variables.

One such variable was denomination. Each of the four schools was of a different denomination: Baptist, U.R.C., Church of England and Methodist. Although this does not include a Sunday school from the sectarian tradition, the particular United Reformed Church selected does in many ways resemble both the theological orientation and teaching methods to be found in many of the more conservative sects.
From the schools selected there was also a range of Sunday school rolls from 19 to 75, and of teaching methods. The schools included one which was predominantly conservative in both theology and in teaching methods, and one which was conservative in theology but relatively liberal in teaching methods as described above. A similar variation in teaching methods occurred in the liberal schools. One was comparatively free and unstructured in teaching methods, whereas the other tended to be somewhat more formal.

Finally, access to the Sunday school was necessarily an important issue. Where possible the attempt was made to select Sunday schools in which a good rapport with the superintendent had already been established through the initial interview. It was anticipated that this would help create a sympathetic atmosphere as the observer entered the Sunday school situation and would allow for a maximum of interaction between the observer and the teachers, children and parents.

Having outlined the two principal areas of data collection and the overall design of the research, the next chapter locates the Sunday school within an urban context. After tracing the historical roots of the Sunday school, the chapter will review the progress of the movement in this century, concluding with an examination of the patterns of social change in contemporary society and their effect on the Sunday school today.
PART II

THE HISTORICAL AND SOCIAL CONTEXT
3.1 Introduction

The final decades of the nineteenth century saw the height of the Sunday school movement in England with 19% of the total population of England, Scotland and Wales enrolled in Sunday school.¹ For the typical churchgoing family in 1880, the Sunday school with its allied activities - Band of Hope, sports clubs, Christian Endeavour Society, International Bible Reading Association, and so on - offered education and recreation for all ages. It was a major social institution. From the 1880s to the first decade of the 1900s, there was a steady growth in Sunday school enrolment figures, although the overall proportion of the population attending Sunday school decreased.² However, in the past seventy years, the Sunday school has steadily declined in both numbers and influence - indeed, statistics have indicated a 'continuous and sustained decline of between five and six per cent per year'.³ Figures compiled in 1979 indicated that child attendance at Protestant churches or Sunday schools was only some 2.1% of the total population of England.⁴ This decline is particularly apparent in the inner urban areas of the major British cities. Sunday schools which fifty to sixty years ago had recorded attendances of 300 children on a weekly basis, now consider themselves fortunate if they can attract 30 - 40 children. Others have been forced to close altogether due to the practicalities of declining numbers of both staff and children.⁵
In the conclusion to his historical analysis of the Sunday school up to 1850, Thomas Laqueur suggests a number of factors which may have contributed to the decline in Sunday school attendance.

The likeliest explanation for the steady decline in enrolment per capita is that the period of attendance by the twentieth century had become increasingly short. Rather than remain in Sunday school to engage in sports, youth group activities, or some other form of recreation, young people joined the Boy Scouts or Girl Guides, participated in school directed games, went to the movies or professional sports matches. As each pupil's stay in Sunday school grew shorter, the proportion of the population on school rolls declined.6

He goes on to say that the very idea of the importance of religious education may also have been in decline. However, this development must be seen 'against a broad background of secular change and not simply as a response to religious factors taken as independent variables'.7

The declining influence of the Sunday school is thus a complex phenomenon which must be set within the wider context of the decline of institutional religion per se in the twentieth century. This in turn relates to the changing social patterns within society as a whole, and these will be considered briefly in Section 3.4. It is outside the scope of this chapter to trace in detail the decline of the Sunday school since the height of its popularity in the late nineteenth century. However, since in 1980 the bicentenary of the founding of the Sunday school movement by Robert Raikes was celebrated, it is a useful backdrop to the study of the contemporary
Sunday school to look back over two centuries and examine some of the key factors which have contributed to the present situation.

3.2 Historical Origins

Grounding a study of the Sunday school in a historical context makes possible the highlighting of certain issues surrounding the origins of the school and the tracing of certain trends in its growth which are of relevance today. There are numerous aspects which could be discussed here: the curriculum of the Sunday school and its evolution, the growth of the Sunday school and its governance, the social and community aspects of the school, values inculcated by the school and so on. Thomas Laqueur's book, Religion and Respectability: Sunday schools and Working Class Culture 1780 - 1850, is an excellent source book for information on these aspects. He succeeds in presenting an historical study of the institution while also setting it in its cultural context. Furthermore it is one of the few books currently available which concentrates exclusively on the Sunday school, although further details regarding this period may be found in the National Sunday School Union archives and the annual lectures of the Robert Raikes Historical Society which provide valuable information on specific aspects of Sunday school development. However, Laqueur carried his study only as far as 1850. He observes that 'except for night classes and special sessions of various sorts for adults, regular secular education vanished from the Sunday school by the 1870s.' From that period on, Sunday schools entered a new phase in which the
function of religious education predominated. This phase is particularly relevant to our concern with the contemporary Sunday school in an inner city area working class area. Hence, the usefulness of the historical perspective lies in its potential for providing a clearer understanding of the twentieth century situation. There are three historical aspects which are of particular relevance here:

1. the relationship of religion and class in the origins of the Sunday school;
2. the relationship of the church and the Sunday school;
3. the functions of the Sunday school.

3.2.1 The Relationship of Religion and Class.
Considerable debate has taken place regarding the various social, economic and religious factors which led to the rise of Sunday schools in the latter half of the eighteenth century. The early years of the industrial revolution, from approximately 1740 onwards, were years of great social change for England. They saw the rise of industry and of the new class of bourgeoisie, the movement from the country into the industrial areas, the long hours of work for adult and child alike in the grim conditions of the factories, and the lack of leisure time. These elements were paralleled in the religious sphere by an increasing loss of influence on the part of the Established Church with its landed interests and its "squirearchy" ideal, as the peasant farmer moved to form the new industrialised working class. This period also saw the rise of Methodism and the New Dissent. The ensuing church and chapel conflict, which is well-documented in Alan Gilbert's Religion and Society in Industrial England, (1976), was to colour the history of England for the next
century or more until non-conformity itself became routinised in
the latter half of the nineteenth century. Gilbert attributes
the success of evangelical non-conformity in attracting a large
following to both their methods and their ideology. The emphasis
on recruitment from the wider society through a conversionist
experience, the stress on itinerancy to carry the movement out to
prospective converts, and the heavy reliance on lay workers made
the movement immensely popular, with a special appeal to the lower
classes to a degree which the Established Church never approached.
It also was essentially an expansionist movement, young and outward
looking.

In terms of its ideology, it was eminently suited to the needs of
early industrial society. It contained an element of social pro-
test with its emphasis on other-worldly values and eternal life.
Its belief in the equality and common sinfulness of all mankind
before God sounded dangerously revolutionary to the upper classes
who saw in its popular appeal a leaning toward radical democracy.
On the other hand, through encouraging thrift, hard work, self-
discipline and frugality, values compatible with the work tenor of
the new industrial society, it legitimised the improvement of an
individual’s socio-economic position. This will be discussed below
in greater detail, but from adopting a simple ascribed status in
pre-industrial society, an individual now had open to him possibil-
ities for self-improvement and an achieved status. Finally, the
new non-conformity established strong associational links among its mem-
bers through chapel, Sunday school and other activities. This provided
an important element in counteracting the anomie experienced by
many people in the rapidly growing towns. The extended family
system and the village which had been the main community and source
of support for the individual in pre-industrial society had given
way to an individualised type of existence in the great towns and
factories of the period. Evangelical non-conformity and the
chapel provided a much needed focal point in terms of religion,
community, social services and recreation.

There has been much debate over the precise nature of the role of
evangelical non-conformity and Methodism in particular in the early
English industrial society. Popularly, Elie Halévy has been seen
as the major exponent of the theory that revolution was averted in
England in the late 18th and 19th centuries because of the role of
Methodism as an instrument of social control in ensuring passivity
amongst the working classes. In point of fact, he was most interest­
ed in understanding the role of religion in social change and in
this context saw Methodism as providing the opportunity for upward
social mobility through religious mobility. He saw Methodism as
standing between the New Dissent and the Established Church and
easing the transition from one to the other. Through Methodism,
the working classes could become "respectable" working class/middle
class and non-conformist, and the potential was then open for them
to enter the Church of England and merge with the upper strata of
society. Thus he sees this 'anticipatory socialisation' available
to the working classes as the reason why no revolution took place
in England, in that the aspirations of the bourgeoisie were not
blocked as they had been in France.
There existed sufficiently fluid channels of social mobility together with an inbuilt mechanism of anticipatory socialisation through the 'transitional' creed of Evangelicalism, to allow a more stable accommodation of the newer social groups into the established order.\(^\text{12}\)

It is important to note the distinctive contribution which Halevy made to the understanding of the rise of Methodism in that he stresses the religious and social linkage function of Methodism - its "embourgeoisement" potential - rather than the Marxist perspective that it acted as an opiate.

Another useful analysis of the role of early evangelical non-conformity is involved in Weber's theory as to the relationship between the Protestant ethic (as exemplified in evangelical non-conformity) and the spirit of capitalism which was inextricably linked with early industrialisation.\(^\text{13}\) This, together with Halevy's thesis, will provide a background for the subsequent discussion on the relationship of class to the growth of the Sunday schools.

There have been numerous restatements of this Weberian thesis and a particularly helpful one is to be found in Michael Hill's *Sociology of Religion* (1975).\(^\text{14}\) Much of the discussion revolves around the issue of chronology. Did the Calvinist ethic which endorsed a disciplined behaviour in which profit and success were seen as a sign of God's favour encourage the rise of the economic ethos of capitalism? Or was capitalism responsible for the rise of the Protestant ethic of Calvinism? According to Michael Hill's understanding of Weber, the religious ethic and capitalism were congruent although this does not necessarily mean that Calvinism
played a part in the development of capitalist economic attitudes. There is no single causal factor. Rather,

there was an "elective affinity" between the Protestant (and especially Calvinist) ethic and the spirit of capitalism: that it was not purely a case of "accommodation" to economic conditions on the part of the religious ethic is due to an internal dialectic between religious "ideas" and religious "interests", the latter being generated - as has been shown - by the need of Calvinist believers to find their strategies for salvation. 15

This 'elective affinity' is an important concept which indicates that there was a 'dynamic process' taking place within the ethic itself. Thus, although originally the Calvinist ethic was exclusively concerned with religious ideas, because of its emphasis on individualism, on asceticism and on material gain as a sign of God's blessing, it generated 'interests' within itself with which it had to come to terms. In other words, Calvinist non-conformity had to accommodate its ethics to the reality of the material conditions it created. However,

Weber strongly maintains that this process is not merely the permissive "accommodation" of the ethic to dubious business practices, later Puritan doctrine did not approve every form of acquisition but insisted on maintaining strict discipline and on preserving the ascetic element intact, which no amount of "accommodation" could have achieved. 16

Nonetheless it may be seen how well suited such an ethic was to early industrial society.

There are two schools of thought regarding the relationship of class and the Protestant ethic as represented in evangelical non-conformity
to the growth of Sunday schools in this period. E.P. Thompson in The Making of the English Working Class (1977) traces the formation and growth of the working class in the period 1780 to 1932 and sees Methodism in terms of a ruling class conspiracy designed to inculcate a work discipline into the lower classes necessary for industrial society which would undergird capitalism by reinforcing the prevailing social structure. In particular he sees the Sunday schools as agencies of the middle classes imposed on the working classes and designed to suppress their traditional patterns of behaviour. He attributes the success of Methodism in its 'psychic exploitation' of the people in the main to the 'direct indoctrination' carried out in the school. However, as Laqueur points out, there are obvious difficulties in this approach in that Methodism was clearly espoused willingly by great masses of the working classes which would appear strange if there was no genuine religious motivation whatever for attending chapel and Sunday school, if the school's educational services 'were minimal and severely curtailed by the obscurantist mentality of those who managed them' and if their 'textbooks committed a real "psychological atrocity" upon the children'. Thompson does in fact take note of this and speaks of Methodism as having a 'dual role as the religion of both the exploiters and the exploited', and indeed attributes this in part to its success in indoctrinating the young.

Laqueur, on the other hand, strongly disputes that the Sunday schools were predominantly middle class institutions. As he indicates in his appendices, most Sunday schools were initiated by men and women of working class origins: framework knitter, farm worker, bobbin winder, weaver,
shoemaker, blacksmith, and tallow chandler to name only a few.

It is difficult to maintain in any literal sense that Sunday school constituted an imposition by the middle upon the working class. Many of those active in founding Sunday schools in both the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries were from the working class. The teachers were almost all from the same social strata as those they taught; after 1810 some sixty per cent of all teachers had once been students themselves.20

Laqueur does not deny that the middle classes, especially evangelical non-conformists, were involved in philanthropic enterprises towards the working class and that Sunday schools were one aspect of this. Indeed, Robert Raikes, who is credited with having founded Sunday schools although he was primarily responsible for publicising them, Hannah More and Sarah Trimmer, well-known names in Sunday school annals, were well within the tradition of middle class benevolence when they began their schools. For example, in his recent biography of Robert Raikes, Frank Booth makes reference to Mrs. Trimmer 'who emphasised the point which Raikes had declared to be of paramount importance, videlicet, that the success of the Sunday school depended upon the involvement of people whose level of education was superior to that of the paid teachers and the children'. Booth continues:

Her praise of Raikes himself would have helped to increase the regard in which he was held by many of her aristocratic friends: "Mr. Raikes of Gloucester...has, by his excellent scheme of Sunday schools, drawn attention of the benevolent towards the rising generation of the parish poor, who are already become objects of general regard".21
E.P. Thompson's view that Sunday schools were used to undergird the capitalist system is further countered by Malcolm Dick in his study of the large Stockport Sunday school. Noting that the majority of the Sunday school committee members were traders or factory owners, he goes on to say,

> It is reasonable to expect that these men might use the school to protect their interests, but it would be wrong to say that they used the institution as a means of capitalist social control, promoting the punctuality and work-discipline of the factory workforce. Although the school stressed the importance of virtues such as deference and hard work, it was strongly critical of some aspects of factory employment. In addition, it also emphasised the importance of qualities such as a morally cohesive family life, which had little direct relationship with the mental attitudes required by factory operatives. 22

There are also difficulties with Thompson's argument that Methodism was the religion of the exploiters designed to keep the working classes in submission, and yet that it was also the religion of the exploited simply because the exploiters carry out such an effective programme of indoctrination through the Sunday school. In the first place, he seems to ignore completely the religious ideology that was basic to Methodism. Although, as noted above in the discussion on the Protestant ethic and the spirit of capitalism, there is an 'elective affinity' between the two, in which the religious ethic adjusts itself to the material conditions surrounding it, the social ethic cannot be separated from its religious counterpart without misunderstanding the whole basis of Methodism. Thus Methodism as a religious ethic was based on certain doctrines which Wesley set out in his sermon on "The New Birth".
If any doctrines within the whole compass of Christianity may properly be termed fundamental, they are doubtless these two, the doctrine of justification and that of the new birth; the former relating to the great work which God does for us in forgiving our sins; the latter to that great work which God does in us in renewing our fallen nature. 23

This purely religious ideology encouraged individualism and legitimised the acquisition of goods as a sign of God's blessing. It stressed the ultimate importance of other-worldly values and an attitude of asceticism, obedience and humility in this world. This aspect may be termed its "intentional function". However, inevitably this religious ethic could not remain abstract but was grounded in a social situation. Thus it also had a practical outworking or "pragmatic function" in that it led to a raising of the adherent's social status, the rise of the spirit of capitalism, and an emphasis on the values of obedience and submission to authority in this life in the hope of a better life to come. In his discussion of Methodism, Thompson appears to neglect its "intentional function" and concentrates on its "pragmatic function", thus failing to take account of the religious motivation which ultimately underlay the pragmatic outworking of Methodism, particularly in its early years. With reference to the Stockport Sunday school, Malcolm Dick stressed the point that far from simply endorsing the values within the factory system, the managers of the school were primarily concerned to protect the young from the allegedly corrupting influences of factory employment... [and] offered to solve the problems created by urban society. Evangelical and conservative images combated the influence of depravity in an attempt to establish a new pattern of spiritual and social harmony. 24
In the second place, Thompson assumes a dividing line between the middle class and the working class, between those who 'used' Methodism and those 'upon whom it was used'. However, as Laqueur pointed out, a large number of those who taught in the Sunday schools were of the working class themselves, so there was no clear-cut dividing line between the middle class and the working class. Also, values such as thrift, industry, punctuality, discipline, cleanliness and so on were so widely held by members of the "respectable" working class that it was difficult to regard them as imposed by the middle class. Such values held by working class evangelical non-conformists derived from their religion and also from the practical realities of the Sunday school situation.

The school and the factory as organisations were susceptible to the same problems and arrived at similar solutions. That two contemporaneous institutions faced with the same problem arrived at similar remedies does not indicate that one was subservient to the other. 25

Thus the fact that these values were congruent with those held by the middle class does not necessarily mean that they were a result of indoctrination by that class in order to create fodder for the factory. This assertion is supported by the interesting and often overlooked fact that many of the early schools arose in rural areas untouched by industrialisation and its ethic of the maximisation of its profits through mass production techniques. In fact there is no apparent relationship between the degree of industrialisation and the strength of the Sunday school. 26 Hence, contrary to Thompson,
it would appear that Sunday schools were not simply a tool of
indoctrination of the exploiters, neither were they necessarily
a result of the Methodist need to inculcate their "work discipline"
into children.

It would appear, therefore, that the distinction between the middle
class and the working class is not the significant issue here.
What is significant is the way in which Methodism linked the
"respectable" working class and the middle class in terms of a
religious ethic to which they both subscribed. The working class
adopted the values compatible with "respectability" not because of
indoctrination by the middle class, but because of their belief
that these values, inherent in the religious ethic, were commensurate
with gaining a place for the individual in the kingdom of heaven.
This in turn had the incidental effect of raising their social status,
thus bringing them closer to the middle class. Hence, Sunday schools
were institutions of the "respectable" working class for the nurture
and enlightenment of their own children and for rescuing and en­
lightening the children of the "rough" working class, i.e., those
who had not subscribed to Methodism and whose social status had not
been raised. This is borne out in the three ideas which underlay
the founding of the Sunday schools:

(1) a desire for the moral rescue of children from
corrupt parents;
(2) a means of spreading the word of God;
(3) a result of the influence of a softer, more
optimistic and sentimental view of children.
The implications of this dichotomy between middle class and "respectable" working class on the one hand and the "rough" working class on the other are considerable. It has meant in fact that the "rough" working classes have largely remained outside the pale of organised Christianity.

Charles Booth at the turn of the century found this to be so and he also distinguished between the church-going middle and "respectable" working classes, on the one hand, and the non-church-going masses, on the other, although using different terms.

The five classes which we have recognised are wealth (with fashion), upper middle class (without fashion), lower middle class, regular wage earners, and the poor... The poor can indeed be visited, but they cannot be induced to come to church. It is too fine for them, their clothes are not good enough, they would feel ashamed. Excuses such as these are made for them as well as by them. Their homes are probably at some distance from the church. A smaller church or mission hall must be built. It shall be their own and then they will come. But they do not.

It is interesting to note Booth's differentiation between the 'regular wage earner' who would be the "respectable" working class and the 'poor', who would be the irregular wage earner - perhaps a docker or casual labourer - of the "rough" working class. Wickham in his study of Sheffield also comments on the historic estrangement of the working classes' lower strata, and indeed, this has been a continuing issue of major concern to the church.

3.2.2 The Relationship of the Church and the Sunday school

Sunday schools were never originally intended as recruitment agencies
for the adult Christian community. Indeed, as noted above, (footnote 1, Chapter 1), many of the schools in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries arose independently of any chapel or church. In presenting the background to the rise of the schools, Asa Briggs notes, 'by then, [1851] there were secular as well as Christian Sunday schools - some of them were very famous in Lancashire - and Robert Owen had taken over Raikes' message'. Laqueur cites several instances of individual men and women or committees initiating some of the early schools: 'Sunday schools were essentially lay institutions'. Thus, the schools performed a civilising and socialising function with the implicit hope that when the child became an adult, he would be more receptive to the ministry of the church or chapel by virtue of having attended the school. Obviously it was to be welcomed if children wished to attend the adult services and while some schools encouraged and even required attendance at worship particularly in later years, some churches and chapels seemed to be somewhat apprehensive about having the children in attendance for fear that they would make too much noise or 'soil the place'. John Wesley was anticipating future developments when he said, 'Who knows that some of these schools may become nurseries for Christians'.

This situation is not surprising when one realises that the main instruments in the recruitment of early evangelical non-conformity had been the lay itinerant preaching and village prayer meetings. The Sunday schools were viewed as auxiliary agencies. However, this situation altered as the initial strength and dynamic of Methodism and the New Dissent became routinised. With a larger
As the proportion of members who were children of older members rose, each group accumulated an internal constituency for whom socialisation not adult conversion had been the basis of associational commitment. For such people, the preservation of association and the consolidation of organisational structures became an end in itself.

Thus, as the Sunday school increased in importance, so itinerant evangelism and lay preaching decreased. The Sunday school which had previously been predominantly independent and undenominational in character, in terms of policy increasingly became the agent of individual denominations in recruitment, although in practice its effectiveness was limited. Thus the church depended on the socialisation of its own juveniles to maintain its membership rates and the importance of recruitment of adults from the external community dropped. During the Victorian era in the latter half of the nineteenth century, Sunday schools flourished as indicated by the high enrolment figures (see above p.3). However, perhaps unwittingly, this very strength spelt the beginning of organisational decline for the church. The time came, particularly in the early twentieth century, when the internal constituency (i.e., the church membership) began to decrease and the church, which had for so long largely ignored its external constituency, discovered it had no such constituency on which to draw for further recruitment. The majority of those outside the church were either alienated from or totally disinterested in the church. So the flow of recruits from the Sunday school never fulfilled expectations. It is significant that even today in theory denominational bodies and local
churches still view the Sunday school as a primary recruitment agency for the adult Christian community. This is so despite the results which, by and large, belie its effectiveness as such an agency, and despite the apparent lack of any meaningful relationship between the church and the Sunday school which could promote such results. Furthermore, despite historical evidence that a decline in the importance placed on recruitment of adults from the external community through evangelism will lead to a decline in the size of the internal Christian community, most denominational bodies today lay very little stress on evangelism of the external community of the type practiced by eighteenth and nineteenth century evangelical non-conformists.

3.2.3 The Function of the Sunday school

The Sunday school in the early industrial and Victorian era sought to fulfill three basic functions.

(a) secular education
(b) religious education
(c) social welfare

(a) Secular Education

One predominant reason why children of the working class attended Sunday school was because of the secular education offered. In the early years reading was taught, then, despite opposition from conservative quarters, writing and even cyphering and accounts, the latter at week-night classes. Laqueur cites considerable evidence to suggest that schools which offered extended curricula generally
tended to be more popular than those with limited instruction.

'No other institution was more instrumental in bringing the printed word to the working class child.'\(^{34}\) This comes in direct contrast to E.P. Thompson who is of the opinion that, 'not only was the teaching of writing discouraged, but very many Sunday school scholars left the schools unable to read...\(^{35}\) It would appear, however, judging from contemporary accounts, that Thompson's assessment underrates the extent and effectiveness of the instruction given. It is true that in the early years of the Sunday school, instruction in writing was not included in some of the schools for practical reasons. For example,

Teaching of reading and spelling, which formed the chief intellectual content of the education provided in Raikes' and Stock's Sunday schools, assisted the development of the children's powers of expression. Writing does not appear to have been included, which is not surprising in view of the problems of supplying the necessary desks, inkwells, ink, quill pens, and paper...To have found anyone capable of teaching the children to write would also have proved difficult... Neither Raikes nor Stock appear to have considered it.\(^{36}\)

However, many schools included it in later years. Laqueur goes on to say that 'within the context of a working class childhood, three to five hours of instruction each week for an average of four years... had a significant impact on the creation of mass literacy in nineteenth century England'.\(^{37}\) An added attraction for parents and employers was that the instruction was free and did not affect the working week.
Many poor but able children, having been taught the rudiments of reading and spelling in Sunday school, had the determination and persistence to obtain the literature and such instruction as they could get, to educate themselves. Thus armed they fought for social and political recognition for themselves, their families and their neighbours.39

One of the first such working class reformers was Thomas Paine, who succeeded in arousing the hostility of the middle and upper classes through his book in support of the principles of the French Revolution, The Rights of Man. In particular he stressed the need for a state education. Building on the growing intellectual awareness of the working classes, he emphasised the need for political awareness. Once the working classes became aware of the potential for political recognition and for a radical involvement in the much-needed social reforms, they organised themselves to form trades unions, as a result of which the Labour Party came into being.

(b) Religious Education

As a source of the Biblical rhetoric which influenced popular writing and speech during the nineteenth century, as a place of comfort at times of sickness and death, and as an instrument of conversion, the Sunday school played a central part in the lives of its students. 39

The Bible was a regular text at all schools as were 'primer readers, spelling books, catechisms, testaments, hymnals, and religious and morally instructive literature'. 40 In 1785, Raikes printed a book for use in the Sunday school whose full title gives an idea of its religious contents: 'The Sunday Scholar's Companion: Consisting of Scripture Sentences, disposed in such order, as will quickly ground Young Learners in the Fundamental Doctrines of our most Holy
Religion: And at the same time Lead them Pleasantly on from Simple and Easy to Compound and Difficult Words'. Laqueur places special emphasis on the vital part which the Biblical assurance of salvation and of an after-life, together with the Sunday school's sense of community, played in providing comfort and reassurance to a community within which bereavement was an ever-present phenomenon. This accounts also for the highly emotional and eschatological nature of much of the literature, particularly the deathbed accounts, and many of the hymns. In addition, many schools of the evangelical non-conformist tradition encouraged an individual conversionist experience as an indication of commitment to Christ. Overall, the Sunday school seems to have succeeded in 'sustaining a Christian culture among working class children'.

(c) Social Welfare

The Sunday schools played a very important role as a social agency in providing various forms of charity and relief for the working class family. Hence, there were clothing, sickness, and burial clubs, benefit societies and so on. Sunday schools also performed important social and recreational functions for the child and the family. The Sunday school anniversary was the highlight of the year for most children, more important even than Christmas, and warranted a new set of shoes or new clothes. In addition, there were Sunday school outings, teas, feasts, and prize-givings, which were also eagerly anticipated by the children long in advance of the actual event. Such experiences of fun and entertainment were
a welcome relief to the drabness and hard conditions of their everyday life. The Sunday school also organised regular clubs and activities in the week. In short, it provided a focal point in the lives of many working class families.

3.3 Later Developments: Post 1870

By 1870, the secular education function of the Sunday school had largely been taken over by the State, and in the later Victorian era, the Sunday school functioned principally as an important social and religious agency. During this period there appeared several groups and activities marginally allied to the church or Sunday school, some of which are still in evidence today. There was the Christian Endeavour Society, an agent in religious education, the Band of Hope, a temperance society, Boys' and Girls' Brigades, as well as numerous social and sporting clubs. A particularly interesting development at this time was the growth of numerous boys' or lads' clubs particularly aimed at reaching boys of the "rough" working class in the large towns and cities, many of which in this century have banded together to form national youth associations. The appeal of a Sunday school of this nature offering, as an adjunct, such a wide variety of activities to the Victorian child, is attested to in part by the Sunday school enrolment figures which reached their peak in the 1880s.

However, from this period onwards, new developments took place which affected the system and status of the Sunday school, and, apart from one or two small periods of growth, there began the overall decline
In the first place, with the advent of the day schools and the loss of the Sunday school's role in secular education, individuals began to question the existing structure of the Sunday school. An article in the *Sunday School Chronicle* for 14 September, 1899 suggested that the inexorable law of progress necessitates periodic readjustment or modification of all forms of organisation to meet new conditions. Criticism arose regarding the training of Sunday school teachers, the quality of teaching, the curricula, and the equipment of premises. Comparisons were made with the newly-established day schools and the Sunday schools fell far short in every area. There was a widening gap between the professional and amateur teacher, and the Sunday schools were frequently run by poorly qualified teachers, who, according to the critics of the day, were deficient in their knowledge of the Bible. Added to this, there were problems with holding the older students, difficulties in the relationship between the church and the Sunday school, and a lack of liveliness and brightness in the classes. As will be seen below, changes were also taking place within the wider society which affected the Sunday school. There was increased prosperity, more leisure time, children had more activities outside the home available to them, the day school was stretching and challenging the youth in new ways, and consequently the Sunday school was becoming less attractive to them. In short, the Sunday school was failing to move with the times. It is significant that criticism of the Sunday school in the 1980s in many ways echoes the concerns voiced nearly a century ago by Sunday school authorities. It would
appear that since the beginning of the twentieth century, the Sunday school has continually trailed some two or three decades behind the wider social changes, and thus has failed to attract the generation for whom it was designed. In addition, the Sunday school was becoming but one of a number of more or less stimulating alternatives, where once it was the principal source of both education and entertainment. No single factor can be pin-pointed as causing the increasing decline in Sunday school attendance during this century. Weaknesses within the school and changing patterns within society as a whole have played their part. However, it is possible to highlight four related factors which have contributed to the decline. Reference has been made to these by Philip Cliff in his analysis of the Sunday school in this century.

Firstly, there was an ending of the accepted 'folk myth' that in order to obtain 'a full life of learning, leisure, and eternal life,' it was necessary to attend Sunday school. Whilst the Sunday school played a part in helping to create the "respectable" working class through the various social functions associated with it, people now came to realise that they could achieve this status without having to go to Sunday school.

Secondly, since the Sunday school had grown continuously since its inception in the late 1700s, it rested on its own successes to its detriment. The Sunday school had offered secular education to thousands, a vast literature had been provided, countless numbers
had benefitted from its social activities. To be associated with a Sunday school was a matter for pride. But this ceased to be important to the youth of the early twentieth century. 'The people were gradually ceasing to be "puritan" in outlook and desire, and as the Sunday school ceased to be the means of secular education, so it became easier to leave an institution that outwardly still spoke for the more stringent ways of life.'

Thirdly, with the advent of more liberal schools of Biblical criticism, the position of the Bible as the unchallenged focal point of the Sunday school began to be questioned. Moreover, as these new schools of thought were the domain of the theologian and the minister, the essentially lay character of the Sunday school movement was threatened. Finally, the majority of the schools were poor in premises, equipment, and skilled teachers. Many were ungraded in the sense that the children were not separated into age groups appropriate to their level of learning. All these factors compared most unfavourably with the day school.

Numerous attempts were made to stem the tide of decline. The debates over the various issues have been documented in particular in the "Sunday School Chronicle", the magazine of the Sunday School Union, and these cover all aspects of the school. However, reference must be made to two men in particular who brought important new insights to the Sunday school movement. The first of these, George Hamilton Archibald, made his impact during the first thirty years of this century. His great contribution was to promote a new
understanding of children and the processes by which they grow and learn, as pioneered by educationalists such as Froebel. This led to a growing concern to provide adequate teacher training schemes, and Archibald travelled widely delivering a programme of lectures on the 'child-study theme' which drew audiences of between three and four thousand people. These included parents and day school teachers as well as Sunday school staff. He also began Easter Conferences for Sunday School Workers, giving opportunity for lectures, discussions and practical work. In 1907, his plan for a Training Institute for Christian Workers became a reality.

A house was found...which would accommodate twelve students; and so the experiment began. A small day school was started so that the students would have daily opportunity for child study, and a Froebel Teacher Training Department was set up so that those who were to train for work in the Church and Sunday school should be as proficient as those in day school.

Westhill College is still in existence and still has a section of its work concerned with Christian education.

A.H. Hamilton made his contribution in the 1930s as Archibald's approaches were becoming routinised. Archibald asked, "How does a child learn?" Hamilton moved on from this to ask, "What is Sunday school for?" He sought to harness the insights of some of the social sciences such as social psychology and sociology in order to understand the best methods of learning within the context of the Sunday school. He was particularly concerned with the way in which the Sunday school and the church had become institutionalised into separate entities, resulting in a total lack of any sense of community between old and young. Paralleled with this, new
trends in education stressed the importance of discovery, adventure, exploration and activity in learning, rather than simple transference of factual information from teacher to child.

Hamilton's unique contribution to the Sunday school movement lay in the way in which he combined contemporary educational methods with an emphasis on the church as a living community, resulting in the pattern of learning in worship which came to be known as 'the Family Church'. 'Family Church starts by assuming one Church which includes the last baptised (or dedicated) baby and the oldest saint, in one living fellowship of mutual, loving, and caring relationships...It is the Church, i.e., the living personal relationships that are the Church - which educates a child for churchmanship'. The concept of the church learning and worshipping together as a family became absorbed into the thinking of the major denominations, particularly in the fifties and sixties, and took a variety of forms from the "all age Sunday school" to the "family communion".

The methods of learning advocated by Archibald and Hamilton were subsequently carried still further by the studies of Ronald Goldman. Goldman caused considerable controversy amongst those involved in religious education by his findings that for a child, religious thinking using a cognitive approach cannot reach its full depth until the child has reached the level of abstract thinking. Those at the more conservative end of the religious spectrum understood Goldman to be saying that there was no point in teaching young children the Christian faith. In fact, Goldman was referring only to
the cognitive approach to learning. The "affective approach", encouraging exploration, curiosity, and learning through the use of the senses, is particularly important amongst younger children. In the 1960s and 1970s, based on studies relating to these two approaches to learning, new curriculum materials were developed using the "experiential approach" as it came to be known, based around the life experience of the child, and making maximum use of the five senses in learning. This brought the Sunday school more into line with the approaches and teaching styles used in the day school, and also encouraged the teachers to see the child and his experiences as central to the Sunday school, discovering and learning with the child.

A review of the progress of the Sunday school movement in this century would seem to indicate that there have been injections of new life into the movement every thirty years or so, at the end of which time the new ideas and approaches have become institutionalised. However, despite these new thrusts, the overall numerical decline of the Sunday school has not been stemmed. It is necessary, therefore, to look outside the Sunday school situation also, to see the effect that the external social changes have had on the school. This will help to provide a clearer picture of the many-faceted nature of the decline.

3.4 Changing Social Patterns

Sunday schools arose within the context of the early years of the industrial revolution to counter the harsh conditions existing within
the factories in which long hours, low pay, and grim working conditions were the norm for the majority of working class children. As noted above, Sunday schools were originally designed to provide a moral rescue for the child and to instil into him the rudiments of education within a religious context. On Sunday the factories were closed and the energy of the children, pent-up for six days was released.

Sunday was a day of crime. "Farmers and other inhabitants of the towns and villages", Raikes wrote in the Gloucestershire Journal in 1783, "complain that they receive more injury to their property on the Sabbath than all the week besides: this, in a great measure, proceeds from the lawless state of the younger class, who are allowed to run wild on that day, free from every restraint." 51

However, by the Victorian era, the Sunday school began to manifest the effects of changes in the wider society. Regular secular education became the responsibility of the day school. As a result of marches, riots and movements such as Chartism, agitating for the rights of the working man, government legislation gradually alleviated the severe factory conditions affecting the working classes.

In his brief epilogue in which he assesses the general trends in the Sunday school post-1850, Lequeur observes that even in 1890, Sunday schools were still largely the province of the working class, and is of the opinion that a 'broad social base' for the Sunday school remained somewhat of an ideal. 52 However, it may be argued that while Sunday schools may still have been the province of the working classes, these were the "respectable" working classes. Historically, as evangelical non-conformity became increasingly institution-
alised in the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, so its membership became more "respectable" and middle class in outlook. This had the effect of alienating the "rough" working class who tended to see the value of "respectability" as synonymous with "religious" or "Christian". In his study of religious life in London at the turn of the century, Charles Booth noted that the "poor" refused to attend church or chapel because of the lack of "respectable" clothing, and unrefined manners. In his analysis of the relationship between religion and class in Victorian London, McLeod cites several instances illustrating how the clergy viewed the working class parishes in which they found themselves.

The clergy were pained by the overt and public existence of much that in the "respectable" classes was pushed into a private "man's" world, where gambling, heavy drinking, improper language and recourse to prostitutes were accepted and normal as long as they were limited to this private world; they were disturbed by the loss of that "influence" over the lower classes that many of them, in the 1850s, still regarded as normal, and fearful of the effects of this loss of "influence".

Likewise, even those members of the working class who attended church did so with some initial concern.

A friend of his persuaded him to visit [a local chapel] though new anxieties now arose as the atmosphere of the chapel was so respectable that he felt his coming from a rough neighbourhood might be held against him.

Whilst this growth in "respectability" originally related to the churches, Gilbert notes (see above, page 58) that Sunday schools increasingly became the agency of individual denominations in recruitment of members, housing the churches' own 'internal constit-
uency'. So the Sunday school, too, became more "respectable". This growth in respectability is paralleled by upward social mobility amongst the church members, and is closely related to the term "social lift" which is used by Donald McGavran to describe "the social and cultural estrangement of members of a religious group from the social environment in which they were recruited". Social lift slightly raises the status of an individual such that he is no longer a part of his social environment in terms of the values he holds and his behavioural patterns, although he may possibly still live in the area. The example of George Acorn, a local East End boy, is typical of this growth in respectability.

He was shaped through attachment to the chapel "into the image of an ordinary sort of middle class youth";...he married a girl from the chapel, and moved to practice his trade as a cabinet-maker in a different area, after breaking with his parents. Thus, by the early twentieth century, the principal constituency of the Sunday school had become the "respectable" working class. The abject poverty characteristic of the families of Sunday school children a century before had given way to a comfortable prosperity. However, the increased prosperity carried within it the seeds for declining Sunday school attendance. Young people could now afford amusements outside the home. In fact, as one writer of that period noted, 'to look at the music halls, dance saloons, was to recognise that young people were not wanted at home'. Greater affluence meant that families had more to spend on leisure, and 'godless homes, late Saturday nights, love of pleasure, the new fresh air philosophy and weekend trips', were blamed by Sunday school teachers for the
declining numbers. Even the invention of the bicycle was held responsible by some for the school's declining popularity.

These trends have continued to the present day, and it is interesting that factors similar to those referred to in the early 1900s are being blamed for declining Sunday schools today. There are five aspects of secular change which are particularly relevant to our understanding of the contemporary Sunday school: economic and social, demographic, urban, cultural and educational. We will consider each in turn.

3.4.1 Economic and Social Changes

The child's attitude towards the Sunday school is closely related to the economic and social changes which have taken place in the past three or four decades. In the immediate post-war years and in the 1950s, home entertainment was still fairly traditional, television was a comparatively new phenomenon, and there was not the variety and availability of activities outside the home which attract children today. The economic changes of recent years have resulted in a great increase in affluence. This has contributed considerably to the widespread availability of entertainments at home, such as the television, computer games, video and so on, which rival the Sunday school for the child's attention. Many homes now have the benefit of technological advances in the form of refrigerators, freezers, washing machines, dishwashers, micro-wave ovens and other labour-saving devices which allow greater leisure time in the home. Family income is further supplemented by the trend
amongst many married women to return to work, resulting in more money for luxuries and leisure. Such affluence, coupled with changing patterns of employment which have reduced the working week, have led to what might be termed a "leisure boom" in recent years. Highly sophisticated forms of entertainment from video and the potential of cable television at home, to discos, pop concerts, sports activities, films and theatre in the wider community, have become accessible to virtually all sections of the population. In the early years of this century, despite a growth in outside entertainments, the Sunday school still offered to many children a welcome outside interest and gave access to a variety of different clubs and activities. However, to a child in the 1980s, Sunday school has become simply one of many leisure activities available to him - and it is often one of the less attractive at that. Teaching staff have discovered the necessity of ensuring that Sunday school time (especially afternoon Sunday school) does not conflict with popular television programmes.

The advent of the car, and the increased mobility which it gives to the family has also had a marked impact on Sunday school attendance. In the first half of the century, family activities tended to be home-based, but now children are frequently away at weekends or go out for the day on Sundays. Many working class families own or rent caravans in a holiday resort to which they go at weekends or during holiday periods. Thus there is a tendency towards irregular rather than regular attendance at Sunday school among the children of such families. Beyond this, continental travel would have been
unthinkable for the average family even thirty years ago, but with package holidays and charter flights, this too has become widely available.

Social changes have also radically affected values and behavioural patterns within the family. It can no longer be taken for granted that the majority of children attending the average Sunday school come from a complete family unit. Divorce is now easily obtainable and has become commonplace. Broken homes and single-parent households are widespread. Until some twenty or thirty years ago, the extended family was an important factor in child-raising, and whilst its importance remains in many of the closer-knit, "village"-type communities in working class areas, the nuclear family has become the focal unit, as the newly married couple buy or rent property away from grandparents, parents, and other relatives. In the many cases in which even the nuclear family has disintegrated, the family unit as such has become unclear, as siblings within the same "family" have different parents, only one of whom actually lives in the home. Within such a context, children tend to mature at an earlier age and expect greater freedom as a result. The "freedom" or permissive values of the 1980s are considerably different to those of the 1900s, but it is interesting to note that in its magazine, one of the early Sunday school unions also blamed changing values for declining attendance: it saw that 'young people [were] beginning to earn their livings earlier, parents were allowing wage-earning children more licence, and...there were new facilities for weekend excursions'.
Also, following the Second World War, there came an increasing emphasis on the importance of youth work as distinct from children's work or adult work. It was recognised that teenagers were not simply "older children" but warranted special attention in their own right. Laqueur notes that this trend began even earlier as young people discovered that they no longer needed to remain within the Sunday school in order to participate in sports clubs, youth clubs, or other recreational activities. Since the war, the youth services, both statutory and voluntary, have become so professional in the quality and quantity of the opportunities they offer, that for many young people, the link with the Sunday school and allied clubs and activities, is totally irrelevant.

Changes such as those outlined above, have affected every aspect of life within the family and the community. Sunday school staff have been forced to bring their philosophy and teaching styles into line with the new social patterns. Where this adaptation has not happened, the school has simply been forced to close.

3.4.2. Demographic Changes
In the early years of the Sunday school, its social welfare function was of major importance. Harsh factory and home conditions meant that infant mortality was high, and the Sunday school provided an important service through burial societies which cared for the costs of the funeral. Sick clubs and clothing clubs also helped to alleviate the severe poverty. By the mid-1800s, however, such functions had been largely taken over by specialised bodies, and
today the situation has changed even further. To begin with, changes in medical care and social conditions have meant that the issue of alleviating problems associated with infant mortality is no longer relevant. At the other end of the scale, modern medicine and changes in living patterns have greatly increased life expectancy. A wage earner retiring at 65 is likely to have somewhere in the region of ten years of retirement to enjoy. This has meant that the period of married life becomes longer, and factors such as the greater freedom in relationships between the sexes, the rising divorce rate, and the social acceptance of single-parent households can affect the stability of the marriage.

In recent years there has also been a decline in the size of the average family, from the early years of this century when six or seven children was the norm, to two or three today. This factor has also had an effect on school numbers, since consequently the average family involved in Sunday school today would probably only have two or three children.

In considering demographic changes, an important factor to take note of has been the high proportion of New Commonwealth immigrants to this country since the 1950s. Whilst the majority of those of Asian origin have no Christian affiliation, many of those from the West Indies arrived with a strong church tradition. Their children, "sent" to Sunday school with a strict regularity, have boosted attendance figures, particularly in many inner city areas.
3.4.3 Urban Changes

Changes within the urban centres of Britain in the last forty years have had a profound effect on the church and the Sunday school. To begin with, there has been a movement of industry away from inner city areas to areas where there is greater potential for new development. In consequence, there has been a high percentage of unemployment amongst those remaining in the inner city. Often jobs traditionally handed down from father to son have been lost. For others, the relocation of industry has either meant leaving the area altogether in search of work, or has necessitated commuting some distance to work, whereas at one time work and home were only a short distance apart. This was particularly so for groups such as dockers, where close-knit residential communities grew up near the docks. Thus, there has been a loss of many of the "village" communities, replaced by impersonal estates where often there is no communal sense of responsibility in caring for either property or people.

The housing programmes for inner city areas have also contributed to the decline of the traditional urban scene. There was initially the move outward from the decaying city centres to new estates in the suburbs of the big cities, many of which are characterised by anonymity, impersonality and an essentially private way of life. Many have become "dormitory towns". Most of those living on such estates have little, if any allegiance to the church, and this is one of the most difficult areas of work for the church. Then in the sixties came the building of the tower blocks in an effort to alleviate the housing shortage. Together with succeeding redevelop-
ment and slum clearance schemes, these building programmes have
had the negative effect of destroying much of the traditional
working class community spirit, by moving and separating families
which had previously lived together for generations.

The church is basically not geared to meet the needs of a decaying
inner city with the concomitant problems of loss of industry, un-
employment, a commuting population, housing needs, and changes in
patterns of community. In terms of plant alone, many inner city
churches are at a disadvantage, having inherited huge, decaying
Victorian buildings, which were built to seat in the region of
3 - 400 and are uneconomic to maintain. Fortunately, the modern
trend is for a purpose-built building to seat 100 to 150, with halls
available for community activities. Beyond this, however, many
clergy are not trained or experienced to meet the demands of work
in an inner city parish. The "rough" working classes may have
been outside the pale of organised Christianity since before the
industrial revolution, but the churches have yet to work through
these modern urban changes, which seem to have further alienated
all sections of the working class from the church.

3.4.4 Cultural Changes
It is in the area of cultural norms and values that some of the
most far-reaching changes since the beginning of this century have
taken place. There has been a general trend towards far greater
democratisation, towards increased participation, towards egalitar-
ianism at every level of society. Within industry, trade unions
have grown in strength, and there has been a greater emphasis
on workers' rights and workers' participation in decision-making processes. In schools, interchange between teacher and pupil has become freer and more informal, students now sit on decision-making committees and exercise a greater freedom of choice with regard to the direction of their own education. Within the local community, there has been a considerable rise in the number of self-help groups, in voluntary organisations working in all sections of the community, in involvement in local politics. In the home, the woman is no longer confined exclusively to a domestic role. As an increasing number of women work, the husband is no longer the sole breadwinner and has come to take his share in carrying out household duties which at one time were considered to be exclusively the role of a woman. Indeed, in the present recession, there are instances in which the husband has been made redundant and the family depends on the wife's income. Decision-making within the family has moved from being the prerogative of the husband to being shared between husband and wife, and in some cases amongst all family members. This trend towards equality of roles within the family has been advanced by the "women's liberation" movement of the past ten or fifteen years, in which feminists have campaigned for equal rights for women at all levels in society, from politics, to industry, to the home. The exercising of a greater democracy within the family has meant that there has been an accompanying decline in coercive forms of parental control. Freedom of choice is offered to the child at an increasingly early age, and it may be argued that this has encouraged children to challenge other sources of authority such as the police, the school, even the church. Since the war, the church in particular has experienced a
continuous eroding of its influence, especially amongst younger sections of the population. Its moral standards and values are no longer regarded as relevant and it no longer exercises any coercive authority within society. For example, despite the church's teaching to the contrary, divorce, adultery, pre-marital relationships, and extra-marital relationships have largely lost the stigma which used to be attached to them. The public morality which used to condemn such activities, and was derived in a large part from the church, has given way to a private morality in which the individual's freedom of choice and expression is of paramount importance.

Such cultural changes have inevitably affected the Sunday school also. As the coercive aspect of parental authority has decreased, so the child is generally no longer sent to Sunday school, but attends of his own volition. There is a close relationship between church-going parents and children's attendance at Sunday school. Thus, as the importance of the church has decreased for large sections of the adult population, so there is less encouragement for children to attend. Another factor to note is that as children now mature at an earlier age, there is an onus on the Sunday school to present an attractive programme in which the child feels he is a participant in the learning process, rather than merely passively absorbing knowledge.

3.4.5 Educational Changes

Over the years, the most significant change for the Sunday school in
terms of education has undoubtedly been the loss of its function as the principle vehicle for a basic secular education. Whilst in the years after 1870, some schools continued specialised classes in writing and advanced reading, the day school became primarily responsible for providing a basic elementary education for all. As the twentieth century progressed, so educational opportunities increased. Secondary education was made available to all.

Through scholarships and grant aid, the universities, once the domain of the rich and privileged, became accessible to a wider constituency and new universities were built. Within the day school, new teaching styles have evolved which are child-centred, stressing the importance of discovery, experimentation and involvement in the learning experience. Through open-plan classrooms, team-teaching, extra-curricula activities, and school conducted holidays and field-trips, the distance between child and teacher has gradually been reduced. The use of modern equipment, from closed-circuit television to computers in primary schools has further extended the child's experience of learning.

In all of this the Sunday school has trailed some two or three decades behind the day school - in some instances even more. As early as the first decade of this century it was observed that in the day school 'teaching was developing into an art, lessons were well-arranged, reasonably equipped schools were within reach of all, merely mechanical work was gradually being reduced to a minimum, and the children were being taught to think'. This stood in sharp contrast to the Sunday school in which teaching was didactic and consisted principally in the process of imparting facts from teacher
to pupil, through simple reading and explanation of the Bible passage. Many of these passages were obscure and no attempt was made to relate them to contemporary life, and often knowledge of the Bible on the part of the teacher was inadequate. Sunday school superintendents were urged to visit day schools to see the progress which had been made in teaching methods. In general, Sunday schools were criticised for their lack of attractiveness, poor premises, inferior quality of teachers and poor equipment.

These criticisms still apply today in many schools. As noted above in Section 3.3, considerable effort has been injected into improving teacher training, although there is little formal training available. This is possibly because few, if any, Sunday schools require their teaching staff to have formal training. Many have difficulty in even obtaining sufficient staff. Schools naturally welcome those who have had teaching experience, and some schools may organise a short training course for their own staff. Some denominations, in particular the Methodists, publish booklets to guide with training. Many schools today have also acquired modern equipment, and have adjusted their teaching methods to concentrate on a child-centred approach. However, the day school, too, has advanced in its philosophy. It may be said that in many ways the Sunday school today lags as far behind the day school as did the Sunday school of 1900. Criticisms levelled at the contemporary school are similar to those voiced in 1900: it is unattractive, premises are often drab and unsuitable, teaching staff lack training, equipment is poor, teaching is unimaginative, and curricula materials are often unsuitable.
3.5 Conclusion

The purpose of this chapter has been to set the current decline in the social significance of the Sunday school against its historical origins and within the changing social patterns in society as a whole. The historical section is designed primarily to inform the contemporary situation. Thus, the three aspects selected for detailed study in Section 3.2, which cover the period up to 1870, have particular relevance to our understanding of the church and the Sunday school today. The dividing line between the "respectable" and the "rough" working classes still exists today with the "rough" working classes largely outside the institutional church. The ramifications of this may be seen in the Sunday school: in attendance, parental attitudes, relationships with children approaching teenage years, continuation to church membership and so on. Likewise, the dependence of the church upon its own 'internal constituency' (the Sunday school) for maintenance of its membership has been an important part of the church's expectations particularly since 1870. It has now become very clear that the Sunday school is no longer the nursery of the church. This may perhaps signify a return to the original concept of the Sunday school, which grew up independent of church or chapel and was never seen as a recruitment agency for the church. Thirdly, the original functions which the Sunday school sought to fulfil were those of religious education, secular education and social welfare. However, it may be seen that over the years, the process of structural differentiation has resulted in a loss of function for the school. The secular education and social welfare functions are now performed by specialised bodies, leaving
the school to exercise what many would consider to be its principal function, that of religious education. It will be argued in the final chapter that the Sunday school now also exercises an important function as a leisure-time activity, and that for many children, this is its principal function.

In Section 3.3, a brief sketch of developments in the Sunday school post-1870 is presented. Attempts to stem the decline in attendance and influence are noted, but the overall trend continues to be downwards. It is particularly interesting to observe the indicators of this decline, since they mirror many of the issues which are of concern to Sunday school staff in the 1980s.

Finally, the chapter concludes by examining the major social changes which have taken place since the late nineteenth century, and the effect which such changes have had on the Sunday school. The situation in which the Sunday school arose in the 1780s was vastly different a century later, and by the 1980s, economic, social and cultural changes had completely altered the social context of the Sunday school. As this research is concerned with the Sunday school in the inner city, this section particularly considers the effect of urban society on the family, with the implications this has for the child and the Sunday school. The next chapter will focus in detail on one particular inner city area, the London Borough of Newham, in which the field work for this present research took place.
CHAPTER 4

THE LONDON BOROUGH OF NEWHAM

4.1 Introduction

This study is located in the inner city London Borough of Newham, situated north of the Thames on the eastern borders of the Greater London area. Newham bears the hallmarks characteristic of many urban, highly industrialised areas in terms of poor housing, low standards of education, removal of industry, high unemployment, an increasing juvenile crime rate, large-scale immigration and the emigration of the upwardly socially mobile. The description of the inner city given by Rex and Tomlinson in Colonial Immigrants in a British City (1979), applies equally to Newham as it does to Birmingham.

What is commonly called the inner city really refers to a secondary ring neighbourhood. It is essentially the archaeological residue of an Edwardian or late Victorian industrial working class culture and society. It includes usually a declining number of factories; a park of some grandeur, but somehow now underused and gone tatty; a football ground which still brings noisy and turbulent crowds on to the street...demolition sites, whose future has been pencilled in by planners, but which is uncertain and unknown to the local populace, some odd pockets of boarded-up houses not yet demolished;...and, finally, the huddled, though often tree-lined terraces which actually constitute lodging-house zones, general improvement areas and housing action areas. 1

However, Newham also has its own distinctive characteristics. The Borough itself covers an area of some ten square miles and has a population of 209,500. 2 It was created in 1965 as an amalgam of the old London county Boroughs of West Ham and East Ham. Geographically, Newham is a clearly defined unit: to the east it is bounded by the River Roding, to the west by the River Lea, both of which flow into the Thames which forms the southern boundary, while to the north the
Wanstead Flats, once a part of the Forest of Essex, form a natural boundary (see Appendix IX). Whilst being a geographical entity, however, Newham has little social cohesion. Rather, it is an administrative convenience. Traditionally, West Ham housed the working classes employed at the docks and at allied industries along the Thames and the River Lea. East Ham, on the other hand, offered residential accommodation for the middle classes. Despite the years which have elapsed since the formation of Newham, there still remains a strong sense of separate identity, particularly amongst the older residents. Newham may appear as an homogeneous working class unit to the outsider, but within its boundaries it still contains many "villages", areas where inter-marriage, the extended family, and a strong community of interests have produced the close-knit communities characteristic of the East End of London and documented by Willmott and Young in their classic study of East End society, *Family and Kinship in East London*.3

The following sections will focus in greater detail on four particular aspects of the social environment of Newham which contribute to its distinctive character. In looking at its demography, we will consider in particular its multi-racial character; in the area of housing, new development schemes are off-set by housing shortages and sub-standard housing. A steady removal of industry has led to high unemployment, and the standards of education are jeopardised both by governmental policies and by the low value placed on educational achievement by many in the local community. We will then move on to consider the position of the church and the Sunday school in Newham.
4.2 Demography

As with many other inner city areas, the demographic character of Newham has changed considerably over the last twenty years. In common with the trend in inner London as a whole, Newham's population has undergone a steady decline, from 265,400 in 1961, to 237,400 in 1971, to 209,500 in 1981, a decline of some 12% even within the last ten years, compared with 18% in inner London as a whole. A large part of this population change may be attributed to the movement out of the area of those most upwardly socially mobile: the "respectable" working class and the middle class aspirants. They have left in search of better and often cheaper housing, new employment, increased educational opportunities for their children. Those remaining are, disproportionately, the elderly, young married couples not yet able to afford their own home, and, often, the socially inadequate.

The gap created by this "emigration" has been filled by an influx of immigrants from Commonwealth countries. Immigrants from the West Indies, many of whom came to England in response to job advertisements, such as those issued by London Transport, began to settle in Newham in the 1950s. Unlike some inner city areas in which the West Indian population is relatively homogeneous, coming predominantly from one Caribbean island, those who have entered Newham since the 1950s represent virtually all the islands of the West Indies. Those from the Caribbean now resident in Newham total some 8,240 individuals. Newham also houses Africans from countries such as Nigeria and Ghana, many of whom are students and nurses. Ugandan Asian refugees also entered the Borough in the early 1970s, following their
expulsion from Uganda by Idi Amin. A high proportion of Newham's immigrant population come from the Indian subcontinent (including India, Pakistan, and Bangladesh), and this group numbers in the region of 16,650. In all, some 20% of all Newham residents were born abroad, while some 26% live in a household with a New Commonwealth-born head. Much of the immigrant population tends to congregate in certain areas of the Borough. This generally to the north and north-east where there is considerable owner/occupier or privately rented accommodation available. Large houses in these areas make multi-occupation possible. In a single ward in this area, 1981 census data indicated that 42% of the residents were born abroad and 55% lived in a household with a New Commonwealth-born head. It is interesting that comparatively few immigrant families have migrated to suburban areas. This could be due to a preference on the part of the members of the ethnic minorities for the inner city areas, in which family and community ties with their fellow-countrymen are strongest. It could also be due to economic disadvantage. This same pattern was noted by Rex and Tomlinson in their study of the immigrant community in Handsworth, Birmingham. Significantly, the lowest proportion of immigrants in Newham live in the south of the Borough where council housing predominates. Residential qualifications have played their part here, but the principal reason for the low racial mix in this area stems from strong anti-immigrant feelings amongst the local white community, resulting in considerable racial harassment on some council housing estates. It is interesting to note that in the 1979 elections, over 5,000 people voted for the National Front, and in the constituency of Newham South this had the effect of pushing the Conservative candidate into third place behind Labour and the National Front candidate who was placed second.
These ethnic minorities bring with them a great diversity in religion, customs and language. Such factors intensify an already difficult community relations situation as the immigrant community lacks homogeneity even within itself. Immigrants are also cited as convenient scape-goats in the issue of housing shortage, as racist individuals amongst the local residents allege that ethnic minorities receive preferential treatment in securing housing. However, as the majority of immigrants live in areas where there is little council housing, there appears little justification in this assertion. This allegation does, nevertheless, highlight the concern felt amongst the local community regarding the whole area of housing standards and the provision of housing in the Borough. The next section investigates this aspect in greater detail.

4.3 Housing

The local authority owns 38% of the housing stock in the Borough, much of this in the south resulting from post-war rebuilding and slum clearance programmes. Approximately 20% of the remainder is privately rented accommodation, predominantly in the north west of the Borough, and a further 36% is owner/occupier, principally located in the north east and east of the Borough.10 Approximately one quarter of the Borough's housing stock was destroyed in the war, and despite a continuing programme of rebuilding, pre-fabs built in parts of the Borough immediately following the war with an anticipated lifespan of ten years are only now being demolished. Shortage of housing accommodation has long been an issue of major concern in the Borough. Council figures to the end of March, 1981, indicated
that the Borough was still short of some 3,100 houses. However, central government restrictions on capital expenditure in 1980/81 resulted in the local authority's allocation for housing capital investment being cut by 14%, and the council was only able to complete some 500 new houses.

The docklands area of Newham in particular has suffered from the lack of a clear-out policy regarding rebuilding and rehousing, as policy changes by successive governments and uncertainty over the future of the docks have resulted in continual delays. Within the past few years, much of the uncertainty was connected with central government proposals to establish the London Docklands Development Corporation. This was eventually set up in 1981. These delays have had the effect of denying access to both public and private sectors of the most important area of land in the Borough for housing development. However, the establishment of the L.D.D.C. has given the Corporation absolute rights to develop the docklands area within its jurisdiction as it sees fit, in consultation with, but without being answerable to the local authorities concerned, in matters of planning control, housing and industrial development.

In Newham, this has resulted in planning permission being given to a large-scale development by private contractors, totalling some 2,000 houses, as well as the completion of a smaller council development. This building programme has involved the demolition of a considerable number of substandard properties. However, it is not anticipated that the private development will 'at present...affect the household : dwelling ratio significantly as it is thought that the majority of purchasers they [private householders on L.D.D.C. land] attract come from outside the Borough'. Of the 34,000 Newham
council tenants circulated with details of the development, only 500 asked for further details, and to date only 121 are expected to complete purchase of one of these new properties. Thus, the local authority's original objective which was to use the land for council housing to relieve the Borough's own problems of overcrowding and housing shortage, has been frustrated by the L.D.D.C.

65% of the dwellings in the Borough were built pre-1939, and the majority of these date back to the turn of the century. Many of these older homes lack an indoor toilet, bath or adequate hot water supply and fall into the category of homes which are unfit or lacking in standard amenities. In fact, the English House Condition Survey indicated that in 1976, Newham had the highest percentage in the country of homes lacking an inside toilet. The 1981 census emphasizes the problem showing that, taking into account the need for major repair work and provision of the basic amenities, '...there are only three Boroughs in London which have a higher proportion of stock in an unsatisfactory condition'. Government cutbacks have considerably restricted financial outlay on improvements, and the number of housing action areas has been reduced.

Although the building of tower blocks is no longer sanctioned following the collapse of Ronan Point in 1968, they continue to provide a large proportion of council housing, particularly in the south of the Borough. The right of council tenants to buy their own houses, has inevitably led to the purchase of the most attractive dwellings in the Borough, and also those on estates outside the Borough. As a result, the local authority, already faced with a housing shortage, is left with the less desirable properties and the deteriorating
tower blocks. This high-rise living has led to considerable social isolation and resultant social and psychological pressure upon the residents, particularly amongst young families with children. Many of the tower blocks have been plagued by vandals, resulting in the establishment of restricted entry systems. In addition, structural defects have necessitated extensive repairs to some of the blocks, to the extent that earlier this year two blocks were demolished as the cost of the necessary repairs would have proved uneconomic.

4.4 Industry

In common with other inner city areas, Newham has been severely affected by the current economic recession. In July 1981, the unemployment rate amongst the male population stood at 12.1% and this figure does not include some 3,000 women unemployed. However, Newham had been suffering from an economic decline long before the present situation. Traditionally, the south and west of the Borough, particularly the former West Ham County Council area, has housed the industry of the Borough, since this area has, for generations, depended upon the docks for its livelihood. The Royal group of docks comprised one of the largest areas of impounded dock water in the world: approximately 1,000 acres with some 11 miles of quays. Canning Town, Custom House, Silvertown, North Woolwich and areas bordering on the River Lea, have housed the dockers and those in related industries: sugar refining, chemical works, glue manufacturing, and so on. However, as containerisation has changed the methods of cargo handling, so the traditional labour-intensive docks, from Tilbury upriver to the Tower of London, have closed one by one, culminating in early 1982 in the closure of the Albert and Victoria Docks.
The major effect of new cargo handling methods has been to change the traditional geography of the Port by progressively transferring the location of port operations to the lower reaches of the River Thames and the small ports in the south and east coastal areas of England. In addition, the development of container terminals has led to the transfer of quayside cargo preparation operations to sites outside the ambit of the Port, with consequent problems regarding the definition of dock work. 21

The social effects of the closure of the docks have been enormous, not least in terms of unemployment, as dockers, made redundant after generations of docking, have experienced difficulties in finding suitable alternative employment. Furthermore, the work expectations of the sons of dockworkers who anticipated entering the docks in the family tradition have been frustrated. As the docks have closed, so allied industries have moved to areas offering greater industrial potential. This drain of industry away from the dockland areas, has in fact been encouraged by the policies of the present government who, in encouraging private enterprise and investment, have given incentives to companies prepared to move to the north, the south west, and to new towns. At the present time, the only major employer in the docks is Tate and Lyles, and even they have been forced to make considerable redundancies in recent years, due to the introduction of new methods of sugar refining necessitated by Britain's entry into the E.E.C. Other companies, such as Standard Telephones and Cables, British Shipbuilders, and Paragon Works have moved their businesses elsewhere. Another former major employer in South Newham was the Beckton Gas and Coke Company employing some 10,000 men at the turn of the century. With the advent of North Sea gas, however, and as electronic equipment has replaced dependence on coal firing, the vast complex of equipment has become obsolete and a mere skeleton
staff maintain the site.

In an attempt to attract new industry to the dockland area and to revitalise the economy of the Borough as a whole as well as the social structure in docklands, the Department of the Environment is injecting large sums of money into the area through the L.D.D.C. The new housing units built in the dockland area (referred to above in 4.3), come under the provisions of the L.D.D.C., and have been paralleled in the industrial sphere by the development of a vast industrial complex known as the London Industrial Park. As well as erecting large warehouses, the "Park" is being extensively landscaped, new roads are being built, and a new district centre for south-east Newham is planned, incorporating a hypermarket. Thus far, despite an extensive advertising campaign in the national media, industry has been slow to invest in the area. This no doubt relates in a large part to the lack of systems of transportation in the area adequate to cope with increased industrial and commuter traffic. At present, the road network serving the area suffers severe congestion, and there is no effective rail link. There is a strong possibility that a short-take-off-and-landing airport (STOLport) may be built in the disused docks. Local opinion generally appears to favour the project, although there is vigorous anti-Stolport lobby. A public enquiry is to be held in 1983, and permission for the airport is currently being sought from the aviation authorities. If approval is granted, it could be operational by 1984 and it is anticipated that it could provide up to 500 jobs locally. It would provide both a freight and passenger
service within England and to the Continent, and could potentially be a further means of encouraging industry to the docklands area.

It is eventually intended that there will be a new secondary school within the new district centre to serve the incoming population. When completed, it will be the first secondary school in south Newham, an area with a population of some 33,000, exclusive of the new L.D.D.C. housing. The provision of such a school is long overdue in this area, and this delay is indicative of some of the problems facing Newham in the area of education. These will be considered in greater detail in the next section.

4.5 Education

Some six to eight years ago, Newham was frequently cited as an example of the bankruptcy of the education system. An article in 'The Times' in 1974 began, 'If education breaks down anywhere, it will break down first in the London Borough of Newham...\(^{23}\) During these years, problems such as truancy, staff shortages, and poor facilities and equipment were magnified. Seven of the sixteen comprehensives in the Borough operated only on a part-time basis, and at the same time, one of the schools was advertising for six departmental heads. Although the situation has improved considerably in recent years - the problem of teacher shortage, for example, has been largely solved, due in part to cutbacks in training and a scarcity of jobs - the legacy of that period still remains. The quality of the education offered in some of Newham's schools is frequently a cause for concern amongst those parents who wish their children to achieve in academic terms; the emphasis in some of the schools tends to be on obtaining C.S.E.s rather than on going on to
study for 'A' levels. This approach is understandable if it is considered in the light of the observations of the Plowden Report. In an area where the jobs people do and the status they hold owe little to their education, it is natural for children as they grow older to regard school as a brief prelude to work rather than as an avenue to future opportunities.\textsuperscript{24}

In common with other inner city areas, Newham has frequently drawn teachers in their probationary year or those who could not obtain work in more popular areas. In the past, this has meant that several schools have experienced a high degree of staff turnover and a succession of supply teachers as vacancies have remained unfilled. Often such teachers have lacked the experience, commitment and sense of challenge essential to working with inner city youngsters. Whilst the present economic situation has meant that the rate of staff turnover has slowed considerably, resources in other areas ranging from new buildings to new books continue to be scarce. Priority in such matters is frequently given to new towns and suburbs where the quantity and quality of education has to keep pace with the growing population. In Newham, the school population has continued its slow decline, from 58,187 in 1980 to 57,047 in 1981, a drop of 1,000 in one year.\textsuperscript{25} Newham is further disadvantaged in some respects, by the fact that it falls just outside the Inner London Education Authority boundaries. Thus, while facing social and educational problems similar to those Boroughs within I.L.E.A., Newham does not have access to the resources of I.L.E.A., and salaries in Newham are based on a different and lower scale.
However, Newham does have an excellent record in the provision of nursery education. At the start of the 1980/81 school year, Newham had eight nursery schools, more than in any other London Borough, as well as 32 nursery classes or units in primary schools. It also has a good reputation in its provision of special schools for the handicapped, mental as well as physical. The Borough also has two colleges of technology for further education, as well as several adult education centres.

The preceding four sections have outlined the principal social and economic characteristics of Newham. We now focus in on the position of the church within this network.

4.6 The Churches

The recent social and economic trends in the Borough have inevitably caused changes within the churches. Perhaps the most obvious of these changes to the outsider is the decline in the number of churches belonging to the major denominations. In 1950 there were approximately 200 churches of all traditions (excluding non-Christian religions) in the Borough. By 1960 this had declined to approximately 150, by 1970 to approximately 90, and in 1980, there were about 70. These figures exclude Black Churches which are referred to below. Churches which have been declared redundant during these years have variously been demolished, transformed into warehouses, community centres or social clubs, or left to stand vacant while a decision regarding their future is awaited. In contrast to this decline amongst the traditional churches, there has been a considerable growth in House Churches, and other small non-denominational Christian groupings. Some of these
groups meet principally for worship and fellowship, while others have evolved around a common interest, such as a Christian dramatic group, or a sacred dance group. There has also been an increase in the number and strength of Black Churches in the Borough. They now number about 25, and many share premises with the main-stream denominations.

The causes for the decline of the traditional churches are complex, and relate both to trends within society as a whole, and also to factors inherent in the structures of the individual denominations. A few aspects are worth noting relative to this. One factor particularly characteristic of many inner city churches is that they are strongly clergy-oriented, and the laity generally tend to play a relatively minor role in those aspect of leadership seen to be the responsibility of the minister or the priest, such as visiting, conducting worship, teaching, and so on. Thus, if the minister should leave and not be replaced, church members may be unprepared to fill his role effectively on a long-term basis. Often, churches find that the members of their congregations who are the most socially mobile move out of the area. These may be those buying their own homes or generally seeking what they see to be a better quality of life; often they are married couples with young children and their loss is deeply felt. Such families may transfer their membership to a church in their new neighbourhood if their commitment is strong. Others may cease attending church altogether. However, there are also situations in which church members (particularly those in the older age range) have moved out to the suburbs, but have maintained their attachment to the inner city church. Such a membership, commuting in from a suburban area, has sometimes kept an inner city church artificially
alive, in the sense that the church may draw few if any members from its immediate neighbourhood which it was designed to serve.

In recent years there has been an increasing trend in the inner city towards churches working together across denominational boundaries. This is gathering momentum in Newham, particularly in the traditional working class areas of the Borough, such as docklands in South Newham, where the church has never had a foothold and where most congregations are very small, some in single figures. In one such area, a Local Ecumenical Project has been established between an Anglican and a Baptist church, on the recognition by the denominational authorities that they either work together or there is no future for the church in the area. The very localised nature of the experiment is contributing to its success.

The foregoing description of the church in Newham may be applied to many inner city areas with regional variations. The overall picture for the traditional churches and their traditional structures is one of decline, and of a continuous struggle to make the message of the church relevant to the working class community. This is particularly true of the Protestant churches, and also, contrary to what is sometimes thought, of the Roman Catholic churches. When Irish immigration was high, the Roman Catholic churches in working class areas appeared to flourish. However, with the fall in immigration, the decline of Roman Catholic support became apparent, and here also there was a trend towards social and geographical mobility out of working class areas and into the suburbs. Thus, history has shown that by and large, the traditional working class have always remained outside the pale of organised, institutional Christianity. Yet many of the children of
these same working class parents attend Sunday school for a period of time. To conclude this overview of the church in Newham, let us now take a brief look at the Sunday school.

4.7 The Contemporary Sunday School

To the uninitiated, one of the most surprising factors regarding the contemporary Sunday school, seems to be simply that they exist in as large a number as they do. In Newham, for example, when the field work for this research was carried out in 1978, 61 of the 67 Protestant white-led churches still conducted a Sunday school. These ranged in size from approximately 6 children to 166. The following table gives some indication as to size variation across the denominations.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Denomination</th>
<th>Number of Sunday Schools</th>
<th>Average</th>
<th>Range</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Church of England</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>6 - 85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baptist</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>14 - 145</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Methodist</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>12 - 60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United Reformed Church</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>8 - 30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sects</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>12 - 166</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In general terms, as noted above in Chapter 3, the decline in Sunday school attendance began slowly in the last two decades of the nineteenth century and in the early years of this century. As early as 1916, one Sunday school in what is now Newham, convened a conference 'to discuss the falling off of scholars and the relationship of the church and the Sunday school'. This decline has continued to the present day. Taking Newham as an example, in 1978 only 1.4% of the
total population of the Borough was enrolled in Sunday school. This was only 4% of the total child population of the Borough in the appropriate age range. It should be noted that these percentages refer to enrolment figures. On average, allowing for anomalies in certain churches, actual Sunday school attendance is approximately two thirds of the roll.

The interviews conducted with the Sunday school superintendents or key individuals provided the basis for a factual analysis of the contemporary Sunday school in Newham and these findings are detailed below in Chapter 5. However, a few general observations are useful here in providing an overview of the current situation.

A lack of meaningful integration between the Sunday school and the adult congregation is characteristic of numerous schools. In some cases, integration of any nature is precluded by the fact that the Sunday school and the church meet at different times. In other situations, the children only join the adult congregation once a month for a "family service", or for ten or fifteen minutes each Sunday. Responses to the interviews indicated that considerable difficulties were experienced in finding an effective method whereby to introduce youngsters to and include them in a meaningful way in the adult congregation or service. This relates to another concern amongst Sunday school staff. There is a high incidence of non-attendance amongst children once they have reached secondary school or early teens. It was felt that this high rate was exacerbated by the lack of integration referred to above. Many youngsters, themselves, indicated that they saw the church as an adult activity and not as a natural
follow-on to the Sunday school. Peer group influence is also a significant factor, particularly as a child reaches adolescence and adult influence over him/her is at a minimum.

The Sunday school structure was also seen to be an important element in the failure of the school to attract children. In an inner urban, industrialised and predominately working class area, a high value is not placed on education as an end in itself by many families. For this reason, some respondents queried the impression given to the child by the Sunday "school", employing as it does such terms as "classes" and "lessons", "teachers", "pupils", "scholars", and so on. Thus, some churches favoured the term "junior church" in preference to "Sunday school". Others looked for something more modern such as "Sunday Scene" or "Sunday Club". Interestingly enough, the worst offenders in maintaining the old academic ethos were often the children themselves, who, despite modern alternatives, still persisted in referring to the "Sunday school". The heritage of two hundred years is not easily changed in the popular mind.

Finally, home visiting was generally accepted by Sunday school staff to be of considerable importance in maintaining the interest and involvement of the children, but many schools are faced with the constraints imposed by the commuter church syndrome. Teachers who live outside the area, who are retired, without transport, or with family commitments, find that visiting, which often needs to be carried out in the evening, becomes virtually impossible. In fact, street corner contact with children tends to be more effective because it is more in keeping with
the cultural context of the area. Clearly, contact of this nature presents difficulties for the teacher who works during the day or who does not live locally, and as a result the teacher frequently has little or no knowledge of the home background of many of the children.

These concerns regarding levels of attendance, maintaining contact during teenage years, and relationships with the home, are by no means exclusive to the Sunday schools in Newham, but are similar to problems faced by Sunday schools in other inner city areas. In a discussion paper entitled "Sunday Schools for the Seventies?" and in an ensuing report on the results of a survey conducted amongst ten Methodist Sunday schools in the Leeds area, Ivan Reid highlights similar problems. He questions the role of the Sunday school in preparing a child for church membership, challenges the appropriateness of an emphasis on factual learning, suggests that such training as teachers receive needs to be reevaluated, particularly as it relates to the Methodist approach, emphasises the lack of contact between the teacher and the home, and concludes that either modifications to the present structure are needed, or there must be a radical restructuring of the entire Sunday school system. Whilst some of his priorities may be questioned in the light of the present research conducted in Newham, it is interesting to note that issues similar to those in Newham were raised by Sunday schools in the Leeds area.

The difficulty of attracting children with any long-term commitment to the Sunday school or church, is universal. It would appear from the interviews conducted in Newham, that attendance at Sunday school is not
seen as "sissy" or a sign of weakness, but rather tends to be totally irrelevant to the interests of the average child in the 1980s. It may provide an interesting diversion for the younger child in infant or junior school, but peer group influence and outside interests take precedence as the child approaches secondary school, and interest in Sunday school diminishes. The child from the "respectable" home background where there is parental encouragement to attend will probably be more committed and regular in attendance than will the child from a "rough" background. Where there is parental indifference and the child is left to his own preferences, his attendance at Sunday school will probably be irregular at best, or he may not attend at all.

Despite the many problems associated with conducting and maintaining Sunday schools in Newham, most churches have continued to provide this service for the children within their community. They have experimented on individual levels to meet the needs and interests of their children, but it would appear that there has been little in the way of a comprehensive programme amongst all the churches to explore possible solutions to common problems. The task is complicated by the insularity of most Sunday schools, the diversity of their aims and approaches... and most of all by a complete lack of research findings, or even many records of experimentation. On a national level, many working parties have been convened and numerous theories formulated regarding particular aspects of the churches' ministry amongst children, while Christian educationalists have devised new teaching manuals and workbooks, but the degree to which such new schemes and approaches have affected the day-to-day running of the local Sunday school is uncertain. Churches in inner urban industrialised areas such as Newham, have little time, inspiration or staff to
examine and experiment with new teaching programmes devised by
denominational bodies. Rather, their energies are more frequently
absorbed in wrestling with the immediate situation of a diminishing
Christian presence in inner city areas, and related issues such
as those noted above of loss of leadership, immigration, and the
effects of changes in standards of housing, education, and the
removal of industry.

4.8 Conclusion
The foregoing chapter has presented briefly the social and economic
background against which the church, and, more specifically, the
Sunday school in Newham operates. The population of Newham is
traditionally strong working class, and as has been noted the working
classes have largely remained outside institutional Christianity.
Thus, the proportion of the population attending either church or
Sunday school has remained small compared with middle class suburban
areas. The multi-racial character of the population in which 20% of
all residents were born abroad, has led to considerable racial tension,
and has also radically altered the social mix of children in Sunday
school, as many schools have found that their classes are predominantly
black. This has necessitated an adjustment of traditional patterns
of teaching to take account of the various cultural backgrounds of the
children. The teacher thus faces new and demanding situations within
the school for which he or she may be inadequately prepared. Added to
this, the low value placed on education as an end in itself in a
working class area such as Newham, may present further difficulties
for a teacher who sees the Sunday school principally as a vehicle for
communicating factual knowledge about Christianity to the children.
Factors associated with the removal of industry, resultant unemploy-
ment, shortage of adequate housing accommodation, tower block living
and the social isolation it can cause, all create a community in which the churches themselves must struggle to survive.

What are the Sunday schools of Newham offering to the children and is this what the children want? Or is it true as Ivan Reid concludes that 'the Sunday schools now find themselves in a hyper-competitive market situation with declining demand, attempting to sell a product which has been decimated in terms of consumer appeal and constricted in size'?34 The following two chapters examine in greater detail the position of the Sunday school in Newham. Chapter 5 reviews the results of the survey conducted amongst the Sunday school superintendents, and Chapter 6 then considers four schools from a variety of perspectives. These empirical studies will then be assessed in the concluding chapter, which will focus on the nature and purpose of the Sunday school in an inner city Borough such as Newham.
PART III

THE STUDY OF THE SUNDAY SCHOOL IN NEWHAM
This section of the research was designed to examine the empirical evidence collected regarding the structure and function of the Sunday school in the inner city Borough of Newham. There are two main elements to Part III. Chapter 5 analyses the data gathered by means of interviews with the superintendents of the Sunday schools. Chapter 6 reviews the results of in-depth studies in four selected schools. Thus, the Sunday school is assessed from a variety of perspectives: those of the superintendents, the teaching staff, the ministers, the children, and the parents. Through the gathering of this empirical data at a local level relating to the current situation in the Sunday school, it was intended to examine these various viewpoints and the differing values placed on the school by all those who were connected with it. From this it was anticipated that a clearer understanding of the role and position of the contemporary Sunday school in an inner city industrialised area would emerge.
CHAPTER 5

THE SURVEY OF SUPERINTENDENTS

5.1 Introduction

The interviews which were conducted with the superintendents of the Sunday schools were primarily designed to provide a broad overview of the position of the contemporary Sunday school in Newham. The five topic areas covered in the survey were therefore very general, seeking for information in the areas of Sunday school organisation and structure, characteristics of the family background of the children, particulars regarding the teaching staff, details of the lesson material used, and information relating to the theological orientation or aims and philosophy underlying the operation of the school. A secondary aim of the interviews was to use the data collected as a basis for the selection of the four schools for in-depth observation. The construction of the interview schedule has been discussed above in Chapter 2 and a copy of it may be found in Appendix I. In considering the research design, Chapter 2 also examines in detail the Sunday schools which took part in the survey and the responses of the superintendents towards participation in the survey. This present chapter, therefore, will concentrate on the findings of the survey and will present an assessment of this data.

The interview schedule contained some fifty questions, and in analysing these, the attempt has been made to select the most significant variables and to group them so as to present an overview of the current situation in Newham. It should be remembered that the responses represent the views of one key individual in each Sunday school. Hence, although
the majority of the questions required factual answers, in some instances the personal opinions of the informants and their own attitude to the Sunday school have an important bearing on the response. For example, with regard to the question 'are there any difficult children in your Sunday school?', although the types of difficulties were specified, probing revealed that a child one teacher might define as difficult, might simply be hyperactive according to another. Such questions, together with those referred to above in Chapter 2 which could only elicit general impressions, were often as valuable in terms of what they revealed about the superintendents and their approach to the Sunday school as for what they revealed about the children.

The following areas selected for summary purposes represent only those key variables and selected tables considered to be of greatest significance in presenting a broad perspective of the Sunday school. For detailed tables, reference should be made to Appendix II.

5.2 Overview of the Current Sunday School Situation
5.2.1 General Organisation
A useful starting point in the study of any social institution is an overview of its organisation and structure. One aspect of this with regard to the institution of the Sunday school is the need to place it in context as part of the wider Christian community, the local church, which is generally the Sunday school's parent body. In the majority of cases there appears to be little relationship of any significance between structural aspects of the Sunday school and of the church. The exception here seems to be the situation noted below in Section 5.2.1.1 in which the socio-economic area affects the attendance patterns in
both Sunday schools and churches in West Ham. However, in general there is little pattern of any significance in the relationship between the size of the adult congregation and that of the Sunday school, and in many cases, the time at which the Sunday school is held or the form it takes precludes any meaningful integration with the adult worshipping community. Ivan Reid, in his paper "Sunday Schools for the Seventies?", (1972) also referred to the maintenance of separate identities by the church and the Sunday school. He noted that attempts to change some of the 'outmoded concepts' underlying the Sunday school were hampered by the 'apparent institutional separatism of church and Sunday school'.

5.2.1.1 Adult Congregation and Sunday School Size
The term "adult congregation" refers to the average number of adults (approximately eighteen years of age and over) who attend the church service on a Sunday morning or evening. With regard to size, 80\% of the churches in Newham with Sunday schools have congregations of 50 or under, this figure remaining relatively stable across the denominations. The significant variable here seems to be the socio-economic class of the area in that nine of the twelve congregations larger than 50 fall into the East Ham or "respectable" working class area of the Borough, while of the remaining three, two were established in the Victorian era, one as a settlement and the other as a mission. Both carry large resources in terms of staff and plant.

The incidence of larger congregations in the East Ham area undoubtedly has historical roots. This area in Victorian times was suburban, housing the middle classes for whom the tradition of church affiliation
was part of the way of life. This tradition, although greatly diminished in strength, still continues today to a certain extent. West Ham, on the other hand, accommodating the noxious industries that grew up alongside the docks, housed the labourers who preferred not to spend their only free day each week in church.  

This same pattern may be seen in the Sunday school attendance and roll figures. In particular it is interesting to note that the Canning Town area of West Ham has the smallest adult congregations, the smallest Sunday schools and the lowest numbers of places of worship of any area in Newham. Accommodation is predominantly council-owned with several large estates and tower blocks. Since the war there has been considerable rehousing, families have been moved away and the tradition of church-going is very weak. These factors may also indicate that Wickham's thesis regarding the alienation of the working classes from the institutional church based on his study of Sheffield, is also applicable to Canning Town, since there remains in many parts of this area a strong sense of the traditional working class community, closely allied to the docks.  

In contrast to variations in the adult congregation size, denominational affiliation rather than socio-economic area appears to play a significant part in determining the size of the Sunday school as the following table indicates.
TABLE 5.1  Average Number of Children Attending Sunday School by Denomination

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Denomination</th>
<th>Average</th>
<th>Range</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Church of England</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>6 - 85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baptist</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>15 - 145</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Methodist</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>12 - 60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United Reformed Church</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>8 - 30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sects</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>12 - 166</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The largest Sunday schools are among the Baptists with the Sects coming second followed by the Methodists. It is interesting to speculate as to why the Baptist churches take preeminence in terms of size and may relate to the fact that generally they expound a theologically more conservative and fundamentalist system of beliefs than do the U.R.C., the Church of England or even the Methodists. An integral part of this is the religious enthusiasm and fervour which motivates the teacher in working with the child and may frequently manifest itself in visiting and maintaining contact outside the actual Sunday school situation, with the ultimate aim of bringing the child to some form of conversionist experience. The Sects also hold similar beliefs, but many of the smaller groups (Brethren, London City Mission) tend to be conservative in teaching methods as well as theology and this may be the reason why fewer children are attracted and the average consequently lowered. In contrast, some of the Baptist schools have adopted more up-to-date teaching methods.

At the other end of the scale, some of the smallest Sunday schools are those of the Church of England. Indeed, in terms of actual atten-
dance, 17 of the 21 Church of England Sunday schools have an average Sunday attendance of 25 and under. This may relate to the fact that the Church of England sees itself as the established church, relying on its status in the community to attract children and generally lacking the religious zeal and fervour which characterises the Baptists.

The value of questions on the interview schedule related to roll figures varies considerably as the practice of roll-keeping differs from denomination to denomination and even from church to church. Within several Church of England schools, the register is augmented by the inclusion of all children baptised at the parish church. Many of these no longer attend church and some do not even live in the parish. In other denominations, notably the U.R.C. and certain Sects, two or three churches record very high figures on the register but are very weak in terms of actual attendance. However, allowing for these few individual anomalies, on average actual Sunday school attendance is approximately two thirds of the enrolment figure.

The total number of children in actual attendance at these Sunday schools is approximately 2,090 compared with a Borough-wide population of children in the same age range of 50,300. These figures indicate that only about 4% of Newham children in the appropriate age groups currently attend Sunday school. This low percentage was reflected in the concern expressed by many teachers that Sunday schools in their present form were largely failing to meet the changing interests and needs of children. Many of the older teachers recalled with some
nostalgia the days when 300 - 400 children attended the schools, and they varying attributed the change to lack of interest and support by the parents, a general decline in the importance of religion, and the increase in outside activities such as television which competed favourably with the Sunday school for the child's attention. Some attributed the change to a failure on the part of the Sunday school, particularly in inner city areas, to adapt its form and content sufficiently so as to relate effectively to the life experiences of the child.

5.2.1.2 Structure
Questions relating to format indicated that there was very little differentiation between the Sunday schools in terms of structure. The majority met first as a group, either as a whole Sunday school or on a departmental basis (primary, junior, etc.) and then divided into classes. Size was generally the determining factor here, the larger Sunday schools having more classes and the smaller ones fewer, although the numbers of teachers available obviously affected the situation. No Sunday schools divided their pupils solely on the basis of sex as used to be the custom in past years, although ten divided according to both age and sex. Undoubtedly this was because of size in some cases, but in others, particularly those of a conservative tradition, this was seen to be a means of control. It was claimed that single sex classes encouraged fewer distractions and that the children paid better attention and were easier to control.

Sunday school structure is one possible reason for the failure of the Sunday school to attract children. In an inner urban, industrialised predominantly working class area a high value is not placed on
Many children are disaffected, consciously or unconsciously, with a system that prepares them for C.E. and 'O' levels but often fails to prepare them for the real world situations they will have to face, for example, the prospect of unemployment. It was interesting to speculate what impression the whole ethos of Sunday school made on children, employing as it does such terms as classes and lessons, teachers, pupils or scholars, scripture exams and so on, in many situations sitting the children in neat rows of chairs while extolling the virtues of sitting quietly and behaving oneself. Even accepting the educational ethos of the Sunday school, it cannot hope to compete with the day school in terms of skilled teachers, teaching methods and resources available. Although denominational bodies have sought to change the image of the Sunday school by calling it junior church or some such name, by updating teaching methods and aims, and by encouraging an informal structure, it would appear that in the majority of actual Sunday schools the form of the school tends to be somewhat outdated, still carrying within its very terminology vestiges of a period when it was primarily an agency for basic education. Attempts to change the educational ethos are further hampered by the persistence of the children themselves in using the educational terminology, since the experience of school is common to them all. This issue, together with a discussion of the values which are seen to be inculcated by the Sunday schools, is taken up in the final chapter.

5.2.1.3 Integration With the Adult Christian Community

A great deal concerning the Sunday school's relationship with its parent church and the church's attitude toward the Sunday school is
revealed by an examination of the church/Sunday school integration patterns. By integration is meant the degree to which the Sunday school and the adult congregation combine in some form of significant united activity. The emphasis here is on the term "significant". Hence, a simple physical coming together is not classed as a significant united activity. Integration requires some form of frequent and meaningful interchange between the participating groups. In the following table, family services have been classed as non-integrated in that it would appear that little significant interchange takes place between the children and adults on such an occasion as will be noted below.

**TABLE 5.2** Relationship Between the Sunday School and the Adult Congregation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Denomination</th>
<th>Full</th>
<th>Partial</th>
<th>None/Family Service</th>
<th>All</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Church of England</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baptist</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Methodist</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U.R.C.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sects</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>2</strong></td>
<td><strong>10</strong></td>
<td><strong>46</strong></td>
<td><strong>58</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The two churches classed as fully integrated represent two very different models. The Church of England case holds no Sunday school as such although five to seven year olds go out during the service as it is felt they are rather young to participate in the entire act
of morning worship. Rather each Sunday’s service is a family service specifically designed to include the children. The Baptist church, on the other hand, runs a Sunday school for all age groups from beginners to adults. The emphasis here is on the entire church family worshipping and learning together.

In those classed as partially integrated, the children go into the adult service for the first ten to twenty minutes before dispersing to classes. This period generally includes the singing of hymns or choruses, a prayer and perhaps a children’s story. It is often although not always the case that in these situations children are tolerated at rather than specially catered for in the morning service. Thus they are often visitors at rather than an integral and indispensable part of the adult worship.

The third classification includes those churches meeting with the Sunday school only for monthly family services or other special occasions, and those with whom there is no integration at all except possibly once or twice a year such as at Christmas. As noted above, family services have been classed as non-integrated because it may well be queried whether any significant interaction between adults and children takes place on such occasions. Although colours may be paraded by uniformed organisations, children generally sit in groups with their teachers and the hymns and sermons are often beyond their understanding. Indeed, family services could be regarded as merely token recognition of the Sunday school by the church as a whole. Based on his study of Sunday schools in the Leeds area, Ivan Reid supports this view:
At present, judging by reports and conversations, neither group particularly enjoys its common meetings. Younger children are quickly bored with hymns and prayers they cannot understand, adults often lack the simplicity necessary to enjoy more than infrequent worship with children. Family services often fall between the two and satisfy neither. 6

Clearly, a controlling element in this question is the time at which the Sunday school is held. Since 18 Sunday schools are held at midday (from 12.00 to 2.00pm) or in the afternoon, it is not possible for any integration to take place. However, increasingly Sunday schools have changed to the morning, although in few cases with the stated objective of promoting integration. Reasons have related to convenience for the teachers, the desire to encourage parents to attend the morning service, and also to the fact that many families go out in the afternoon. It is interesting to note that the Sects predominate in holding their schools at midday or in the afternoon. Contrary to the opinion of many teachers who think that morning schools encourage larger attendances, there appears to be no significant relationship between the size of the Sunday school and the time at which it is held. Rather time appears to be a matter of tradition and established patterns of structure which in certain Sectarian traditions in particular appear to admit little change. Afternoon Sunday schools are undoubtedly a carry-over from the days when in many working class households Sunday afternoons was the time for husband and wife to relax together with the children safely out of the way. 7

This almost total lack of any real integration between church and Sunday school raises some significant issues. Churches, in particular
their adult constituency, frequently express concern over the lack
of young people in the adult services and the loss of children from
the Sunday school as they reach mid-teens. Yet apparently no real
effort is made to introduce such youngsters to and include them in
any significant way in the adult congregation or services. Sunday
school becomes too young for them and many churches make no prov-
ision for any intermediate grouping, neither do they seem able to
adapt the adult service to the needs or culture of modern youth.
The very terms "adult congregation" and "Sunday school" indicate
an orientation towards two very different constituencies. A
further interesting factor pointed out by one of the teachers
interviewed was that the children were expected to go into the
adult congregation for a family service but there was never any
mention made of the adults coming into the Sunday school.

An underlying feeling, not always expressed but often implied by
many of the teachers interviewed, was the sense that the Sunday
school was viewed by other sections of the church as a rather minor
adjunct to the real task of the church in catering for adults. Hence,
in some schools it was difficult to obtain sufficient staff with the
necessary commitment and adequate time for lesson preparation. In
some churches the minister or vicar, himself, had comparatively
little knowledge of what was actually taking place in the school.
On the one hand, this lack of continuing involvement in the church
by any significant section of the teenage community raises the whole
issue of the future of the church in the inner city. But on the
other hand, perhaps it indicates a return to the original conception
of the Sunday school which was not directly viewed as a recruiting agency for the adult congregation. As A.D. Gilbert points out speaking about the beginning of the Sunday school movement in the late eighteenth century:

A natural progression of older scholars from the Sunday school to the adult membership of a chapel community had been neither the object nor the effect of these early Sunday schools...

...When the Sunday schools had lost contact with the scholars so had the churches, except in cases in which the scholars had been children of church-going families.

5.2.2 Family Background

Information derived from questions relating to family background was notable for the lack of specificity in the responses. Teachers could give very few precise details as to the home background of the children or the occupation of the parents. This was undoubtedly related to the infrequency with which teachers visited the homes and the comparatively superficial nature of the visits when they did take place. For example, the handing out of invitations to a church function can be achieved with a minimum of personal involvement. It would appear, therefore, that this lack of knowledge relates to a lack of enquiry on the part of the teachers rather than necessarily to any reluctance on the part of the children or parents to share certain aspects of the family situation. The responses to the in-depth observations confirm this and go some way towards providing this information (see Sections 6.3.3 and 6.3.4).

5.2.2.1 Ethnic Origins

The ethnic mix of the various Sunday schools was fairly represen-
tative of the population of the area of the Borough in which the Sunday school was located. Most of the Sunday schools with more black children than white were located in Forest Gate which has the highest proportion of immigrants from the New Commonwealth countries, while East Ham, followed by Canning Town had the majority of all-white Sunday schools. (See Appendix V for census data on immigration.)

This area of enquiry raised difficulties with some teachers as they were unable to distinguish between West Indians and Africans, and indeed, until specifically probed, in a few cases classified Asians with them calling them all "coloured". Thus, for analysis purposes West Indians, Africans and Asians have been classed together as black. The number of Asian children attending Sunday school is relatively small, but it is significant to note that in the cases where children of Asian origin are listed separately, they do not fall into any of the main areas of Asian settlement in the Borough. This probably indicated that those who do attend Sunday school tend to be more Anglicised, some possibly even Christians from Kerala State in South India. The fact that no Sunday schools in the Manor Park area, where there is a sizeable Asian population, specifically refer to Asian children in the schools may indicate that the Asians who have settled there have formed a tight-knit community maintaining their own faiths and traditions, whereas those scattered at random throughout the Borough integrate with the indigenous community to a greater degree. Given another one or two generations, the cross-cultural integration through school and peer group influences will undoubtedly open up the Asian community as it has done the West Indian, although
the effect this will have on Sunday school attendance will probably be negligible.

5.2.2.2 Housing

Different areas of the Borough have different types of housing characteristic of them as was noted in Chapter 4 and may also be seen from the figures in Appendix IV. Thus since most children attending Sunday school live in the immediate vicinity of the school, it is a fair assumption that the type of housing in which the children live is broadly characteristic of the type of housing in the neighbourhood of the church. The figures in Table 5.3 relate to the type of housing accommodation in which the majority of pupils in each Sunday school live. Two areas, East Ham and West Ham are contrasted. Thus the table indicates that the majority of Sunday schools in the West Ham area draw on children living in council accommodation, while those in the East Ham area tend to draw children living in the private sector of accommodation.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Predominant Type of Accommodation</th>
<th>West Ham</th>
<th>East Ham</th>
<th>All</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Council</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private Landlord</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Owner Occupier</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mixed</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>26</strong></td>
<td><strong>32</strong></td>
<td><strong>58</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Source: Survey of Superintendents)
5.2.2.3 Parental Involvement

There has long been discussion among the clergy and those involved in Christian education over the degree to which families are reached through the children. In other words, does the Sunday school act as an effective gateway into the church for the parents? It is now generally accepted that it does not, and evidence from the superintendent interview schedules supports this view. Of the 58 Sunday school superintendents interviewed, 22 indicated that no parents of the Sunday school children attended church on a weekly basis and a further 34 said that only a few (four or five individuals) attended weekly. The attendance rate increased somewhat with reference to the number of parents attending church on special occasions (Christmas, Sunday school anniversaries, etc.). Six superintendents recorded that no parents attended on special occasions, 27 that a few attended, and a further 21 that about half attended.

The general indication from this seems to be that the vast majority of parents maintain no regular connection with the church themselves although they will attend on special occasions. Such parents appear to be generally happy for their children to attend, or at least do not prevent them. According to the superintendents, in some instances the parents apparently do not even know where the child is. In other cases, children attend two, possibly even three schools on a single Sunday, while in other situations some children, particularly within the West Indian community, are sent. Whether this is because the parents see the Sunday school as a harmless agency which keeps the children occupied for an hour, whether it is because they feel it inculcates certain moral and religious teaching into the child
which will help him establish his values and take his place in society as a responsible adult citizen, or whether they simply send the child because they themselves went to Sunday school and this is part of the British tradition of growing up - these are issues which are of vital importance if one is seeking to investigate the effectiveness of the Sunday school in a society which, by and large, considers the church to have only peripheral relevance. It was apparent from the interview schedule that information of this nature would need to be collected in the in-depth interview situation, as the Sunday school superintendents could give only their own impressions as to why the children attended Sunday school. These issues are, therefore, examined in greater detail in the analysis of the in-depth studies in Chapter 6, particularly in Section 6.3.4 regarding parental perspectives. Nevertheless, in the majority of cases, the superintendents' opinion was that the child attended the school because he enjoyed it. This was in part supported by the fact that in most Sunday schools the children were regular rather than occasional in attendance, this figure remaining stable across both denomination and area.

An interesting point to observe, which is statistically significant, is that there is a variation in terms of weekly parental attendance at church from West Ham to East Ham as the following table indicates.
### TABLE 5.4  Weekly Church Attendance of Parents by Area.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Parental Attendance</th>
<th>West Ham</th>
<th>East Ham</th>
<th>All</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>None</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>26</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Chi Square with Yates' Correction = 3.92)
(Significant at .05 with 1 d/f)

There does not appear to be any significant difference in area in terms of parental attendance at church on special occasions. This may be due to the fact that regardless of area, the majority of parents make the attempt to support their children or attend a special church service a few times during the year. West Ham, however, does appear to have a greater number of Sunday schools with fewer parents attending on both a weekly and special occasion basis. This may again relate to the fact that West Ham has a large representation of working class individuals many of whom traditionally have had little use for the church except for the rites of passage: birth, marriage and death. By contrast, in the East Ham area, the church-going tradition is a much more established part of the pattern of life such as may be found in the suburbs. This is undoubtedly an oversimplification of the issue as even within the broad West Ham/East Ham dichotomy there are area differences. Furthermore, this treatment does not begin to wrestle with the motives, conscious or unconscious, of parents who send their children
to Sunday school, to which reference will be made in the following chapter. However, this is useful in presenting an overview of the situation, viz., that parental involvement substantially reflects social class differences between the two areas.

5.2.2.4 Visiting Patterns

Linked with the issue of parental involvement in the church is undoubtedly the issue of the involvement of the church or its official representatives, in this case the Sunday school staff, with the parents. Although the relationship between the numbers of parents attending church and the amount of home visiting carried out by the teachers is not significant, perhaps the general lack of time, interest and priority afforded by the teachers to visiting may be related to the overall lack of interest evinced by the parents in both the church and the Sunday school. A simple frequency count indicated that twelve Sunday schools did no home visiting, a further twenty visited only annually (this category included those who responded "occasionally"), eighteen visited quarterly (this category included the response "no set pattern but several times a year"), while seven visited monthly. Reasons for visiting varied greatly. Maintaining contact with the absentees ranked highest on the list, but other reasons ranged from the distribution of Christian magazines to informing the families about special events at the church, or simply maintaining general contact.

This whole area of enquiry regarding the contact which inner city Sunday school staff maintain with the parents highlighted some important issues. It was significant that various superintendents who visited the homes only occasionally mentioned the importance of
street corner contact in maintaining links with the parents. This, together with the infrequency with which most teachers visit, may very well relate to the fact that visiting people in their homes is much more of a middle class phenomenon. The more common meeting ground in a working class community is the pub, the launderette or the street corner. A home visit is an indication of a close friendship rather than a casual acquaintance. Beyond this, in some families both parents are out at work all day and reserve the evening for relaxation and watching television. In other families, parents may be on shift work, and consequently have to sleep during the day or in the evening. In such situations, a home visit is often not convenient and may be seen as an intrusion. Related to this, very few Sunday schools held any organised activity specifically for parents, such as a coffee morning or parents' day, apart from the more traditional Sunday school anniversary or prize-giving. The structuring of formal social events such as a coffee morning may also be indicative of a more middle class suburban pattern of life. For example, planning ahead and booking such a date in a diary is not a usual habit for many working class individuals who often prefer to leave the options open until a few days prior to the event.

Several Sunday schools are faced with the additional difficulty that some or all of their teachers now live outside the area. For those retired, without transport, or with family commitments, visiting, which often needs to be carried out in the evening, becomes virtually impossible. This may be one reason why many
Sunday schools have resorted to sending letters and leaflets home so as to keep the parents informed as necessary, albeit rather impersonally.

5.2.2.5 Home Background

Finally, as expected, these visiting patterns serve to indicate how little many Sunday schools actually know about the home backgrounds of the children. Answers relating to the socio-economic status of the parents were almost totally impressionistic except in a few cases in which specific family circumstances were known. On the basis of these impressions it seems that the majority of the children come from fairly stable home situations, with one or both of the parents at work, generally in the East London area. The case studies provided further information in this area.

As might be expected from these general observations, few Sunday school teachers said they had any really difficult children - in other words those which could be classed as problem children coming from families in contact with social workers - although several mentioned troubles with "boisterous" children. The fact that most of the children appear to come from stable home backgrounds and that there are few "problem" children is interesting in that it would seem to indicate that the schools have little contact with children classified by social workers as being at risk. In fact, judging by the comments of the superintendents, many teachers prefer not to have such children in their classes because of their disruptive tendencies. This suggests that the Sunday schools are predomin-
antly attracting the children of the "respectable" working classes or those who already have some contact with the church and Sunday school and are willing to accommodate themselves to the required routines and discipline.

42 of the 58 superintendents referred to children in their schools with learning difficulties. The majority of these were slow readers or those with writing problems but reference was also made to non-readers. Several superintendents blamed the education system for the poor performance of the children while other teachers commented on the general drop in standards of literacy in recent years.

5.2.3 Teaching Staff

The section of the interview schedule relating to teaching staff raised several interesting issues regarding the leadership of the schools. The number of teachers in the 58 Sunday schools totalled 350 of whom 118 were male and 232 female. The number of teachers was generally related to the number of classes in the school, with about a third of the schools having only one teacher per class and a further third having sufficient personnel for at least two per class. It was interesting to observe that only 10 of the teachers were black and all but one of these was of West Indian origin. Area did not appear to be a significant variable in determining the location of the black teachers, but as the figure was so small this was difficult to establish. Considering the fact that there were 23 Sunday schools with half or more black children in them and a further 29 with about one quarter, the very low number of black teachers is significant. It might indicate that white-led churches do not consider that black children within their Sunday
schools have a need for any type of specialised approach and therefore do not see the necessity for the specific recruitment of black teachers. However, it is more likely that this can be attributed to the low representation of immigrants within the white-led adult congregations and the fact that the majority of black adult Christians in the area attend one of the black pentecostal churches. This means that there are very few black adults from which to recruit. By contrast, it is interesting to observe the high proportion of black children attending white-led Sunday schools. It would appear that in the majority of cases such children do not come from church-going homes. The children of black adult Christians who attend black pentecostal churches generally attend the Sunday school connected with their parents' church. This issue is discussed further in Section 6.3.3.1.

Over four-fifths of the teachers were engaged in non-manual occupations with a very small representation of manual workers. Thus the trend for most of the leadership positions in the church to be in the hands of the upper working and middle class was maintained in the Sunday school as well. About a quarter of the teachers could be classed as professionals, among them clergy and teachers. Specific reference was made in the interviews to 31 qualified day school teachers of which 21 taught in theologically conservative Sunday schools. One Sunday school had six qualified teachers in it. Difficulties did arise in obtaining precise answers to the question of socio-economic status as some superintendents did not know the occupations of the teachers and could give only vague answers. This
same problems was encountered in relation to the years of teaching experience of the teachers.

In terms of teacher ages, numbers were spread fairly evenly over the entire age range from under 20s to over 60s. Over half of the teachers, however, fell into the 20 to 49 age groupings which is interesting in that the young and early middle age groups (twenties, thirties and forties) are lacking in many inner city churches, resulting in a membership which is predominantly very young (under twenty) or late middle aged to elderly (fifty and over). This figure may, of course, not in any way be representative of the average age of the congregation. Rather it may again serve to strengthen the point that most of the leadership positions in the church, including those in the Sunday school, are held by the upper working and middle classes who are in their early middle age and carry the major responsibility for administering the activities of the church. This is supported by the fact that the fifty and over age group accounts for only one third of the total number of teachers (Table 5.5).

TABLE 5.5 Age of Sunday School Teachers by Theological Orientation
(Figures refer to numbers of teachers)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age of Teachers</th>
<th>Conservative</th>
<th>Liberal</th>
<th>All</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Under 20</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20 - 29</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30 - 49</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50 - 59</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60 and over</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>175</td>
<td>160</td>
<td>335</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*For scaling on Theological Orientation see Chapter 2.

15 missing values (insufficient data for full scaling on theological orientation in two Sunday schools)
TABLE 5.6  **Experience of Sunday School Teachers by Theological Orientation**
(Figures refer to numbers of teachers)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Experience of Teachers</th>
<th>Conservative</th>
<th>Liberal</th>
<th>All</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Under 1 year</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 - 10 years</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>161</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 - 20 years</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21 years and over</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>175</strong></td>
<td><strong>160</strong></td>
<td><strong>335</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

15 missing values (insufficient data for full scaling on theological orientation in two Sunday schools)

Part of the investigation into the age and experience of the teachers was undertaken with the hypothesis that the theologically conservative Sunday schools had the greater number of older teachers and of those with longer teaching experience. However, this has not been supported by the empirical data and the reason for this would appear to be that the scaling on theological orientation was designed to include teaching method as well. Thus, as was noted in Section 2.3.1.1, certain Sunday schools might be conservative in terms of the theological content of their teaching but at the same time might be liberal in terms of their teaching methods. Such Sunday schools, therefore, might not necessarily choose the oldest and most experienced teachers but might look for a younger teacher with a better understanding of the present-day needs of children. This is assuming that there are sufficient volunteers to enable there to be a choice of teachers; more often than not, there are fewer individuals able and willing to teach than are needed.
5.2.3.1 Training and Preparation

Finally, the enquiry was made as to whether the Sunday school or church ran some type of formal or informal training session for prospective Sunday school teachers. Only four schools did whereas 54 did not. A similar question was asked regarding the holding of a preparation class for discussion and planning of the lesson on a weekly or even monthly basis. The response increased slightly here, 14 of the 58 Sunday schools did run some form of preparation class on a fairly regular basis, whereas in the remaining schools, either because of time or some other constraint, teachers prepared individually. While recognising that Sunday school is only a weekly activity, considering the amount of time and preparation that is involved in training day school teachers, and the modern methods and approaches adopted in communicating with children in such a setting, perhaps the lack of training and expertise on the part of many Sunday school teachers may go some way towards explaining why Sunday schools cannot compete with other attractions in drawing children to the extent they once did. It seems that many schools have to make do with shy or reluctant "volunteers", or those so highly committed in other areas that they have little time to devote exclusively to Sunday school, or older teachers often inevitably out of touch with the modern child. The place of the Sunday school within the priorities of the adult Christian community may well be questioned in many cases, and this is likely to have a bearing on the growth or decline of the school in terms not only of size but also of commitment to and understanding of the Christian faith.
5.2.4 Teaching Materials

A wide range of teaching materials was used ranging from simple home-made material based solely on the Bible to elaborate American material using workbooks and preparation packs. The most popular material (used by 26 of the 58 schools) appeared to be that published by Scripture Union, an independent publishing company of pronounced conservative theological orientation. The attraction of their material lay in the fact that it could be easily adapted, it provided sufficient activities and songs for the children, and it could be supplemented by a take-home leaflet if desired.

Other schools, also at the conservative end of the theological spectrum, used Scripture Press, the American-produced material referred to above, or Go Teach, which is published in conjunction with the Federation of Independent Evangelical Churches. The Scripture Press material provides detailed weekly worksheets for the children in connection with the lesson, which then combine to form a workbook which the child takes home at the end of the session. The teachers' guide is extremely detailed and adaptation requires considerable time. It is criticised for being too American (the flag salute is included in some books), too expensive and too difficult for the average inner city child. The Go Teach material is centred around teaching a Bible story to the children and introduces a current-day story to emphasise the point being taught. It contains no craft activities, but does include visual aids and the learning of a memory verse is central to the lesson.
Towards the liberal end of the theological spectrum, several schools used **Partners in Learning**, material published jointly by the Methodist Church, the U.R.C. and other bodies. This series has recently been revised and a number of schools indicated that they had stopped using it partly because the biblical content was weaker and also because the lesson preparation was rather detailed and required too much adaptation. Three or four schools used material produced by the Church Information Office (Church of England) such as *Alive in God's World* and *All Together One*. This material has the advantage of providing only an outline plan for the session and can therefore be readily adapted. However, some saw this as a disadvantage particularly for young or inexperienced teachers for whom there were insufficient guidelines. The emphasis in this material was strongly on experiential learning: awareness of nature, the seasons, activities in the world around as related to the senses, whereas specific biblical content was weak. Finally, there were those schools at both ends of the spectrum which felt that none of the currently available material suited their needs for one reason or another and therefore created their own, some based solely on the Bible and others in which biblical content was minimal.

5.3 Conclusion

Comparatively little empirical data is available regarding current trends in inner city Sunday schools. In fact, it has been observed that there is 'a complete lack of research findings, or even many records of experimentation'. The present study was based on data collected from interviews with Sunday school superintendents in 58 white-led Protestant Sunday schools in the London Borough of Newham. A detailed analysis of the interviews indicated that a fairly wide range of
principles and methodologies was adopted in the various schools, consonant with the theological orientation of the school. Another factor of considerable importance in the determining the approach of the individual Sunday school was the geographical area in which the Sunday school was located taken as an indicator of socio-economic class.

However, despite the variations in the theological orientation of the school and the social class of the area in which the school was located, certain factors emerged which were common to virtually all schools. For example, the majority of schools drew children from stable home backgrounds, mostly from the "respectable" working class. The majority of teachers were also drawn from the "respectable" working or middle classes and were predominantly white, female and young to middle-aged. With regard to the church, little integration with the adult worshipping community appears to take place in the majority of schools. The responses relating to enquiries concerning the children's home background revealed that many parents have no connection with a church themselves, yet send their children to Sunday school. This may have a bearing on the fact that most children stop attending Sunday school in their teenage years, an issue which greatly concerned many of the teaching staff. Finally, the interviews indicated that by far the majority of the schools operate within an educational ethos, dating from the time when education was central to a flourishing Sunday school, the implication being that, as the Sunday school is seen as the Church's vehicle for Christian education, a cognitive approach to learning remains appropriate. The terminology used in many schools contributes to this academic ethos.
Examined in the light both of historical trends and also of the contemporary social situation as outlined in Chapter 4, these factors raise issues of fundamental importance for the future of the white-led Protestant Sunday school in the inner city. What, if anything, does the contemporary Sunday school have to offer to the children of the "rough" working classes? Does the educational ethos of the school have a bearing on the type of children reached? If so, what is the significance of this for the future of the church in an inner city working class area? Is there a connection between the low rate of integration taking place between the adult worshiping community and the Sunday school, and the fact that most children leave Sunday school in their early teens? Why do parents, who themselves maintain no church connection, send their children to Sunday school? Is it simply a convenience? Or a part of the traditional pattern of growing up? What values, if any, do they see the Sunday school inculcating into the child? Issues such as these will be considered in the following chapter which will report on the results of the in-depth studies in four selected schools.
CHAPTER 6

IN-DEPTH STUDIES

6.1 Introduction
In the preceding chapter, the major characteristics of the inner city Sunday school were presented, based on the findings of the survey conducted amongst the Sunday school superintendents. The present chapter is designed to provide further information regarding the principles and practices of the Sunday schools, and the attitudes of the children, their parents, and the teaching staff, through the use of techniques such as participant observation and in-depth interviewing in four selected schools. In particular, these in-depth studies will examine in greater detail certain issues highlighted by the initial interviews with the superintendents such as the values inculcated by the Sunday school, the parent church's attitude to the school, the parents' attitude to the school, the child's motivation for attending, the role of the school as an agent of Christian education and its role as a recruiting ground for membership in the adult Christian community.

The survey of superintendents also provided the basis from which to select the four schools for in-depth study based on a scale of theological orientation and geographic area taken as an indicator of socio-economic class. This process has been outlined above in Chapter 2 in the discussion on research design. The principal characteristics of the four schools are delineated in the next section of this chapter.
The in-depth studies involved six to ten visits to each Sunday school, depending on the number of groupings or classes there were to be visited. Originally it was intended to spend time in each class in the smaller schools, but only in each department in the case of the larger schools. However, as only one of the schools had departments incorporating several classes of the same age group, and as no valid method existed for selecting one of these classes for observation in preference to another, it was decided to visit all classes. Where only one grouping existed as in the case of SSLRes (see below), the school was visited frequently enough for the researcher to become acquainted with the various routines in the school and sensitive to the interaction between children and staff.

It was decided that the use of participant observation in the in-depth studies would be of value in that the disturbance caused to the normal running of the school would be minimal. The majority of the children accommodated themselves quite readily to a new helper in the school situation, whereas the presence of a passive observer could have been disconcerting to child and teacher alike. As far as possible, the observer aimed to participate in the activities of the school, interacting with children and teachers during the regular Sunday session. This also provided opportunities for informal chats with the children and the staff and enabled a rapport to be established before actually interviewing the children. The latter proved to be essential, in that in the few situations in which it was not possible to have time to build up a relationship with a child, the child was very reserved in the interview.
Initially, it was intended that interviews with the staff and the children would be conducted outside the actual Sunday school session, as it was felt that the one hour Sunday session was not suitable for extensive talking, and that care had to be taken not to interfere with the activities of the school. In the case of the teaching staff, therefore, interviews were generally conducted in their own homes. However, with regard to the children, it became apparent that in most cases it was not feasible to consider interviewing outside the Sunday school session. This was principally due to the mechanics of the situation in that originally it was intended to select only an average of half a dozen children from each school for interview. However, it proved impossible to select a sample of this size in such a way as to be representative of the children in the school as a whole. Thus it was subsequently decided to interview all the children, and arranging home visits with this number of children was not possible in the time available. Also, as noted below, the children were less inhibited when interviewed in a group situation, than they would have been had the interviews been conducted at home on an individual basis. Such difficulties in finding a suitable time and place for interviewing were, however, eased by the fact that with virtually no exception, the teaching staff were happy to allow the children to leave the class for the purpose of being interviewed. The interviews were conducted with groups of three or four children, as it was found that they contributed far more freely when in a group than when interviewed individually. Care was taken in setting up the groups not to place a dominant child with a very shy child in case the views of one child predominated. It was recognised that the weakness of the group interview could be
that one child might simply echo the opinions of another. However, in practice, this did not often appear to be the case, as conflicting opinions arose even within a single interview and most children qualified their answers. Overall, it was felt that the advantages of the group interview in the area of freedom of contribution far outweighed any disadvantages.

The interviews with the children focussed around a number of questions (see Appendix VIII), but were relatively unstructured in order to allow the children freedom to digress. The majority were tape-recorded. With regard to the teaching staff, questions related to their own motivation for being involved with the school, and their opinions as to its value and future, as well as to practical aspects of principles and methodology. The majority of these interviews took place in the home of the interviewee and were not taped. In some cases this was for practical reasons, where, for example, they were conducted in the context of a meal, and in some cases this was because the interviewee did not wish his/her reservations regarding the school to be recorded. Interviews were also conducted with each of the ministers regarding their approach to and involvement with the Sundry school, and their views as to its future, both with reference to their own school and in more general terms.

Finally, through the rapport established with the children and the staff, an entree was gained into the homes represented by the children in each Sunday school, so as to interview the parents. This was seen to be an important aspect of the in-depth studies, particularly in understanding the attitudes towards the school of those parents.
who did not profess to be Christians, their reasons for sending their children to the school or permitting them to attend, and their own background in relation to the church. These interviews were also focused around a series of questions (see Appendix VIII), but allowed for digression. Depending on the response of the parent, some of these interviews were tape-recorded, whilst at the other extreme a few interviews were conducted on the doorstep.

The in-depth studies were particularly designed to elicit information regarding the goals or expectations held by the various participants in the school, and the degree to which the participants felt that their goals were being fulfilled. It was expected that there would be considerable divergence among the goals, and Chapter 7 will examine the implications of both the divergence and the congruence of these goals or expectations for the future role of the Sunday school in the inner city.

Following a brief outline of the key features of the four Sunday schools selected for in-depth study, the present chapter will first analyse the goals of the Sunday school from the perspective of the clergy. The ensuing sections will then review the goals or expectations of the teaching staff with reference to the school, those of the children, and finally those of the parents. The concluding section will then summarise the principal findings of the in-depth studies.
6.2 The Research Schools

This section reports on the key descriptive features of the four schools selected for in-depth investigation, by means of the process outlined in Chapter 2, wherein an explanation of the terms "conservative", "liberal", "respectable", and "rough" may also be found. A more detailed record of these features may be found in Appendix II. Hereafter, the schools are referred to by the shorthand SSCRes, SSLRes, SSCRes, SSLRgh for ease of reference.

School 1: conservative - "respectable" (SSCRes)

This Sunday school has an average of 45 children. There are six teachers, all of whom are 35 or below, a pastor and an assistant pastor. The adult congregation averages 60 to 80 adults of whom 20 to 30% are of West Indian or African origin. The Sunday morning worship begins at 10.30 with a communion service for 40 to 50 adults lasting about 35 minutes. An opportunity for chatting and for others to arrive then takes place from about 11.05 to 11.30. An all-age service then begins at 11.30, the first twenty minutes being taken up with opening hymns and prayers for all ages. Then the congregation are dismissed to their classes which last until 12.30. The Sunday morning service is called "family church" and the Pastor conducts the adult class. The church building, erected in 1901, is large with a gallery and lower halls. The gallery is not used but Sunday school classes are conducted in the lower halls. The worship area is fully carpeted with chairs arranged in rows for the Sunday morning service, and in a semi-circle for Sunday evening interspersed with coffee tables. The rear of the church under the gallery is set out in an informal coffee bar with a kitchen. Tea is served here.
following the morning service. Various weekly activities take place in the church halls. The most significant of these as far as the Sunday school is concerned are the Boys' and Girls' Brigades, as membership of Brigade carries with it the requirement of attendance at Sunday school.

School 2: liberal - "respectable" (SSLRes)

This school averages about 10 children. There is one middle-aged teacher and the vicar who only has minimal administrative involvement with the school. The average adult congregation numbers about 50 with a few from the Asian and Afro-Caribbean communities. The first part of the Sunday service takes place from 9.30 to 10.15. During this period, the Sunday school meets in the vicarage, while the adults have the sermon and prayers. At 10.15, during the reading of the notices, the children join the adults for the communion service, following which tea is served. The church is a multi-purpose building, housing a kitchen and toilets at the rear, and also a full-sized pool table and a library. The premises are used for various activities during the week, including a play group. The church also used to have a hall, but this was sold to the local Sikh community for use as a temple.

School 3: conservative - "rough" (SSCRgh)

This Sunday school has 13 on the roll, but there are times when only one or two turn up. There are two teachers, both elderly, one of whom does not attend regularly, while the minister is not involved in the Sunday school at all. The adult congregation numbers 15 to 20. The morning service is held at 11.00 am and the Sunday school meets at 3.00 pm for one hour. The school is held in the church building
itself, around a small table to one side of the pulpit. There are two halls at the back of the church, but they are not used in the winter as they are not heated. Some of the children attend the Sunday service, but do not attend Sunday school. The church holds a youth service once a month which was begun on the initiative of the minister to encourage greater involvement by the young people connected with the church.

School 4: liberal - "rough" (SSLRgh)

This Sunday school has 20 to 25 children. There are five teachers, one of whom is in her fifties, the remainder are under 35. The adult congregation averages 15 to 20 with about 40% of these being of Afro-Caribbean origin. Sunday worship begins at 11.00am and the children join with the adults for the first fifteen minutes before being dismissed to classes. This fifteen minutes includes hymns, notices, a reading, prayers and so on, some part of which is generally directed specifically towards the children. The minister generally remains with the adults when he is there or occasionally visits the classes. The church is part of a circuit system, thus the minister is often preaching elsewhere. The church itself was built post-war and will seat about 150 using the gallery. The Sunday school is conducted in various adjoining rooms and halls. A family service is held once a month.

6.3 Goal Analysis

6.3.1 Clergy Perspectives

In view of the small size of the sample of schools selected for
in-depth study, it is difficult to draw general conclusions regard­
ing goal definition and the working out of these goals on the part
of the clergy. Each of the four ministers must be analysed as an
individual case. In the initial selection of the sample, however,
in addition to selection on the basis of socio-economic factors, the
attempt was made to select schools with differing theological
orientations and also from differing denominations (see page 39
above), in the expectation that these variables would have some
bearing on the individual minister's approach to the Sunday school
connected with his church.

In the event, it was not possible to indicate a direct correlation
between the theological orientation of the school and the nature of
the minister's personal approach to the school. However, the
minister's own Christian perspective or theological stance was one
of two important variables which did appear to have a bearing on
his approach. The other variable, was the minister's own perception
of his role within the church. The relative importance of these
variables was deduced from comments made by the ministers during
interviews.

6.3.1.1 The Minister's Christian Perspective

The danger of generalisations from a sample of four must be recog­
nised. Nevertheless, the interviews seemed to indicate that the
goals or expectations of the minister with regard to the Sunday school
were largely determined by his Christian perspective or theological
stance. Particularly important here seems to have been his under­
standing both of the church's responsibility towards the child in
the area of religious education, and also the level of religious thinking of which a child is capable at a given age. So, for example, where the minister considered a faith commitment - involving a conscious choice on the part of a child to follow God as set out in the teaching of the church - to be one of his primary goals in the school, his personal level of involvement in the direction of the school and teaching given seems to have been high. In a situation in which the minister saw the Sunday school as principally fulfilling a "civilising function" or a leisure function in a Christian atmosphere, his involvement in the actual religious teaching given at the school was minimal as this aspect of the school was seen to be less important.

The understanding of the timing and nature of a faith commitment or a conversion experience differed somewhat, even within the two schools classed as theologically conservative. The minister of one Sunday school (SSCRes) commented:

'conversion is the object and the revolution that is needed. It is not for us to determine the age at which it comes. I would prefer it later rather than younger.'

But he went on to say that he did not doubt that there could be a genuine religious understanding or faith on the part of a child. But he saw 'great dangers in early religious enthusiasm' because he felt it could produce 'a fearful shock for the child when he goes out into the real world', whereas if he had already seen and known the world and what is in it, then he was somewhat prepared. Clearly, despite a belief in the importance of a conversion experience, this minister also took into account a child's psychology, recognising
the difficulty of maintaining such a commitment on the part of the child. Nevertheless, the actual content of the Sunday school material taught in most of the classes clearly pointed towards the need for a faith commitment and appeared to encourage an early response.

In the other theologically conservative school (SSCRgh), there was a sharp divide in terms of teaching methodology between the teacher and the minister, although without apparent animosity. The teacher, now in her seventies, has been involved in children's work at the church since she was eighteen and 'sees the children's work as being mine'. Thus, while the teacher sees the goal of the Sunday school to be the bringing of children into a conversion experience now, while they are still young, the minister tends to feel that a commitment of this nature is something that may come as the child grows older or perhaps as an adult. Unlike the minister in SSCRes, he does not see it as the primary goal of the school, and does not feel that the instruction given in the school should be principally aimed at teaching the importance of a faith commitment per se. He feels that a child's level of religious thinking matures with his age, and in fact referred to Goldman's studies to support his viewpoint. As a result of the fundamental differences in goals between the minister and the teacher, and because the teacher is soon to retire, the minister prefers to remain uninvolved in the school at this stage. The teacher, herself, would not be happy to have the minister involved in the school, feeling that he is far too lax with the children and she does not agree with his experientially-based approach to learning.
The importance of a faith commitment as such apparently does not enter into the goal definition of the clergy in the two schools classed as theologically liberal. Thus, one minister saw the aim of the school to be that

'it is important that the kids feel as though they belong to a family and that they can understand this sense in worshipping or doing together.' (SSLRgh)

The emphasis here is on the atmosphere generated by the school, rather than on the knowledge inculcated. The minister went on to say that whilst the element of religious instruction per se was present, it was more important to enable the children to relate their faith to their own life experience. This stands in interesting contrast to SSCRes in which the minister saw the 'main object of the school as giving a thoroughly good working knowledge of the Bible'. He saw the Sunday school as providing a 'working foundation' for the child in later life.

The interviews with the ministers of both SSCRes and SSLRgh further indicated the important bearing that their Christian perspective had on their approach to the Sunday school. The minister of SSCRes felt that while the Sunday school could provide this 'working foundation' for the child, to have a strong, growing church, 'the key is preaching. A loving fellowship is important, but it works from the pulpit.' He elaborated on this by saying that what was demanded of the Christian was not just dedication but 'a complete end of self-interest - a full involvement in the things of Christ, leaving self behind'. He criticised much of the currently available
Sunday school material for presenting a 'namby-pamby Christ' not 'a real, live red-blooded man'. This emphasis on the importance of right teaching and strong leadership, stands in contrast to the minister of SSLâgh who described his approach to preaching and ministry as 'incarnational and sacramental'. By this he meant that he laid stress on the aspect of God in man and of man seeing God in the various sacraments of the church. He went on to say that he finds it very difficult to preach about the atonement (man being reconciled to God through the death of Christ), although he did believe it. A young ordinand in the church (also a Sunday school teacher) had suggested that the church was not 'spiritual' enough, in the sense of an emphasis on positive biblical teaching. The minister accepted that this might be the case, but had responded that it was not his approach to preach along such lines. Another key teacher in the school further clarified this position by saying that the emphasis was on a human rather than a godly church in the sense that interaction between different individuals and horizontal relationships were stressed.

The tendency for the principal emphasis in theologically conservative schools to be on the primary importance of factual learning was born out also by the nature of the teaching given in the second conservative school (SSCrgh). Although no set syllabus was followed, the school was conducted in the manner of a mini-service with prayers, hymns, notices, an offering, and a short Bible-based talk. Some Sundays this format varied with the inclusion of quizzes, but again, these were principally based on factual knowledge of the Bible. Both of the conservative schools participated in the Scripture Exam, an
interdenominational written Sunday school competition based on a factual understanding of several portions of Scripture.

It is interesting to observe that of the four clergy interviewed, none sees the Sunday school principally as a recruiting ground for the adult congregation. Possibly they would like it to be such and it may be structured as such (e.g., the process in SSLRes whereby once confirmed, a child remains in the adult congregation rather than attending Sunday school). In reality, however, clergy and teaching staff recognise that this process from Sunday school to church member happens infrequently. In situations where it does take place, the child may be from a churched home. Thus SSLRes minister commented:

"Churches have made a big mistake in seeking to build from youth organisations and Sunday schools. The numbers coming through this way [into the church] are minimal."

6.3.1.2 The Minister's Role in the Church

Closely allied to their Christian perspective, appears to be the priority placed by the ministers on different activities within the church in terms of time. Thus, in situations where the minister places a high priority on the value of the Sunday school as the principal vehicle for Christian education, he tends to be highly involved in the school personally, and often carries the congregation with him in supporting the school. In SSLRes, the minister looks on the church as a "family church" (rather than an all-age Sunday school), which is divided up into different age groups of which he leads the
adults. Moreover, while 'the church has the last word as a body', the members play close attention to his recommendations in selection of teachers. In fact, one teacher commented that the minister asks for "volunteers", then selects the "volunteers".

It is significant that despite the fact that this church operates a large and apparently thriving school, the minister calls himself a 'sceptic about Sunday schools. They inoculate with a mild form of Christianity and the children leave without knowing what real Christianity is about.' Referring to children entering church through Brigades he commented: 'a person is churched when young and is now almost impervious to the Gospel'. This very scepticism may in fact go some way towards explaining the "family church" grouping adopted by this church and the minister's considerable personal involvement in the concerns of children's work. It would appear, however, that possibly the teachers tend to look upon the Sunday school in more traditional terms. The assistant pastor made an astute observation when he commented that the minister was a man of vision but that he was ahead of his people and 'often fails to carry them with him in terms of understanding although he does in loyalty'. The minister himself described himself as a 'radical' in a lot of areas. The potential for conflict which exists here between the minister and the teachers, will be discussed further below when considering leadership styles.

Conversely, it would appear that in situations where the minister does not personally view the school as an essential tool in Christian education or as having a high priority amongst the concerns of the
church, his involvement with it will be minimal, and frequently, so will that of the bulk of the adult congregation. Another aspect of this is that where clergy do not have a personal gift for working with children and an interest in them, their involvement with the children is proportionately lower, although they may still feel the school to be an important part of the church life. The minister in SSLRgh commented on this fact in the interview: 'I can't and don't relate well to kids. I'm not even quite sure how to bring them into the morning worship'. He has relatively little to do with the children and reference was made to another teacher in the Sunday school when information regarding the school was requested. He does, however, visit the classes periodically and, interestingly enough, the children generally enjoy their time in the morning service when he is conducting it. His personal orientation is towards work amongst adults, particularly in the field of race relations. The minister in SSLdes expressed a similar lack of personal knowledge regarding the daily running of the school, suggesting that reference be made to the teacher for further information.

In the absence of a church hall or suitable rooms, the Sunday school was held in the vicarage, although the minister seemed to have little appreciation of the types of activities which the school might need to offer to the children and had, for example, expressed considerable concern over the possibility of the carpet being spoiled. In SSCRgh, whilst the minister has a considerable interest in work amongst children, he remains virtually uninvolved in the school since his methods and approach would, as noted above, be in total contradiction to those of the elderly teacher currently responsible. This teacher is nearing retirement and rather than remove from her that which is
her primary contribution to the church, the minister has temporarily withdrawn from close involvement. It is interesting to note that his own children do not attend this school but attend the one connected with the other church for which he is responsible, where there is considerable experimentation taking place. The level of personal interest and the minister's involvement in other aspects of the church's mission thus appear to play a significant role in determining the extent of his involvement in the Sunday school.

Finally, it is also necessary to take into account two other important factors which again make generalisations in a sample of four difficult and necessitate that in some respects each school be taken as a separate unit.

The first of these relates to styles of leadership within the church which had a considerable effect on the running of the school. In the preliminary survey with the superintendents, it appeared that generally there was little, if any, significant interaction between the adult congregation and the Sunday school. This referred to members of the congregation, however. Further investigation in the in-depth studies indicated that in two of the schools, the minister played a significant role as a reality definer, as much by his non-involvement as by his involvement in the school. As noted already, the influence of the minister in SSCRès dominated all aspects of both the church and the school, as he exercised his authority in a very paternalistic manner. Both the spiritual and the organisational direction of the church appeared to derive ultimately from him, although there is a diaconate of about a dozen as well as consider-
able lay involvement. This lay involvement does not extend to preaching which the minister undertakes entirely himself, stressing that 'it is regular Bible teaching that makes a church strong'.

All his sermons are taped and may be borrowed. He felt that one of the chief disadvantages of the Sunday school lay in the fact that the teachers were unable to hear the morning teaching directed towards the adults. At one time, he even suggested that teachers should change every three months in order to have the opportunity to join in the adult teaching sessions which he leads. However, the teachers objected to this as they felt it did not allow sufficient time for them to establish a rapport with the children. As a compromise, teachers are now encouraged to step down after one year if they so desire. The minister also does all the visiting and even the assistant pastor does not feel that he is allowed to make any significant contribution to the manner in which the services are conducted. It is interesting to observe the relationship between the minister and the assistant pastor. Whilst they are in agreement on fundamental issues of doctrine, the assistant feels the need for a 'breath of fresh air' to blow through the church as the minister has been there for ten or eleven years and changes are slow in coming. Yet because he is the "assistant", newly out of training college, and some 35 to 40 years the minister's junior, and because of his great respect for the minister, there appears to be little if any direct conflict on major issues. Incidentally, the minister draws considerable support for his policies and his style of leadership from the church secretary, who also happens to be his son.

The potential for conflict between the minister's self-confessed
scepticism about Sunday schools and the more traditional approach of the teachers largely disappears in the light of his comment, noted above, that the main object of the school was to give a thoroughly good working knowledge of the Bible which the Spirit of God would later bring into use. Thus it appears that he sees the value of the school primarily in terms of the religious knowledge it imparts, which can then be called to mind in later years. He does not appear to see the school as having any intrinsic value as a social activity. By contrast, none of the teachers expressed any fundamental doubts as to the value of Sunday school per se, but each reflected the strong emphasis placed by the minister on the inculcation of religious knowledge, seeing the goals of the Sunday school very much in didactic terms of teaching the Bible. This close alignment between the goals of the minister and those of the teachers with reference to the school is no doubt related to the fact that the pastor has "selected" as teachers individuals who are in sympathy with his views. That there should be several such people is perhaps related also to the fact that, according to the pastor, 95% of the congregation are converts and two-thirds of the diaconate are believers of only four or five years. Such individuals have entered the church within the ten or eleven years that the pastor has been there and, influenced by the dominant personality of the man and his strong authoritarian leadership, it is perhaps to be expected that they have either accepted his definition of reality and his goals (or at least are not in direct opposition to them) or they have left. The pastor stressed several times both through his teaching and in private conversation that he would not carry "riders". He saw the individual's commitment to the local church as being of paramount importance.
In view of this sense of common goal, it is interesting that there is neither a training nor a preparation class for teachers through which one would expect such values to be transmitted. Neither is there a teachers' meeting as such except for one annually at which material for the coming year is ordered. Rather, the approach of the pastor to the all-age Sunday school is such that he sees the decisions which must be taken regarding its function as affecting the entire church family. Thus concerns regarding the Sunday school are discussed and prayer given for them at the mid-week prayer meeting. Here again the pastor is in charge and leads such discussion. In some respects a critic might observe that this method of operation demonstrates the pastor's psychological astuteness, conscious or unconscious, in that with each group and class ultimately responsible to him, he can maintain control over the church.

SSLRgh, and to a lesser degree SSLRghs and SSCRgh, stand in direct contrast to this model. In these schools, the minister operates only on the periphery of the school, if indeed at all. In SSLRgh, the leadership style of the minister is very different to that of the minister in SSCRghs. In SSLRgh, the minister tends to be non-directive and non-authoritarian, encouraging a maximum of lay leadership in all aspects of church life, from visiting, to preaching, to conducting worship. A "worship group" composed of Sunday school teachers, a representative from the morning and evening services, a church steward and the minister, meets monthly to share information, plan the month's Sunday school activities, the all-age morning worship service, and generally to have a time of fellowship. The role of the
minister in this group is very much that of one amongst equals. His approach to ministry as a whole is of an "incarnational" nature, emphasising the humanistic element - God in man - in his preaching, rather than engaging in biblical exegesis. Much of his time outside the church is involved with a church-related community relations project. His wife is also very involved in various community-based activities.

This non-directive and "incarnational" approach is reflected in the fact that he sees the aim of the Sunday school as being to enable the children to feel as though they belong to a family, which they could only understand by "doing together", or worshipping together as a family in an all-age service. His non-directive approach is also reflected in the fact that he is not particularly concerned whether or not the teachers share his goals. He considers that he cannot and does not relate well to children and the principal responsibility for the Sunday school rests with another individual. Significantly, this is not the Sunday school secretary, but another teacher who is very closely involved with the children outside the actual Sunday school situation. Possibly as a result of the lack of a strong authority figure within the Sunday school, the goals of the teachers tend to differ and there is also a wide variety of teaching styles.

In both SSLRes and SSCRgh, the minister was not involved at all in the actual running of the school. In SSLRes, there has been a long tradition of encouraging maximum lay involvement in church affairs. The church council has numerous sub-committees which meet regularly and carry responsibility for all aspects of the church's life from
ministry to mission to community relations. Where relevant, Christians from local community organisations are also co-opted onto these committees. As in SSLRgh, the minister in SSLRes adopts a very non-directive style of leadership, seeking to ensure that the decision-making rests principally in the hands of the laity. In general it appears that he will raise an issue which he feels to be of importance at a sub-committee or at the church council in order that a full discussion about his proposal might take place. As a result of his policy of encouraging the laity to accept responsibility, and also because working with children is not one of his primary interests, he tends to leave the running of the school almost entirely in the hands of the teacher. This has the effect of leaving the teacher feeling somewhat isolated and unsupported, although, as she has been teaching for several years she tends simply to continue in her traditional pattern. The minister's non-directive, non-authoritarian style of leadership and the fact that the Sunday school does not appear to rate very highly on the list of church priorities seems also to have affected the response of the adult congregation towards the school. The Sunday school joins the adults during the morning service, but they sit on their own and little if any attempt is made to encourage them to feel a part of the church family. Moreover, confirmation now takes place at about ten years, after which time the children are expected to remain in church for the entire service. Whilst the attempt is made to involve them in various functions within the service, as servers or in the orchestra, etc., they are too young to appreciate the entire service and it is easy for them to feel
alienated from a church which they see as boring. It is also interesting to note that the areas in which the church attempts to involve the children carry strong middle class overtones. As servers, the young people are dressed in floor-length cassocks, which many inner city youngsters see as unmanly and a source of ridicule, and an orchestra is not typical of most inner city churches. The fact that these are the types of activities in which young church members are involved, may account in part for the fact that most of the few youngsters who attend the adult service are children of church members, and therefore are already accustomed to church-going and church ritual.

A different situation again may be found in SSCHgh. Here again the minister is not involved in the school; however, as noted above, this is out of consideration for the teacher rather than because of any personal lack of interest. In point of fact, he is very interested in working with children and has had considerable experience in this area, including the organisation of holiday clubs. His approach to children tends to be based on an experiential teaching style, which the elderly teacher sees as being too 'lax' and 'modern'. His style of leadership also tends to be very non-authoritarian and non-directive. Despite withdrawing from the Sunday school, in other areas of church life such as worship and outreach, he has gradually been introducing new ideas into a predominantly elderly traditional congregation. For example, he has initiated a monthly youth service and has begun a lunch-time drop-in for students at the local polytechnic which backs onto the church. It would appear that he has exercised considerable sensitivity in introducing new ideas and activities
gradually in the context of ongoing discussions with members of the congregation. Thus, although they do not necessarily agree with his new approaches, he does not seem to have alienated the bulk of the congregation.

It would not be possible to say conclusively that the ministers in SSLRes and SSCRgh played any significant role as reality definers within the context of the school, whereas in SSSRgh and particularly in SSCRes, the minister's approach had a significant role in determining the direction of the school. Nevertheless, in SSLRes, despite his non-involvement, the non-directive style of leadership adopted by the minister did affect the tone of the school and, to a certain extent, the morale of the teacher, and thus in some respects his approach did have an effect on the school. It is interesting to note that where the minister sees the school as an important priority, he tends to carry the congregation with him, whereas if the minister does not stress the importance of the school, neither does the congregation see it as particularly important. This would seem to indicate that a congregation vests considerable authority and status in a minister, even in situations where he attempts to exercise a non-directive, non-authoritarian style of leadership. It would appear that this is particularly so in inner city areas where leadership and decision-making within the church has traditionally rested with the minister who is seen as trained and qualified to fulfil this role.

The second factor which has a bearing on the minister's role within the church will be developed further in the final chapter. It is posited that a link exists between the area in which the school
is located ("rough" v "respectable") and the minister's perception of the goals of the Sunday school. For example, SSCRgh and SSLLRgh both fell into the "rough" area of the Borough. In both of these schools the minister's orientation was towards building up a family atmosphere within the school in a Christian context and encouraging the children to feel they belonged. Both ministers saw this approach as a response to the needs of the children in their area. By contrast, in SSCLRes the emphasis lay strongly on religious education. Whilst the Bible as such was not strongly stressed in SSLLRes, this was probably because the school tended to be of a liberal theological orientation, and through such aspects as early confirmation there was more of an emphasis on churchmanship. There was no emphasis on the social needs of the children.

Another dimension to this might be that a larger proportion of the Sunday school children's parents attended the two churches in the "respectable" area so that the children may already have learned the foundations of the faith at home. This would stand in contrast to the situation to be found in the "rough" Sunday schools where parental involvement is minimal and the children are likely to have received little if any basic Christian teaching from home.

Incidentally, it is interesting to note that the conservative Sunday schools tended to be far more highly structured than were the liberal schools which were far more loosely organised and allowed far greater freedom to the children. The conservative schools, with their emphasis on religious education, seemed to reflect the historical Sunday school to a far greater extent than did the liberal schools which seemed to draw more from the contemporary teaching styles of the day school.
Summary

The in-depth interviews with the four ministers indicated that a wide variety of factors played a part in determining their goals or expectations with reference to the Sunday school. Of these factors, the two principal ones appeared to be their Christian perspective or theological stance and their perception of their role within the Church. With regard to their Christian perspective, there exists a basic difference in approach between those of a conservative theological persuasion and those of a liberal persuasion. In very general terms, it would appear that a minister of a conservative background would lay greater emphasis on a basic factual teaching of the Bible, whereas the minister of a liberal background would place greater emphasis on the social function of the school. However, there the simple dichotomy ends, for even amongst "conservative" ministers there is a diversity in their understanding of, for example, the nature of a "faith commitment", the level of religious thinking of which a child is capable at any given age, the value of the school as a social activity, and so on.

Closely linked to his Christian perspective is the minister's perception of his role within the church. Together, these govern the nature and degree of his involvement with the school. It was noted, for example, that where the minister exercises an authoritarian and paternalistic style of leadership within the church as a whole, his direct involvement in determining both the content and the organisation of the school is considerable. In situations in which the minister exercises a less authoritarian and more non-directive style of leadership with greater lay involvement, his
degree of involvement in the major aspects of the school tends to be much lower. Consequently, his influence in determining the direction of the school is much less. As an adjunct to this, the in-depth studies indicated that most of the congregation followed the lead of the clergy with reference to their interaction with the Sunday school. Thus, if the school ranked high in the priorities of the minister, the congregation also saw it as important, and vice versa.

Finally, this section concluded with the suggestion that ministers' goals for the Sunday school are also in part determined by the socio-economic area in which the school is located: "rough" or "respectable" working class. In the "rough" areas, possibly in response to the needs of the children, the emphasis tends to lie in building up a welcoming family atmosphere within the school. By contrast, in the "respectable" areas, there was a greater emphasis on religious education and on church-going. It was also noted that a larger proportion of the parents of the schoolchildren attended the churches in the "respectable" areas of the Borough. This aspect will be developed further in the final chapter.

6.3.2 Teaching Staff Perspectives
The four schools investigated had a total of thirteen teachers. This number was unevenly distributed throughout the schools: one teacher only in each of two schools, five in another and six in the fourth. The degree to which these teachers had consciously spent time analysing their goals varied greatly even within a single school, although as noted below (6.3.2.2), most appeared to have given some thought to the matter. Nevertheless, in one school, (SSCRes) a
teacher admitted that he did not really understand children at all or know at what level to reach them. He had been willing to assist in taking a class, but had had no teaching experience whatsoever. Because of this, he was very unclear as to what his goals were or as to the best way of achieving them. By contrast, another teacher within the same school had clearly itemised his aims as follows:

1. to bring the young people to a personal faith in God through Jesus Christ;
2. to teach young people the ways of God and his ways for us as outlined in Scripture and through Christian experience;
3. to encourage Christian fellowship and family love;
4. to encourage Christian morality;
5. to encourage participation in the full life of the church on Sunday and Wednesday;
6. to encourage personal prayer and Bible study;
7. to encourage personal witness/evangelisation/testimony.

It is interesting to note that possibly apart from item 3, 'to encourage fellowship', none of these aims indicates in any way that there might be a social or recreational side to the Sunday school, in which being a part of a Christian family has validity in its own right. This is significant in the light of the question in the superintendents' survey relating to why children attend Sunday school. In general terms, the responses to this question indicated that the children attended because they enjoyed it, rather than primarily to learn about Jesus, God and the Bible. Yet this teacher evidently did not see that a recreational dimension had any place in his Sunday school goals. Beyond these aims, he had listed the methods he employed to achieve
These aims. Here there was stress laid on building up friendships, but there was a very strong sense that these were principally a means to an end. It appears that a carefully outlined approach such as this is the exception rather than the rule, and may be accounted for by the fact that this teacher was also the assistant pastor at the church, and in some senses still "in training". However, that such a wide divergence in goal definition could exist within a single school between the teacher with only vague goals and the teacher with seven clearly itemised goals, illustrates a commonly voiced concern amongst clergy that there was frequently no choice available when selecting teachers, since the number of those available and willing to teach was so limited.

It would appear that in each of the Sunday schools where a close working relationship existed between clergy and teaching staff, the goals of the staff reflected the orientation of the minister. Conversely, in the schools described above in the previous section wherein the minister allowed the teaching staff total responsibility for the school, there tended to be a greater divergence in both goals and methods. In SSCRes, in which the minister stressed the value of building a firm foundation of biblical knowledge, the teaching staff generally tended to reflect this view in their own goal definitions. One teacher stated as her aim:

'to acquaint the children with the Bible so that when they get older they can learn from it and apply it...My aim is creating a foundation for children to break away from the idea that the Bible is a fairy story.' (SSCRes)

Another teacher, noted above, also from SSCRes, stated his primary
aim as 'to bring the young people to a personal faith in God through Jesus Christ'. An integral part of this was teaching the Scriptures. A third teacher saw 'the whole of the Sunday school as a building process gradually growing and nurturing the child in a knowledge of what Christianity is and who Jesus is' (SSCRse).

In SSLRgh, despite the lack of a close association between the minister and the Sunday school in terms of direct ministerial involvement in the school, yet a good working relationship on other aspects of church life is maintained. Thus a monthly "worship group" is held for teaching staff, congregational representatives and stewards, to discuss and plan for future services and to prepare a united approach to the Sunday school and monthly family service. Possibly because of this pattern of regular interaction, some goals tend to be held in common. In this school, the minister stressed the importance of building up a 'family atmosphere'. Thus, one teacher outlined his goals as follows:

'It is just as important [as teaching them about God] (not more) to teach kids an appreciation of the richness of life and to teach them about the potential in themselves, which means to draw them out of themselves.' (SSLRgh)

Another teacher commented,

'It is necessary to keep Jesus and God in perspective. In my class I can't make mention of God. That is taboo. The kids come to church to meet their friends ...To the kids, God's an abstract. The kids can't come to grips with it. You read about it in the Bible, but you can read about Oliver Twist and he's not real.' (SSLRgh)
A third teacher saw it somewhat differently:

'The kids are presented with the Gospel to the extent that they have to make a decision yes or no. This is the broad outline. The challenges or claims have to be put differently at different times.' (SSRgh)

Underlying this broad aim he claimed that his Sunday school group was 'THE social group' to which the children belonged and that they were involved together as a unit outside the actual Sunday session. Perhaps most interesting is the aim of the Sunday school superintendent:

'to teach the children about Jesus and our Lord because they don't get it at school or at home, and to encourage them to continue attending church as they get older.' (SSLRgh)

This is significant for two reasons. Firstly, this teacher is in her fifties, considerably older than the other teachers. In the interview, she emphasised the recent decline she saw in the numbers of children attending Sunday school. She felt that in recent years the children had become much more 'rude and answered back', and attributed this to a lack of parental control and a total lack of discipline in the schools. She also felt that the rise in the number of single-parent families, broken homes, or homes in which both parents were at work all day leaving the children to care for themselves, resulted in many disturbed children. Secondly, this teacher is superintendent by virtue of her age and the length of time she has been at the church, despite the fact that her views are not coterminous with those of the majority of the teachers. She is actually superintendent in name rather than practice insofar as none of the links into the school were made through her, but
through another teacher. The children have very little appreciation for her regarding her as 'bossy' and 'old-fashioned'.

This position of Sunday school secretary or superintendent raises some interesting issues. In three of the four schools, the Sunday school secretaries, all women, were either retired or near retirement and had been involved in the church or Sunday school for most of their lives. In SSCRgh, the secretary was well over 70 and had been involved in the school since she was 18. In SSLtigh, the secretary, now in her mid-fifties, had been involved in the church and Girls' Brigade since she was five. In SSCRes, the secretary had been attending the same church for over 60 years. They all spoke nostalgically of the past, recalling the time when church-going was more the norm amongst adults and when Sunday school numbers ran in the hundreds. Two of the three were still directly involved in teaching, although both their goals and teaching styles appeared to be at variance with those of the other teaching staff and the minister, as well as unrelated to the needs and life experiences of the children. In fact, one of the secretaries employed such dated teaching methods (see above, p152) that they were at total variance with those of the minister who chose not to become involved in the school. The third teacher had stood down from teaching because she felt there was a need for younger teachers who were 'more in touch with the present generation'.

Of greatest significance regarding this position of secretary or superintendent is the fact that, despite the impression given by this title, they were not necessarily the key person in the school.
(The exception was the teacher in SSCRgh, and had the minister insisted on his own approach, she would not have remained the key person either.) This is illustrated by the fact that the secretary in SSCRes observed with some annoyance that she had not been consulted about several decisions that had been taken concerning the school. It would appear again here that the minister controls the decision-making, and that the secretary's position is primarily seen to be one of administration: ordering the lesson material, coordinating the Scripture Exam, organising the collection, and so on. In SSLRgh, a somewhat different dimension emerges, in that the teacher who is the key person finds it somewhat embarrassing that people should relate to him, rather than to the superintendent. Yet he recognises that both the children and the other teachers find her approach too authoritarian, and he also feels that she tends to over-commit herself in other areas to the detriment of the Sunday school.

This issue is interesting in that it highlights the fact that, consciously or unconsciously, many schools have evolved a system whereby the nominal responsibility for the school rests with a person, often elderly, who holds the title of Sunday school secretary or superintendent, whereas in fact the real power lies with someone totally different. This may have a bearing on the separatism which exists between the church and the school in many situations, in that the more traditional members of the congregation may persist in seeing power lying with the older, "safer" figure of the secretary or superintendent, whereas in fact the school may have its own key
figure who is frequently younger and more innovative.

Three interesting factors emerge from this synopsis of teaching staff goals which bear closer investigation.

6.3.2.1 Social Factors

Firstly, the degree to which teachers take cognizance of the social factors affecting a child's background varies considerably. The discriminating variable here seems to be the socio-economic area into which the school falls. Teaching staff of schools located in the predominantly "rough" working class areas generally appeared to be alert to the social needs and home backgrounds of the children. As the majority of such children came from homes with no church connection, several of the teachers had spent considerable time visiting the homes. In one of these schools, a teacher rejected the term "visiting" when applied to children and their parents, and substituted "building up relationships", observing that parents did not respond to any formal type of visiting. He further commented that one of the teachers operated an "open house" policy for all the children in his neighbourhood connected with the school, inviting them in or taking them home and thus becoming acquainted with the parents in this informal manner. Also two teachers in this same school (SSLRgh) had taken a group of the older children away on a camping trip. The teaching staff in these schools were thus aware of the particular forms of deprivation facing the children.

'The kids are very inward looking. You can talk about the shortage of food, e.g., the Indians and rice, but here...doing without something means doing without your car. They think of things in concrete, monetary terms... [The Sunday school material] attempts to make kids aware of the richness of life, but kids around [here] ...for whom there is no richness in life, life is at best a drag'. (SSLRgh)
Another teacher commented on the fact that very few children in the Sunday school came from complete family units, saying that if the incidence of broken homes or single-parent families in the Sunday school were 'representative of East London society as a whole, then we're a mixed up lot'. One teacher expressed some reticence about visiting because 'you never know which part of the family you might meet - possibly mum's boyfriend'.

It was interesting that in the interviews, teachers of schools in "rough" working class areas talked extensively about the children, their backgrounds, the difficulties they faced and the multi-racial situation. By contrast, the teachers in the "respectable" working class areas tended to talk more about church and Sunday school structure, and teaching material and methods. This may have been because teachers in the "respectable" areas did not see the social background of the children as an issue, since within these areas many of the school children come from churched families. Others, in SSCRes, attend by virtue of their being members of the Brigades. The Boys' and Girls' Brigades are specifically Christian organisations and membership carries with it the requirement of attendance at Sunday school. It would appear, however, that while the children enjoy the Brigades, many of them initially attend Sunday school reluctantly. This led the minister in SSCRes to make the comment 'a person is churched when young and is now almost impervious to the Gospel'. Little visiting is carried out in these areas - the principal reason being given as lack of time - as church families are not visited as such, and contacts through the Brigades are left to Brigade
leaders to follow up. Thus, frequently the teaching staff know comparatively little about the home situations of some of their children. Where social factors were taken into account, they were more frequently seen in terms of the need for the Sunday school to compensate for the lack of adequate religious education teaching in the day schools, rather than in terms of the distinctive social needs facing the inner city working class child. This may in part be accounted for by the fact that the majority of children from schools in "respectable" working class areas were drawn from relatively stable home situations. In SSCRes in particular, there was no regularly structured opportunity for the teaching staff to meet together to discuss issues such as the social patterns of the area, or to plan strategy. Teachers were invited to raise matters at the mid-week prayer meeting, but it appeared that each class operated more or less independently.

6.3.2.2 Social Background of Teaching Staff

A second significant factor relates to the socio-economic background of the teaching staff themselves, the majority of whom hold or are in training for some professional or white collar position. Of the thirteen teachers, one is retired, three are in white collar work in the city, one is a graduate in engineering working in computer programming, one is a clergy wife, one an ordinand, one in college, one studying for a PhD, one a community worker, one a teacher (now a housewife), one an assistant pastor, and one is training to be a chartered accountant. A revealing comment was made by the church secretary in SSCRes when he observed that the only "good" teacher
the school had at present was the person who was a trained day school teacher by profession. There seemed to be no awareness of the fact that a day school teacher might not necessarily be the best teacher within a Sunday school situation. This interviewee saw Sunday school primarily in terms of religious education, and by his definition a trained day school teacher was the best qualified individual to "teach" religion in Sunday school.

The teachers' "respectable" working class or middle class background was also reflected in their articulate comments in the interviews and in their precise goal definitions. It appeared that the majority of teachers had given some thought to their aims within the school. However, it was apparent in some instances that the goals, having been formulated, were maintained without reference to their validity for the contemporary situation. For example, in SSCRgh, the teacher several times observed with great bewilderment that she did not understand why the numbers of children attending Sunday school were dropping. Only a few years previously, sixty to seventy children used to attend, and as they are running the school in the same way as they have always done, she cannot understand the drop-off rate. In other instances, the teaching styles and the methodology appeared to be out of touch with the interests of the children. Again in SSCRgh, the Victorian-style approach of the school apparently no longer related to the children, and goals and methods remained as they had been for years. This school used the Sunday School Hymnary, first published last century, and generally closed the session with "A Vesper Verse to be Sung at the Close of the School" such as the following:
See, Lord, before Thy throne, Thy children bending
Ere from our school we take our homeward way,
We seek Thy guidance, each young life defending
From harm and danger both by night and day -
Until we meet again. Amen. Amen. 2

In yet another school, the methods adopted by a particular teacher
tended to alienate the children according to their comments, and
this prevented goals from being fulfilled. This teacher operated
on a very strict authoritarian basis, summarised by another teacher
in the phrase, 'I'm not continuing until you all shut up and listen'.

6.3.2.3 Leadership Styles

A final element which must be considered in an analysis of the goals
of the teaching staff is the effect which a charismatic leader may
have on both the definition and the achievement of goals. Thus where
clergy or indeed, an individual teacher exercises a strong charismatic
leadership, it may be argued that other teachers are more likely to
derive their goals from this leader. In SSCRes the minister is
clearly the significant reality definer within the church, and it
may be argued that the teaching staff derive their goals from him.
Also, insofar as he is responsible for recommending teaching staff
it may be argued that he selects those in sympathy with his goals.
It is not possible to isolate the single most significant factor.
However, it is clear that where a strong leader operates, other
teaching staff are inevitably influenced by his approach. In fact,
one teacher commented that this minister was 'the mainstay' of the
church and wondered where the church would be without him, qualifying
this with the comment: 'I suppose I shouldn't really ask that'.
In turn, children also will respond to such a leader and it may follow
that his goals are therefore achieved more quickly and effectively than are those of a less charismatic personality. In SSLRgh, the teacher operating the "open house" policy has a very strong following amongst the young people in the school, and several of them commented that they attended the school because of this teacher and his wife. Probed further, several of them indicated that they would stop attending if the teacher left the school. The teacher was aware of this factor and expressed considerable concern over it. It may have been that in this school the teacher and his wife fulfilled parent figure roles as so many of the children came from broken family units.

6.3.2.4 Summary

It would appear that the goals or expectations of the teachers in these four schools centre around four principal elements: religious education, preparation for adulthood, personal faith, and social interaction.

First, there was a trend amongst many teachers to see the school as a vehicle for religious education. In the theologically conservative schools, providing the children with a strong biblical foundation was seen as essential in order to bring them to the point at which they could choose to make a faith commitment. In the theologically liberal schools, it tended to be the teachers of the older generation who stressed the importance of religious education because it was no longer taught at school or at home. These teachers felt that in recent years, children had become much less disciplined and
linked this to the lack of supervision and the teaching of religious, and, by implication, moral principles at home.

Secondly, SSGRes in particular stressed the importance of the Sunday school as preparation ground for adulthood in the sense of "building a good foundation". SSGRes seems to have been the exception in making this emphasis, perhaps reflecting the influence of the minister. Thirdly, about three teachers saw their aim as to bring the child to a point of personal faith. This number was somewhat lower than had been expected based on the preliminary talks with the Sunday school staff in the theologically conservative schools. It can be attributed both to the stress laid on religious education in the Sunday schools in the sense of imparting factual information about Christianity, and also to the tendency, particularly in SSGRes to stress the permanence of adult rather than child conversions.

Finally, there was a strong emphasis in the theologically liberal schools on the value of the school as a base for social interaction. In SSLRgh, the logical extension of this was that several of the staff were involved with the children on a social basis outside the actual school situation. Within the school, there was a strong emphasis on creating an informal, welcoming family atmosphere in which the children were encouraged to share with each other and the teaching staff as friends with friends. However, neither of the conservative schools emphasised this aspect at all as being of any major importance. Any social activities related to the church in which the Sunday school children were involved came by virtue of their being
Brigade members. As there appeared to be no significant interaction between the school and the Brigades, there was no overlap of this social dimension into the Sunday school.

6.3.3 Children's Perspectives

In analysing the goals and expectations of the children in the four schools selected for in-depth study, it is essential that they be examined within the context of the Sunday school as a whole and not as isolated expressions of a child's imagination. To this end, a useful approach is to examine three aspects of the child's commitment to the Sunday school, seeing his expression of his expectations of the Sunday school as arising out of the interplay between these aspects. The three aspects are: (1) Why the child started attending Sunday school; (2) Why he presently attends (personal goals); (3) What he sees as the aims of the Sunday school (perceived goals).

Two subsidiary areas which also have a bearing on understanding the child's definition of the goals of the Sunday school are his projected future involvement with Sunday school or church and his assessment of what it means to be a Christian and his application of this to himself. In addition, there are a number of other factors within the Sunday school or church context which also have a bearing on the child's goal definition, although their influence may be less direct. These are factors such as the child's attitude towards adult services, towards prayer, the attitudes of parents and friends towards the church, the content of the Sunday school curriculum, the influence of baptism, the influence of a church school and so on.
There were a total of some 97 children in the four schools selected for study. Of these, 43 (including 10 beginners) were in SSCRes, 29 were in SSLRgh, 12 were in SSLRes, and 13 were in SSCRgh. It was decided not to interview the 10 children in SSCRes who were in the beginners class ages four to six. Interviews with a group of five year olds in another school indicated that many of the questions could not be answered by this age group (eg., How long have you been coming to Sunday school? What do your parents do? What is the aim of the school?) It is also important to note that SSCRgh began the year in October with 13 on the roll, but actual weekly attendance had dropped to three or four over a four or five month period. Of the 97 children, 35 were of West Indian extraction, 51 were white, and the remaining 11 consisted of children from Nigeria, Malaysia, India, and four half-caste (West Indian/white) children. It is interesting to note that the highest proportion of white children were to be found in SSCRes, whilst the highest proportion of West Indian children were to be found in SSSRgh. This distribution confirms the conclusions drawn from the initial interviews held with the Sunday school superintendents in which it was noted that there was a higher proportion of West Indian involvement within the churches in the Stratford area of the Borough as compared with the East Ham area. This is also supported by the census data regarding ethnic origins. The ethnic distribution within the four schools is as follows:
There was a wide age range within the Sunday schools; the youngest child was four years old and the oldest (who also doubled as a teacher) was eighteen. However, the majority of children were of junior school age, approximately nine to twelve years old. Generally, there were fewer children over twelve than there were under nine. In the two larger schools, specific classes were held for teenagers and these had on average 8 to 10 (SSCRes) or 10 to 12 (SSLRgh) youngsters in them. The other two schools had no children above the age of twelve.

Let us now examine in detail the three aspects of a child's involvement in Sunday school. In the following quotations from the interviews, the school, ethnic origin and age of the child are noted in parentheses.

### 6.3.3.1 Initial Involvement

There is the point at which a child first starts attending Sunday school.

'We walked around looking for a church and saw this church so we came [here].' (SSLRgh, W.I., 14)
'Mum and Dad came to church...I can't quite walk!' 
(SSLRes, white, 9)  (n.b., child lives five miles away)

'I felt like coming because there was nothing to do.'
(SSLRes, W.I., 12)

'Uncle had a piece of paper through the door telling
him everybody could go.'  (SSLRgh, Malaysian, 7)

'I started because my sister went with a friend and
asked if I wanted to go.'  (SSCRes, white, 10)

'Well, I just started coming after going to B.B.
'Boys' Brigade'. You see, you gotta come really.'
(SSCRgh, white, 10)

'My mum wanted us to come.'  (SSCRgh, W.I., 6)

Reasons for this initial step vary quite widely as may be seen,
from a conscious decision on the part of the parents to send the
children, to attendance almost
"by accident": 'Well, I just started coming after going to B.B.'.

There are four variables which appear to affect significantly the
reason why a child first attends Sunday school. The first of these
relates to the ethnic origins of the parents. For example, based
on the comments of the children, there appears to be a far greater
concern amongst West Indian parents that the child should attend
Sunday school than there does amongst white parents.

'I come because my mum thinks I should.'  (SSLRes, W.I., 12)

'When we moved here, the first thing my mum did was to find
a Sunday school.'  (SSLRgh, W.I., 12)

'My mum and dad and me sisters said, "One of these days
we're going to go to church". So I said alright and we
went.'  (SSCRgh, W.I., 12)

This finding is in keeping with the cultural background of many West
Indian families in which church attendance was an important factor
in the Caribbean community. Since coming to England, many members
of the West Indian community have lapsed in their church-going, in
particular those who attended churches of the main-line denominations in their home countries. Comments made by a group of boys in SSLRgh supported this.

R1. 'Like my mother. She went in Jamaica. Then she came here and sent the kids but she was too busy with housework...'
R2. 'Same here. My mother went in Jamaica, not here.'
R1. 'Mum got a certificate for passing exams in the Sunday school [in Jamaica].' (SSLRgh, group interview, W.I., R1: 11; R2: 12)

Another girl commented:

'My parents used to go [to church] in Jamaica. But mum is an auxiliary nurse and works Sundays. Dad has to stay home and cook dinner. He works at Fords.' (SSCRes, W.I., 11)

This tendency to lapse has been due in part to the pressures of life within a foreign country, which often include Sunday work, and also in part to the cool reception which many received within the traditional English churches. Others have joined the close-knit communities existing in and around the many black-led churches which have sprung up particularly in the large urban centres in England. These black-led churches generally encourage entire families to attend church, and many have a minibus with which to collect the faithful. Therefore, where parents have lapsed, whilst many may still maintain the tradition of sending their children to Sunday school, it is more likely that they will be sent to a white-led traditional English school. Here generally the emphasis placed on parental attendance at church is minimal compared with the pressures exerted by the black-led churches. Also, many choose a school of the same denomination to that which they themselves attended back in the West Indies. Finally, many choose the school which is
nearest, which, simply in proportional terms is more likely to be a white-led rather than a black-led school.

The second variable relates to parental involvement in the church. In families where both parents are involved, the child's attendance at Sunday school can generally be attributed to the fact that the parents bring him with them. Often these are families who hold leadership positions within the church, for example, ministers, Sunday school teachers, a church secretary, a Boys' Brigade officer, a sacristan and so on. A total of 12 children had parents who were involved in some such capacity. A further 15 children indicated that one or both parents or another close relative attended regularly. About half of the remainder stated that their parents attended periodically or would come for a special occasion. It is interesting to note that the highest proportion of children with both parents attending church, and who indicated that they began attending Sunday school because of their parents, fell within the "respectable" area of the Borough. This again may serve to support the findings of the initial interviews wherein it became apparent that the tradition of church-going is more common in "respectable" working class areas rather than in "rough" working class areas. An interesting footnote to this aspect, however, is that SSLRgh contained within it a few parents (mainly West Indian) who had started attending church as a result of their children attending Sunday school - a reversal of the trend in the "respectable" area. This appeared to be a direct result of the steady building up of relationships carried out by the teacher in the school who operated the "open house" policy. These parents had first become
involved in assisting with social activities such as cooking or providing transport, and this provided a bridge for them into the church.

The third variable governing the reasons why a child began attending Sunday school relates to the activities offered by the church, in particular those of the Boys' Brigade or the Girls' Brigade. It should be noted here that a stipulation made by the Brigades is that a child must attend church if he is to attend the Brigade. This is differentially enforced within the schools. Thus in the two schools running Brigades, SSCRes enforces this, whereas SSLRgh does not. Hence in SSCRes, over a third of the children in the appropriate age group indicated that they initially attended Sunday school because of joining the Brigade.

'I used to go to another Sunday school...in the afternoon. But I joined Brigade and so I come to [SSCRes]...in the morning.' (SSCRes, W.I., 11)

'Well, I just started coming after going to B.B. [Boys'Brigade]. You see, you gotta come really.' (SSCRes, white, 10)

'Me and my friend, she used to go to Girls'Brigade... She took us to a display of Girls'Brigade. And then next time we decided we was going to Girls'Brigade, but we had to go to church to go to Girls'Brigade and so we just started to go to church.' (SSCRes, white 10)

However, despite this initial requirement, it is fair to say that most of the children indicated that they thought they would continue to attend Sunday school even if they stopped attending the Brigade, although clearly it is difficult for a child to make a conclusive statement of this nature.
A fourth variable which figured significantly in Sunday schools in "rough" working class areas where neither parental influence nor Brigades played a significant role, was the influence of friends.

'I started coming because G. was my best friend and he invited me.' (SSLRgh, white, 11)
'S.'s mum invited me to join.' (SSCRgh, W.I., 8)

It would appear from the responses of the children that the Sunday school fulfills an important function in providing opportunities for social interaction not available elsewhere. It is a communal type of activity in which friends can take part together. From the parents' viewpoint, it is a "safe" place for children to go, since with set hours and activities in a particular place, it has clearly defined boundaries with the additional benefit of seeking to instill into the child some religious/moral principles. A number of the children commented that the aspect they enjoyed best about the Sunday school was the opportunity which it provided to meet friends, to talk together, and to do things and go places together, indicating that the school was fulfilling an important function as a focus of recreational activity.

6.3.2.2 Current Involvement - The Child's Personal Goals

The second area relating to a child's involvement in the school bears on the reasons why he currently attends. There is a certain degree of overlap between the first and second areas. Thus, the reasons why a child initially attended Sunday school may be the motivating factor in his current attendance. For example, a child may have originally attended on the invitation of a friend and he
may continue to attend in order to be with his friend. On the
other hand, his reasons for initially coming to the school and
the reasons for his current involvement may bear no apparent
relationship. Common examples of this were the children who
originally attended because of the Brigade requirements. Most
of these indicated that they now attend in order to be with friends,
or because they enjoy it and so on. In response to the question,
'Do you enjoy going to Sunday school?', one teenager replied,

'Not to begin with. Then I went because I
was forced to - not forced to, but I was told to
do it. Nowadays I go because I want to.'

(SSLRgh, W.I., 18)

Responses to the interviews isolated four main reasons why children
currently attend Sunday school:

(a) to meet friends
(b) belief in God
(c) something to do/enjoy it
(d) required to attend

a) The element of attending in order to meet friends appears to be
a significant factor in sustaining the continued involvement of many
children. This is particularly so in situations where there is little
else to do on a Sunday, and few places in which to congregate socially,
and also in situations in which the primary reference group of a child
is his peer group within the Sunday school. For such children, the
Sunday school fulfills an important function as a recreational
activity. We shall return to this point later as it reinforces
findings from the initial interviews with the superintendents. In
assessing the reasons why children attend Sunday school, one of the
older teenagers emphasised its importance.
'I think that some kids go because in certain age groups they've got members of their own school and they go to the same Sunday school, and they go there to see them and have a muck about. Some kids go to Sunday school just for that.' (SSLRgh, W.I., 16)

This was supported by two other children.

'At Sunday school] you get to meet everybody.'
(SSCRes, W.I., 11)

'Afterwards you get a good old chat and talk to people. You see everybody there you don't see during the week.' (SSLRgh, W.I., 13)

An important variable which should be taken into account at this point is the day school. There are two elements involved here. Firstly, in some of the Sunday schools, the majority of children attended the same day school. Thus, in many ways, the Sunday school was a recreational extension of the day school situation. The child moved within the same circle of friends, particularly if his closest friends also attended Sunday school. Although one might question her proportions, the principle remains the same in the comment made by one girl to the effect that

'Most of my friends go to church...There are more people in my class that go to Sunday school than that don't.' (SSLRgh, W.I., 14)

In situations where the children attended different schools, Sunday school was an opportunity to meet with friends that 'you don't see during the week'. Again, the element of friendship and fellowship was significant. Secondly, the majority of children in one Sunday school (LRgh) had attended the local church junior school. This was important both for the element of friendship and also for the common background held by the children in terms of religious education. Thus while the creedal value of religious education in
itself may have had little impact on the child, at least there was generally a common body of knowledge amongst the children on which the Sunday school teacher could draw.

b) The element of attendance because of a belief in God appeared to be significantly related to parental involvement within the church. Few, if any, children from non-church-going families indicated that they attended because of a belief in God. On the other hand, where the child came from a church-going Christian family, the response was more likely to relate to a belief in God. It was difficult to determine whether a child's response was derived from a genuine personal belief, or whether he was responding as he felt was expected of him. Very few children gave "belief in God" as a reason for attending, and those for whom some aspect of worship did arise were primarily West Indian children whose parents used to or continued to attend church themselves. Thus one child said she came 'to pray to God' (SSCRes, W.I., 11). Another child said, 'I like to be with God' - then added, 'I like to be with my mates, too' (SSLRes, W.I., 11).

An interesting comment came from an eleven year old West Indian girl who said her parents were both Christian, and who came to Sunday school because

'You make lots of new friends and learn more and more about the Christian life.'

Later in the interview when asked what she thought God was like, she responded,

R. 'He's very precious to me.'
I. 'Why?'
R. 'Because he saved us from our sin although some of us do have them...He saved everybody so that...we could be happy.' (SSCRes, W.I., 11)
This was the clearest statement in "theological" terms regarding what a belief in God involved. Without denying the validity of the experience for the child herself, it can perhaps be attributed to the fact that she used to attend a pentecostal Sunday school which tend to be theologically very conservative, stress factual learning, and frequently encourage the children to make a faith commitment.

c) A number of children indicated that they attended Sunday school because it was something to do or because they enjoyed it. Again, these categories are not mutually exclusive in that one reason a child presumably enjoys Sunday school is because his friends attend. However, while the initial response of a child often related to enjoyment, the actual reason for this enjoyment only became apparent through probing. In some instances the content of the Sunday school session gave rise to the enjoyment. In other instances, it was the opportunity to meet friends. One of the most straightforward answers to this question came in an interview with a ten year old white boy who comes from a difficult broken home situation:

'It's better than staying at home - there's nothing on telly.' (SSLRgh, white, 10)

Another child responded:

'[I come] mainly because I like it.' (SSLRgh, W.I., 14)

R1. 'I quite enjoy it.' [i.e., Sunday school]
I. 'What's good about it? Why is it good?'
R1. 'Cause I get bored at home of a Sunday morning.'
R2. 'Yeah, nothing interesting to watch on television... sitting there...I'd rather be here...'
I. 'You mean if there was something interesting on telly you'd stay home and watch it on a Sunday morning?'
R2. 'No, I'd still come.'
R1. 'Yeah, I'd watch the rest of it when I got home.'
(SSCRes, group interview,
R1: white, 11; R2: W.I., 12)
In one of the interviews, a group of three boys was asked why they thought that children continued to attend Sunday school. Their responses summarised what they saw to be a number of the major reasons.

R1. 'Most kids go when there's a club and then go on to Sunday school.'
R2. 'A lot of kids go when they're small and carry on and carry on.'
R3. 'Older kids go because their friends go and they're invited. Some go because it's something to do.' (SSLRes, group interview, W.I., R1: 12, R2: 11, R3: 15)

Several children saw Sunday school as a preferable alternative to church.

'Well, if you go into church, you get boring sermons. If you come here, you don't have to listen to sermons. C. [sister, now confirmed so stays in church] takes her homework to do during sermons 'cause they're so boring.' (SSLRes, white, 9)

R. '[Sunday school gives] a chance to see friends. You learn more, it's more interesting than staying in church. It's boring staying in church.'
I. 'What's boring about church?'
R. 'We sing songs we don't know. They're known by the old people but not the young. I don't like sermons 'cause they go on too long and go on about things that are interesting to old people - makes you want to fall asleep.' (SSLRes, white, 17)

d) Finally, a few children said that they had to attend. The two reasons given for this were the Brigades and parental insistence. Again, it appears that there is an overlap here in that some children gave their primary reason for attendance as parental pressure, yet other comments in the interviews indicated that they
also enjoyed coming to Sunday school per se and claimed they would continue to attend even if they were free not to come. Those who said they attended because of the Brigades tended to be those who had joined the Sunday school fairly recently as a result of the activities of the Brigades and who apparently did not yet feel entirely settled within the school.

It is interesting to note that the children who indicated that they attended because of parents, were frequently children of church-going parents or church members who were highly involved in the activities of the church.

'My mum and dad make me go to Sunday school and I can't stay home by myself.' (SSLRgh, white, 7)

I. 'If you don't like Sunday school, why do you keep going?'
R. 'I'm made to, I have to go.' (SSLRgh, white, 11)

When asked if she would continue to attend church if her parents stopped going, another child also from a Christian background, responded without hesitation, 'No' (SSCRes, W.I., 10). Another child, not from a Christian background commented:

'My mum wants us to come. The only time she doesn't let us go is if it's raining or if we feel sick... Dad never comes except on special occasions because he's not interested. He likes reading the Bible but doesn't like going to church because he doesn't like sitting.' (SSLRes, Guayanan, 8)

The tendency for parents to coerce their children into attending Sunday school, despite the fact that the children may prefer not to attend, could have the effect of alienating the child from both the Sunday school and the church as he grows older. This is in
fact born out by the studies of Etzioni on complex organisations (1961) who observed that 'coercive power...applied to committed or only mildly alienated lower participants [i.e., children]...is likely to affect adversely such matters as morale, recruitment, socialisation, and communication, and thus to reduce effectiveness'.

Thus parental coercion of this nature is likely to have an alienating effect on the child in terms of his future involvement with the Christian community. It is also interesting to speculate what influence parental patterns of church attendance might have on such a child in future years. It might be hypothesised that where the goals set by the parents for their children are not congruent with the goals which the parents set for themselves regarding church-going, it is likely that in future years the child will eventually follow the parents' example, adopting the parents' goals and dismiss those goals set for him when a child as being childish. For example, this same child, when asked about future involvement with the church responded somewhat doubtfully, 'I don't know'. This point will be discussed further when looking at the child's expectations regarding future involvement with church or Sunday school.

6.3.3.3 The Child's Perception of Sunday School Goals

The third area of a child's involvement with the school relates to what he sees to be the aim or goal of the school. Essentially these are perceived goals according to the child's interpretation of what he sees as the official goals of the school. The second area relating to the child's reasons in coming may be interpreted
as the child's personal goals. It would appear that generally
the child's perception of the goals of the Sunday
school bore some relation to teaching about God and Jesus.

'It is to teach the kids about God and Jesus,
apart from the odd stories you get at Christmas
and Easter and so forth...it's there for you to
goto know about Him throughout the rest of
the year.' (SSLRgh, W.I., 18)

'It's for us to learn about God and things like
that, and Jesus.' (SSCRgh, W.I., 11)

RL. 'It's to teach people about Jesus.'
R2. 'Yeah, so that they can go up into heaven...
Don't want to go where it is all horrible, want
to go where my friends are.' (SSLRgh, group
interview, RL: white, 10; R2: W.I., 11)

'It's to get you to ask God into your life and
that - get you to believe.' (SSCRres, white, 15)

'You get bored in church because you don't un­
derstand it. Sunday school builds you up to a
stage where you can go into church and un­
derstand it.' (SSLRres, white, 9)

RL. 'To teach people about God, to make them un­
derstand...'
R2. '...What God's like.'
RL. 'Yeah, what God's like...to understand why He
saved us really, more things about God. Cause
when you come to Sunday school you learn things
so when you grow up and you go into the bigger
church and they all say things, so you'll be
able to understand them and understand what
he's [minister's] talking about.' (SSCRres, group interview, white, RL: 10, R2: 11)

I. 'Why do you want to learn about God?'
R. 'Cause that's what Sunday school and church is
for.' (SSCRgh, W.I., 11)

There were very few children who saw the official goals of the
Sunday school as related exclusively to activities or friendship.
This stands in interesting contrast to the reasons why children
said they attended Sunday school. The fact that personal goals
and perceived goals were not congruent apparently had little effect on the level of a child's attendance. It would appear that in the minds of most children, their perception of the official goals of the Sunday school bore little if any relation to their personal involvement in the school and, indeed, tended to be irrelevant to them. This was further emphasised by the fact that many children hesitated in response to the question regarding the aim of the Sunday school, some even responding 'don't know', whereas few children hesitated in replying to the question regarding their reasons for attending. Thus it may be inferred from the interviews that the children's perception of the official goals of the Sunday school are not generally congruent with their personal goals, yet this does not appear to affect the level and degree of the child's involvement in the school.

A further dimension is added to this point when the children's responses to the question regarding their anticipated future involvement with the church or Sunday school are assessed. Despite the statement made by many of the children that learning about God and Jesus is important to them, this appears to represent only a ritual adherence to be discarded as the child outgrows Sunday school. In some situations it might also have been the case that the child was responding as he thought the interviewer wanted. Thus, when these same children were questioned as to future involvement, the most prevalent responses related to 'if I have time' or 'I don't know'. The type of job held seemed
to be an important determining factor in most children's minds, influenced no doubt by parental patterns of church attendance.

'I'd go once then miss once. I won't go every Sunday. I don't think it's really important to go to church, but it is good to go to church...If you don't go, you can still pray and read the Bible at home.'

(SSLRgh, W.I., 14)

R1. 'I might drop off for a while, but go back... might not get the time when I'm older.'
I. 'Is it important?'
R1. 'Yes, gets the strain off you and everything.'
I. 'If it's that important, wouldn't you make the time?'
R2. 'I'd go occasionally, but not every week like now.'
R1. 'Because I'd be working and wouldn't have time off. I'd go when I had time off.'

(SSLRgh, group interview, W.I., R1: 11; R2: 12)

It would appear therefore, that the future involvement of the children is more closely related to their personal goals than to their perception of the official goals of the school, despite any theoretical importance they may attach to these perceived goals. Thus, perceived or official goals are virtually bypassed in favour of personal goals. This is so even in the case of some of those who term themselves Christians.

I. 'Will you keep going to Sunday school when older?'
R. 'Depends where I live.'
I. 'Is it important?'
R. 'Depends. I'd stop coming if I moved to the country. My mum's cousins are up in Yorkshire. They can't go to church because they're too far in the country.'

(SSCRes, W.I., 11)
This was the comment of the girl who said she was a Christian and made the explicit statement regarding her faith as stated above (page 187).

Finally, insofar, as the official goals of the school relate to Christian teaching, and since presumably this bears some relation to living a Christian life or to being a Christian, it is useful to observe what the children in the in-depth studies understood by the term "Christian". The following interview extracts appear to indicate that the children hold a variety of ideas as to what it means to be a Christian. Some of these ideas are clear-cut, indicating what appears to be a precise conception of what is involved, whereas other responses indicate somewhat vague and confused ideas. Some of these ideas relate to what the respondents see as necessary changes in life-style.

I. 'Do you call yourself a Christian?'
R. 'No.'
I. 'What is a Christian, then?'
R. 'Being kind and good.'
I. 'Why aren't you, then?'
R. 'I'm not bad-tempered. I am kind, but not to everyone. Christians usually talk more about God than a normal person would.'
I. 'Is it important to you to be a Christian?'
R. 'Not really. I don't think I'd like to be a Christian really.'
I. 'Why?'
R. 'Because a Christian...say I was a Christian and you weren't, I don't think I'd keep it up and that...Like a Christian is good to others.'

(SSLRgh, W.I., 14)
I. 'Do you believe in God?'
All. 'I do.'
Rl. 'I think about it, but I don't say "I believe in God" everyday. I know I believe in him but I don't talk about it.'
I. 'Would you call yourselves Christians?'
All. 'No.'
I. 'What's different about Christians?'
Rl. 'Some people take it more seriously than me, that's why I'd say I'm not a Christian. I take it serious but not all that serious.'
I. 'Would you take it more serious the older you get?'
All. 'Depends on the person.'
Rl. 'J. takes it serious. V. might. [J. and V. are other children...]' I. 'Does it make a difference? Is it important to take it seriously?'
R2. 'It is important, but not a lot of people take it seriously. At youth rallies a bloke goes around saying, "Why not let Jesus into your heart?" We say we don't know, maybe when older. He says, "what if you die tomorrow? Why not now?"'
R3. 'He keeps on scaring you.'
Rl. 'Someone keeps on pushing you - you might do it and then you don't like it...'
I. 'Will the time come when you make a commitment?'
All. 'Don't think about it.'
R2. 'A bloke scares you a bit, then you forget about it. I'd forget about it, I reckon.'
Rl. 'I might commit myself.'

I. 'Would you call yourselves Christians?'
Both. 'No.'
Rl. 'No, I'd just call myself a Methodist.'
R2. 'I'd like to be, but if I said to someone, "I'm a Christian", and they said what is a Christian, I couldn't...'
Rl. 'She's a religious sort.'
R2. 'They might say that's not a Christian...'
R2. 'D. is a member of the church, isn't she? Is that being a Christian? I'm not a member yet, they said I could become one, but they was telling us all those things and I got a bit confused.'
I. 'Do you pray at home?'
R2. 'Of a night-time. Do you have to pray everyday? You see, I sometimes forget, then people might think I'm not a Christian. You see, you have to do certain things - pray all the time and try to be a bit...not go out so much to parties, and tell people about it. I might do it sometimes, but see - I don't know really.'
I. 'Would you like to be a Christian?'
R2. 'I keep thinking that if you want to be a Christian, you've got to leave out a lot of things of what you used to like - you have got to show it around.'
R1. 'I talked to this lady - she used to think you had to give up a lot, but she now realises the things she doesn't have to give up. She's cut down.'
R2. 'I thought we couldn't do none. Give up your friends, give up that... 'cause my aunt's a Christian and can't go to pictures or discos - things like that.' (SSLRgh, group interview, W.I.)
R1:14, R2:16

It would appear from these interview extracts that the young people have given thought to the matter of being a Christian. It is also interesting that there seems to be a sense in which being a Christian is not entirely "normal" and relates to changing patterns of life, to "giving up" certain practices. Another child, when asked if she was teased at school for being a Christian replied, 'Others don't mind that we're Christians, they just treat us as they would a normal person'.

Other children see being a Christian as conforming to certain regulations, such as regular prayer, church attendance, or confirmation.

I. 'Would you call yourselves Christians?'
R1. 'No, not really.'
R2. 'No, 'cause I haven't prayed and all that, or gone to church regularly.' (SSLRgh, group interview, R1: W.I., 11; R2: white, 10)

I. 'Do you think that when you grow up you'll keep on going to church?'
R1. 'Yeah, I am.'
I. 'Why is it important?'
R1. 'You can show you're a proper Christian because you go to church. People can see that you really believe in God, follow God, know God.'
R2. 'It proves that you're a Christian.'
I. 'Would you say that you're Christians?'
R1&R2. 'Yeah'
Rl. 'When you're confirmed, then you're a Christian.' (SSLRes, W.I., Rl: 12; R2: 12)

I. 'Would you call yourself a Christian?'
R. 'Yeah, probably.'
I. 'What is a Christian?'
R. 'Someone who goes to church.' (SSLRgh, W.I. 14)

Finally, there are those who seem very unclear as to what a Christian is. The second comment was made by a person who doubles as a Sunday school teacher.

I. 'Would you call yourself a Christian?'
R. 'I don't know.' (SSCRes, white, 10)

I. 'Would you consider yourself a Christian?'
R. 'That's a tough one. I really don't know.' (SSLRgh, W.I., 18)

It is interesting also to note that when asked about the importance of prayer and a relationship with God, a number of children saw this rather in terms of an insurance policy.

'Sometimes when I'm in trouble at school, or I've done something at home, I just, you know say a quick prayer in my mind asking for God to make it turn out right.' (SSCRes, white, 10)

I. 'Do you pray at home?'
R. 'Yeah, sometimes when I'm sort of in trouble.' (SSCRes, white, 10)

I. 'Do you think about God?'
R. 'I think about him when I'm playing netball and I want to win, and I think of him when I'm praying - like when I'm coming to a birthday and Christmas, I pray that mum gives me what I want. If I get in trouble I don't, but if anything happens at school I pray.' (SSLRgh, W.I., 14)

This bore no apparent relation to the fact of being a Christian. In other words, you may not call yourself a Christian, but you still had open to you the right to pray and ask for help in a
difficult situation. This apparent inconsistency perhaps bears some relation to the findings of a survey on young people's beliefs commissioned by the Church of England General Synod Board of Education and published in 1977. Whilst this survey was conducted amongst young people in the 13 to 24 age range, their observations could also be applied in a limited sense to the present research.

There is a total absence of any drive to intellectual consistency either in the belief pattern itself or between belief and behaviour, and this despite a general conviction that you would be able to tell the "real Christian" because heart and actions would be one. 4

Generally, speaking, therefore, it would appear that there were a variety of understandings as to what it meant to be a Christian, with no overall consensus of opinion, although elements relating to life-style and the necessity of conforming to certain rules and rituals were seen by a number of children to be indicative of being a Christian. In point of fact, many of the respondents indicated a considerable degree of vagueness and uncertainty, particularly when probed. This being the case, generally speaking the children did not appear to be very interested in becoming Christians. Thus, insofar as the official goals of the Sunday school relate broadly to religious education and socialisation, it would appear that the school is only marginally effective in terms of achieving its own goals, of actually socialising the children into a Christian life.
6.3.3.4 **Summary**

Ultimately, then, it would appear that the children attend Sunday school in response to their personal goals, and that for the majority of children their primary goal relates to meeting friends. In other words, children tend to look on Sunday school primarily as a recreational pursuit. This reinforces the conclusions drawn from the interviews with the superintendents in which the emphasis was on the enjoyment factor in the children's attendance. That most of the children have taken cognizance of what they perceive to be the official goals of the school is attested to by their statements relating to what they see as the aim or goal of the Sunday school. But these goals are generally bypassed. Primary importance is attached to personal goals which often diverge widely from the official goals of the school, although these official goals do themselves vary from school to school.

### 6.3.4 Parental Perspectives

The final area of goal definition to be analysed relates to the parents' goals or expectations for their children in sending them to Sunday school. Broadly, these fall into three main areas which do have some overlap. Parents see the Sunday school to be valuable for their children:

(a) in providing specific teaching about the Christian faith;
(b) in teaching social and moral principles and guidelines;
(c) because it is a part of the expected pattern of growing up.

Beyond this, there are a few parents who are not particularly concerned whether their children attend Sunday school or not,
provided their time is occupied, they are out of the way, and they are keeping out of trouble.

Before discussing these in detail, let us reflect briefly on the children's perceptions of parental patterns of church involvement drawn from interviews with the children. These are of particular interest in that it would appear that while many parents are concerned for a variety of reasons that their children should attend Sunday school, yet their own personal degree of involvement is often minimal, as indicated by the following interview extracts.

'My mum and dad stay at home and tidy up the house.' (SSCRgh, W.I. 10)

I. 'Do your parents go to church?'
R. 'Not very often - once in a blue moon. My mum's excuse for not going on a Sunday morning is that she's got too much to do at home, and I guess if I get bogged down with things like that, probably not [won't go].' (SSLRgh, W.I., 18)

'None of my family come. They just can't be bothered.' (SSLRgh, white, 10)

'Dad doesn't come because he has to work on Sunday mornings and Saturdays as well as the rest of the week, but he'd like to come. Mum has been about four times, when I got my membership card [for Boys' Brigade] and on parade Sundays.' (SSCRcs, white, 9)

This aspect of parental patterns of church involvement will be referred to again later in this section. Let us now look in detail at the parents' goals or expectations.
6.3.4.1 Christian Teaching

Those parents concerned primarily about the element of Christian teaching tend to fall into two categories. There are those who are regular church-goers themselves and who are anxious to bring their children up in the same faith. Within such families, it is generally the case that their children attend church regularly. This is usually because the children are too young to remain at home alone and also because the parents more or less insist that they attend. As noted above, these were often the same children as those who gave parental pressure as their reason for attending Sunday school, giving the impression that they had little choice in the matter.

'The goal of the Sunday school is to teach the children the truth as revealed in the Bible.'
(SSCRes, white)

'The kids are presented with the Gospel to the extent that they have to make a decision yes or no.'
(SSLRgh, white, also a Sunday school teacher)

Those parents concerned about the aspect of teaching the Christian faith are often West Indians or Africans. While for work reasons they may be unable to attend church themselves, yet they regularly attended either as children or adults in their country of birth, and wish their children also to receive Christian teaching.

'It is to teach them more about God, about Christ.'
(SSCRgh, W.I.)

'The point is to teach them a belief in God.'
(SSLRes, W.I.)

'The aim is to learn about Christ, but they don't realise that yet. It's been more as an activity but as they get older, it'll sink in more.'
(SSLRgh, white)
Within this category, it is interesting to note the high proportion of West Indian parents who said that upon moving into the area they had specifically looked around for a church of the same denomination to that which they had attended back in the West Indies. No doubt this was in a large part due to the need to find the security of a familiar pattern of worship in a foreign country, many of whose customs were strange to them.

6.3.4.2 Social and Moral Principles
Most parents saw the goal of the Sunday school to lie in the teaching of social and moral principles to the children, based on a loose religious foundation. It is interesting to note that one significant variable here again appears to be the ethnic origins of the parents in that there tended to be more white parents whose responses placed them exclusively in this category than there were West Indians. As already noted, there was some overlap between the three categories, particularly in the responses of the West Indian parents. Some of these parents saw the Sunday school as important for Christian teaching purposes but also felt it had social and cultural value as well. "The point of the Sunday school is to learn the good things of the Lord," commented one West Indian mother, going on to say that it helped the children grow up to be good, and that as she went as a child it was important for her children to go also.

There was one white family of particular interest in this second category in which the father was a day school teacher and the mother a headmistress, also at a day school. They saw the Sunday school
as having primarily a social function and saw the religious education aspect of it to be of minimal importance. They felt that the most important element for their children to gain from Sunday school was a good atmosphere and that this laid a foundation for encouraging a "way of life". Within the church, they saw the service, the orchestra, the Sunday school, and the social activities as all working together to encourage the children to become acquainted with and used to "a way of doing things", and they saw that this foundation and these guidelines could become a pattern for later life. In general, their approach to church seemed to be that it was important for them personally, but that they did not see it as vitally important for the children except insofar as it would enrich their lives and perhaps give them a pattern to live by. When asked if they would be disappointed if their daughters did not continue attending church, the mother replied that 'sad' would be a more appropriate word, as 'disappointed' implied expectations for the girls of which she said she had none. She simply wanted them to 'be themselves'. Incidentally, it is interesting to observe that one of her daughters echoed this approach when asked if she would call herself a Christian.

'No, 'cause sometimes I believe in God and sometimes I don't. It depends what I feel like when I wake up. I might and might not be confirmed. Depends what I grow up to be, what I'd like when I get older.' (SSLRes, white, 9)

Incidentally, this family was not typical of most of the families connected with the Sunday schools, although each of the schools had children in them who were from middle class, professional families - often children of the minister or of some member of the teaching staff - the exception being SSCRgh.
Another parent saw the goal of the Sunday school as follows:

'I would say myself, that it more or less shapes their character. Whatever I may think about religion, whether I believe it, or whether or not to a certain extent they believe in religion, it gives them a set of rules to live by, doesn't it?...Whether or not parents believe, it gives the children a set of rules to live by, forms character for them.' (SSLRgh, white)

One mother was somewhat uncertain as to the purpose of the Sunday school but decided that,

'It teaches them that there's a God above and helps them to be good. It gives them something to do and keeps them out of mischief. It's a good way for them to occupy their time.' (SSCRes, white)

The mother in a one-parent West Indian family saw the goal of the Sunday school

'to encourage the children to make friendships and to learn to do things that would be useful or helpful in the community.' (SSLRgh, W.I.)

But again, indicating the overlap, she went on to say that another aspect of it was so that they would learn to recognise that Sunday was a day for worship. They could do what they liked the rest of the week, but Sunday was important and set apart for worship. This lady was herself brought up to attend Sunday school, was married in a church and has had her children baptised. She insists that her child attends Sunday school, which, by his own account he enjoys, and she herself now attends church quite regularly having lapsed for a period after coming to England. It is interesting, however, that no specific mention was made of God during the discussion with her regarding goals and aims, despite the fact that she spoke of worship. This perhaps reflects an inhibition which appeared to be common amongst a number of adults in
speaking explicitly about matters relating to faith.

6.3.4.3 Childhood Developmental Pattern

The third category, comprising parents who indicated that they saw Sunday school attendance as an important part of the pattern of growing up, was by far the smallest. Again, the majority of the parents in this category were of West Indian origin, although there was only one parent who gave this as the principal reason for sending her child to Sunday school.

'I just feel because I went as a child, they should go and learn the Bible.' (SSCRgh, W.I.)

In many respects, this category has a close bearing on the first category, in that the fact that the parents had themselves attended Sunday school as children frequently had a bearing on the reason why they sent their own children. One mother, having commented that she saw the purpose of the Sunday school as being to bring the children up in the right way, went on to say that she insists her children go.

'I went and it did me no harm. It is part of their life. They have school, home, and Sunday school; it is part of their life, those three things.' (SSLRgh, white)

It was noted at the beginning of this section that parents were often eager for their children to attend Sunday school to learn certain religious and moral values, yet the majority of these same parents attended church only occasionally according to their children. This appears somewhat anomalous unless one concludes that some parents must assume that by the time adulthood is reached, a child's learning of social, moral and religious prin-
ciples has been achieved. One family recognised that they were maintaining two separate sets of goals, one for themselves and one for their children.

R. 'I'd like to see my children grow up and carry on [going to church], but when they reach a certain age, if they don't want to you just can't force them.'

I. 'Is church-going important for you both?'
R. 'I can't say that because I've just admitted I don't go to church. I'd like to but I haven't got the time.' (SSLRgh, W.I.)

Other parents indicated that they felt somewhat guilty that they only attended church infrequently, yet encouraged their children to attend.

I. 'Do you go to church yourselves?'
R. 'In the evenings we go when the girls have something on. We went to the carol service at Christmas. We go to a couple of other things from the church...But we don't go regular, I must admit that, we don't go once a week or fortnightly.' (SSCRes, white)

Another parent said she didn't go to church as often as she should, but not because of work. She simply 'didn't make it'.

Some parents, on the other hand, indicated that they were not particularly concerned that their children continue to attend Sunday school or church once teens or adulthood were reached. They thought it would do them no harm if they did attend, but said that it was entirely up to the child. It would appear that this is one factor which has an important bearing on the high percentage of children leaving the school in their early teens. In discussing the reasons why children tended to leave Sunday school at this age, the responses of the parents indicated five main reasons.
One of these was lack of parental influence and encouragement. The others were peer group influence, the strength of outside distractions, a church and Sunday school which was increasingly seen as boring and childish, and an adolescent period of rebellion against parental values.

The importance of the home environment and of parental encouragement was seen by many parents to be the most important factor in determining the child's continued attendance at Sunday school. Interestingly enough, this was stressed as much by parents who attended church only infrequently as by parents who attended regularly.

'Really, I think it's the home environment has a lot to do with it, the parents themselves, what encouragement they give.' (SSLRes, white)

In contrast, another parent observed:

'You can encourage them to a limit. I'd like to see my child grow up and carry on. But when they reach a certain age, if they don't want to, you just can't force them...Friends are a significant influence. If their friends don't go and talk about it, it may put them off.' (SSLRes, W.I.)

A number of parents stressed the importance of peer group influence, as having a greater salience for the adolescent child than the parents. This perhaps also ties in with the observation made by one set of parents in SSLRes that they expected their children to lapse in their teenage years as they entered a phase of rebellion against parents and other symbols of authority. It is interesting to note that this aspect was mentioned only once.
by a family not local to the area and in which both of the parents were professionals in the field of education. Their response would appear to indicate a familiarity with the developmental stages in a child.

The strength of outside distractions were mentioned by several parents, referring in particular to the television and to the amount of spending money many children had. This was paralleled, according to a few parents, by the fact that the church and Sunday school were seen as increasingly boring and babyish, the older the child grew. This would seem to indicate that there were comparatively few schools which catered effectively for early teens (only two of the four in the in-depth study), a fact that was supported by the evidence from the superintendents' survey that there were few teenage groups within the Sunday schools.

It would appear, therefore, based on the reasons given in these responses, that a lack of parental encouragement linked with the strength of outside attractions and the influence of friends, and paralleled by a failure on the part of the school to respond effectively to the needs of the adolescent, result in the high percentage of teenagers leaving Sunday school. The converse of this would be that where there is strong parental encouragement for the child to attend Sunday school and where the parents themselves are church-goers, the child is more likely to continue attending. Often such children by their own account appear to draw their closest friends from among other children also attending Sunday school. Therefore, unless friendships are broken,
the peer group as a unit tends to remain at the school.

6.3.4.4 Summary
We have seen that parental goals or expectations regarding the Sunday school relate principally to its role in teaching social and moral principals, and to a lesser degree to its role in teaching the Christian faith. There are also a number of parents who see it as a traditional part of a child's pattern of growing up, although such parents generally hold one of the other goals, also. It has been noted, however, that many of these same parents attend church themselves only occasionally, despite encouraging their children to attend Sunday school. It is possible to attribute the strength of parental goals to the fact that a child, while under age, is situated permanently within his family, whereas the influence extended over him by the Sunday school amounts at the most to an hour or two a week. Where the goals of the teaching staff and the clergy in the school diverge from those of the home situation, and where parental example and encouragement to attend church and Sunday school are weak, the influence of goals associated with the Sunday school will therefore naturally be weaker. The child who attaches priority to the goals of the teachers or clergy over and against those of the home, in terms, for example, of making a faith commitment or having a "conversion" experience, would appear to be the exception rather than the rule. Such a child may not only have to face disinterest from the home, but may also have to take a stand which could isolate him from his peer
group, if, for example, he remains at the Sunday school and his friends leave. Thus one girl who made such a commitment commented:

'I told my sister, she took the mickey out of me...Mum said, "It's your life, it's up to you", and Dad don't know.' (SSLRgh, white, 17)

6.4 Summary of Findings

Whilst it is possible to isolate certain general features characteristic of the inner city Sunday school based on the interview data from the four schools selected for in-depth study, yet each of these four schools also exhibits certain characteristics which distinguishes it from the other schools. Thus, there is a sense in which the distinctive characteristics of each Sunday school also need to be taken into account in order to see how these inform the general aspects of the school. The findings from the interviews with the children indicated that personal goals are above all related to the element of relationships, in particular to friendship and enjoyment, rather than to cognitive learning. In the light of this, it is perhaps interesting that the distinctive aspects of each of the four schools relate to the influence of particular personalities and to the manner in which relationships are built up within the church and Sunday school. These in turn relate to the manner in which structure, curriculum and so on are decided upon. In this summary, we will first review the major characteristics of the four schools and then proceed to examine the derivation of the child's personal goals.
6.4.1 SSCRes

It was noted above in the discussion of goals, that the most powerful reality definer in SSCRes was the minister. Despite involvement by laity in a variety of functions, most especially as deacons, the minister exercised ultimate control in a benign, paternalistic manner. His authority undoubtedly derives from the fact that under his leadership over a ten year period the church has grown from a mere handful to an average of 60 adults and 45 children. Through this, he has gained the respect and loyalty of his congregation. The minister exercises considerable authority through his teaching in the church, which he sees to be of ultimate importance, as he indicates in the following comment:

'The key is preaching. A loving fellowship is important, but it works from the pulpit.'

An incident occurred in this church one Sunday morning which served to confirm the high importance placed on teaching. A Sunday school teacher was ill and the minister asked the interviewer if she would be willing to conduct the Sunday school class in order that a regular church member might not have to miss his teaching. In addition, the minister also records his sermons and lends the tapes to members of the congregation who may have had to miss a service.

Whilst having a great regard for the minister, the assistant pastor also indicated a certain degree of frustration in that the minister maintains tight control over all aspects of church
life, from home visiting to deciding on the music to be used in the services. This tight control is reflected in the Sunday school as teachers must be "approved" by the minister in order to be "appointed", although the pastor himself describes them as 'selected by the church as such; the church has the last word as a body', whilst recognising his recommendations. However, an interesting comment made by one teacher pointed out that the minister asks for individuals to "volunteer" then chooses the "volunteers". To further indicate his control over the Sunday school, it is interesting to note that he has attempted to instigate a system whereby teachers step down from teaching after a one year period in order to allow new teachers to step in and, of greater import, so that the teachers might be able to attend his adult teaching class. Originally this was attempted on a three monthly basis, but this raised difficulties with the teaching staff as it allowed no time for them to establish a rapport with the children. Even the annual changeover has caused certain objections in that several teachers feel that those more experienced in teaching are no longer afforded the opportunity to teach. However, it would appear that this system is not strictly enforced.

Finally, it should be noted that whilst being termed a "family church" by the pastor in the sense of ideology, it is also literally a family church. The church secretary is the son of the pastor and he and his wife and five children exercise a significant influence in the church in a variety of areas.
Thus it may be seen that the minister is indeed the significant reality definer. The tone of the entire church, as well as organisational and spiritual direction are ultimately derived from him. This clearly has considerable effect on the goals held by those running the Sunday school, their power and the degree to which they are generated by the minister, or derived from him by the teaching staff.

6.4.2 SSLřgh

Another situation entirely is presented by SSLřgh. In this context the minister plays an extremely low-key role in relation to the Sunday school, admitting that personally he feels he does not relate well to children. Consequently, he leaves responsibility for the Sunday school per se in the hands of the teachers and even referred the interviewer to one of the teachers for further information. The significant factor here is that this teacher is not the Sunday school superintendent but a lay worker appointed by the denomination as community worker in the area. In the absence of strong leadership by the minister, this teacher rather than the Sunday school superintendent, has become the significant reality definer within the Sunday school. It would appear that this transference of influence from the superintendent to the teacher has taken place almost imperceptibly and with comparatively little friction. However, the teacher did observe that at times it caused difficulty in that people tended to approach him rather than the superintendent with regard to matters relating to the Sunday school. The superintendent is a
lady in her fifties who has been connected with the church since before the war and her approach towards the Sunday school tends to be very traditional. In her class the children sit around a table and are given a talk and a Bible reading with a series of questions at the end to ensure that the children have learned the lesson. In terms of discipline, her approach is such that she refuses to continue with the session until the children are all quiet. The children generally dislike her approach and consider her to be bossy and old-fashioned, thus strengthening the attraction of the other teachers who conduct their classes on a discussion basis. Possibly the reason why friction between the community worker and the superintendent is minimal is that the superintendent's priorities lie in her involvement with the Girls' Brigade of which she is area deputy commissioner. She is very highly committed to this and appears to find her security and sense of identity in this direction rather than within the Sunday school.

The considerable influence exerted by the community worker was further illustrated by the number of children who indicated that they first attended the Sunday school on the invitation of this teacher or a member of his family. His wife was very concerned at the comments made by some of the children to the effect that the Sunday school would close if and when the community worker and his family left the area. These children did not simply say that they themselves would stop attending, but indicated that the Sunday school as a whole would close, presumably because
there would no longer be a focus of cohesion in it such as the community worker to whom the youngsters would relate.

'The boys said that if A. leaves, they're not going to church any more.' (SSLRgh, W.I., 16)

The community worker and his wife were disturbed at this in that it suggested that the children were attending Sunday school because of the personal relationships built up with this teacher and his family rather than because of the intrinsic nature of the Sunday school per se. This illustrates the importance of personal links built up between child and teacher within the school and the strength that such links can exert in determining a child's reasons for attending Sunday school.

6.4.3 SSCRgh

The strength of a teacher's individual approach is again the determining factor in understanding SSCRgh. The superintendent in this school is an elderly lady in her seventies who has been involved in the children's work of the church since she was eighteen, and 'sees the children's work as being mine' as she expressly states. She is assisted by another lady, also elderly, but she remains firmly in charge. Her approach to the school, as noted above when discussing clergy goals, is very traditional, conducted in the manner of a mini-service. This approach stands in marked contrast to that of the minister who is a young man in his thirties. The minister recognises that, because of her age, the superintendent has only a few years remaining in which she will be able to conduct the Sunday school.
Rather than divest her of this role which is of great importance to her, he has temporarily withdrawn from any involvement in the Sunday school. The superintendent for her part has considerable regard for the minister and recognises his ability to initiate new work in several areas, and she offers him her support. She does, however, consider him to be far too lax with the children, failing to discipline them adequately. Therefore, she is pleased to be left to conduct the school according to her own principles. However, it would appear that, conscientious as she is, her approach has had the effect of alienating a number of the children on her roll book who now no longer attend.

6.4.4 SSLRes

The final one of the four Sunday schools (SSLRes) does not bear the distinctive stamp of a single individual personality in the same way as do the other three schools. The teacher operates a very low profile within the school, yet as she has run the school for many years, she could be said to emerge as the reality definer within the school. Thus, the vicar tends to leave the content and direction of the school in her hands. She follows no set syllabus, but bases a short talk or discussion around the set reading for the day as taken from the lectionary, which is then followed by a short period of craftwork or quizzes. The Sunday school often does not begin until 9.40, ten minutes late, and some of the children arrive even later than this. Since the children join the adult congregation for communion after about three quarters
of an hour, the period the children actually spend on their own in Sunday school is necessarily limited.

6.4.5 Derivation of the Child's Personal Goals

It may be seen that each of the schools discussed above has a single individual who may be described as the significant reality definer of that school: the minister (SSCRes), the community worker (SSLRgh), the Sunday school superintendent (SSCRgh), and the Sunday school teacher (SSLRes). The singular approach of each of these individuals plays an important role in affecting the overall direction of the school, the nature of the relationships within the school and the manner in which these are established, and the goals of the (other) teaching staff. These in turn play an important part in determining why the children attend or fail to attend a particular school. Against this background, let us now examine the effect upon the child of the goals held by the various participants within the Sunday school and consider their implications in defining the role which the inner city Sunday school plays in contemporary society. The principal question which we are seeking to answer is, why do children attend Sunday school and what are the factors affecting their choice?

It has already been noted that within any Sunday school there are four groups of goal definers: the clergy, the teachers, the children and the parents. As the child may be termed the "principal consumer" in this context, in that the Sunday school is operated expressly for children, it is the effect of these various goal orientations on the child which must be noted. While it is not possible to indicate in simple diagrammatic form the full inter-
TABLE 6.2  Goal Interaction Within the Sunday School and Its Effect on the Child

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>strong ←</th>
<th>CLERGY → weak</th>
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<tr>
<td>official goals of the Sunday school</td>
<td>goals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>goals</td>
<td>parents' understanding of S.S. goals mediated through children - except church-going parents</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TEACHING STAFF</td>
<td>results in a variety of goals - personal goals have greatest salience</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>results in shared goals - perception of ministerial/clergy goals is generally co-terminal with personal goals</td>
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<tr>
<td>media, wider society</td>
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<td>PARENTS</td>
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<td>personal goals of parent for child</td>
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<td>CHILDREN</td>
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<td>in defining personal goals affected by:</td>
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<tr>
<td>1. child's response to teaching staff goals</td>
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<td>2. child's response to goals of parents for him</td>
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<td>3. child's awareness of parents' personal goals</td>
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<td>4. peer group influence</td>
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play of the mediation or communication of goals within the Sunday school; and the factors which affect this communication, the following diagram will perhaps serve as a basis for the ensuing discussion. It must be stressed, however, that in presenting this diagram, there is not in any sense implied a reifying of the goals within the school. Thus the processes of negotiation, bargaining and interpretation in which the children continually participate must always be taken into account. The process of goal formulation within the school is based on the interaction between numerous variables which have been discussed in the previous sections of this chapter.

It is significant that for the majority of children their perception of the official goals of the Sunday school relate to a belief in God. In other words, the majority of the children understood the principal purpose of the Sunday school to be related to teaching about God and Jesus. However, the number of children who adopted this as their own personal goal in coming to Sunday school were, as noted above, minimal, and were most likely to be children from church-going families. In some cases it may be questioned to what degree a child who expressed a belief in God as his personal goal in attending Sunday school, was responding as he felt was expected of him in view of his coming from a church-going family.

Beyond the child's perception of the official goals of the Sunday school, lie his own personal goals. In defining his personal goals, it would appear that the child is conditioned by influences from five principal areas.
6.4.5.1 Teaching Staff Goals

Firstly, he is affected by the goals mediated to him by the teachers. These may either be their perception of the official goals of the Sunday school (official here referring to those laid down by those responsible for defining such goals, be they clergy, church council, diaconate, etc.), or they may be the teachers' own personal goals. As the diagram above indicates, where communication of the official goals is strong and effective within the Sunday school (as observed, for example, in SSCRes in which the minister "recommends" teachers who share his goals for the school), these goals are generally adopted by the teachers such that the teachers' perception of the official goals of the school become coterminous with their own personal goals. Where communication of the official goals of the school is weak (as in SSLRgh where the minister did little to communicate any standard set of goals as official), this results in varied goals amongst the teaching staff as their personal goals become more salient. Thus it may be hypothesised that personal goals of the teaching staff are affected by the relative strength of the clergy as reality definers. Where clergy held strongly stated goals, the goals of the teaching staff reflected this. Where clergy held weakly stated goals, teaching staff goals tended to vary depending on the teacher.

In discussing the mediation of goals from teaching staff to child, it is particularly interesting to observe the effect of a very popular or charismatic teacher or leader on the children
in his/her group. It would appear that in such a group, the children find their personal goals being fulfilled in a considerable number of areas, particularly as these relate to the enjoyment of the group as a recreational activity. In SSLRgh this was so to the extent that the children in one class indicated that they would leave the Sunday school if and when their teacher left. The children appeared to find many of their goals to be coterminal with the goals of the teacher as he presented the opportunities for questions and discussion within a relaxed and enjoyable atmosphere. There were also those who had adopted the teacher's goals regarding a faith commitment as their own. Even those who had not done so, appeared to understand that he was teaching them about the importance of a relationship with God.

"He [the Sunday school teacher] asks odd questions really. He asks surprising questions and then joins the questions into something else. When it ends up, its about God." (SSLRgh, W.I., 12)

Their strong friendship with the teacher and their obvious enjoyment of his class were important factors in affecting their attitude towards the Sunday school as a whole.

6.4.5.2 Parents' Goals for the Child

A second of these influences related to the child's response to the goals which the parents set for him in relation to Sunday school attendance. The weighting of this influence appears to vary from child to child depending on the degree to which the
child's coming to Sunday school is controlled by the parent. However, it does not appear that there is any significant relationship between the fact that a parent is not particularly concerned as to whether or not his child attends Sunday school, and the personal priority which a child attaches to the importance of attendance at Sunday school. In other words, a parent may not insist that his child attends Sunday school, but the child himself may make attendance a high personal priority for one reason or another. Indeed, a handful of children in each of the schools attended quite regularly despite the fact that their parents did not require it. The children indicated that they came because they enjoyed it.

Conversely, neither does the fact that some parents set goals requiring their children to attend Sunday school mean that the children will necessarily enjoy it. In fact, a number of children of church-going parents said that they only attended because their parents insisted on it. One of these children, when asked which part of Sunday school he enjoyed the most, commented, 'The part when the time goes quickly'. It is generally true to say, however, that there were comparatively few children in any of the Sunday schools whose parents had absolutely no interest in the fact that their children attended Sunday school. And, whether a child actually enjoyed it or merely tolerated it, the fact that parents took or sent their children clearly influenced the child's approach to Sunday school and what he saw as
important in it, even if this influence was negative. Thus, in some cases it would appear that the observation of one of the clergy held true for the children: 'a person is churched when young and is now almost impervious to the Gospel.' His comment related specifically to curriculum content, which no doubt influences a child's attitude to the school as will be observed below, but this minister's comment might also be relevant in the sense that required attendance at Sunday school could have the negative effect of alienating a child from Sunday school and, as an adult, from church. This is more likely to be so in circumstances in which the child does not find other aspects of the Sunday school to be very enjoyable. Again, Etzioni's observation regarding the alienative involvement of the lower participant through the use of coercive power is relevant here, having as it does a negative effect on matters such as recruitment and socialisation. Thus, the effect of being forced to attend an activity which he may find boring or childish, and in which members of his peer group are not involved, may have the cumulative effect of causing the child in later years to become 'almost impervious to the Gospel'. In circumstances, however, where the requirement to attend is paralleled by a desire to attend, and the child's experience of Sunday school is very positive, this may be an incentive to become fully involved in the church as an adult.

6.4.5.3 Parents' Personal Goals

It appears from the interviews with the children, that the goals held by the parents with regard to their own personal attitudes
towards church attendance, exercised an even greater influence on the child's approach to Sunday school than did the goals the parents set for him in sending him or encouraging him to attend Sunday school. In other words, the actual church-going practice of the parents governed the child's attitude towards Sunday school to a greater degree than did the parents' stated reasons in sending the child to the school. As was observed above, this became particularly apparent when the children were questioned as to their future involvement with Sunday school or church. Frequently their response mirrored the parents' practice rather than the parents' requirements for them as children. Thus, relationship with the church tended to be seen as an activity to be engaged in while a child, but given up in favour of other priorities when an adult. It would appear from this that the majority of non-church-going parents were not particularly concerned if their children no longer attended in teenage and adult years. One parent observed that it would be good if his child continued attending, but he could not force him. Another parent, when her daughter told her that she had become a Christian, responded, 'It's your life'. The expectation on the part of the parent, therefore, tended to be that the child would cease attending. This ties in with the goals of the non-church-going parent, which as already noted in Section 6.3.4 generally related to the inculcation of certain social and moral principles, and to seeing attendance at Sunday school as a part of the "proper" pattern of growing up in somewhat vague moral terms. The projected future church involvement of the child from a non-church-going family thus generally correlates with
parental practice and goals, unless the child had made a personal commitment of some nature which superceded parental goals. The strength of parental goals as over and against the goals of the teaching staff and clergy, are no doubt in part related to the fact that the child has daily contact with the parent and daily exposure to his goals and values, whereas contact with the Sunday school is generally limited to one hour a week.

We have been referring here to non-church-going families. Within church-going families there is not the same degree of divergence to be found in non-church-going families between the goals set by the parent for the child and his own personal goals. However, despite this more unified set of goals, the child does not necessarily adopt his parents goals in terms of continued attendance when he grows older. He, too, is influenced by other outside factors, such as his peer group, the media, and trends in the wider society as will be noted below.

It is worth digressing briefly at this point to note that whilst the principal area of stratification within the Sunday school was, as already outlined above, between the "rough" and the "respectable" working classes, a secondary area of stratification became apparent during the interviews. This was also related to socio-economic class in that in some cases it represented a middle class/working class divide, but it also related to the area of commitment to the church. It is manifested in the divide between children of church-going parents (of which there were
comparatively few) and those of non-church-going parents. In virtually every situation in which both mother and father with children attended church together as a family, the parents were involved in some form of professional occupation: minister, community worker, teacher, doctor, business executive, head-teacher and so on. This was reflected in the classroom situation, although without apparent antagonism, in a variety of areas. Children of these families, even the five-year-olds, generally tended to be more articulate, had a greater Biblical knowledge, a clearer conception of the Sunday school's raison d'etre, and their outlook on life generally tended to be more ambitious. This degree of stratification was perhaps most clearly expressed in the responses by two children in SSLRes to the question, 'what do you want to be when you grow up?' One replied 'A secretary', the other, 'A zoologist'.

Another indication of the socio-economic divide lay in the fact that the professional nature of the work carried out by the father was often the factor that enabled both parents to attend church. Neither father nor mother had to work on Sunday. Within many of the working class families, however, the reason given by the children as to why parents did not attend church generally related to work commitments. 'Dad has to work weekends.' 'Mother is on shifts, so dad has to stay home and get the dinner.' A brief list of the occupations held by the parents who do not attend church regularly further illustrates the socio-economic divide: welder, gardener, auxiliary nurse, cleaner, works at Fords, cook, works in a garage. It is important to note that
such occupations were not restricted to parents with children in the schools in "rough" working class areas. Parents with children attending schools in "respectable" working class areas also held such occupations. Thus, the nature of the parents' occupations had a considerable influence on whether or not the parents attended church regardless of the area in which the Sunday school fell. However, insofar as schools in "respectable" working class areas generally had a larger proportion of a skilled and professional population on which to draw, there was a greater likelihood of such schools drawing children from families in which both parents, could, if they wished, attend church. Whether they chose to attend or not was another matter. This, in fact, was mirrored in the Sunday schools in that Sunday schools in the "respectable" working class areas had a greater number of families in which both parents attended church than did Sunday schools in "rough" working class areas.

Apart from the religious motivation within church-going families, it was also possible to distinguish a few families for whom attendance at church was part of a "way of life", and provided for the children a social atmosphere which could enrich their lives. In this approach, there was the implication that Sunday school was a "respectable" activity which would benefit children in the process of growing up. This appeared to be foremost in the minds of church-going parents. Few non-church-going parents indicated that they saw the Sunday school as an agent of respectability in the sense of it being fundamentally important to the child's life. In interviewing the parents there was no implication that they saw
the Sunday school as potentially opening new avenues for the child with increased social status. The one area in which overtones of "respectability" could be detected, related to those parents who saw the Sunday school as providing a 'foundation for life' or 'guidelines for life' or a 'rule for living'. Some parents felt the school thus provided the child with religious-moral principles for life, although they were rather vague as to the precise nature of such principles. Such comments, however, were qualified by the fact that these parents also said that it was up to the child to decide if he wanted to attend Sunday school or, eventually, church. Thus, a search for "respectability" does not appear to have been a major motivating factor amongst parents in encouraging their children to attend Sunday school.

6.4.5.4 Peer Group Influence

The peer group was a fourth significant influencing factor affecting the child's goals. One of the most important elements highlighted by the interviews, was that comparatively few children are teased by their peer group for attending Sunday school. Amongst children, Sunday school appeared to be seen in the light of a personal choice. Attendance or non-attendance does not warrant teasing, just as attendance at cubs or an after school club does not warrant it. Age, however, is the discriminating variable here. The older a child grows, the more likely he is to encounter questions and friendly banter from non-church attending peers.

I. 'Are any of your mates at work Christians?'
R. 'I don't know, I don't ask. We just don't talk about it...'
I. 'How did they know you went [to church]?'
R. 'They asked what I did and I told them. Then when we went camping [with the Sunday school class], they wanted to know who with and said they were going to come and see
I. 'Do your friends take the mickey?'
   R1 & R2. 'No.'
   R2. 'A few of the girls I wouldn't tell, but some of the girls...'
   R1. 'My friends ask me out. I say I'm going round Mr. P's [Sunday school teacher] and they say, "You never come out and enjoy yourselves."
   R2. 'If you say you're going to church, they say, "Oh leave that, come and enjoy yourself." I say, "It's good down there," and they say it's boring. I say, "It's only an hour." They must think it'll last forever.'
   (SSLRgh, group interview, W.I., R1: 16, R2: 14)

A rather different approach was taken by a West Indian lad in his early teens.

   I. 'Do you get teased?'
   R. 'No. Only once when I first came...kids started pushing me about and called me a Bible-basher. I said, "If you want to make something out of it come outside". He kept quiet.'
   (SSLRgh, W.I., 12)

The observation made by the eighteen year old who doubled as a Sunday school teacher in SSLRgh confirmed comments made by the majority of children.

   I. 'Does it get harder as you get older?'
   R. 'Yes. Especially at the age of about sixteen, because at that age there are other things you get involved in. You might start going to disco or something like that and notice members of the opposite sex and all that, so it's...there is that sort of middle stage. When you're younger it doesn't matter so much. Then there's that sort of middle stage where it matters to you what your friends think, but after...At my age I couldn't give one taboo what they think. It's just a stage kids go through.'
   (SSLRgh, W.I., 18)
Thus, the older a child grows, the more outside interests draw him and the more sensitive he becomes to the comments of his friends. The combination of these two factors may, in fact, be the major contributing factor to the decline in attendance at Sunday school in teenage years. As a child reaches adolescence and becomes increasingly independent from the home situation, so parental sanctions over him (including possibly required Sunday school attendance) lose their force, and the influence of the peer group grows. The influence of the mass media, television, radio, magazines, as well as social trends within society as a whole must be taken into account here, particularly since the adolescent is at a very impressionable age.

However, it may be hypothesised that Sunday school attendance in teenage years is far less likely to decline in situations in which the child's primary reference group lies within the Sunday school. The community worker in S.LRgh commented that his Sunday school class was a social group, "the social group" to which the children belonged. Beyond simply meeting for an hour on a Sunday, it served an important social function in that the youngsters went camping together, to rallies, on outings and so on. This group also met at the community worker's home one evening each week on an informal basis for a chat or activity. In the event, it was not necessary for these teenagers to adopt coping strategies in order for them to reconcile their attendance at Sunday school with the activities of their peer group. All the same, even in this school most of the teenagers considered that the strength of
this peer group alone would not suffice to guarantee their continued attendance at church upon reaching adulthood. Many of these youngsters were quoted above regarding their future involvement with the church and indicated that such involvement depended on work or family commitments.

I. 'Would you make church a priority? Something you would never miss [when older]?'
R1, R2 & R3. 'No'
I. 'Why?'
R1. 'Say you have a party. And they say, "You coming to the party?" And I say, "No, I'm going to church." Well, you gotta go out some weeks.' (SSLagh, group interview, W.I., R1: 12, R2: 13, R3: 11)

6.4.5.5 Sunday School Content

A final significant influence affecting a child's formulation of goals within the Sunday school related to the actual content of the Sunday school session. Comments regarding this varied widely amongst the children in the four schools. Key words were "boredom" and "childish". Many children indicated that they found the time spent in the adult church service, before or after separate Sunday school classes, as well as in the family services, to be boring. This was so despite the fact that family services were supposedly designed to cater for the needs of children. This boredom was in part due to the hymns, which, virtually without exception, children said they found difficult, and in part due to the sermon. A fairly typical picture of the frustrations children found in the service was presented by one of the West Indian girls.
'Before T. came, we had another minister and he was the most monotonous guy I've ever met. I mean he really was boring - he'd put you to sleep. And when there was church parade, I myself didn't want to go and all my brothers kicked up a fuss and I backed them, because to start with, all the hymns he chose, no one of the kids knew it, and that's about the only part of the family service that a lot of them enjoy. What's the point of going into a family service and you don't even know the hymns? He didn't really cater for the younger kids 'cause the things he was saying - you really had to listen to understand what he was talking about - sort of basically for the adults of the congregation, and he sort of forgot there was children in there. That made it boring and the little kids used to get sort of irritated and fiddle about.' (SSLRgh, W.I., 18)

Clearly if this is the experience of church with which some children are left, it will have a significant effect in determining their personal goals with regard to Sunday school attendance.

Other children disliked some of the activities in the classes because they were childish.

R. 'At that age [14 to 16] the things that P. and Q. [two Sunday school teachers] does, that becomes childish. Before at that Sunday school there wasn't the kind of group or the kind of relationship that A. has with the older group. And they found it difficult to go from that childish stage, and they don't really go into the church, and they don't bother to go to the Sunday school because it's babyish.'
I. 'A's group. Does your brother enjoy it?'
R. 'Tremendously - he doesn't like to go when it's church parade 'cause it's boring.' (SSLRgh, W.I., 16)

This teenage group in SSLRgh received considerable praise from its members.
'His [the Sunday school teacher of the teenage group] group is at the age group before they decide this is not my scene, and he's discussing things with them and doing it on their kind of level, not a babyish kind and he's making them feel not childish. He's talking to them and making them feel as if they understand what he's talking about and they're having a sort of man-to-man conversation like that, and I think that's a good thing, because at that stage... they're more likely to still be there at the 16/17 age than kids who didn't have that kind of thing.'  (SSLRes, W.I., 18)

Children obviously vary in the activities which they enjoy, and it was interesting to observe the number of children who indicated that they enjoyed competitions of any form, whether in memory work, quizzes, or the Scripture Exam. The Scripture Exam is a paper set annually by a national body with questions on a given biblical passage or book. Only one Sunday school (SSCRes) took part in this exam, but virtually all the children opted to take it and clearly the sense of competition and achievement was a motivating factor.

'...In school if you do very good, all you get is, "Oh, well done. You did that good." But if you do good in Scripture Exam you get a certificate saying you did good. And if you get honours you get a book, and there's that feeling that you feel you done something really special and you've achieved something.'  (SSCRes, white, 11)

Frequently, teachers themselves are dissatisfied with the curriculum material currently available, and as, for example, in SSLRes and SSORgh, devise their own material. The degree to which a child responds positively to the content of the Sunday school session is, then, an important determining factor in a child's formulation of his own personal goals in attending Sunday school.
6.4.6 Conclusion

Drawing on the data from the in-depth studies, the foregoing chapter has looked in some detail at the goal orientations within the Sunday school from four perspectives: the clergy, the teaching staff, the children and the parents. It is generally accepted both by denominational authorities and also in the popular mind, that the Sunday school operates for the benefit of the children and is designed as the church's vehicle for religious education and socialisation. The effect of the various goal orientations on the child plays an important role in affecting the derivation of the child's personal goals. These personal goals, in turn appear to a large extent to determine the degree of effectiveness of the Sunday school in its role as a vehicle for religious education and socialisation. The in-depth studies indicate that while the children recognise that the official goals of the school relate to some form of religious education, these do not necessarily bear any relation to their own personal goals. The final section of this chapter examines the factors affecting the derivation of the child's personal goals, and it is noted that in this the child is conditioned by influences from five areas: the teaching staff goals, parental goals for the child, the parents' personal goals, the child's peer group, and the content of the Sunday school itself.

In conclusion, the analysis of the factors influencing the formulation of the child's personal goals would seem to indicate that the child's goals in attending Sunday school relate to the school's effectiveness in providing an enjoyable recreational activity. The content of the Sunday session needs to be stimulating and in
keeping with the age group for which it is designed, and the building up of strong, positive relationships both with teachers and also with other children is important. The influence of parents and of the peer group are also important factors in determining a child's continuing attendance upon reaching adolescence. In short, whether or not a child chooses to attend Sunday school depends on the effectiveness with which it meets his own personal goals, and it is argued that these personal goals primarily relate to seeing the Sunday school as one of a number of leisure-time pursuits. We now move on to the final chapter in which we shall look particularly at the role the Sunday school plays in providing a recreational activity for the child in the inner city.
PART IV

CONCLUSION
CHAPTER 7

THE SUNDAY SCHOOL AS A RECREATIONAL ACTIVITY

7.1 Introduction

The basic premise that contemporary inner city Sunday schools are in decline and losing the social significance they once had seems beyond dispute. Our purpose in this thesis has been to examine some of the factors contributing to this decline. In Chapter 3, we noted the historical origins of the school and the changing social patterns of the twentieth century which have resulted in the Sunday school becoming simply one of many leisure-time activities open to children. Chapter 4 outlined the major social and economic characteristics of the London Borough of Newham in which the field work for the research took place, further underscoring the fact that the working classes have, by and large, remained untouched by institutional Christianity. The ensuing two chapters then focussed on the contemporary Sunday school. Both the preliminary survey with the superintendents (Chapter 5), and the in-depth studies (Chapter 6) highlighted the fact that the goals or expectations held by the various participants in the Sunday school are widely divergent. In the present chapter it will be argued that the very fact that these goals or expectations are so varied, has also contributed to the decline of the Sunday school and its loss of social significance, particularly in the inner city. Where the goals of the institution are not clearly defined, not clearly communicated, or are substantially at variance with the expectations of the child and the
parent, the Sunday school will be less than fully effective in its traditional role as the church's vehicle for religious socialisation. However, it would appear that even this traditional role is now subject to various interpretations, according to the various clergy and teaching staff involved. Furthermore, as far as the children and the parents are concerned, their expectations regarding the school are different again, as has been noted in Chapter 6, depending on their background and factors such as their previous church involvement.

In discussing the issue of goals, it has been argued that in order for the Sunday school to be effective in fulfilling its official goals as decided upon by the clergy and the teaching staff, some degree of co-terminality between its goals and those of the child, and, to a lesser extent, those of the parent must obtain. This posits the model that the Sunday school is a consumer-oriented institution operating in a market situation and therefore has to adjust its product to some degree in order to ensure that it has maximum marketability. The importance of the voluntary nature of the institution must be emphasised. In contrast with a statutory institution such as the day school at which attendance is obligatory, a child may simply stop attending Sunday school if he does not find his expectations being fulfilled to his satisfaction. It will be argued that this lack of fulfilment of personal goals on the part of the child is a principal factor contributing to the decline of the contemporary
inner city Sunday school. Based on this discussion of goal fulfilment, a major theme of this final chapter will be to reflect upon the way in which the contemporary Sunday school has, by and large, taken on the role of a recreational activity. In that it has therefore become one of a number of alternative leisure pursuits, it will be argued that from the children's point of view, its function in religious education and socialisation is incidental.

7.2 Summary of Issues

Before proceeding to discuss the issue of goal fulfilment within the Sunday school and its role as a recreational activity, we will briefly summarise a number of factors which are relevant to our understanding of the situation in which the Sunday school finds itself today, and which will place the discussion of goal fulfilment in perspective.

Firstly, in Section 3.3, we reviewed the position of the Sunday school in the final decades of the last century and the early years of this century, noting that flaws were beginning to appear in the system. Today some one hundred years later, it would appear that the Sunday school has virtually come full circle. The criticisms directed at the school in the late nineteenth century are largely the same as those levelled at it today, if we may judge by the comments of the superintendents and by the responses to the interviews in the in-depth studies. Criticisms a century ago related to aspects such as the following: Sunday school premises were in poor condition, often drab and unattract-
Sunday school itself was not joyful, bright or attractive; teaching staff were amateur and many seemed tired; there was an underestimation of the improved state of general knowledge and education, as a result of which the Sunday school tended not to be in keeping with the times; the curriculum was poor; there was a lack of understanding and integration between the school and the church; there was an increasing rate of loss amongst older students as 'consciousness of maturity comes earlier to the new generation; they had done with school and there was a new sense of seeking the love of pleasure'.

It would appear that the Sunday school today has yet to resolve many of these same issues. Certainly some schools do attempt to provide attractive surrounds, and a lively and enjoyable Sunday session. Also attempts have been made to improve curriculum materials and to bring them into line with modern teaching methodologies. Teacher training is a matter of considerable concern and courses have been set up to assist in this, although the degree of response to these from within inner city schools would appear to be very low, according to the observations of the Sunday school superintendents. However, many fundamental issues remain unresolved, in particular those relating to the inability to hold older children, and to the institutionalised separation of the adult worshipping community and the Sunday school. It may well be asked what the church and the school have learned from the experiences of the Sunday school over the past one hundred years, and whether or not such experiences have been examined in sufficient depth to enable them usefully to inform the present
situation. The fact that the Sunday school is a voluntary institution, that the church can function quite effectively without a Sunday school, that the school does not often rank very highly among church priorities - these factors may perhaps give some indication as to why little fundamental progress has been made over the last century in solving the Sunday school's continuous decline. Essentially, the school has not been seen as an important enough institution to warrant such in-depth analysis of its role and function. The general lack of any detailed empirical studies of the Sunday school goes some way to support this assertion. Traditionally, there seems to have been a tendency to try to 'make old patterns of operation work by trying harder. To do this is only to increase feelings of guilt and inadequacy and to lead the whole institution into the kind of situation which is the real source of depression.' This was an observation about the church made by the authors of a study of adolescent young people's beliefs in the mid-1970s. The same is true of the Sunday school.

Secondly, since the removal of secular education from the curriculum of the Sunday school in 1870, it would seem that the school has operated in a series of thirty year cycles of growth and routinisation. In 1870, the Sunday school experienced a new vitality with the opportunity to concentrate on what many saw to be its primary function, that of religious education. By 1900, problems were arising, as already noted, and at this stage George Archibald provided the second injection of new life into
the Sunday school scene with his emphasis on understanding the child and improving teacher training. A.E. Hamilton brought new insights to the school in the 1930s just as Archibald's contributions were becoming institutionalised. He encouraged the Sunday school staff to seek to understand how children learn, and to reassess the purpose of the Sunday school in the light of this, introducing the concept of the "family church". By 1960, the impetus generated by Hamilton had also waned and it would appear that the Sunday school was being challenged yet again to reassess its underlying assumptions. At this time, Ronald Goldman brought the issue of child-centred education into focus again, with his studies regarding the process of learning within a child, with particular reference to religious learning. Today, his approaches, which may be encapsulated in the "experiential" approach to learning wherein affective learning through the use of feeling and of the senses is encouraged, are also becoming routinised. The old criticisms have arisen again. In 1976, the British Council of Churches Consultative Group on Ministry among Children set up a working party to investigate the position of The Child in the Church. In their report, they summarised the present situation as they saw it.

There is a general feeling that the Churches have failed to adapt to the rapid social changes of the past few years...While there is some evidence of new thinking taking place, we have not been able to discover anything sufficiently coherent and distinctive of Church thinking as a whole or by denominations, to make it possible for us to report on this. We could offer a series of reviews of a few booklets and papers, but we have not found evidence of much original thinking about this problem in Britain such as could be
summarised and attributed to 'the Churches'. We would be failing in our duty if we did not reiterate the concern of the body which appointed us, that we do face a crisis of Christian nurture in Britain today...The situation of the Christian faith in modern Britain is so precarious, the pace of change is so much greater than before, and the resources of the Churches are so depleted, that our conviction is that without more radical thinking and action in the field of nurture the future of Christian life and faith in Britain is seriously at risk.7

The current thirty year cycle is nearing its close and as the above report indicates, it is essential that new insights are brought to bear on what appear to be the perennial problems of the church's work with children if the Sunday school, as one aspect of this work, is not to decline still further.

Thirdly, it would appear that for the greater part of this century and particularly at present, the Sunday school has not kept pace with the social changes within the wider society. Consequently, it often fails to attract the children for whom it is designed. Post-war affluence means that most children grow up accustomed to a wide range of modern conveniences, from central heating to the deep freeze. Car ownership has increased, resulting in greater mobility for the family. Coupled with this, changing patterns of leisure pursuits mean that families travel more frequently and often cover greater distances. The mass media make information more widely available, and new trends in music, fashion, sport, and the home bring a variety of different life styles and personalities to the forefront of the popular mind for brief periods. By contrast, many Sunday schools have to make do with
a paucity of resources, a lack of trained teaching staff, and often a somewhat unimaginative teaching programme. Such factors also stand in marked contrast to the resources available to the day schools and to the teaching styles they employ even in the deprived areas of our inner cities. The contrasts between the patterns within the wider society and those within the church are further highlighted by the observation made in the report *The Child and the Church*.

The provisions of the Church, particularly in study and worship, tend to remain rather passive...The techniques of communication generally employed by the Church compare rather unfavourably with the variety, the humour, the subtlety and the professionalism which people have learned to expect from politicians, the advertisers and the entertainers, who compete for their attention in the world outside the Church. Communication in the Church remains largely verbal, and church music, too, often fails to rival the colour and the vigour of contemporary pop, folk, film and television music...The life and rituals of the Church often seem to speak of a vanished age. Too often, the architecture, the moral codes and the language of the Churches strike the young as being quaint and remote...8

This report is referring to the experience of the child within the Church rather than the Sunday school, which does attempt to be more child-oriented. However, insofar as most of the children in the present research spent at least some time within the "adult" church, and, as already noted, indicated that they found it singularly boring, these observations are useful in illustrating the failure of the church as well as the Sunday school to move with the times. More importantly, there exists for those young people outside the church 'an image of the typical "religious person" or "churchgoer" as clinging to the externals of religious conformity, middle class, boring, often hypocritical and nearly always neo-Puritan'.9
It must be recognised, therefore, that the Sunday school, and also the church, is now simply one of many alternatives. 'It is seen as one among many institutions competing for attention ...', is the comment regarding the church.¹⁰ There is no coercion to attend Sunday school and therefore the element of competition comes into play for which most Sunday schools are not geared. They have not been accustomed to thinking of themselves as operating in a market situation with a product which is no longer popular with the public to the extent it once was.

Fourthly, any study of the role and function of the inner city Sunday school today, must address itself to the question, for whom was the Sunday school designed? Historically, as already noted in Chapter 3, the Sunday school was not seen as the nursery of the church. Very few children joined the church as a result of attending Sunday school. Indeed, in the early years of the Sunday school movement, many schools arose independently of either Church or chapel. They were principally vehicles for secular and moral education within a Christian context. Thus, 'in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries Evangelical Non-conformist communities did not have to rely for their growth on the religious socialisation of juveniles, as most modern English denominations do'.¹¹ However, during the nineteenth century, the responsibility for running Sunday schools was gradually taken over by various denominations. This was particularly so after 1870 when the Sunday school became seen as the vehicle for the religious socialisation of the church's juveniles. It is important to note that the constituency of the Sunday school also changed
particular denominations, so increasingly the clientele of
the Sunday schools came to be the children of church members.
The Sunday school was, in fact, becoming seen as the nursery
of the church, insofar as it was expected that these children
would themselves become church members, and in turn their
children would enter the school, and so on. Thus, in theory,
the church had its own "internal constituency" upon whom it
could depend for its ongoing existence. However, as
A.H. Gilbert points out in his assessment of the Victorian
Sunday school, in a sense this was fatal for the flourishing
Victorian school. In the first place, socialisation rather than
adult conversion became the basis for affiliation to the church,
and as a result, 'the preservation of association and the
consolidation of organisational structures became an end in
itself'.¹² In other words, maintenance of the status quo
became important. Secondly, the flow of children from the
school into the adult worshipping community gradually decreased.
Thus the church and the Sunday school found their "internal
constituency" decreasing, only to look outside the church and
discover that their "external constituency" for so long ignored,
was now largely disinterested in the church.

This historical perspective has an important bearing on the
Sunday school today. With the removal of secular education
from the Sunday school to the state school, the Sunday school
was reorganised such that it principally functioned as a vehicle
of religious socialisation for the children of church members or children associated with the church in some way, with the intention of providing a "gateway" into the church for both the child and also for non-church-going parents. It is widely held today that in fact the Sunday school does not function effectively as a "gateway", that it is not the nursery of the church, and that non-church-going parents are not reached by their children attending Sunday school. Yet the structure in many schools remains largely unchanged from the time when these points were seen to be valid. Several schools still meet in the afternoon, a carry-over from the time when it was thought that non-church-going parents particularly among the working classes, would appreciate an opportunity for privacy. Many schools are conducted on a "classroom" basis, with the teacher giving instruction to the pupils in the elements of the Christian faith. A few schools and teachers, notably SSCORgh, still use teaching material dating back to the early decades of the present century. Finally, the Sunday school is still widely regarded as the church's vehicle for religious education. The responses of the children regarding their perceptions of the official goals of the Sunday school (see Section 6.3.3 above) support this. However, it has already been noted that attendance at Sunday school in the past few decades is numerically lower than at any time in its history. It would appear that in part this may relate to the fact that it is operating with an outmoded structure which still maintains an educational ethos, whereas in fact its effectiveness as the church's vehicle for religious education and socialisation is
coming under serious question. Instead, the Sunday school is increasingly being viewed by the children primarily as a recreational activity.

Fifthly, bearing in mind that the goal of the Sunday school is seen by many of the children to relate to 'teach[ing] the kids about God and Jesus' (SSLRgh, W.I., 18), it is interesting to review briefly the current patterns of religious practice among children of Sunday school age. The responses in the in-depth interviews generally indicated that attendance at Sunday school was of greater salience for junior-age children than for those at secondary school. Unless the child's primary reference group also attended Sunday school, the tendency was for children gradually to stop attending upon reaching their teens. This observation was supported by a study on "Young People's Beliefs" commissioned by the Church of England's General Synod Board of Education (1977).

1. They do not go to church as small children unless taken or sent by parents or unless they link up with a group of friends in the immediate locality who have been sent to church regularly.

2. Virtually all who attended at all found Sunday school a pleasant experience as a small child. From about the age of 8, however, they begin to get bored. They complain of being talked at, told the same things over and over again, having a sense of going forever over the same ground. Unless the parents themselves are regular church-goers there is little resistance to peer group pressures after the age of 10...

3. In most cases church-going ceases around the age of 12 to 14, as it had become 'boring' and was making irritatingly regular claims on the young person's time just at the point where the peer group is beginning to have a major pull.
4. There is a very strong feeling that going to church simply isn't a normal, expected part of being a healthy, ordinary adolescent. Church-going is always seen as somebody else's habit even by those who have sometimes gone to church themselves.  

The trend for children to leave Sunday school during adolescence because it is 'boring', is not 'normal', or because it has been outgrown, again raises questions as to the validity of seeing the school as an effective vehicle for either religious education or religious socialisation. Its effectiveness in fulfilling this role may also be questioned when one considers again the responses of the children as to what it means to be a Christian. These responses, reviewed in Section 6.3.3.3, covered a wide variety of ideas, some of which indicated that the child had given thought to the issues involved, whereas other responses were vague, confused or doubtful. The in-depth studies further revealed that even where the child appeared to have a clear grasp of the issues involved, this did not necessarily lead to an anticipation of future involvement on the part of the child with the adult church community.

Finally, the present research concentrates in particular on the Sunday school in the inner city, and in this connection the differentiation between the "rough" and the "respectable" areas of the Borough has been stressed. Whilst being aware of the dangers of generalisation, the following points have been observed, arising from the in-depth interviews. The tradition of church-going is more common in the "respectable" areas of the Borough than in the
"rough" areas, and adult congregation and Sunday school membership generally tends to be higher in the East Ham area, traditionally the "respectable" working class area of the Borough. Within the "respectable" working class areas, there appears to be a greater parental involvement in the activities of the Sunday school and of the church. Also in these areas the emphasis within the school of a conservative theological orientation tends to be on religious education; within the school of a liberal theological orientation it tends to be on acquaintance with the church rituals and related teachings.

Within the "rough" working class areas, there is correspondingly less parental involvement. The teaching staff in the schools in the "rough" areas generally appear to have a greater awareness of the child's social and personal needs, than do those in the "respectable" areas, and there appears to be a greater emphasis on the building up of a family atmosphere. Religious education continues to have an important place within the theologically conservative schools; however, there is still an expressed concern for and knowledge of the child's background and his individual needs. Teaching staff of schools in "rough" areas spoke far more frequently about the children and their levels of response than did the staff of schools in the "respectable" areas, where conversation in the interviews tended to revolve more around the nature and effectiveness of the teaching material and the need to achieve, or the frustration in failing to achieve, certain personal goals, such as covering the entire lesson in the time allocated,
In general, there appeared to be a greater sensitivity towards the experience and the needs of the children by those involved in Sunday schools in "rough" working class areas, than there did in "respectable" areas. This may have been due to the greater social needs amongst the children from "rough" areas, which necessitated the teaching staff becoming aware of such issues. It may also have been due to different backgrounds or personality characteristics between the various teaching staff, with some more sensitive to children and some less so, although it seems unlikely that there would be a clear-cut differentiation of this nature between the staff in the "rough" areas and those in the "respectable" areas.

The foregoing summary has highlighted six issues, which are designed to place the contemporary inner city Sunday school in what might be termed both an historical and a social perspective. Thus we note that the contemporary Sunday school faces similar problems to that which it faced at the beginning of this century, and in respect of this, it seems to have operated in a series of thirty year cycles of growth and decline. We also note that the contemporary Sunday school is now one of many alternative leisure activities for the modern child, and that often it fails to attract the children who are seeking more attractive forms of recreation. We questioned for whom the Sunday school was designed and ask whether there is still validity in seeing its role to be
that of the church's vehicle for religious education and socialisation today in view of the fact that most children look on it as a recreational activity. In relation to this, we note that the patterns of religious practice among children today mean that most will leave Sunday school upon reaching adolescence as it has outworn its interest. Finally, we note that the "rough"/"respectable" dichotomy relating to inner city working class areas appears to have a very considerable effect on the inner city Sunday school in terms of teaching staff sensitivity towards the children attending the school.

With these issues in mind, let us now examine the way in which the Sunday school has, in the minds of the children, taken on the role of a recreational activity. In respect of this we will consider whether or not the official goals of the Sunday school are being fulfilled and whether the personal goals of the children are being fulfilled, and examine the implications of this for the future of the inner city Sunday school.

7.3 The Sunday School as a Recreational Activity

A major finding of this research related to the fact that children attending Sunday school today view it primarily as a recreational activity. Its official role as the church's agent in religious education and socialisation is incidental as far as the majority of children are concerned. Rather, the measure of popularity which a particular Sunday school engenders is based on its effectiveness in fulfilling the child's desire for an enjoyable leisure-
time activity. Thus in Section 6.3.3.2 it was noted that the personal goals or expectations of the child in attending Sunday school centre principally around the recreational factor. The element of attending Sunday school in order to meet friends, to chat together, to pursue a variety of activities together was of major importance. It was maintained by one teacher that the children regarded his class as their primary social group. Opportunities for further social interaction outside the actual classroom situation were provided through outings and camping holidays for the children. Such events also provided the opportunity for a building up of relationships not only between the children and members of the teaching staff, but also with the parents in some instances. The actual content of the Sunday school session was also an important factor in giving rise to a sense of enjoyment amongst the children. It did not appear that the actual subjects themselves were as important to the children as the manner in which they were presented and the way in which they were made relevant to the children's actual experiences. For example, amongst teenagers the discussion approach was generally appreciated since, according to one of the older teenagers, it made the group feel they were being treated as equals. Negative reactions to Sunday school content virtually always centred around two words "boring" and "childish". Whilst it varied from school to school, "boring" was generally used with reference to the time spent in the adult church service. (SSCRes which operated the "family church" structure was generally the exception here.) "Childish" generally referred to the content of the actual Sunday school class.
Overall, the in-depth studies indicated that the nature of the social interaction taking place among the children, and the strength of the relationships established between the children and their parents and the teaching staff, were of fundamental importance in maintaining a child's attendance at Sunday school, particularly upon reaching adolescence. Thus, as has already been noted, a number of children in SSLRgh indicated that they attended the Sunday school because they enjoyed their class, they had a good relationship with their teacher, both inside and outside the classroom situation, they enjoyed his methods of conducting the Sunday session, and the class provided good opportunities for interaction with their friends. They also indicated that they would probably leave Sunday school if and when their teacher left. This highlights two important factors: the good relationship established between the teacher and the children; and the fact that the children's allegiance lay with the teacher and the relationship which had been established with him rather than with the Sunday school as such. That such children do not appear to have responded to the official goals of the Sunday school as these related to religious education and socialisation, is indicated by the fact that very few of them anticipated maintaining any regular future involvement with the church upon reaching adulthood. Thus, unless the positive relationships established with the teaching staff and within the Sunday school class can in some way be transferred to the Sunday school as a whole, such that the child sees some value for himself in the principles which both the Sunday school and the church teach and advocate, there will probably
be no future involvement of the child within that Christian institution. It has already been noted (Section 6.4) that the personal goals of the child in seeing Sunday school primarily as a recreational activity are related to the element of relationships, and we looked at the way in which this was worked out in some of the schools. It would appear that in order for the child to see the entire Sunday school as a source of enjoyment and as a fulfilling recreational activity, a principal focus of each aspect of the Sunday school - from relationships with the adult worshipping community to the actual classroom situation - needs to be on the establishment of positive relationships amongst the children themselves, between the children and the teaching staff and also the clergy and the parents. Thus the child should be able to see that the recreational factor is integral to the Sunday school and church as a whole, even, it could be argued, to the extent of becoming a fundamental aspect of the Sunday school's process of religious education and socialisation. This, in practical terms, would be a major result of the Sunday school adjusting its own official goals to take account of the child's personal goals, in an effort to work towards some degree of co-terminality of goals, as noted in the next section.

Taking again the example of SSLRgh, whilst the relationships established within the one class referred to were very positive, most of the other experiences which these same children had of the Sunday school and the church as a whole, were generally very negative. Those who had had experience of other classes in the
school found them uninteresting, and one teacher seemed to engender a universal dislike. With virtually no exception, all the children viewed the time spent in church as boring and indicated in particular that they never knew the hymns. Even family services were not much more popular. Few knew any members of the adult worshipping community except those involved with the Sunday school. Clearly, the elements of enjoyment, fun, and of a pleasurable recreational pursuit provided by the actual Sunday school class did not carry over into other aspects of the Sunday school and church life. Thus, it would appear that the child's personal goals were not being fulfilled at a sufficient number of points to ensure, or to even offer the potential for an on-going involvement with either the school or the church. This was indicated by the children's own responses.

7.4 Goal Fulfilment

The case studies in the four Sunday schools indicated that generally the clergy and the teaching staff goals relate to some aspect of Christian teaching, although the emphasis varies according to the individual and also according to the socio-economic area in which the school is located. There is no conclusive way of ascertaining how effectively the official goals of the Sunday school were being communicated to the children. In the first place, it is difficult to define what is meant by "effective". Does it refer to the amount of factual knowledge which a child acquires, or to seeing a child undergo a "conversion" experience, or to laying a foundation whereby adult involvement with the church is
made more probable? Secondly, it is difficult to establish a scale whereby "effectiveness" can be measured. Is it to be measured by an examination? It would appear that the Scripture Exam is designed with this in mind. More importantly, does it refer to short-term or long-term results? In other words, is the school effective if it manages to encourage the child to remain at the school throughout adolescence? Or is it effective only if the child maintains involvement with the church upon becoming an adult? Thirdly, a number of variables such as the training a teacher has had, his/her leadership potential, his/her ability to establish a rapport with the child and to communicate with him, the lesson material available, the environment within which the Sunday session takes place, the response of the adult worshipping community and of the minister—all of these variables have a bearing on the effectiveness with which the official goals of the school are communicated to the children.

We have already reviewed in Chapter 6 the responses of the children to the question of what it means or what is involved in being a Christian. Following on from this, we have also noted their projected future involvement with the church. In the light of these responses, it would appear that the school may be said to be largely ineffective in achieving its official goals of religious education and socialisation in both the short and the long term. Why is this? The present research suggests that this is because the official goals of the Sunday school are not co-terminal with the goals or expectations of the child at a sufficient number of impor-
tant points. It has already been observed that the personal
goals of the child in attending Sunday school relate to meeting
friends and enjoying a recreational activity (see Section 6.3.3.2).
The element of attending in order to learn about Christianity
featured very low in his priorities. It has also been stressed
that the contemporary Sunday school is a voluntary institution in
a consumer-oriented society. It is today operating in a market
situation, as one of a number of alternatives. Therefore, if
the child attends the school and finds that his expectations of
meeting friends and having an enjoyable time are not fulfilled to
his satisfaction, he may simply stop attending. Certainly,
learning can still take place in a situation in which the goals
of the institution are substantially divergent from those of the
client. But insofar as the Sunday school is a voluntary insti­
tution, its maximum potential as the church's vehicle for religious
education and socialisation can only be realised if the child's
personal goals are being fulfilled to a considerable degree.
Therefore, it is perhaps necessary for the Sunday school to adjust
its goals to the extent that it takes into account the child's
personal goals as its own, as it is unlikely that the child as
the consumer would adjust his own goals to take account of the
official goals of the school. In other words, it is necessary for
the school to recognise that the child's principal reason for atten­
ding is because he sees it as a recreational activity. There­
fore, the school must seek to ensure that the child's need to
experience the school as a leisure time pursuit is being met.
What precisely is involved in meeting this need? To begin with, there remains the ideal, particularly within the theologically conservative schools, and also to a certain degree within the liberal school in the "respectable" working class area, that the inculcation of what is called the "body of knowledge" is of primary importance: 'the argument that the intrinsic essence of a subject will be compromised if it is not presented "pure and undefiled" as it were'. The children, however, are basically not interested in acquiring this "body of knowledge". Related to this, there is also a sense in which the following statement made in 1900 still reflects the official goals in some Sunday schools today, especially in those with a conservative theological tradition.

The Sunday school of the future must be more and more the Bible Teaching Institute of the church. It must fasten upon Holy Scripture with all its strength and teach the Gospel powerfully and clearly to every scholar. This is its real function. The educational and recreational elements are incidental to its greatest work and are to be prized only as far as they advance it.

The key words here are that 'the recreational element' is seen as 'incidental'. On the contrary, in order for the child to continue to find personal fulfilment in the Sunday school today, the recreational element must be seen to be of fundamental importance in the school. The term "recreational" must be taken not simply to imply participation in enjoyable activities, although this is part of the whole, but must encompass a range of elements from the experience of a warm and friendly atmosphere, to sharing in new
friendships, to participation in a common "way of doing things". Above all, it must stress the establishment of strong positive relationships within both the school and the church. The report, The Child in the Church, highlighted some of these aspects.

If we ask what makes anyone feel that he "belongs" to any community we should probably say: a sense of fellowship; a sense of enjoyment, which includes happiness and laughter; a sense of significance, the recognition that one belongs and that one matters; a sense of responsibility, of being given tasks to do, tasks where it really matters if one does not do them properly; and a request for service, being asked to give time and energy in the service of others. Those who are teaching children in the Church should be trying to help children associate with the Church fellowship, enjoyment, significance, responsibility, and service, and not simply as giving "instruction" in the Christian faith.16

Another important element here which was noticeably lacking in the majority of Sunday schools, was the importance of meaningful integration with the adult Christian community, building up a sense of acceptance and belonging.

The quality of human relationships experienced by the child within the Christian community will... have a crucial influence on his religious development, and the sad truth is that many Christian communities are not concerned for the quality of their life as a context for nurture.17

The aspect of integration is perhaps best demonstrated in the concept of the "family church" wherein each individual member, child or adult, should, in theory, have the sense of being accepted and valued for his/her own intrinsic worth.
However, even within the two larger schools (SSCRes and SSLRgh) which appear, in fact, to have catered for some of the personal goals of the children, there have been declining numbers and a loss of older children. As the child reaches adolescence, the Sunday school is increasingly seen as boring and childish. Outside interests predominate and peer group pressure may deter him from attending. Furthermore, he is likely to adopt parental patterns of non-attendance. Even in situations wherein loyalty to an individual leader within the school maintains his level of attendance for a period, the indication is, that when that charismatic person or teacher leaves, the attendance level of the child will also decline. A major finding of this present research is that basically children do not attend Sunday school because it is about God or because it teaches a Christian set of values. There is therefore no commitment to such values amongst the older children, except possibly for those within church-going families. Thus, when these other influences intervene, although the official goals of the school may dictate that a commitment to something Christian should hold the child, in fact this does not happen. The school is no longer significant for him as a recreational activity so he leaves.

It would appear, therefore, that in order to hold the older child in particular the Sunday school needs to be far more radical than simply to incorporate some of the children's personal goals into the school's official goals, although it would appear that generally this suffices for the younger age group, the under-tens.
The existing structure of the Sunday school and its role as the church's vehicle for religious education and socialisation is no longer relevant to the adolescent inner city child of today. The study, "Young People's Beliefs", observed that 'young people are wide open to belief but not in a way which the church has traditionally recognised'. The reflections on this study observed that it is necessary, to identify the areas of belief already existing in the youth culture and address itself to those, not immediately to demand a subscription to ways of worship and belief which do not seem to connect up with their present experience.

In other words, to broaden this analogy, the school must identify the child's goals or expectations with regard to the school and seek to make these substantially co-terminal with the school's own goals, even if this necessitates readjusting the school's own goals to take account of the needs and desires of the child. Returning to the market analogy, the school needs to adjust its product to meet the changing requirements of the consumer. The children's responses to the in-depth interviews and their patterns of attendance would seem to indicate that SSLRgh was closest to identifying with the needs of the children, particularly of the adolescent, in providing a recreational activity for the child. Thus, according to one of the teachers, his class was THE social group to which its members belonged, and this relationship was maintained outside the Sunday school situation. The group was seen as a club, a forum for discussion on a wide variety of topics, a focus for engaging in a variety of different activities. It formed the associational basis for the teenagers who belonged to it. They were aware that it operated within a Christian context,
and this was seen generally as a positive factor. Yet the class was not seen as a forum for religious education.

I. Is Sunday school just another club, or is it important as a Christian thing?
R2 & R3. Just a club.
R1. I don't think so. You'd have a joke about it but I reckon there's more to it than that.
R2. No, it's just a club. Our group is - you go away together, you go to youth rallies together. I use it as a club...
I. Does the fact that it's a church club and Christian make any difference?
R1. In a way, yeah...
R2. When it's a Christian club you know you're there and God's with you and that, but when it's a real club, you just do what you want - anything - you don't...
R1. But God's with you everywhere.
R2. Yeah, but in a Christian club, it's got a different atmosphere...but in an ordinary club you got all kids there, kids that don't go to Sunday school, they just go there and muck about. In a Christian club you don't see them doing that. You have a laugh and everything but don't go mad.

However, as already observed, this was just one class within the school and was not representative of the school as a whole. Until the school in its entirety is able to adjust its official goals such that it can substantially adopt the elements of enjoyment, of friendship, of belonging, of recreation - in other words, the child's personal goals, it will not even be able to begin to stem the tide of decline within the school.

7.5 Conclusion
Taking into account the divergence which exists between the official goals of the Sunday school and the personal goals of the child, the implications for the future of the Sunday school within
inner city working class areas are considerable. The child who does not find that the Sunday school meets his need for a recreational activity will simply stop attending, particularly as the number of more attractive alternatives increase. Parental involvement is particularly low in "rough" working class areas, so there is generally little home encouragement for the child to continue attending Sunday school. If Sunday schools are to continue to have any impact within contemporary inner city society, it would appear that in the short-term, they need to adjust their official goals such that they formally take account of some of the child's personal goals. In the long-term, particularly in order to maintain links with the older children, it will be necessary to reevaluate the entire structure of the Sunday school, aware of the fact that it may no longer be relevant to maintain the Sunday school in its traditional form. It may be that a series of social groupings are necessary, meeting at various times during the week, operating within a Christian context, and providing the basis from which a number of other social activities can take place. Above all, it is necessary for such groups to be fully integrated in some form into the adult worshipping community. The concept of "nurture" as stressed in *The Child and the Church* seems particularly applicable here. Nurture relates to the 'process of growth' as Christians, to 'communicating a way of doing things', to 'communicating a way of looking at things', to communicating 'a working knowledge of the way in which faith is conventionally expressed'. The aim of Christian nurture, however, is to enable the child in the end
to face a radical challenge. The nurturer must have a real choice in mind: belief or disbelief." It is related to becoming part of a family. In the inner city, where many children experience a wide range of personal, social and educational deprivation, belonging to a family in this sense can be of major importance in giving the child an identity and a sense of security.

The present research has underlined yet again the great division which still exists between the "rough" working classes and institutionalised Christianity. This is no less so among children than it is among adults. The "rough" working class child may attend Sunday school for a period, is quite likely to enjoy it as a recreational activity, but once it no longer fulfills his needs in this area, he will leave Sunday school and it is probable that, except for the rites of passage which are an essential part of working class folk religion and generally linked with the Church of England, so also will cease any regular connection with the church. It must be recognised that the official goals of the Sunday school as they relate to religious education and socialisation, appear to have little relevance for the child and appear to be largely unfulfilled. Therefore, it is perhaps time for the church as a whole to reassess both the role and the function of the contemporary inner city Sunday school, with a view to restructuring it or replacing it with an activity which has the flexibility to be more in keeping with the needs and aspirations of the working class child of today.
APPENDICES

I. Survey of Superintendents - Interview Schedule

II. Significant Characteristics of Sunday Schools in the London Borough of Newham in Terms of Theological Orientation and Socio-Economic Status

III. Socio-Economic Groups in the London Borough of Newham by Area

IV. Tenure in the London Borough of Newham by Area

V. Ethnic Origins in the London Borough of Newham by Area

VI. Map of Newham - showing six main areas based on ward boundaries

VII. Characteristics of the Four Sunday Schools Selected for In-Depth Study

VIII. Topic Areas for In-Depth Interviews - children, parents, clergy and teaching staff

IX. Map of Newham - showing principal geographic, road and rail features of the Borough
APPENDIX I

SURVEY OF SUPERINTENDENTS

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE REGARDING SUNDAY SCHOOLS - LONDON BOROUGH OF NEWHAM

1. **GENERAL INFORMATION**

   A. Name of Church
   
   B. How large is your average adult congregation at a Sunday Service?
   
   1. under 25
   2. 26-50
   3. 51-75
   4. 76-100
   5. over 100

   C. Total number of children on the roll of the Sunday School/Junior school.

   D. Breakdown of numbers on roll in Sunday school according to age groups.

   1. under 5's
   2. 5-7
   3. 8-10
   4. 11 and over
   5. 1 & 2
   6. 3 & 4

   E. Approximate average Sunday attendance of children at Sunday school (total)

   F. Basis for class division.

   1. age
   2. sex
   3. both

   G. Departmental structure of Sunday school (e.g. primary, junior, senior, beginners)

   1. fully graded
   2. partially graded
   3. no grading

   H. Total number of Sunday school classes.

   I. Regular format at Sunday school.

   1. group - classes
   2. classes - group
   3. group - classes - group
   4. classes only

   J. 1. Is this structure varied at all? (i) yes (ii) no

   (if yes, ask questions 2 and 3)
2. If so, how often?  
   (i) once a month (e.g. family service)  
   (ii) more than once a month  
   (iii) less than once a month  

3. In what way is it varied?  
   (i) group - classes  
   (ii) classes - group  
   (iii) group - classes - group  
   (iv) classes only  
   (v) group only  

K. Nature of the relationship between adult church service and Sunday school.  
   1. fully integrated  
   2. partially integrated  
   3. no integration  

L. What time is the Sunday school held?  

M. 1. Have you ever held it at a different time?  
   (i) yes  
   (ii) no  

2. If so what time?  

3. Reasons for change.  

N. 1. Do you have any children's clubs at your church during the week?  
   (exclude uniformed organisations)  
   (i) yes  
   (ii) no  

2. If so, when?  
   (i) day  
   (ii) time  

3. Age range  
   (i) under 5's  
   (ii) 5-7  
   (iii) 8-10  
   (iv) 11 and over  

4. Type of club?  
   (i) Bible teaching only?  
   (ii) recreational/social with epilogue?  
   (iii) recreational/social only  
   (iv) other (specify)  

II. FAMILY BACKGROUND OF CHILDREN  

A. 1. How many of the Sunday school children on the roll are of indigenous origin?  

   2. West Indian  
   3. African  
   4. Asian  
   5. Other  

B. 1. How many of the parents attend church weekly?  
   (i) none  
   (ii) very few  
   (iii) about half  
   (iv) more than half
2. Special occasions only?

    (i) none  
    (ii) very few  
    (iii) about half  
    (iv) more than half

C. 1. Does any particular ethnic group of parents seem more involved and co-operative than others?

    (i) yes  (ii) no
    (if yes, ask 2)

2. If yes, which group?

    (i) indigenous  (iv) Asian  
    (ii) West Indian  (v) Other  
    (iii) African

D. What contacts are there with parents other than regular church services?

    1. coffee mornings  
    2. family services  
    3. parents day for Sunday school parents  
    4. other (specify)

E. On average how frequently do teachers visit families?

    1. monthly  
    2. quarterly  
    3. annually  
    4. never (if 4, move to question G)

F. What are the reasons for visiting the families?

    1. absentees  
    2. special events at church  
    3. general contact  
    4. other (specify)

G. What are the main reasons for the children attending Sunday school?

    1. to learn about God, Jesus, the Bible  
    2. children enjoy it  
    3. parents working  
    4. sent by parents  
    5. something to do  
    6. other (specify)

H. Do the children tend to be regular or occasional in attendance?

    1. regular  
    2. occasional
I. How would you rate the different ethnic groups for regularity of attendance? (lowest score = highest attendance)

1. indigenous
2. West Indian
3. African
4. Asian
5. other
6. no difference

J. With regard to family background, how many of the children come from:

1. stable home
2. home with family problems
3. single parent family
4. broken home
5. other (specify)
6. don't know

K. 1. Are there any difficult children? (i) yes (ii) no
   (if yes, ask 2, 3 and 4)

2. disruptive and noisy?
3. withdrawn and silent?
4. other behavioural problems (e.g.)

L. 1. Are there any children with particular learning difficulties?

(i) yes. (ii) no
(if yes, ask 2, 3 and 4)

2. non-readers?
3. slow readers?
4. difficulties with writing?

M. What is your general impression of the socio-economic status of the parents with reference to the type of jobs held?

1. work locally (i) blue collar
   (ii) white collar
2. work outside area (i) blue collar
   (ii) white collar
3. don't know

N. Are any of the parents unemployed?

1. yes
2. no
3. don't know

O. Are any of the parents on social security?

1. yes
2. no
3. don't know

P. Do most of the children attending Sunday school come from the immediate locality of the church? (i) yes (ii) no
Q. What sort of housing do most of your children live in?

1. council
2. private landlord
3. owner occupier

R. (if answers to P is no ask R)
1. Does the children's housing differ from that around the church?
   (i) yes (ii) no (if yes ask 2)

2. If yes, what is the type of housing around the church?
   (i) council
   (ii) private landlord
   (iii) owner occupier

S. Which schools do most of the Sunday school children attend?

III. THEOLOGICAL ORIENTATION OF THE SUNDAY SCHOOL

A. How important is the Bible in the teaching given in the Sunday school?

1. very important
2. fairly important
3. not very important
4. not used (if answer is 4, move to question C)

B. Which version is used?

C. Are the children encouraged to bring their own Bible to Sunday school?

   (i) yes (ii) no

D. What do you as the Sunday school superintendent see as the aim of the Sunday school? (rate in order of importance - lowest score = highest rating)

1. religious education (knowledge of the Bible)
2. moral education (growing into useful citizens)
3. bringing children into relationship with God
4. making converts (church membership)
5. keeping children off the streets
6. promoting fellowship (interpersonal relationships)

E. Other aims? (specify)

F. Would your view represent the general policy of your church?

   (i) yes (ii) no (if no, move to question G)

G. If no, rerate according to perceived policy.
IV. TEACHING MATERIALS

A. 1. What teaching material is currently used in your Sunday school?
   2. Publishers?

B. 1. Have you had any experience of using other materials (i)
    yes (ii) no (if yes, ask 2)
   2. If yes, what material?

C. For what reasons did you stop using your previous material?

D. Overall impressions of material currently used?
   (The following are guidelines only)
   1. is the material meaningful to the life experience of the children in your Sunday school?
      - if so, how?
      - if not, why not?
   2. does it meet the needs of the children adequately or with difficulty?
      - if adequately, what are its strong points?
      - if with difficulty, what sorts of difficulty?
   3. what is your impression of the activities recommended for the children?
      - too demanding
      - not meaningful
   4. is the material too Bible orientated?
      - not enough Bible orientation?
   5. does the material enable the teachers to meet the aims of the Sunday school adequately or with difficulty - elaborate.
   6. how do the teachers find the material?
      - too structured
      - too flexible
   7. does the material require considerable adaptation?
   8. other comments.

V. TEACHING STAFF

A. Numbers of teachers (including superintendent)

B. Age range of teachers (numbers)
   1. under 20
   2. 20 - 29
   3. 30 - 49
   4. 50 - 59
   5. 60 and over
C. Male and female teachers (total numbers)  1. Male  2. Female

D. Ethnic background of teachers (total numbers)
   1. indigenous
   2. West Indian
   3. other

E. How much experience have the teachers had in teaching Sunday school here or elsewhere? (numbers)
   1. under 1 year
   2. 1 - 10 years
   3. 11 - 20
   4. 21 and over.

F. How many if any qualified teachers?

G. What is the socio-economic status of the teachers (numbers)
   1. blue collar
   2. white collar
   3. professional
   4. housewife (with no other job)

H. Is there a training class for new teachers?  1. yes  2. no

I. Is there a regular preparation class for teachers?  1. yes  2. no
## APPENDIX II

**SIGNIFICANT CHARACTERISTICS OF SUNDAY SCHOOLS IN THE LONDON BOROUGH OF NEWHAM IN TERMS OF THEOLOGICAL ORIENTATION AND SOCIO- ECONOMIC STATUS**

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<td>6</td>
<td>11</td>
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<td>7</td>
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<td>11</td>
<td>16</td>
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(Two Sunday schools with insufficient data for calculating theological orientation. N = 56)
APPENDIX III

SOCIO-ECONOMIC GROUPS IN THE LONDON BOROUGH OF NEWHAM BY AREA

(Number per 1000 Economically Active Males)

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Socio-Economic Group</th>
<th>West Ham Area</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th>Total</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Canning Town</td>
<td>Stratford</td>
<td>Plaistow</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional workers, employers, managers</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>71</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other self-employed, skilled, other non-manual</td>
<td>496</td>
<td>565</td>
<td>556</td>
<td>530</td>
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<tr>
<td>Semi-skilled, unskilled</td>
<td>401</td>
<td>331</td>
<td>328</td>
<td>363</td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Socio-Economic Group</th>
<th>East Ham Area</th>
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<th></th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Forest Gate</td>
<td>Manor Park</td>
<td>East Ham</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional workers, employers, managers</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other self-employed, skilled, other non-manual</td>
<td>549</td>
<td>595</td>
<td>562</td>
<td>566</td>
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<tr>
<td>Semi-skilled, unskilled</td>
<td>330</td>
<td>287</td>
<td>343</td>
<td>327</td>
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## Appendix IV

### Tenure in the London Borough of Newham by Area

(Number per 1000 households)

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<th>Tenure</th>
<th>Canning Town</th>
<th>Stratford</th>
<th>Plaistow</th>
<th>Total</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Owner occupier</td>
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<td>320</td>
<td>205</td>
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<td>444</td>
<td>284</td>
<td>417</td>
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<td>Privately rented (furnished and unfurnished)</td>
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<td>390</td>
<td>389</td>
<td>372</td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tenure</th>
<th>Forest Gate</th>
<th>Manor Park</th>
<th>East Ham</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Owner occupier</td>
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<td>421</td>
<td>503</td>
<td>450</td>
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<tr>
<td>Council housing</td>
<td>109</td>
<td>227</td>
<td>286</td>
<td>217</td>
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<td>Privately rented (furnished and unfurnished)</td>
<td>489</td>
<td>347</td>
<td>292</td>
<td>366</td>
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</table>

APPENDIX V

ETHNIC ORIGINS IN THE LONDON BOROUGH OF NEWHAM BY AREA

(Number per 1000 residents born)

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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Canning Town</td>
<td>Stratford</td>
<td>Plaistow</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>37</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>African and East African Asian</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>15</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West Indians</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>32</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All New Commonwealth</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>88</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Birthplace</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Forest Gate</td>
<td>Manor Park</td>
<td>East Ham</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Asian</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>37</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>African and East African Asian</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>10</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
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<td>West Indians</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>17</td>
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<tr>
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<td>115</td>
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</table>

MAP OF THE LONDON BOROUGH OF NEWHAM

Showing the six main areas based on ward boundaries

Scale: 1 to 45,000 (approx.)

## CHARACTERISTICS OF THE FOUR SUNDAY SCHOOLS SELECTED FOR IN-DEPTH STUDY

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>West Ham Conservative</th>
<th>Liberal</th>
<th>East Ham Conservative</th>
<th>Liberal</th>
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<tr>
<td>Denomination</td>
<td>U.R.C.</td>
<td>Methodist</td>
<td>Baptist</td>
<td>C.of E.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theological Orientation Scale Score</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Size</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adult Cong. Size</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S.S. Time</td>
<td>afternoon</td>
<td>morning</td>
<td>morning</td>
<td>morning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teaching Material</td>
<td>Bible</td>
<td>Partners in Learning</td>
<td>Scripture</td>
<td>Own Press</td>
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<td>Position of Bible</td>
<td>v.important</td>
<td>v.important</td>
<td>v.important fairly imp.</td>
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<td>Version used</td>
<td>N/R</td>
<td>Good News</td>
<td>Living</td>
<td>N.E.B.</td>
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<td>Bring own Bibles</td>
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<td>Aim of S.S.</td>
<td>rel.w/ God</td>
<td>rel.w/ God</td>
<td>rel.w/ God</td>
<td>rel.w/ God</td>
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<td>Memory verses</td>
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<td>no</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>no</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scripture Exam</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>no</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Integ.w/Adult Cong.</td>
<td>none</td>
<td>family serv.</td>
<td>full</td>
<td>partial</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mid-week activities</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethnic origins of children</td>
<td>75% B/25% W</td>
<td>75% B/25% W</td>
<td>75% W/25% B</td>
<td>50% W/50% B</td>
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<td>Parents attend church weekly</td>
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<td>few</td>
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<td>Parents attend church on special occasions</td>
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<td>few</td>
<td>few</td>
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<td>regular</td>
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<tr>
<td>----------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------</td>
<td>---------</td>
<td>-----------------------</td>
<td>---------</td>
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<tr>
<td>Family background mostly stable</td>
<td>most stable</td>
<td>all stable</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td>Difficult children no</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>no</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>children with learning difficulties yes</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td>own/occ</td>
<td>own/occ</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td>Number of teachers</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>1</td>
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<td>2</td>
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<td>Age of teachers 60 and over</td>
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<td>1</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
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<td>N. of white teachers</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N. of black teachers</td>
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<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N. of qualified teachers</td>
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<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
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<td>Training class held no</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preparation class held yes</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Training class held no</td>
<td>no</td>
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</tr>
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<td>Preparation class held no</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>no</td>
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</table>
APPENDIX VIII

TOPIC AREAS FOR IN-DEPTH INTERVIEWS

The following questions served as general guidelines only, and were rephrased to suite the individual requirements of the various interviews.

CHILDREN

1. How long have you been coming to Sunday school?
2. How/why did you come in the first place?
3. Parents? friends? boys' or girls' brigades? own accord? other?
4. Do your parents come to church?
5. Do you talk about Sunday school and what you learned at home? Do you talk about anything religious? or pray? If so, what?
6. Do your friends know you go to Sunday school? If not, why not? If they do, do they tease you?
7. Do you have (close) friends who never go to Sunday school? Have you ever suggested they come? If not, why not? If yes, with what result?
8. How well do you know your teacher? Does he/she ever visit you? Have you ever been to his/her home?
9. Do you think you will leave Sunday school later? Why, why not? If yes, how long do you think you'll continue coming?
10. Do you think you'll join 'the church as an adult? and keep coming? Why, why not?
11. What part of Sunday school do you enjoy most?
12. What part of Sunday school do you enjoy least?
13. Why do you keep coming?
14. What do you think is the aim, the whole point of the Sunday school?
15. What do you think God is like?

PARENTS

1. Do you insist that your children go to Sunday school? If so, why? Or do your children go of their own accord?
2. Did you go to Sunday school yourself as a child? What denomination? Where?
3. Were you married in a church?
4. Were your children dedicated/baptised/christened?
5. Do you go to church yourself now? How often? If not, why do you send your child or allow him to go?
6. What do you see as the aim or the purpose of the Sunday school?
7. Why do you feel it is important for your children to go? or is it important at all?
8. Would you like to see your child join the church and attend regularly once he gets older? or are you bothered at all? why, why not?
9. Have you specially chosen this church or Sunday school for him to attend? If so, why?
10. Do any of the Sunday school teachers ever visit you? Would you like them to?
CLERGY AND TEACHING STAFF

Interviews with the clergy and the teaching staff were relatively unstructured, ranging over a wide variety of topics relating to the individual church and Sunday school. Topics included the following:

1. the church, history, structure, membership
2. the Sunday school, structure, organisation, selection of teaching staff, relationships with the adult Christian community
3. teaching staff: background, length of involvement, general impressions of the school
4. the aim or goal of the Sunday school
5. relationships with the children, their background, degree of involvement with the children inside and outside the school
6. relationships with the parents, patterns of visiting
7. Sunday school curriculum material
8. opportunities for training, preparation
9. the place of the Sunday school in the child's mind, and the level of the child's commitment to it; reasons for this commitment
10. ideas and impressions as to the future of the Sunday school, within their church, and generally as an institution for religious education and socialisation
APPENDIX IX

MAP OF THE LONDON BOROUGH OF NEWHAM

- showing principal road, rail and geographic features -

Source: Annual Report 1980/1
London Borough of Newham,
September, 1981.
CHAPTER 1

1 Laqueur notes, Religion and Respectability: Sunday Schools and Working Class Culture, 1780 - 1850 (Yale University Press: 1976), p.33, that clergy and ministers played a comparatively small role in initiating Sunday schools. Indeed, many grew up unattached to a local chapel or church, viz., pp.25ff.

2 A comprehensive analysis of the historical origins of the Sunday school from its beginning until the state took responsibility for providing a basic secular education, has been provided by Thomas Laqueur in his book, Religion and Respectability: Sunday Schools and Working Class Culture, 1780 - 1850 (Yale University Press: 1976). This has proved to be an invaluable source book for the present research.


4 Denomination here refers to the Church of England as well as to non-conformist bodies. A.D. Gilbert, Religion and Society in Industrial England (Longmans: 1976), pp.138ff., makes the interesting point that in terms of a typology of religious groups, the Established Church has now become a denomination - one amongst many - in a denominationally pluralistic society.


6 The British Lessons Council was established in 1916 to draft materials suitable for use by the various age groups in the Sunday school. The Council was composed of educationalists, biblical scholars, Sunday school experts and denominational representatives. They also produced various teacher training manuals. In 1967, the Partners in Learning syllabus emerged from this group and it is widely used today, particularly within non-conformist Sunday schools. Another major publisher of Sunday school materials is Scripture Union, an evangelical non-denominational body, the modern face of the C.S.S.M. or Children's Special Service Mission which arose in the early years of this century. In addition, many denominational bodies also produce their own material such as the Church of England, Alive in God's World, Altogether One and Quest, and the Church of Scotland, Growing Up in the Church. All of these publications are regularly up-dated in format and content to bring them into line with the needs of the modern-day child.

7 See for example, The Child in the Church by the Consultative Group on Ministry among Children, British Council of Churches, 1977; Bernice Martin, Ronald Pluck, Young People's Beliefs, General Synod.

8Equivalent figures are not available with which to up-date Laqueur's table. Denominational bodies are singularly poor in recording child attendance figures at either Sunday school or church. Cf. Robert Currie, Alan Gilbert, Lee Horsely, Churches and Church-Goers - Patterns of Church Growth in the British Isles Since 1700 (Clarendon Press:1977). In 1979 the Nationwide Initiative in Evangelism undertook a census of the churches in England, some of the results of which are published in Prospects for the Eighties (Bible Society, 1980). The findings of this survey indicate that in 1979, child attendance at Protestant churches and Sunday schools was 967,000 or some 2.1% of the total population of England. Whilst this figure only represents England, it does include child attendance at both church and Sunday school, whereas Laqueur's figure of 5% for 1961 although including Wales and Scotland, refers only to enrolment in Sunday school. Findings from the Superintendent Survey (see Chapter 5) indicate that actual child attendance at Sunday school is generally two thirds of the enrolment figure. However, taking all these variables into account, it would nevertheless seem to indicate that the overall percentage of children attending Sunday school is continuing to decline.

9Martin, op.cit., p.42.


CHAPTER 2

1 For further information on the immigrant community and other aspects of Newham's social situation see David White, "Newham: An Example of Urban Decline", New Society, October 25, 1975.


3 Ibid., p.23.


6 Michael Smee, Reading: A Sociological Analysis, PhD Thesis, 1971 (London), This study was conducted in Havering, Dagenham and Chingford. Two groups of adult readers in Chingford and Dagenham were studied, and three groups of adolescents and young adults in three institutions of education.


CHAPTER 3

1 Laqueur, op.cit., p.246 (viz. Table 1.1, p.3).

2 Ibid. The percentage of the population enrolled in Sunday schools decreased from 19% (1881) to 16% (1906) although the actual number of students rose from 5,762,038 (1881) to 6,178,827 (1906).

4 Percentage derived from Prospects for the Eighties (Bible Society:1980), from a census of the churches in 1979 undertaken by the Nationwide Initiative in Evangelism, pp.23 - 25. (See also Chapter 1, footnote 8.)

5 In Newham, for example, when the field work for the present research was carried out, six of the total 67 white-led Protestant churches no longer ran Sunday schools (see Table 2.1).

6 Laqueur, op.cit., p.249.

7 Ibid.

8 Ibid.

9 For a discussion of this loss of influence, see Gilbert, op.cit., pp.94ff.

10 Ibid., pp.54-59, 85-93.


12 Michael Hill, A Sociology of Religion (Heinemann:1973), p.188.


14 Hill, op.cit., pp.98ff.

15 Ibid., p.132.

16 Ibid., p.131.


18 Laqueur, op.cit., p.147.

19 Thompson, op.cit., pp.411-12.

20 Laqueur, op.cit., p.189.


24 Dick, op.cit., pp.62, 64.

25 Laqueur, op.cit., p.223.

26 Ibid., pp.60ff.

27 Ibid., pp.4-18.

28 Charles Booth, op.cit., pp.44-5.


32 Ibid.

33 Gilbert, op.cit., p.152.

34 Laqueur, op.cit., p.113.

35 Thompson, op.cit., p.415.

36 Frank Booth, op.cit., p.136.

37 Laqueur, op.cit., p.123.

38 Frank Booth, op.cit., p.139.


40 Frank Booth, op.cit., p.84.

41 Ibid., p.85

42 Laqueur, op.cit.


Ibid., pp. 129-131.

Ibid. p. 129.

Ibid., p. 130.

Ibid., p. 134.

Ibid., p. 135.

Ibid., p. 139.

Frank Booth, *op.cit.*, p. 18.


Ibid., p. 116


McLeod, *op.cit.*


Ibid., p. 127.

Ibid., p. 128.

Ibid., p. 125.
CHAPTER 4


3. Young and Willmott, op. cit.


6. Ibid.


13. Housing Strategy Statement, B(i)14, p. 4.

14. Ibid.

15. G.L.H.C.S., Table A.20: Date of Construction.


17. Ibid., B(i)11, p. 4.


22 Connolly particularly stresses the loss of community amongst dock workers resulting from the new cargo handling methods. Cf. pp562-3.


26 Ibid.

27 There is an excellent historical study of the growth of East and West Ham and their churches in Vol.VI of the Victoria History of Essex (O.U.P.: 1973). Unfortunately, however, there is comparatively little historical data available specifically for the Sunday school. Such as there is must be drawn from denominational or local church records which are also very limited.

28 This fact is of fundamental importance to any study of the relationship between the Church and the working classes and has been emphasised in numerous historical studies. See in particular E.R. Wickham, op. cit., pp.215ff; Keith Thomas, Religion and the Decline of Magic (Weidenfeld and Nicolson: 1971), pp.159-166; E.P. Thompson, op. cit., chapters 2 and 3.


33 Ivan Reid, "Sunday Schools for the Seventies?", p.1.

34 Ibid., p.3.
CHAPTER 5

1 Ivan Reid, "Sunday Schools for the Seventies?", p.3.


4 Annual Abstract of Greater London Statistics (GLC:1977), Vol.10, Table 2.02a, p.127.


6 Ivan Reid, "Sunday Schools for the Seventies?", p.12.


8 Gilbert, op.cit., pp.57ff, 200ff.

9 See for example Young and Willmott, op.cit., p.107.


11 Ivan Reid, "Sunday Schools for the Seventies?", p.1.

CHAPTER 6

1 The term "reality definer" has been used extensively in this section and is not to be confused with more structural terms such as superintendent or leader. "Reality definer" refers to the single individual in the school who appears to exercise the greatest influence in determining the overall direction of the school, and with whose goals or approaches to the school the majority of the other staff in the school generally identify.

2 Carey Bonner (ed.) The Sunday School Hymnary (National Sunday School Union:n.d.)

For clarification purposes, it should be noted here that the original "rough"/"respectable" dichotomy was based on the geographic area in which the Sunday school was located taken as an indicator of socio-economic class. In other words, the classification "SSCRes" does not necessarily mean that all the children in it come from the "respectable" working class. However, in referring to this secondary area of stratification, the term "middle class" is used to indicate the socio-economic class of specific individuals within the Sunday school.

CHAPTER 7

An interesting discussion on the necessity for teacher training and preparation and on the content of such training may be found in C.M. Parker, "Fifty Years of Teacher Training - Some aspects of the work of the Sunday School Union from 1856 - 1909", Robert Raikes Historical Society Annual Lecture, 1966.

Besides lecturing, Archibald also expounded his ideas in a number of books: The Sunday School of Tomorrow, The Modern Sunday School, and, emphasising the priority of the child, The Child in the Midst.

See especially Ronald Goldman, Religious Thinking from Childhood to Adolescence (RKP:1964).

The Child in the Church, 6, p.3.

Ibid., 14, 16, pp.6,7.


16 *The Child in the Church*, 118, p.41.

17 *Ibid.*, 94, p.34.

18 Martin and Pluck, *op.cit.*, p.iii.

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