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# **The Impact of an International Unit on a School Culture**

A thesis presented in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of  
Master of Education Administration at Massey University.

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2002

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I wish to acknowledge the support and assistance of the following people who contributed greatly to the successful completion of this thesis.

I would like to express my appreciation to Dr Molly Neville whose inspirational lectures activated my interest and enthusiasm for studying organisational culture.

My sincere thanks to my supervisor Dr Wayne Edwards for his invaluable assistance, encouragement and guidance during the course of the thesis preparation. His thoroughness and professionalism greatly inspired me in this task.

I am grateful to have had the cooperation and assistance of many members of Villa Maria College. I would like to extend a special thanks to the Principal, the Principal's Secretary, the Board of Trustees, the Head of the International Languages Faculty, the Sisters and Staff of Villa Maria College. The commitment and interest of the people involved in this research exercise made it easier for me to collect data, to identify organisational trends and to enjoy the research experience.

I wish to thank Pam Marxen for her valued professional opinion and for those many long hours of proof-reading.

I also thank Moira Calley for her assistance with the preparation of graphics material.

A very special thank you goes to my husband Peter and children Shannon and Patrick for providing the care, support and fun a mother needs to complete a thesis.

Finally this thesis is a symbol, that represents my parents' encouragement in me to always value education.

## ABSTRACT

This thesis presents a single site case study that investigates the impact of an international unit on the organisational culture of a Catholic Girls College in the city of Christchurch, New Zealand.

Four main data collection procedures were employed in this study to obtain relevant material useful for describing the school culture and for identifying any apparent changes to the organisational culture between 1996-2002. Statistical searches, document searches, on-site observations, and interviews occurred at various times throughout the school year. Incoming data was analysed to search for emergent themes consistent with the literature. Results from the study relate to identifying demographic patterns, describing the school culture, examining and describing the cultural change process and describing the corresponding impact on the culture elements of this school community.

Two basic directions underpin this study. One is concerned with the intangible and tangible manifestations within the school culture that have been subject to change, and the other with the implications of change on the members of the school community. The examination of cultural elements was aligned with the framework of school culture provided by Beare, Caldwell & Milliken (1989). A school culture model is provided to give insight into the main cultural characteristics of Villa Maria College. A second culture model, the Change Wave Process Model is introduced as an analysis framework for a selection of cultural change examples applicable to the development of the international unit at this school.

This study has revealed that a school is a culturally unique learning organisation that is directly, indirectly or unconsciously changed by people for the purpose of providing positive impacts on the people and the organisation as a whole. The major outcomes from this study indicate that the development of a new international unit at Villa Maria College has produced a number of positive and negative interactive forces that have in various ways impacted on the organisational culture.

The changes that have occurred since 1996 as the international unit has grown and became established have affected the composition of a number of cultural elements that lie at different levels within the school organisation. The surface manifestations that are obvious in physical features or human interaction patterns have been further enhanced as new staff roles and responsibilities, rituals, ceremonies and symbols have been introduced with the formation of the international unit. The subsurface manifestations such as the values and the underlying assumptions of the school have also been subjected to change though to a lesser degree. A broadening assumption base has appeared in the most recent decade as the school has introduced new policies and programmes in an attempt to meet the standards set down in the national policy and curriculum frameworks relating to the education of international students. As a result key values such as equality, social justice, appreciation, tolerance and respect have been openly expressed and accentuated with the introduction of this new group to the school.

The study concludes with an action-based model that encourages members of the various cultural units of this organisation to be involved in ongoing critical cultural evaluation activities that enable members of the school to inspect cultural change processes in the future.

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## DEFINITION OF TERMS

The following terms, which are used throughout this study, may require further elaboration:

**International Student:** a permanent resident or fee-paying student of Non-English speaking background that requires ESOL instruction.

**Local /Domestic Students:** a permanent resident New Zealand student who speaks English or Maori as a first language.

**International Unit:** a group of professional educators and international students that work closely together to achieve educational, social and personal goals in a school.

**Unit Culture:** a group of people who are related by a set of shared social characteristics, that belong to or are associated with (as an attached unit), an organisational group that shares in a common set of social characteristics (some of which may differ from the smaller unit).

**Cultural Unit:** a well recognised group of people referred to regularly in an educational context – administrators, teachers, students, families, that hold other associated fractional groups that contribute to the wholeness of an organisation.

**Co-nationals:** individuals of the same nationality.

**Cross-cultural:** involving more than one culture.

**NESB:** Non-English-Speaking Background. This term is used in New Zealand when referring to students and others who are from a language background other than English. NESB students include specific ethnic groups, new arrivals/immigrants and New Zealand-born NESB students.

**ESOL:** English for Speakers of Other Languages. This term is used in New Zealand when making reference to resources or programmes for NESB students or to those people who work with NESB students.

**FFPS:** Foreign Fee-paying Students.

## Chapter One

### Introduction

“Understanding the depth of culture is a prerequisite to learning what does and does not change in organisations” (Deal, 1986:33).

On entering a new organisation, an individual or group may add to, modify, or take away physical features, existing knowledge or an understanding of the organisational culture. In a sense the context, form or stability of an organisation's culture can be changed. The cultural context and content of many New Zealand schools has been on the move in the last decade as the composition of student populations has changed dramatically with an influx of international students nationwide. The development of new international units or departments accommodating international students within secondary schools has brought a number of significant changes that have moved the cultural position of schools. The task of identifying organisational cultural shift is a complex task and one that has not yet been considered as a serious activity in the education sector in New Zealand.

In periods of rapid educational reforms, changing demographic or economic uncertainty, educators need resources and knowledge that give them insight and understanding of school culture positioning. The administrators and teachers of schools need to become familiar with the knowledge, skills and values that are required to manage an educational culture effectively. To achieve such goals requires educational researchers, government agencies and practitioners to work closely together to build the theoretical and practical resources required to deal with the demographic, social and economic implications that come with culturally diverse classrooms and schools. The familiarisation and utilisation of cultural concepts, processes and theory by researchers, educational administrators and practitioners is a practical course towards the understanding and management of educational cultural change in our schools.

This research attempts to contribute to such a task, by presenting a study that gives insight into the cultural uniqueness and position of an educational organisation, through an examination of the cultural change process at a Christchurch secondary school. Gaining insight into the cultural position of a school gives the members of an educational organisation the knowledge required to deal effectively with future educational change.

It is the people who belong to the school that essentially shape the story and the direction of this thesis. Members of a school community who take the opportunity to be critical and to reflect on the coherence and significance of cultural change tell the cultural story of their school. The administrators, teachers and the researcher of this study worked together to describe how the development of a new international unit changed the cultural fabric of Villa Maria College in Christchurch, New Zealand. This research uses the case study methodology to tell the story.

### **1.1 Thesis Background and Rationale**

Since 1980, New Zealand secondary schools have been exposed to the effective schools' movement, rapid educational reforms and changing demographic patterns. All of these factors combined have contributed to increased growing awareness and pressure on educational organisations to become familiar with the concept of culture and how to manage cultural change.

The study of a school culture provides the context in which the whole educational process occurs. To get insight into culture is to gain insight into many aspects of the educational process. Gaining such insight is always of value to administrators and practitioners who are looking to improve their school. Growing interest in the field of educational research relating to the understanding and management of school culture has gained momentum on a global scale since the 1980's. An increasing number of researchers, practitioners and leaders have come to recognise that culture is a concept that can be used not only to analyse and explain organisational phenomena but is also something that can be used to create a more effective organisation.

"Seeing and understanding something as subtle and ambiguous as the culture of an organisation can be very challenging" (Carlson, 1996:38). Researchers and practitioners who have faced this challenge have recognised that the concept of culture is "hard to define, hard to analyse and measure, and hard to manage" (Schein, 1992:XI). This challenge is further intensified by the fact that the educators who are the valued human resource that can contribute most to the pool of knowledge gathered on educational culture are already heavily committed to the demands of daily education and administration. It is this culmination of challenges that provide the reason and motivation for this investigation, and also its justification, in the hope that this study can meet some of these challenges by presenting findings that will be of value to members of the educational community.

The complex interactive human activities that shape the culture of a school are continually evolving "over time as teachers, students, parents and administrators work together and deal with crises and accomplishments" (Deal and Peterson, 1999:4). In order to gain insight into these interactive patterns, educational research needs to consider how introduced social phenomena such as the development of a new unit culture influences the actions of the people and the outcomes they achieve as they work together to provide effective education. This study attempts to carry out such an exercise by focusing on the impact of a unit culture on the school culture, rather than pursuing the common approach of cultural research, which concentrates largely on the influence and effect of the school culture on the unit cultures.

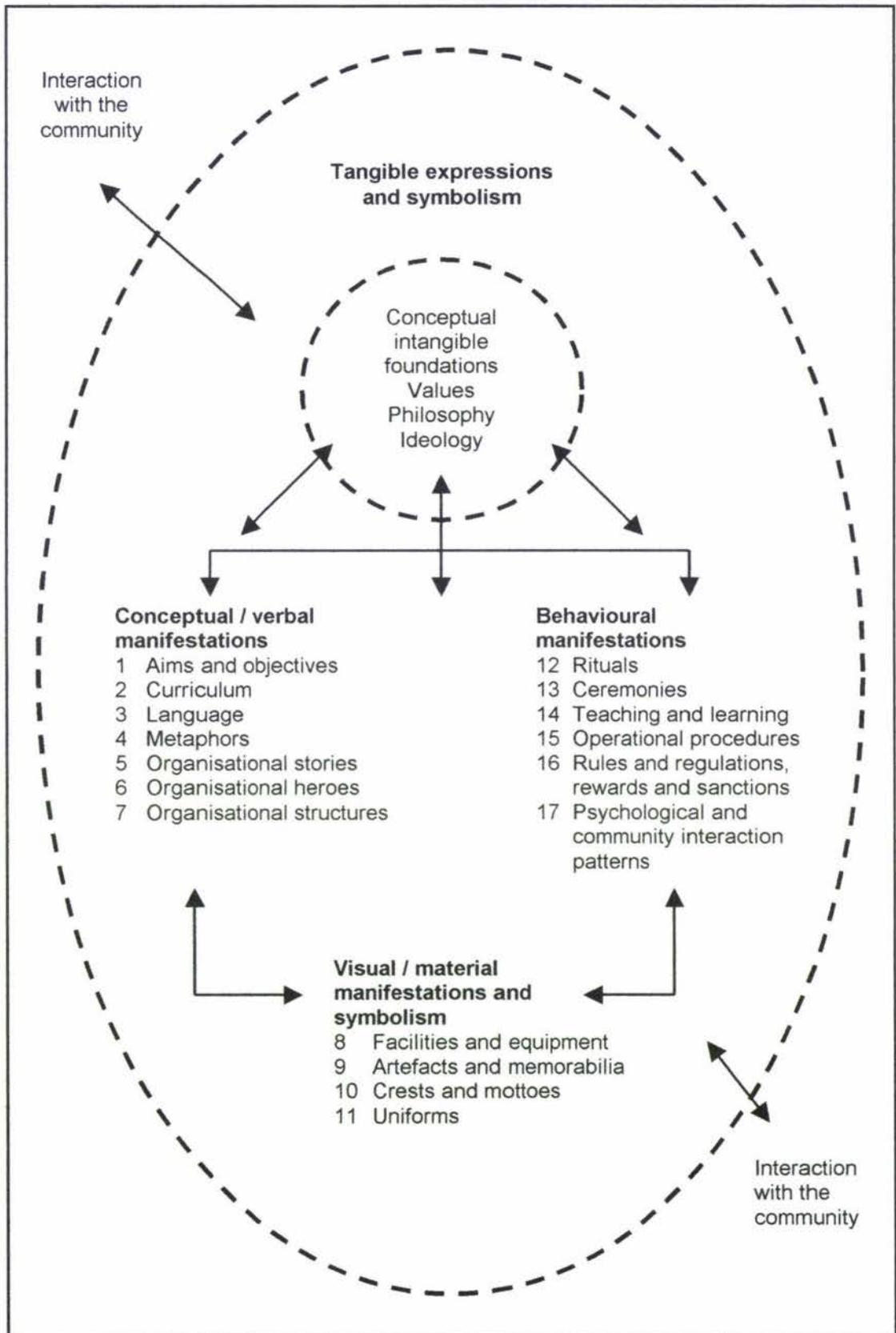
The changing demographics of many New Zealand secondary schools in recent years highlight the need for research to explore the avenue of cultural change involving minority groups. Knowledge relating to cultural processes involving minority groups will help educators deal more effectively with the political, economic, social and environmental issues found in many New Zealand schools today. As Delamont (1992) acknowledges, the "potential intellectual mileage gained by inspections of minority groups in our own mass is great" (Delamont, 1992:47). This study will attempt to gain mileage in this area by presenting a case study that outlines the cultural change process that occurred at Villa Maria College

in Christchurch, New Zealand as their international unit developed over a seven-year period.

Due to the complexity of school culture, it is difficult to make an assessment of such a vast array of culture components. This research used the Beare, Caldwell & Milliken (1989) culture model: Conceptual Framework for Assessing and Developing School Culture presented in Figure 1, to identify key tangible and intangible aspects of the school culture that have been subjected to change. To get insight into intangible aspects this investigation has reviewed changes that have been made to school policy and programmes in relation to the development of the international unit at the school. This review helped the researcher establish an understanding of the underlying assumptions and values that have governed cultural metamorphosis and to establish whether such components have been subject to change or whether they have remained the same. The tangible aspects (which are greatly influenced by the intangible aspects) were also reviewed by carrying out on-site observations to identify the physical changes that have taken place within the school. The identification of intangible and tangible changes was clarified through interviews with administrators and teachers involved in the development of the international unit. Using this evidence, this study documents the implications of significant changes on the members of the school community.

This investigation is guided by critical theory in order to identify if the interests of all key stakeholders are well served by changes in the culture, as well as served with truth in the delivery of this research document. The critical paradigm provides a philosophical foundation that is well suited to the inspection of minority groups within an educational setting. The application of critical theory through a process of dialectic reflection with practitioners allowed the researcher to examine the legitimacy of the change process involving a minority group at the school, and the forces bearing on them. This approach also offered the opportunity to gain an understanding of the administrative practices that have brought about cultural change as well as exposing issues that have resulted from changes made in the school.

**FIGURE 1** CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK FOR ASSESSING AND DEVELOPING SCHOOL CULTURE



As a philosophical justification for a case study, the critical approach gives the administrators and the teachers involved in this study the opportunity to reflect on practice and to gain a better understanding of the technical formation and functioning of their organisation. Giving the research participants this “central role in understanding the conditions that shape, limit and then determine actions to bring about change” enables them to become the translators of the character and conduct of social life within their own educational environment (Carr & Kemmis, 1986). This process of organisational enlightenment has the practitioner involved in the doing (the action), as they formulate and use new knowledge to direct future positive action in their school.

This investigation is effectively carrying out both a critical and cultural analysis of organisational change. In order to contribute to organisational cultural change theory, this study is therefore supportive of the following two perspectives:

(a) The critical perspective – according to Foster (1986):

The idea of change is one of praxis, that is, as practical action aimed at clarifying and resolving social conditions. Praxis must be thought of as practical action, informed by theory that attempts to change various conditions. Practical action in the context of the school involves our critical appreciation of current realities and our critical attempts to evaluate and change these realities in the light of our knowledge about social structures (Foster, 1986:167).

(b) The cultural perspective – as suggested by authors Bolman and Deal (1984); Deal and Kennedy (1982) who maintain that:

An effective organisation functions through the combination of interactive and widely accepted myths, symbols, and rituals: change, therefore, is accomplished through change in these areas (Bolman and Deal (1984), Deal and Kennedy (1982) cited in Foster, 1986:160).

Impact studies of this kind enable researchers and practitioners to work together to gain insight into organisational change, allowing them to accumulate evidence that is useful in the prediction and management of effective change in the future. Hence essentially what makes this topic worthy of investigation is that it can

contribute in some way to the understanding of cultural change and its influence on effectiveness at a school.

To gain insight into the cultural change processes that impacted on elements of a school culture, this case study investigated the following research problem:

## **1.2 Research Problem**

To investigate whether the development of a new unit culture at Villa Maria College, over time, changed the school culture, and to ascertain whether the identified changes have resulted in effects upon members of the school community.

## **1.3 Research Aims**

It is the aim of this research to gain insight and understanding of cultural change processes in an educational organisation by exploring the development and impact of a unit culture on the culture of the school. In order to provide thick descriptions that give insight into the social realities of cultural change, this research design has drawn on both qualitative and quantitative data that is guided by the following set of objectives:

- (a) To provide a historical overview that maps out a course of cultural change at Villa Maria College in Christchurch, New Zealand between 1996-2002. Highlighting significant events or phases in the change process.
- (b) To identify tangible and intangible aspects of a school culture that have been subject to change and to recognise the implications of the changes on the school community.
- (c) To determine if the interests of all groups involved administrators, teachers, students, and families are well served by changes in the school culture.
- (d) To highlight issues that have surfaced as a result of cultural change.

(e) To promote awareness amongst key stakeholders of the relevance and influence that school culture has on the improvement and effectiveness of a school.

(f) To contribute to the current research and debate on the concept of culture.

#### **1.4 Research Questions**

The research objectives above contributed to the formation of the following five research questions that have guided this investigation:

1. What does the current literature in New Zealand and overseas suggest with regard to the impact of an international unit on a school culture? (linked to objective f).
2. Which elements of the school culture have been subjected to change as a result of the development of an international unit within the school? (linked to objectives a and b).
3. Has the changing cultural position resulted in improvement for the members of the school community? (linked to objectives a and c).
4. In what way has cultural change impacted on school effectiveness? (linked to objectives a, e and f).
5. What issues have arisen as the result of cultural change? (linked to objectives d).

#### **1.5 Outline of Thesis**

This research is arranged into eight chapters with accompanying appendices. The background, rationale, research aims and research questions are featured in the introductory chapter. Literature relevant to the research problem and research questions is discussed in Chapter Two. The methodology employed in undertaking

this research including ethical considerations, data collection and analysis procedures is outlined in chapter three. Chapters Four through to Seven summarise the research findings of this study. Chapter Four describes the school culture of Villa Maria College. Chapter Five describes the change processes as the international unit developed at the school between 1996-2002. Chapter Six summarises the impact of the changes on the cultural elements of the school community. Chapter Seven presents a culture evaluation model designed to encourage the ongoing critique of the research topic. Finally, Chapter Eight summarises answers to the research questions, discusses the limitations of the study and makes recommendations for future research.

## **Chapter Two**

### **Literature Review**

Due to the recent growth and development of international student groups in New Zealand secondary schools it appears that there are no current studies that relate directly to international student impact on a school culture. Therefore this review highlights literature that has inspired the call for this topic to be investigated, as well as literature that is linked directly to the research questions. There are four identifiable themes that have largely influenced the formulation of this research topic: the culture concept, the sub-culture concept, the cultural change process and the impact of international students in New Zealand secondary schools.

#### **2.1 Culture: An Elusive Concept**

In a sense everything in education relates to culture – “to its acquisition, its transmission and its invention” (Erickson, 2001:31). However the personal, familial, communal, institutional, societal and global scope, nature and distribution of culture has made it a difficult concept to grasp and define in educational settings. Taking from the simplest definition, the ‘way we do things around here’ we see that even the ‘way’ in this statement “masks a complex, multifaceted, collective knowledge of lessons learned and values to be honoured that are not always easily recognised or appreciated by casual observers” (Fairfield-Sonn, 2001:36). Because of its complex nature and its use across a number of sectors, the ‘culture’ concept has proven to be an elusive concept, and one that has come to be defined in a variety of ways.

Between the 1950’s through to the 1980’s most of the research on organisational culture was dominated by sociologists and anthropologists who concentrated on the analysis of corporate cultures (Schein, 1980, 1985, Ouchi, 1981, Deal and Kennedy, 1982, and Peters and Waterman, 1982), rather than on the cultures of educational organisations. As a result much of the educational literature was influenced by a proliferation of meanings gathered from within the sociological and business sectors. Some of the more significant contributions have come from scholars such as Kroeber and Kluckman (1963), Bower (1966), Deal and Kennedy

(1982) and the work of Schein (1985) who have presented culture definitions that concentrate heavily on shared habits and behaviour of human groups. The adoption and use of particular terms relating to organisational culture from within these sectors unfortunately contributed to an undermining of school culture research over the past twenty years. Like their counterparts, educational researchers have also worked with a set of widely used contextual exemplars of organisational culture that hold meanings that vary considerably. For example:

In the UK, generally speaking, 'climate' is used by school effectiveness researchers, 'culture' by improvement researchers and qualitative sociologists, and 'ethos', 'atmosphere' and 'tone' used to describe ethereal qualities of schools. To add to this confusion terms used are influenced by geographical location – in the USA 'school climate' is preferred whilst in Scotland 'ethos' is used (Prosser, 1999:5).

An awareness of the lack of clarity in culture definitions encouraged the researcher to involve research participants from the study school in the search for a description of the 'school culture' applicable to the educational setting. Critical reflection by the research participants enabled the researcher to establish clear parameters from which the culture of the school is set. This was an important step as it enabled the researcher to ascertain if change had occurred to elements contained within the organisational parameters. Also for this particular investigation the application of the 'culture' concept seemed most appropriate because the relationship between the 'organisational culture' and the 'subculture' concepts are being examined.

### **2.1.1 The Search for Common Culture Strands in an Educational Context**

As early as 1871, anthropologist E.B. Taylor referred to culture as "that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, law and custom and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society" (Taylor, 1871, cited in Bennett, 1995:55). This definition, like many prior to the late 1950's, typically defines culture in terms of patterns of behaviour and customs. However this particular definition was well ahead of its time, in that it touched on the knowledge and moral aspects of culture, which are two features that have been associated with effective school cultures in recent years. The increased interest

and activity of cultural research in educational institutions during the last two decades of the twentieth century, has seen an overall broadening of the 'culture' concept as the inclusion of the 'knowledge' and 'moral' strands in educational descriptions has become more widespread.

The culture concept itself is not a new phenomena in education. As early as 1932 Willard Waller wrote:

Schools have a culture that is definitely their own. There are, in the school, complex rituals of personal relationships, a set of folk ways, mores and irrational sanctions, a moral code based upon them. There are games, which are sublimated wars, teams, and an elaborate set of ceremonies concerning them. There are traditions, and traditionalists waging world-old battles against innovators (Waller, 1932,96).

While this definition highlights the complexity of culture and includes the moral element of culture, it is still like many early definitions that view culture in terms of habits and behaviour. In contrast to this, more recent definitions of culture in education now appear to draw from a wider context in order to obtain a more accurate picture of what comprises a 'school culture'. The broadness and complexity of educational culture is captured by Worsley (1984) who distinguishes four varieties of the culture concept that have been useful in educational studies:

(1) The 'elitists' or 'high culture' imply something that is superior and best protected for the few. This view of culture may have once been the dominant view of culture by educationists in the past, but it has little relevance in the educational sector today.

(2) The 'hegemonic' view of culture introduced by Marxist social scientists sees set behaviours imposed on the people by a dominant minority class. In this viewpoint culture is responsible for reproducing inequalities and class struggle.

(3) The 'holistic' view stresses "the wholeness of a way of life and the sharing of understandings within social groups" (Burtonwood, 1986:2).

(4) Finally, the 'pluralist' dimension recognises that society is composed of a multiplicity of distinctive value systems.

The changing cultural face of educational organisations in the last twenty years, with the additional complexities of educating a diverse student population, and rapid educational reforms, has meant that the holistic and the pluralist views of culture have found strong appeal amongst educationists. In particular the need to consider a multicultural perspective in education has seen a drive for more detailed descriptions that focus on shared knowledge, belief systems and moral behaviour, rather than more narrow definitions of habits and behaviour. For example Bennett (1995) argues that:

All definitions are useful in understanding culture. But a more recent conception of culture as a system of shared knowledge and belief that shapes human perceptions and generates social behaviour is more attuned to the definition of multicultural education as the development of multiple standards for perceiving, believing, doing, and evaluating (Bennett, 1995:57).

Further to this, those multiculturalists who have targeted previous assimilationist and integrationist policies, have strongly advocated the pluralistic view of the culture concept. As Modgil *et al.* (1986) observed:

Multiculturalists have sought to establish a new educational consensus. Rejecting assimilationist and ethnocentric philosophies of the 1960s, many have argued for a form of education that is pluralist in orientation and positively embraces a multicultural perspective (Modgil, 1986:1).

Unfortunately, as most multiculturalists would acknowledge, the reality of establishing and maintaining the pluralistic position is proving a difficult task. Within the field of multicultural education, the theoretical inconsistencies that underpin the multicultural debate and the consequent failure to account for the broader processes of social and cultural reproduction which act to disadvantage minority groups, has meant an inability to translate emancipatory intentions into practice. May (1992) maintains that the full emancipatory intentions of multicultural education may only be achieved "when cultural pluralism is tied to structural pluralism" (May, 1992:2).

Within the range of differing conceptions of culture some definitions seem increasingly inadequate while others are more useful in the field of education. This researcher is supportive of Worsley's (1984) suggestion regarding the retention of this overlapping rich and popular ambiguity. Hence a relevant definition for culture in an educational context may be one that includes a number of overlapping attributes accumulated in previous formulations of the concept, drawing on shared knowledge, shared morals, belief systems, habits, behaviour and maybe other hidden elements relevant only to education. One way to start unraveling the problems of definition is to draw on some of the common conceptual aspects that make up culture across the various disciplines. For example Williams' (1981) conceptual view of culture holds relevance to both corporate and educational organisations. Williams (1981) suggests that the definition of culture can be segregated into three general categories:

(i) The 'ideal' definition: in which culture is a stage or process of human perfection, in terms of certain absolute or universal values. The analysis of culture, if such a definition is accepted is essentially the discovery and description, in lives and works, of those values which can be seen to compose a timeless order, or to have permanent reference to the universal human condition.

(ii) The 'documentary' definition: in which culture is the body of intellectual and imaginative work, in which in a detailed way human thought and experience are variously recorded. The analysis of culture from such a definition is the activity of criticism, by which the nature of thought and experience, and the details of language, form and convention in which these are active are described and valued.

(iii) The 'social' definition of culture: in which culture is a description of a particular way of life, which expresses certain meanings and values not only in art and learning but also in institutions and ordinary behaviour. (Williams, 1981:43).

To gain an educational view of culture may require drawing on aspects of each of these kinds of definitions. It certainly seems necessary to look for the meanings, values and moral aspects of human activity and to look at the record of creative

human activity not only in art and intellectual work, but also in forms of behaviour based on learning processes.

Culture models developed by Schein (1985), Hodgkinson (1983), Beare, Caldwell and Millikan (1989) and Hoy and Miskel (1991), that place various elements of culture at different levels of an organisation are all examples that incorporate a cross-section of features similar to those articulated by Williams (1981). From this particular group the Beare *et al.* (1989) culture model presented in Figure 1 (Chapter One) emerged as the more justifiable framework for analysing the culture of Villa Maria College as this approach had recently been utilised in a New Zealand Catholic school context by O'Donnell (2001). Beare *et al.* (1989) argue that there are sets of intangible and tangible characteristics found in all schools. The set of characteristics that are most difficult to identify and that make up the 'conceptual intangible foundations' (comprising values, philosophy and ideology) have a major influence on the tangible manifestations. The tangible expressions, it is argued, are evident in conceptual, verbal, behavioural and visual manifestations of the organisational culture. Applying this framework O'Donnell (2001) effectively illustrated how the founding dimensions of two New Zealand Catholic schools are integrated into each cultural feature of a school. Taking direction from this material, the researcher has drawn on the theoretical resources of both Beare *et al.* (1989) and O'Donnell (2001) in order to provide the structure and detail suitable for presenting a holistic view of a Catholic school culture and identifying elements of the school culture that have been subject to change.

Not all people are convinced that all concepts of culture have been formed with full moral intention. Some writers have argued that many of the conceptions of culture have in fact been articulated in a way that is more in line with assisting management rather than assisting the managed. As Hargreaves (1997) points out "school cultures in general are frequently investigated and understood from the leader's point of view" (Hargreaves, 1997:69). Bates (1987), who has argued that writers of culture theory have regularly treated culture as synonymous with managerial culture, articulates for a fundamental critique of this orientation. Bates (1987) argues that interest in culture has come about so managers can manipulate it for their own ends and educational researchers such as Beare *et al.* (1989) are

adopting the same manipulative tradition in education. If this is the case, then hopefully with increased involvement of practicing teachers in critical cultural research such as presented in this particular study, this apparent weakness can be overcome and a balancing of perspectives can with time be established and maintained.

Unfortunately the broad nature of the culture concept has certainly made it difficult to formalise on a global scale. This is partially due to the fact that "of the many different conceptions of culture, none is universally accepted as the one best definition" (Deal and Peterson, 1999:3). Or as Beardmore (1985) maintains, "There are no 'right cultures' – each has its own unique blend of attitudes and beliefs" (Beardmore, 1985:67). However from the range of culture definitions that have evolved during the twentieth century it can be said that there are at least a number of common strands consistently woven across descriptions. Collective definitions clearly imply that culture is an entity that delineates one human group from another, and that group culture has cognitive, affective and behaviour characteristics. Further to this we can acknowledge that research to date has enabled us to recognise that the culture concept embodies notions of ethnicity, artistic and symbolic expression and knowledge. Also held within the vast array of definitions have emerged certain overlapping descriptive patterns that seem to prevail as common to the concept of culture. For example, the following terms and phrases have a high use frequency in definitions describing culture whether it is a social, corporate or educational definition:

Shared: meaning, traditions, customs, beliefs, values, norms, behaviour, values, knowledge. The unwritten rules, the glue, the way, the invisible force, the embedded things.

Across the social sciences it would appear that the underlying common denominator joining the primary strands across culture descriptions is 'something meaningful that is shared' within a human group. For the educational sector it would seem appropriate to consider both 'shared knowledge' and 'shared moral' strands as key attributes relevant to a description of educational culture as schools are primarily about people and gaining knowledge. Therefore it is the view of this

researcher that if educationalist want to fully grasp the essence of this complex concept, they will need to embrace themes or descriptions that are composed using a combination of terminology that is applicable to a given setting, rather than spending time searching for a formal unified culture concept.

## **2.2 Linking Subculture to Culture**

It is not possible for individuals to grow up in a complex modern society without acquiring differing subsets of culture – different software packages that are tools that can be used in differing kinds of human activity; tools that in part enable and frame the activities in which they are used. From the nuclear family, through early and later schooling, through peer networks, and through life at work, we encounter, learn, and to some extent help create differing micro-cultures and subcultures (Banks and McGee Banks, 2001:33).

Today the task of defining school culture is made more difficult for schools as they need to decide whether they “have a culture or a variety of cultures”, and whether the culture they have promotes positive teaching and learning for all students (Hoy and Miskel, 1991:220). To achieve such a task will require schools to explore the link between the school culture concept and subculture concept. Unfortunately this is a link that has not been fully explored in-depth in education. Even though the amount of literature relating to school culture has increased rapidly in the last ten years, there is still an obvious deficiency of empirical research relating to the influence of subcultures on organisational culture. While educational theory and research has demonstrated the effects of unit cultures (administrative subculture, teachers' subculture, students' subculture) on behaviour and educational outcomes, few resources provide definitions of the subculture concept from an organisational perspective. Also less attention has been given to how subcultures influence the shape or context of a school culture. This is a concern for the researcher, as subculture influence is the core theme that underpins this research.

### **2.2.1 Subculture in Education**

Across the social science disciplines, the subculture concept has become a rather loosely coupled concept that has lacked unified consensus with regard to definition and with regard to application to organisational culture. From the early 1960's

through to the early 1980's the field of sociology was flooded with papers and conversations laced with the word 'subculture' with much of the research and literature concentrating on the power positional relationships that exist between the subculture and organisational culture concepts (Cohen, 1955, Hall and Jefferson, 1976 and Mungham and Pearson, 1976). During this period the power positional relationships between subcultures and the dominant culture of an organisation was also the central theme of subculture research in the educational arena.

Two early well-known studies of school subcultures are those carried out by Hargreaves (1967) and Lacey (1970). Hargreaves (1967) describing what he called the 'delinquent subculture' of the lower streams at Lumley, and Lacey (1970) describing how Hightown's relative failures are forced into an 'anti-school subculture' both turned to Cohen's (1955) sub-cultural theory for explanation. More recently Ball's (1981) study at Beachside describing the formation of 'anti-school subcultures' has repeated the exercise. Each study, which involved a detailed ethnographic study of the institution in question, provided a theoretical base that supported "a conflict theory which rejects the functionalist view of equilibrium as a neat and simple integration between social groups and a set of norms" (Burtonwood, 1986:31). Within this view, equilibrium is achieved through the contained expression of conflict. Here the early focus of subculture research in education was focused on the negative, dominant versus subordinate relations within a school.

Since 1970 both Hargreaves and Lacey reassessed their sub-cultural studies and began to shift away from the emphasis on the subordination and dominance relationship and instead focused more closely on the individuals' search for solutions to identity problems. Unfortunately subsequent studies by these researchers of schools left many unresolved difficulties concerning the relation of the individual to culture: that is, both the culture of the surrounding community and the peer group subculture within the school itself. Many such issues still remain unresolved today and educational research has also generated insufficient material to fully clarify the 'subculture' concept, or examine the relationship of the individual within a subculture to the surrounding cultures.

Work in the corporate sector by well known authors Deal and Kennedy (1982) and Schein (1992) has provided some insight into subculture formation and contribution to the organisational culture that is relevant also in an educational context. These authors share the view that subculture formation is a natural phenomenon of growing organisations that are undergoing a process of differentiation along various functional lines. This differentiation process involves either a division of labour, functionalisation, divisionalisation, or diversification. The resulting subculture that forms will maintain a distinctive culture that can contribute a significant part to the whole organisational culture. In an early definition of 'subculture' Deal and Kennedy (1982) present a description similar to the 'culture' concept itself:

Each has its own relevant environment and world view; special heroes, rituals, ceremonies, language, and symbols communicate particular values and that subcultures can shape beliefs and determine behaviours in much the same way that cultures can (Deal and Kennedy, 1982:151).

Schein (1992) established a more obvious association between the two concepts:

The subgroups "share their own histories, they develop cultures of their own, which from the point of view of the larger organisation are subcultures" (Schein, 1992:254). As such the "subcultures are made up of whatever cultures arise in the divisions, departments, of that organisation" (Schein, 1992:256).

Over time as a subculture develops a history, high frequency interaction patterns are more than likely to occur with other subculture groups. This interaction may result in a number of positive or negative impacts that can influence the shape and stability of the overall organisational culture. According to Deal and Kennedy (1982) and Schein, (1992) the task of balancing the legitimate differences of subcultures with the legitimate and desirable elements of the organisational culture as a whole is largely the responsibility of the organisational leader. Schein (1992) suggests that leaders need to be sensitive, sympathetic and supportive to different sub-cultural forms and must develop the necessary skills to work across cultural boundaries. This ability of leaders to bring together people from different sub-cultural units and get them working well together is perhaps the essence of culture management.

Like corporate cultures, school cultures have also recently been viewed by some as an agglomeration of several overlapping subcultures that can contribute various attributes to an organisational whole (McLaughlin *et al.*, 1990, Huberman, 1992, Owens 1995). In particular the view of Owens (1995) presents a subculture model that considers the positive components of positional relationships between subcultures and organisational culture. Owens provides a definition that links the 'subculture' and 'culture' concepts, and the appearance of differential cultural forms between sub-units that contribute a multiplicity that can bring the people of an organisation together. Owens' illustration of organisational culture sees the various departments of a school as a set of cultural sub-units that exhibit cultures of their own – "in some ways distinctive and in other ways mirroring the culture of the school as a whole" (Owens, 1995:88). He argues that it is the multiple sub-units of a school that bring the community together in shared interests and values, facilitating cooperation in an effort to get things done. It is the sub-unit functions that provide impetus for developing multiple cultures in an organisation, rather than being considered as suspended units somewhere within a 'top-down' structure that is dominated by a single organisational culture. Owens asserts that it is the recognition of multiple cultures within an organisation that facilitates the use of participative methods which in time provide multiple ideas and views that can contribute to creative cultural change.

The idea of schools being made up of multiple cultural units that contribute to a whole culture has also been echoed throughout multicultural literature. Research carried out in the multicultural education arena has contributed greatly to knowledge relating to subcultures in education. While still heavily focussed on power positional relationships of sub-cultures, multiculturalists have broadened the research base of this area by:

(i) Attempting to expose and explain the relationships that exist between cultural groups within educational organisations. For example: through regular questioning of the well-meaning rhetoric of multicultural education, many multiculturalists have argued that the net result of multicultural education may have, in fact, worked against the life chances of children from minority backgrounds (May, 1992). The valuing of cultural differences, while acting in the best interests of minority or

ethnic groups, may simply act as a shield to the unchanged nature of power relations to which minority groups are subjected within the processes of normal schooling. This is the situation according to Olneck (1990):

Multi-cultural education as ordinarily practiced tends to merely 'insert' minorities into the dominant cultural frame of reference... to be transmitted within dominant cultural forms...and to leave obscured and intact existing cultural hierarchies and criteria of stratification (Olneck, 1990:163).

(ii) Recognising that shifting power positions in an educational environment is a difficult and complex process that generally takes a long time. For example: while the intentions of multiculturalists have been worthy, their emancipatory efforts have been time-consuming and the results minimal. In fact, both Olneck (1990) and May (1992) argue that multicultural education has over a long period done little to transform the prevailing subculture (subordination) and dominant culture patterns.

(iii) Revealing that simply valuing cultural differences does not sufficiently contribute to equality across groups. For example: it has been recognised that 'equality' needs to become a key word and a value in education with regard to allocation of resources and participation in decision making, not left just as an attitude of the mind. If we value cultural diversity then contact is essential, because it is only through contact that we get to value the diversity. This contact should not be restricted to the sharing of differences in lifestyle. In order to gain positive educational outcomes greater emphasis needs to be placed on life chances and choices for all groups, rather than just emphasis on minority lifestyles, which has dictated multicultural education in the past.

(iv) Providing alternative views and possible solutions that challenge or change dominant structures in educational organisations has the potential to reveal the contributing qualities and positioning of subcultures that lie within an organisation.

Hence it is the drive towards a theme that examines the contribution of the subculture to the organisational culture found in the work of multiculturalist and others such as Deal and Kennedy (1982), Schein (1992) and Owens (1995) that initially influenced the direction of this investigation. Rather than concentrate

specifically on the subordinate dominant relationships that exists between subculture and organisational culture concepts, this study instead describes how the formation of the international unit at Villa Maria College has contributed to the make up of the organisational culture.

### **2.2.2 The Unit Culture Concept**

For the purpose of this study and in justification of the critical approach it did not seem appropriate to refer to an international unit as a 'sub-unit' or 'subculture' of the school culture. The use of this concept is "synonymous to one in which the 'sub' in 'subculture' is taken to mean inferior" (Arnold, 1970:iii). The search for clarity of concept often requires the introduction of a new more appropriate term for a given situation or context. For this case study of an educational organisation with a diverse student population the researcher felt it was more appropriate to apply the term 'unit culture' instead of 'subculture' to eliminate any emphasis on position or power in such a term. Instead the term 'unit culture' is used to describe a group of people who are related by a set of shared social characteristics, that belong to or are associated with (as an attached unit), an organisational group that shares in a common set of social characteristics (some of which may differ from the smaller unit).

Effectively the unit culture can be seen as a contextual component of organisational culture. It is a concept that can be defined in terms of shared social characteristics, although further research would be required to develop this concept. While this study considers the positional representation of the unit culture concept in relation to the overall culture of an organisation, it is not the only focus of the research. In this educational setting the unit culture concept is considered in line with contributing shared knowledge in terms of lifestyle, choices and chances for the whole school community. Investigating the value of individual and group contribution to cultural wholeness may prove beneficial, as the creativity and moral aspects of individual and group behaviour between unit cultures holds plenty of unexplored material.

### 2.3 The Cultural Change Process

Change is a process not an event, which connotes that something is happening over a period of time to transform individuals and situations (Fullan, 1985, cited in Poskitt, 1989:8).

The complex nature of the change process has made it a challenging concept for social scientists to grasp or explain. Over the previous quarter century organisational debate has essentially revealed that in order to gain an understanding of change processes a thorough examination of culture is required (Peters and Waterman, 1982, Deal and Kennedy, 1982, Fullan, 1991). This pattern of thought has gained the interest of many in education, as recent research material indicates a move away from traditional structure-based change approaches and a swing towards a change approach that considers structural and cultural components in the process. This culture impact study of Villa Maria College follows this swing by presenting an analysis of change processes that focuses specifically on cultural components.

In the educational sector, serious research on the implementation of educational change began in the late 1960's. Since this time, the aspects of change that have been explored by researchers have fallen largely into three categories: 'the nature of change' (Sarason, 1971, Fullan, 1997), 'conditions of change' (Gross *et al.*, 1971, Fullan, 1985), and 'the management of change' (Hall & Loucks, 1977, Leithwood, 1986, Fullan, 1997), (Poskitt, 1989:8). However change as a cultural process initially gained momentum within the corporate sector during the 1980's. Corporate research during the eighties that combined cultural and structural strategies to organisational change did much to reinforce the view that "understanding change involves a close examination of the context, or culture" of an organisation (Poskitt, 1989:15). Significant contributions came from Kilmann's (1985, 1989) five steps for closing culture gaps, Trice and Beyer's (1985) use of organisational rites, Sethia and Von Glinow's (1985) use of reward systems, and Schein's (1985) set of strategies based on the life cycle stage of an organisation (Fairfield-Sonn, 2001). While school restructuring was the major underlying focus dominating studies on educational change near the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, educational writers and advocates of change had also begun to turn their attention

towards change approaches that considered reculturing schools alongside restructuring them (Fullan 1993, Hargraves, 1995).

### **2.3.1 The Effectiveness and Improvement Focus**

Over the past two decades school effectiveness and improvement are two related areas of research and practice that have witnessed a growing interest in cultural analysis of schools as researchers embarked on a course directed by the need or desire to be effective. In the search for the right school conditions or effectiveness characteristics early school effectiveness research had been reduced to large scale surveys that primarily focussed on narrow issues central to the restructuring of schools. In 1979 a United Kingdom study by Rutter *et al.* (1979) marked a significant turning point for effectiveness research as Rutter *et al.* linked the notion of school culture with the effectiveness of secondary schools. The Rutter study had essentially helped to refocus researchers concern for the holistic features of schooling. From the mid 1980's the refocus on school culture had also found favour amongst researchers concentrating on school improvement. Those involved in school improvement research soon became aware:

That school culture was instrumental in bringing about improvement; for the need to assess a school's potential to accept change; of the complexity of changing a schools culture; of the worthwhileness of identifying and agreeing the direction of change; and of the significance of leadership in change and therefore managing culture (Prosser, 1999:4).

Since this time the effective schools' movement has produced a substantial body of empirical evidence revealing successful educational change as being "significantly influenced by the quality and characteristics of the organisational culture" (Owens, 1995:11). In his 'Search for Effective Schools', Reynolds (1982) argued that "schools would do better to look at school culture and the social relations of school life rather than structures in their quest for reform" (Reynolds, 1982, cited in Ainscow, 1991:56). Others soon caught onto this formula. Hopkins, Ainscow, and West (1994) firmly assert that:

In terms of school improvement we believe that we need to direct equal attention to both structure and culture, and to be alert to the effect that one has on the other (Hopkins, Ainscow, and West, 1994:87).

As a result of this cultural turn in the theory and practice the school culture research and literature that is focused on change and improvement has carried the underlying assumption that “understanding culture is a prerequisite to making schools more effective” (Deal, 1985, Metz, 1986, Rossman, Corbett, and Firestone, 1988, cited in Hoy and Miskel, 1991:220).

Because it is an intention of this study to identify and report findings that link culture with school improvement and effectiveness, this investigation follows the path of current educational research and literature such as Dalin and Rolff (1993), Hopkins, Ainscow and West (1994), and Deal and Peterson (1999) that draw links between these concepts. Rather than simply argue that cultural change causes effectiveness, this qualitative case study attempts to describe the way in which an organisation’s culture is shaped through interactive activities as members of various cultural groups work together in an attempt to improve the school or make it more effective. This is achieved by completing the following tasks:

(a) Ascertaining whether changes to the culture of the organisation due to subculture formation, has brought improvement for the people and the organisation.

(b) Identifying if school effectiveness features have been highlighted due to changes relating to the development of the international unit.

Of these two tasks it is the identification of school effectiveness features that proves the most demanding. Like other well-researched topics, school effectiveness is a complex matter with no universally applicable prescriptions. The task of defining effectiveness or identifying characteristics of an effective school seems to be an ongoing challenge for researcher and practitioner alike. As Reid, Hopkins & Holly (1987) acknowledge:

While all reviews assume that effective schools can be differentiated from ineffective ones there is no consensus yet on just what constitutes an effective school (Reid, Hopkins & Holly, 1987, in Sammons, Hillman, Mortimore, 1995:3).

Instead it is "now widely recognised that there is no simple combination of factors which can produce an effective school" (Williams, 1992, in Sammons, Hillman, Mortimore, 1995:7). Therefore schools attempting to identify effectiveness features, or attempting to develop effectiveness models are encouraged to consider selecting material that is relevant to their own situation. As Dalin & Rolff (1993) suggest: "the meaning of a 'good school', however, only the school itself can decide, try out, assess and reformulate" (Dalin & Rolff, 1993:85).

Taking on board this advice, the researcher carried out a literature survey from a cross-section of well-known school effectiveness resources in order to compile a table which summarises effectiveness features that consistently appear as common denominators in school effectiveness studies (See Appendix I). Although not every study of school effectiveness has come up with an identical list of characteristics, the information displayed in Table 1 Summary of School Effectiveness Features, clearly indicates that there is still "sufficient overlap of several of these elements for us to believe that there must be some consistency of impact across situations" (Joyce *et al.*, 1983, in Stoll, 1994:130). This study draws from this consistent core of effectiveness characteristics as well as additional features relevant to Villa Maria College in order to ascertain whether any such features have been highlighted as a result of cultural change processes in this school.

**TABLE 1 SUMMARY OF SCHOOL EFFECTIVENESS FEATURES**

<b>ASPECT OF SCHOOL</b>	<b>FEATURES</b>	<b>LITERATURE SOURCES</b>
School Administration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Shared vision, values and goals.</li> <li>• Consistent policies and practices.</li> <li>• Management structure.</li> <li>• Commitment to school and community.</li> <li>• Consistent focus on teaching and learning.</li> <li>• High expectations for teachers and pupils.</li> <li>• High management standards maintained.</li> </ul>	Rutter et al. (1979), Purkey & Smith (1983), Ramsey et al. (1987), ERO (1994), Sammons et al. (1995), Beck & Murphy (1996).
Environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Diversity.</li> <li>• Good working conditions for pupils and staff.</li> <li>• Secure, supportive, caring environment.</li> <li>• Orderly atmosphere conducive to learning.</li> <li>• Well developed resources.</li> <li>• Sense of community.</li> </ul>	Rutter et al. (1979), Edmonds (1979), Purkey & Smith (1983), Ramsey et al. (1987), Sammons et al. (1995).
Leadership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strong, competent, stable leadership.</li> <li>• Educational leadership.</li> <li>• Instructional leadership.</li> <li>• Professional leadership.</li> <li>• Visionary leadership.</li> </ul>	Rutter et al. (1979), Edmonds (1979), Purkey & Smith (1983), Corcoran & Wilson (1989), Sammons et al. (1995), Beck & Murphy (1996).
Teachers and Teaching	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Being dynamic.</li> <li>• Good role models.</li> <li>• Stable, highly committed and competent staff.</li> <li>• Provide purposeful teaching.</li> <li>• Good classroom management.</li> <li>• Resource building for teaching.</li> <li>• User rewards, praise, encouragement and appreciation.</li> <li>• Staff development / training.</li> </ul>	Rutter et al. (1979), Purkey & Smith (1983), Corcoran & Wilson (1989), ERO (1994), Sammons et al. (1995), Beck & Murphy (1996).
Pupils	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pupils' rights and responsibilities recognised.</li> <li>• Pupil progress monitored.</li> <li>• Involvement in Decision making.</li> <li>• Pupil support for at risk students.</li> </ul>	Rutter et al. (1979), Edmonds (1979), Ramsey et al. (1987), Corcoran & Wilson (1989), ERO (1994), Sammons et al. (1995).
Parents / Caregivers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Involvement in school activities and Decision making.</li> <li>• Interest and involvement in their children's education.</li> </ul>	Purkey & Smith (1983), Sammons et al. (1995)

### 2.3.2 The Teacher Focus

Consensus between the two fields of 'school effectiveness' and 'school improvement' has revealed that while change is often structure orientated, it is essentially about people, and that the intention to change is to achieve improvement for the people of the organisation, in particular for students and teachers. These two research fields have also exposed that in the attempt to achieve such an intention organisational change will have some form of impact on a teacher or a group of teachers somewhere within an educational environment. On the whole, it is the teachers of a school who have to adapt to changing clientele, technologies, resources, policy and structures (Stoll and Fink, 1996). As a result in the last decade cultural change researchers have begun to place increased value and importance on the teacher in the change process. This is clearly evident in the growing amount of educational research and literature relating to organisational change that places emphasis on "developing the motivations and capacities of teachers, and building on productive working relationships among them" (Hargraves, 1997, cited in Fullan, 1997:58).

The cultural change process and teacher development link is clearly evident in the work of Hopkins, Ainscow and West (1994). According to Hopkins, Ainscow and West (1994) educational change is a multidimensional process that involves one or more of the following features:

- \*Changes in the structure and organisation of the school.
- \*New or additional teaching materials.
- \*Teachers acquiring new knowledge.
- \*Teachers adopting new behaviours in terms of teaching style.
- \*Changes in beliefs or values on the part of teachers.  
(Hopkins, Ainscow and West, 1994:25).

This list identifies structural and human elements that can be linked to either tangible or intangible aspects of a school culture. What is significant about this list is the fact that the change features identified are primarily focused on teacher

development. For many schools the concept of staff development is a preferred way of thinking about organisational change. As Fullan (1990) suggests:

Staff development is both a strategy for specific instructional change, and a strategy for basic organisational change in the way teachers work and learn together (Fullan, 1990:21).

However more recently Hargreaves (1997) has recognised that teacher development strategies have not always been developed to facilitate, maximise and legitimate teachers' views, instead:

In the world of teacher development, the central ingredient so far missing is teachers' voices. Primarily the focus has been on the teachers' practice, almost the teacher as practice. What is needed is a focus that listens above all to the person at whom 'development' is aimed (Hargreaves, 1997:42).

Stoll and Fink (1996) also found that change attempts have often failed in schools because teachers have not been involved in the changes and they find little personal meaning in them. They argue that if change is going to bring improvement and be considered meaningful it will require the involvement of teachers who believe in the meaning of the change action. As Stoll and Fink (1996) state "the sooner teachers are seen as knowledge workers, professional educators and leaders, the sooner schools will improve" (Stoll and Fink 1996:6). Further to this, studies carried out by Fullan and Hargreaves throughout the 1990's have revealed that because educational change is greatly influenced by what teachers do and think, then it is vital to consider the underlying meaningful aspects of teachers' work in order to understand how they influence change in a school and how change impacts on their work (Fullan, 1991).

An awareness of this situation essentially encouraged the researcher to give teachers a voice in this study. In order to ascertain whether a cultural shift had occurred at this school the researcher attempted to identify if the values, beliefs or behaviour of teachers have in any way been modified as a result of a new cultural group being developed in the school. Hence this investigation gives increased attention to the value and importance of the teacher in the change process.

### 2.3.3 The Relationship Focus

The cultural approach to change has also focussed on the importance of establishing positive productive working relationships between members of the school community. In his classic study of the 'Culture of the School and the Problem of Change' Sarason (1971) argued that efforts to understand educational change must take into account the relationships that make up much of the culture of a school. The three main relationships that need to be considered include:

- (i) Those among professionals within the school setting.
- (ii) Those among the professionals and the pupils.
- (iii) Those among the professionals and the different parts of the larger society. (Sarason, 1971:59).

According to Sarason (1971) it is the strength of these working relationships that will determine the strength of the organisational culture. If the relationships are well established and healthy then the individual participants tend to deal better with and contribute to positive change processes. This view is supported in the research evidence presented by Fullan *et al.* (1980) founding in their research on North American schools that:

Schools good at change are characterised by openness of communication, a high level of communication skills, a wide-spread desire for collaborative work, a supportive administration, good agreement on educational goals and previous experience of successful change (Everard and Morris, 1996: 227).

In particular the strong relationships within cultures of teaching are crucial for how satisfied teachers feel and how well their students will achieve (McLaughlin, 1996, McLaughlan & Talbert, 1993). It is from within the teacher cultures that educational change is filtered throughout an organisation. Effectively teachers are responsible for transmitting culture between different cultural zones or units within a school – between administration, students and families. Hence their relationships with other units or individuals is critical to the success of positive change within a school. Recent research on teacher relationships has indicated that organisations that focus on the importance of teacher relationships (Rosenholtz, 1989, Hargreaves

1997) tend to support and encourage collaborative practices rather than individualism, balkanization or contrived collegiality. A collaborative teacher pedagogy is one that embraces the notion of interaction among members of a school community, interaction that can bring benefits to all involved (Thousand *et al.*, 1986). As Hargreaves (1997) expresses:

Cultures that foster collaboration among teachers seem to produce greater willingness to take risks, to learn from mistakes, and to share successful strategies with colleagues that lead to teachers having positive senses of their own efficacy, beliefs that their children can learn, and improved outcomes in that learning as a result (Hargreaves, 1997, cited in Fullan, 1997:68).

The researcher acknowledges that this single site case study does not provide the scope to report findings relating to the cross-section of relationships outlined by Sarason (1971). However the researcher has attempted to identify and report situations where professional relationships have contributed towards positive educational change at Villa Maria College between 1996-2002.

#### **2.3.4 The Leadership Focus**

It would be difficult to study organisational change without considering the leadership roles in the process. Educational literature is full of a vast array of leadership material that presents the principal as a key person involved in change activities (the change agent). While change can occur without principal involvement, more often than not the principal is involved or at least informed of significant organisational change. As a result many school change studies have been investigated and understood from the leader's point of view. Sergiovanni (1984) for instance creates an understanding of school culture from the standpoint of the needs and priorities of the school leader. Much of the literature on organisational culture has taken a similar line: directing itself to the question of how leaders can change the culture in order to build strong cultures that fulfil organisational purpose. This study is supportive of Bates' (1987) initiative to call for a fundamental critique of this orientation. Instead, this research follows a line of investigation that considers how the people of a school community collectively build a strong organisational culture.

There are many leaders within a school who are responsible for developing and emphasizing cultural changes that can impact at surface and subsurface levels of an organisation. Educational organisations are full of intellectual people who by nature of their teaching role are involved in regular leadership activities. In a school senior administrators, heads of department, teachers and students are all involved in activities that initiate new ideas, take care of other peoples ideas, and that make decisions that have worth and value to other members of the organisation. Effective change processes in schools are therefore more likely to result from the productive use of the collective strengths of the people of an organisation. With all the leaders of an organisation working together in a responsible fashion (paddling in the same direction, assisting to remove obstacles) educational goals may become more obtainable. This means that culture research needs to give more practical and theoretical emphasis to teacher and student leadership in the creation of school cultures in addition to the leadership offered by principals. After all, the essence of culture lies with what is 'shared and meaningful' to all people involved in organisational change (Hargreaves, 1997, cited in Fullan, 1997).

## **2.4 International Impact**

Literature that identifies the impact of rapid demographic change in schools due to the influx of international students and the need to address corresponding cultural issues had ignited early interest in this research topic. In this new century, New Zealand is among an increasing number of competitor countries that face issues, problems and opportunities related to cultural diversity in educational organisations. During the last two decades demographic changes have expanded to a global level affecting many countries involved in export education. International migration for employment, once directed towards North America and Europe, has spread across the developed world as people now move to obtain both educational and employment opportunities. Even though the nations of Western Europe and North America have a long history of migration, La Belle and Ward (1994) have recognised that recent demographic changes have greatly affected the diversity of school populations, inter-group relations and educational achievement in these areas of the world. Also "issues of multiculturalism became

particularly acute” in schools as increased diversity, increased inter-group competition and conflict have arisen (La Belle and Ward, 1994:34). In New Zealand similar patterns have begun to surface as increasing numbers of international students, in particular fee-paying students, move into educational organisations nation-wide.

The following figures indicate that a major shift in the composition of our student population occurred at the end of the last century.

During the period from 1986 and 1996 the proportion of:  
 Pakeha students decreased from 72.6 percent to 62.4 percent;  
 Maori students increased from 20.5 to 24.5 percent;  
 Pacific students increased from 5.6 to 7.6 percent and  
 Asian students increased dramatically from 1.7 to 5.0 percent.

This is a trend that is expected to continue into the middle of this century, by 2051:  
 Around a third of all children will be Pakeha; a third will be Maori; Pacific children will make up 21.2 percent of all children; and Asian children will comprise 11.2 percent of all children (ERO, 2000:5).

The 1989 Education Act presented a new set of provisions that led schools to become more actively involved in recruiting full fee-paying students from overseas. Since this time “New Zealand has moved from an ‘aid to trade’ orientation to international education” (Ward, 2001:6). Today New Zealand currently educates 40,000 international students per year, (Export Education Ministry of Education, 2001:8) with 7000 international students now in schools. This demographic shift in New Zealand’s student population has not only resulted in a wide diversity of cultures in classrooms, but more than any other factor, these demographic changes have also charted a new set of practical and theoretical implications and pressures for politicians, school administrators and teachers that this researcher believes needs to be seriously recognised as indicators of organisational cultural shift.

To date in New Zealand the availability of research relating to the impact of international students on educational organisations is sparse and patchy. A recent Ministry of Education Document prepared by Ward (2001) is perhaps the most useful recent resource which contributes in part to filling the void. This review

which provides a summary of empirical work relating to the impact of international students at the classroom, institutional and community levels is relevant to this study as it clearly recognises that “the presence of international students in the classroom has the potential to change both the content and the process of education” (Ward, 2001:17). Even though the material contained in the Ward (2001) review does not specifically correlate internationalisation with organisational cultural shift there are a number of emergent themes within the various research resources indicating that educational organisations in New Zealand are experiencing cultural shift.

#### **2.4.1 Tangible Aspects Subject to Change**

##### Visual/Material Manifestations

A recent Export Education Document (2001) prepared by the Ministry of Education accentuates the main positive capital and resource based gains that educational institutions can receive as a result of the rapid growth of international students in this country. This report sites the increased income capacity that accompanies the internationalisation of educational organisations as a major source of institutional development. Enhancement of facilities, programmes, resources and improved staffing situations are identified as the major physical benefits that accompanies this type of industry. However these physical benefits are generalised for educational organisations across New Zealand, and to date there is limited empirical research evidence available to suggest that such benefits are widespread throughout New Zealand schools. Research carried out in tertiary institutions by Back, Davis and Olsen (1998) in New Zealand, Davis, Milne and Olsen (1999) in Australia and Knight, (2000) in Canada tracing the benefits of internationalisation, have all highlighted examples of environmental enhancement (improved structures and systems). However this same type of empirical evidence is not yet available from the secondary sector in New Zealand. Hence this situation motivated the researcher to seriously consider identifying changes to the physical environment of the study school, as a key component relevant in the exploration of a cultural shift to the organisational culture.

### Behavioural Manifestations

#### (a) Management of international students:

The various provisions that have been made over the past decade to accommodate an influx of international students to secondary schools in New Zealand has impacted heavily on the people involved in coordinating international students. The main body of literature relating to international students concentrates predominately on issues relating to TESOL management (Teaching of English to Speakers of Other Languages). On the whole TESOL management has been a poor relation compared to other areas of educational management research. From the copious quantities of empirical studies that have been published reporting on environments and managerial practices in a variety of educational contexts in the US, Britain, Australia and New Zealand the TESOL educational management context has virtually been ignored. Among the few exceptions are Reasor (1981), who can probably be credited with the first empirical research in the area of TESOL management studied the administrative styles of ESL programme directors at US tertiary institutions; and Pennington who has worked on a number of surveys from job satisfaction (Pennington & Riley, 1991) through to burnout among ESL educators (Pennington & Ho, 1995) in the US, Canada and Asia.

In New Zealand the TESOL management literature that has become available in the last five years has exposed a number of consistent issues that ESOL teachers and managers are facing due to the rapidly changing cultural composition of schools. Kennedy and Dewar's (1997) research of primary and secondary schools and Walker's (1999), and (2000) studies of tertiary institutions are national examples that successfully illustrate the multidimensional nature of the TESOL service. Such studies and other descriptive writings on ESOL management are useful resources that indicate the new range of behavioural patterns that prevail for people involved in this area of education. For example new behavioural patterns relating to TESOL managers, coordinators or teachers would include:

\*The expanding roles and responsibilities for TESOL coordinators and staff working with international students (ESOL teachers, teacher aides, pastoral care providers).

\*The increased attention required to be given to policy and curriculum development.

\*The increased demands on staff recruitment and selection.

\*The increased need and desire for people to receive support for professional development.

\*The increased expectation on teachers to achieve client satisfaction.

\*The increased demand on staff to provide extra pastoral care/counselling services.

\*The increased demand on staff to provide an excellent service on limited resources.

Such features provide tangible evidence that the people of educational organisations are experiencing new pressures and changing roles as they attempt to meet the needs of an expanding diverse student population. The demands, diversity and ambiguity in the work of TESOL managers and teachers accentuate the significance of international impact at the management level. Indeed the growing number of TESOL issues in New Zealand and overseas has brought the call for further research into the impact of international students on educational organisations. An ESOL survey of New Zealand schools carried out during 2001-2002 may shed light and insight into this area and other aspects of internationalisation impact.

(b) Teaching and Learning:

There is a wide range of literature available in education, cross-cultural psychology and multicultural education that examines a number of behavioural patterns in the classroom which can be linked to school culture impact. There are two obvious themes in the literature that corresponds directly to behavioural manifestations stemming from diverse student populations:

(i) Inter-group relationships: Although there is extensive research on interactions between international and local students, the research available has been taken predominately from the perspective of the international student. Research evidence from Europe, America and New Zealand has converged to reveal three common patterns - that cross-national interaction is low, that international students

desire greater contact with domestic peers, and that co-national relations are high (Klineberg and Hull 1979, Furnham and Alibhai 1985).

(ii) Cross-cultural differences in teaching and learning facing both teachers and students: International students entering into Western classrooms are faced with academic assumptions and expectations that are divergent from the familiar. Research evidence has exposed a number of factors that vary across cultural groups relating to the teaching and learning processes. Some of the more regular differences are found to be with educational expectations (McCargar, 1993, Liberman, 1994), communication (Powell & Anderson, 1994), approaches to learning and study (Chen and Chieng, n.d.), motivation and cooperation. Many of the differences are often recognised as precipitating awkwardness or discomfort amongst staff and students, both domestic and international.

In New Zealand Donn and Schick's (1995) study of primary, intermediate and secondary schools' marked an early attempt at establishing an understanding of internationalisation impact. This research touches on language issues, cross-cultural differences in teaching styles and domestic students' perceptions of their international peers that can also be tied to the behavioural themes above. In addition to this, Aston's (1996) study of New Zealand secondary schools which included the survey of 42 teachers in charge of international students and responses from the Boards of Trustees in 38 schools who have fee-paying Asian Students, is a useful document as it covers a wide range of themes that could be linked to behavioural patterns. For example the summary list below of Aston's (1996) findings outlining the advantages and disadvantages that the growing number of Asian students brought to New Zealand secondary schools in the 1990's, clearly reveals the appearance of a number of positive and negative behavioural manifestations.

Advantages of international students:

\*Provide opportunity for New Zealand students to be exposed to other cultures (*Positive behavioural pattern*).

\*Provide financial benefits.

\*The good work habits of international students provide positive examples for New Zealand students (*Positive behavioural pattern*).

\*Provide challenges for teachers to be creative and adaptive (*Positive behavioural pattern*).

\*Assistance to NZ students in learning Asian languages (*Positive behavioural pattern*).

Disadvantages of international students:

\*Limited English ability leading to additional pressure on classroom teachers (*Negative behavioural pattern*).

\*Limited interaction between international and domestic students (*Negative behavioural pattern*).

\*Racial disharmony (*Negative behavioural pattern*).

\*Different learning styles (*Negative or positive behavioural patterns*).

\*Jealousy of New Zealand students over spending power of Asian students (*Negative behavioural pattern*), (Ward, 2001:25).

While it appears that studies of this type and other of a similar nature may pertain to the more visual or surface elements of a school culture, continued exploration into the avenue of cultural research may well reveal that a number of these prevailing behavioural patterns can be or are associated with subsurface organisational elements.

#### **2.4.2 Intangible Aspects Subject to Change**

While it is believed that the internationalisation of schools within New Zealand provides the potential to change policy and curriculum material, which can in turn filter through to teaching materials and methodology, unfortunately it appears New Zealand may still be caught somewhere in the potential phase as there is not yet enough empirical research evidence available to substantiate such belief. This situation may be due to the focus of internationalisation research being viewed from the perspective of the international student rather than from the view of the teacher, administrator or the organisation as a whole. Prior to 1997 there had been no significant surveys or studies to analyse the extent to which curricula had become internationalised either in content or in form in the secondary or tertiary

sectors (Smith and Parata, 1997). Unfortunately (like the previous section) there is limited research evidence available to demonstrate that the positive or negative effects of internationalisation have changed the deeper less obvious intangible aspects of a school culture (particularly at a secondary level). In fact educational research has not seriously considered linking such features to the intangible aspects of organisational culture.

It is therefore the view of the researcher that investigations which highlight modifications to educational policy or curriculum need to be considered as resources that offer insight into the impact on subsurface elements of an educational organisation. For example a recent Ministry of Education ERO (2000) Multicultural Document which recognised that demographic change to educational organisations has prompted debate about multiculturalism, focused on the need to address some of the conceptual inconsistencies that permeate the underlying assumption base which guides educational discourse in New Zealand. This document acknowledges that meeting the challenges of a diverse student population is not an easy task while a number of fundamental conceptual ambiguities within the National Educational Guidelines and the New Zealand Curriculum Framework remain unattended.

Example One: Policy The National Education Guidelines, Goal 1:

*The highest standards of achievement, through programmes which enable all students to realise their full potential as individuals, and to develop the values to become full members of New Zealand Society.*

It is difficult for schools to establish exactly how they must contribute to such a goal as the National Educational Guidelines do not communicate "what the desirable 'values' necessary to participate in New Zealand Society are" (ERO, 2000:11).

Example Two: The New Zealand Curriculum Framework makes two statements relevant to cultural diversity, both of which carry practical and theoretical weaknesses. The following statement is possibly of greatest concern; statement:

*The New Zealand Curriculum provides all students with equal educational opportunities.*

Without further explanation it is difficult for schools to ascertain just how they do deliver equal educational opportunities. Are teachers to deliver a curriculum that recognises and values “the experiences, cultural traditions histories and languages” of three or more different nationalities in one class? (ERO, 2000:12).

Such examples highlight the unexplored intangible aspects of export education that still require development and refinement. By drawing attention to and addressing such issues the Ministry of Education is effectively aligning an assumptions base that keeps pace with the challenges that accompany rapid demographic change in schools. These examples accentuate the need for the Ministry of Education to work closely with individual schools to investigate whether the goals, statements, policies, values and underlying assumptions that direct the school are well matched and applicable to the current and future cultural situation of the organisation. Hence it is the belief of this researcher that applied cultural research is a useful and necessary means to providing educators with the insight and knowledge about how significant demographic change can modify or shift cultural components of an organisation.

## **Chapter Three**

### **Methodology**

This chapter describes the methods employed in the research to investigate the impact of the international unit on the school culture of Villa Maria College. The first section describes the research site of the study. The second section looks at the research design, then moves onto sections reviewing the limitations and strengths of the chosen method. Following this, the theoretical approach and ethical considerations are outlined in relation to the research method. Continuing from this, the data gathering and analysis procedures employed in the study are described, detailing the way data was collected and analysed from the context, administrators and staff involved in the study.

#### **3.1 Research Site**

The school chosen for the study is a state integrated Catholic Girls' College in Christchurch, New Zealand. In the year 2002 Villa Maria College had 745 Students from Year 7 to Year 13, including 38 international fee-paying students who constitute 5 percent of the student population. The international unit is composed of a group of fee-paying and non-fee-paying students that require additional English assistance apart from what is offered in the standard English curriculum at the school, and professional staff who provide administrative, ESOL or pastoral care assistance. The members of this group form part of the International Languages Faculty, which is made up of ESOL and language classes. All the international fee-paying students of this school originate from countries within the Asian continent including eleven students from Korea, ten from Japan, eight from China, four from Hong Kong and one from Taiwan. All international fee-paying students are required to have Intermediate Level English on entry. These students are mainstreamed choosing subjects according to their personal needs, and are given a minimum of four periods of additional ESOL tuition.

There is six staff members involved in a wide range of administrative, teaching and support service activities for the international student body. Staff include: a

Director of International Students (who is the overall Director of the International Languages Faculty), a Student Welfare Liaison Officer, two ESOL teachers, an administrative assistant and a staff secretary.

### **3.2 Research Participants**

Much of the empirical data in this study came from the views gathered from individual interviews with administrative staff or teaching staff at Villa Maria College. Research participants included the school Principal, the Director of International Students, faculty heads, two staff Mercy Sisters and the staff of the international unit. This group of administrative and teaching staff was chosen due to the implicit part they play in the creation and transmission of culture within the school. As experienced teachers and administrators these people have a deep understanding and appreciation of their school culture. It is also the belief of the researcher, that the material gained from these people enabled the researcher to obtain a thick description of the 'school culture' as pertaining from an organisational view.

### **3.3 Research Design**

An examination of methodological processes led to the conclusion that for this research, a single-site ethnographic case study was the most appropriate methodology. An ethnographic case study "focuses on the culture and social realities of everyday life" (Merriam, 1998:156). It provides the opportunity to "investigate and report the complex dynamic and unfolding interactions of events, human relationships and other factors in a unique instance" (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2000:181). In particular the case study design provided a disciplined framework suitable for the examination of the cultural change process that occurred at Villa Maria College between 1996-2002. According to Merriam (1998) the "case study is particularly suitable if you are interested in process" (Merriam, 1998:33). Merriam (1998) explains that process as a focus for case study research can be viewed in two ways:

(i) As monitoring: describing the context and population of the study, discovering the extent to which the treatment or programme has been implemented, providing immediate feedback of a formative type.

(ii) As causal explanation: discovering or confirming the process by which the treatment had the effect that it did (Merriam, 1998:33).

This case study is representative of the second meaning of process, as the researcher attempted to explore and explain how introduced social phenomenon changed the cultural position of the school over a set period of time and describe how the people have been effected by change.

Originating in anthropology, ethnography is “essentially concerned with the cultural context and cultural interpretation of the phenomena under investigation” (Nunan, 1992:76). Hence the aim of the ethnographer is to focus on a particular setting and discover what is going on within the frame. This is achieved by describing the shared meanings that identify people within a particular culture. Essentially ethnography is an interpretive approach that aims to systematically learn reality from the point of view of the participants. The result is to place the research participants and their interpretive and negotiating capacities at the centre of analysis. While participant observation is the most widely used method to collect data, ethnography is not limited to this process alone. Other methods such as document collection, field note taking and the use of interviews are also commonly used today in educational research. This study has drawn on each of these methods in order to collect a broad range of relevant data that is used to illustrate the cultural change process.

By focussing on individual actors and activities within the school culture the researcher was able to gather vivid descriptions of events relevant to the case, analyse these events, then attempt to portray the richness of the case in writing up a report that has relevance to the whole school community. As Merriam (1998) suggests “the case study design is employed to gain an in-depth understanding of the situation and meaning for those involved” (Merriam, 1998:19). To capture in-depth understanding, the researcher worked closely with administrators and teachers of Villa Maria College over a one-year period, to collect and analyse ‘thick descriptions’ that relate to cultural change. The patterned explanations that

prevailed from such investigations were used to explain how a new unit culture impacted on the organisational culture of Villa Maria College.

### **3.4 Limitations of the Case Study**

Like other methodological designs, the case study has been plagued with controversy throughout the twentieth century. The opposing beliefs and conflict that surrounded the case study focus largely on the following philosophical and theoretical weaknesses:

(i) Because the case study design supports either the quantitative or qualitative approach, or a combination of both, it has been difficult for researchers to accurately define, specify or standardise this form of research design. Atkinson and Delamont (1985) argue that it is difficult to provide a clear definition for a case study as it is viewed as a model without agreed subject matter, methods, theories or exemplars.

(ii) With a strong leaning towards qualitative procedures involving human subjects the case study is not easily open to cross-checking. This renders the criticism that it is a "selective, biased, personal and subjective" form of research (Niset and Watt, 1984, cited in Cohen Manion and Morrison, 2000:184).

(iii) Like other qualitative approaches it is difficult for case study research to demonstrate reliability and validity. As Hamel (1993) observes:

The case study has been basically faulted for its lack of representativeness... and its lack of rigor in the collection, construction, and analysis of the empirical materials that give rise to this study (Hamel, 1993, cited in Merriam, 1998:43).

This has largely resulted from the situation that case study research has not provided a set of widely agreed-upon protocols that put subjective findings to a rigorous enough test.

(iv) Much of the controversy surrounding the case study has been largely concerned with the question of generalisation. Early criticism of case study methodology questioned the interpretation of patterns into generalisations, how generalisations can be made from a single case and the connection of generalisations to other cases or settings. For many case studies (this one included) the results are only generalisable when other readers or researchers see their application.

(v) Despite attempts made to address reflexivity, case studies are still prone to observer bias. This is one of a number of ethical concerns that require particular attention when carrying out case studies involving human subjects. Researchers' Stenhouse (1981), Sturman (1997) and Denzin and Lincoln (2000) have recognised that the nature of case study research makes it particularly vulnerable to ethical problems.

### **3.5 Strengths of the Case Study**

Case study research has managed to survive the course of controversy and in doing so has reinforced a number of attractive attributes that hold well for researchers and practitioners in the field of education. Based on material presented by Adelman *et al.* (1980) and Nisbet and Watt (1984), (cited in Cohen Manion and Morrison, 2000:184), the following list provides a summary of the key strengths of the case study methodology and its suitability to the research topic:

(i) The case study can capture unique features or unanticipated events and variables that may hold the key to understanding a situation. Culture is a topic that requires the inspection of unique features. Certain features and events relating to the cultural change process are identified and highlighted in this study.

(ii) The human nature of case study research demands that ethical issues be given high priority throughout a study. This research material is subject to a check by the Massey University Ethics Committee and a Research Supervisor.

(iii) Case study data though often difficult to organise is strong in reality. Realism is an essential component for illuminating educational processes.

(iv) Case studies provide detailed descriptions that recognise the complex embeddedness of social truths.

(v) Rich descriptive material presented in a case study is useful for the interpretation of other similar cases, or subsequent reinterpretation. This case study provides a practical cumulative data source for practitioners whose purpose may differ from that of the researcher.

(vi) Key stakeholders within the study school have the opportunity to judge the implications of the study for themselves.

(vii) Case studies are a step towards the union of theory and action in the educational sector. Case study material can be interpreted and put into action, giving practitioners the opportunity to become familiar with the theory that is guiding their actions. In order for the school participants to be able to synthesize the theory developed in this study with their own practice, this case study devotes chapter seven specifically to action.

(viii) A case study reports material in a format that is more widely understood and accessible to the public, not solely to academics. This case study is presented in language that makes it easier for all key stakeholders (practitioners, parents and students) to interpret and use. Hence this case study is able to serve the whole school community.

I believe that it is the responsibility of the researcher to work hard to accentuate the positives of a case study by endeavouring to overcome any weaknesses that may be apparent in the individual case design. This research has attempted to overcome case study design weakness by presenting:

(a) A justifiable philosophical foundation.

- (b) A clear set of research objectives and questions.
- (c) An in-depth review of literature relevant to the research questions.
- (d) A detailed account of the ethical considerations and standards applicable to the research.
- (e) A range of data collection methods that enabled the researcher to cross-check information during data analysis.
- (f) An outline of the methodological limitations pertaining to the study.
- (g) Details relating to the effects of the research on the people involved.
- (h) An accurate report accessible for all key stakeholders to form judgement.

### **3.6 Theoretical Approach Underpinning the Case Study**

Theorising is an activity that is not solely confined to academics. It is an activity that occurs from a combination of personal experience and the need to understand social processes occurring within the individual's sphere. Sociological theories hold that individual experience alone is not sufficient to formulate explanations of social phenomena. This is where cultural analysis and critical theory combined in the research process provides a multiplicity of human experiences that create an account that gives depth of understanding to social processes. Essentially in this study the researcher has taken this approach by incorporating other people's common-sense explanations of their work as a source for understanding social process and as a source of creating new ideas.

When engaged in an educational setting it is useful to link cultural research techniques and findings with sociological understandings and theories. According to Blackledge and Hunt (1985), education, as per the Marxist view, helps to reproduce or maintain the capitalist system. It is the reproduction cycle that maintains the class system, socio-economic status and relations of dominance and

subordination. The Marx's strict economic determinants have been modified over the years to incorporate social and political explanations along with theories on class and socio-economic mobility. It is this modification of Marx's original theory that is the basis for this thesis as the researcher looks for social factors (the human interactive forces) that are in operation at Villa Maria College in order to explore the process of cultural change at this school.

### **3.6.1 Critical Theory**

Sociological theory has a number of basic theoretical positions, one of which is critical theory. Critical theory stands alone as a multidisciplinary approach which critiques, examines and reflects the truths about society whilst promoting important changes or developments that may offer a significant difference. Early attention by critical theorists was given to aspects such as politics, power, knowledge and class, though a shift in contemporary work has seen an emphasis on the importance of human relationships, culture and values in society. The work of critical theory in the educational sector has been slow, however in recent years it has received more attention as it is becoming widely recognised as a viable instrument for the inspection of social process and change.

The central assumptions and arguments of critical theory originate in and are responsive to the work of the founding members of the Frankfurt School in Germany. Critical theory as a body of thought is largely Marxist in its outlook in that critique and practical activity are perceived as necessary within capitalist society. There is however, more to critical theory than the term implies, 'to critique'. Critical theory may concern a mode of thought most commonly referred to as critical thought, yet it is not about being negative in the way that the words 'critical' and 'criticism' are regarded. Instead, critical theory provides a framework for challenging common-sense beliefs and understandings as well as offering the potential to effect change in the world, through offering new insights and understandings.

In its many forms, critical theory articulates an "ontology based on historical realism, an epistemology that is transactional and subjectivist, and a methodology

that is dialogic and dialectical" (Denzin and Lincoln, 1998:187). The transactional nature of this form of inquiry requires a dialogue between the inquirer and the subjects of the inquiry; the "dialogue must be dialectical in nature in order to transform ignorance or misapprehensions" that are present in the existing social order (Denzin and Lincoln, 1998:202). The inquirer and the objects or groups are assumed to be interactively linked, with the values of the inquirer and of situated others inevitably influencing the inquiry. This interaction between a particular investigator and a particular object or group reflects fusion between the ontological and epistemological positions of critical theory. Through symmetrical communication by those involved in critical research knowledge is developed by a process of active construction and reconstruction of theory and practice. The knowledge produced is historical and structural, and is judged by its degree of historical situatedness and its ability to produce action.

Critical research essentially enables inquirers to become translators of the social order or structures to which they belong. In order to achieve this, critical theorists set for themselves three main tasks; "understanding, critique and education" (Deetz and Kersten, 1983:148). Understanding requires gathering descriptions that give objective and subjective knowledge of societal reality. Here, critical theory allows the researcher to collect and formulate analytically coherent, critical theorems about the character and conduct of social life in a defined setting.

Essentially critical theory is "the product of the process of critique" (Carr and Kemmis, 1983:144). The ability of theorists to reflect critically on the historical origins of all knowledge and the social interests that such knowledge serves has been a major feature of critical theory from the beginning. The application and testing of critical theorems through a process of dialectic reflection with research participants allows the researcher to examine the legitimacy of organisations and the forces bearing on them. Within an educational context this theoretical framework of analysis enables the researcher to unmask the competing interests of groups within a school and provides a means of understanding the struggles that take place where competing interest meet. This activity carried out by members of a school community is for the purpose of achieving organisational

enlightenment. The emancipatory potential of adopting this critical perspective is one that holds particular significance for minority groups in society and in schools. Critical theorists are not content simply to demonstrate inconsistencies and contradictions in current knowledge and practice: rather they want to change basic societal and organisational structures. This can be achieved through education. The educational aspect of critical theory develops as social structures are challenged, reformulated and challenged again. In this sense critical theory can also be considered a practical theory, as it initiates change through the application of critique. Change therefore is facilitated as individuals gain greater insight into the existing state of affairs, and are stimulated to act on it.

As a theoretical approach to research critical theory differs from other bodies of theory in that the primary question concerns – whose interest is served by the research. This research addresses this question by explaining the origins of cultural change in practice, identifying associated issues and also seeking to create positive changes by enabling participants to determine their own future through a purposed course of action.

### **3.7 Ethical Considerations in Relation to the Research**

Ethical principles are intended to guide the behaviour of researchers and offer security and protection to participants. However, no listing of principles of ethics can cover all eventualities... Ethical responsibility begins with the individual researcher and the researcher is the main determinant of ethical standards (Anderson, 1998:26).

As a researcher investigating cultural change, I was aware that it was my responsibility to show respect and sensitivity to the culture and values of the people involved in the research, as well as to the people and to the school that may be influenced by this research. "Ethical standards are important in all research involving human subjects, but particularly so in contextualised research carried out in schools" as the school serves a wider community beyond the members participating within the organisation (Nunan, 1997:366). As the researcher I was a guest in the private space of the people I involved in this research exercise. Those whose views and expressions are portrayed in this study risk exposure to the wider community, therefore it was imperative that caution was

applied at all times to minimise the risks (embarrassment, loss of standing, loss of self esteem, loss of educational status) involved in the research process. Close, regular, open negotiation on a formal and informal basis was carried out between the researcher and the people involved in the research. Given TESOL's mission, culture, and constituency, it was critical that the highest ethical practice possible was carried out at all times during the research exercise. To achieve this goal the researcher made a commitment to standards that were guided by two key ethical resources:

(1) The New Zealand Association for Research in Education has adopted a Code of Ethics (NZARE, 1981) which encompasses four key areas of concerns: general ethical principles and principles relating to research subjects, personnel and reports.

(2) The Massey University Human Ethics Committee (MUHEC) has provided a Code of Ethical Conduct (based on 5 key principles) for teaching and research involving human subjects.

As Clark (1997) suggests:

Educational researchers ought to conduct their investigations within a framework of ethical deliberation...Codes of ethics provide [them] with a set of general principles and more specific rules to guide research practice (Clark, 1997:151-152).

Taking into consideration the principles presented in these two resources, this research was guided by the following set of standards:

(i) Ensuring that the school was provided with an accurate account of the research exercise to allow them time to decide whether they wished to be involved.

(ii) Ensuring that formal consent was received from the school governing body and all research participants, and that anonymity and confidentiality was provided for these people throughout the research.

- (iii) Ensuring that formal consent was received from the Board of Trustees regarding access to school records.
- (iv) Ensuring that the participants in this research were informed of the research process.
- (v) Ensuring that neither the research nor its outcomes be seen to discriminate on the basis of race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, physical disabilities, marital status, colour, class, or religion.
- (vi) Ensuring that the research was "conducted and reported openly and fully so that it is amenable to scrutiny, critique, and replication" (Nunan, 1997:366).
- (vii) Ensuring that the limitations of the research were acknowledged.

### **3.8 Fieldwork: Data Collection and Analysis**

The case study is not a standard methodological data gathering package, rather it is "a different form of research that uses many methods, but in a unique way" (Stenhouse, 1981, cited in Study Guide Four, 2001:40). This research while drawing together "the use of both qualitative and quantitative techniques under one umbrella" (Sturman, 1997, cited in Keeves, 1997:61), has a strong leaning towards qualitative procedures as it largely involves the collection of empirical evidence to produce a clear understanding of the cultural process being studied. During the year 2002, data for this research was gathered on site directly by the researcher through close contact with two key personnel, the School Principal and the Director of International Students. Heads of Faculties and the staff of the international unit were also involved in some aspects of the data collection phase (mainly interviews). According to Deal and Peterson (1990), reading the culture of a school involves "watching, sensing, listening, interpreting, using all of one's senses and employing intuition when necessary" (Deal and Peterson, 1990, cited in Carlson, 1996:41). It required the researcher to utilize all of these senses in carrying out the following data collection and data analysis activities.

### Collection and Analysis of Statistics

This involved the gathering of statistical data from educational sources relating to demographic trends in secondary schools at a national level and at Villa Maria College in recent years. School records were collected on site pertaining to demographic patterns over the past seven years. Statistical data is presented in tabulated and line graph form within an analytic unit that provides a visual representation of the 'Patterns of Demographic Change'. This material, combined with the literature, highlights the changing demographic patterns relating to international students in New Zealand Secondary Schools 1993-2002 and the demographic trends at Villa Maria College in particular between 1996- 2002.

### Collection and Analysis of Physical Evidence

The collection of primary sources of non-written material such as photographic material from school records and school magazines was obtained to identify physical change to the school environment. Additional materials such as artefacts or symbols that have been introduced over the development period were collected in written or photographic form after regular observations during school visits throughout the school year. Notes were also taken during the observation of special ceremonies or rituals throughout the course of the school year (See Appendix II). The on-site observations enabled the researcher to build up an accurate description of the present day culture as well as to identify and to describe physical changes made to the environment of the school between 1996-2002. Through a process of triangulation this material was used within an analytic unit that illustrates the 'Tangible Aspects Subject to Change'.

### Collection and Analysis of Documentary Evidence

School policy documents and school charter documents were collected to ascertain whether legislative or philosophical change relating to the development of the international unit had occurred within the last seven years. The document search informed the researcher about the background to the nature of cultural change. Surveying the school documents enabled the researcher to gain insight into intangible aspects of the school culture such as the values and assumptions, and helped to reveal whether these aspects have been changed or modified in provision for international students. The analysis of documents in this section

focused on one particular theme: 'Intangible Aspects Subject to Change'. This theme was coded as part of a set of thematic categories that were studied as analytic units within the research findings.

#### Collection and Analysis of Interviews

The work of Ouchi (1981), Peters and Waterman (1982), and Deal and Kennedy (1982) have all demonstrated that to get inside an organisation, it is necessary to:

Talk at length with the people; find out what they think is important to talk about; to hear the language they use; and to discover the symbols that reveal their assumptions, their beliefs, and the values to which they subscribe (Owens, 1995:93).

Much of the empirical evidence for this research relies on the views of key participants who have been involved in the development of the international unit at the school. Data was collected through interviews with the school principal, other senior administrators and international staff.

#### (a) Preliminary Interview

The Principal of the School and the Director of International Students were both involved in preliminary interviews during Term Two of 2002. Both interviews were semi-structured with a range of open-ended and closed questions (See Appendix III). Nunan (1992) states that "the semi-structured type of interview has been found to be particularly useful for researchers working in an interpretive context" (Nunan, 1992:149). The interviews took place at a time suitable to these people and in a relaxed atmosphere which allowed the administrators time to speak freely in the discussion. Each interview took around one hour to complete. The preliminary interviews had a two-fold purpose:

- (i) To gain foundational knowledge and descriptions related to the school culture and to the history of the international unit.
- (ii) To gather material that was useful in formulating additional questions suitable for the second set of interviews.

### (b) Interview

A second series of interviews was carried out during Term Three, with the Principal, the Director of International Students, Heads of Faculty, two staff Mercy Sisters and the International Staff. This group of administrative and teaching staff was chosen due to the implicit part they play in the creation and transmission of culture within the school. As experienced members of this community these people had a good understanding and appreciation of the school culture. The Heads of Faculty were provided with a copy of the interview questions prior to the interview to allow them time to share and discuss the questions with other members of their own faculty before the interview. This enabled the Head of Faculty to express some of the shared views and opinions of the teaching staff from within their teaching group at the interview.

The interviews provided a means to gaining a thick description of the school culture and an understanding of how the school's culture was changed and what effects had resulted. The interviews were semi-structured with a range of open ended and closed questions that were guided by the research questions (See Appendix III). Each interview took place at a time suitable to the people involved. The Heads of Faculty interviews were of a shorter format taking around thirty minutes to complete. The second interviews involving the Principal and the Director of International Students were more detailed, and took approximately one hour to complete. Ongoing informal interviews took place with the Director of the International Students at various times throughout the year in order to clarify incoming material.

The findings from these interviews were instrumental in the formation of this cultural analysis. The analysis of qualitative responses in this study was guided by Bogan and Biklen's (1992) version of organising interview data. Bogan and Biklen (1992) suggest taking long undisturbed periods of time to read over data collected during interviews. They then suggest generating preliminary coding categories for each emergent theme in the data. After further refinement, when the coding categories have been decided on, all of the data is coded using these categories. For this study, titles were developed for each thematic category so that they could

be studied as an analytic unit. This particular approach enabled the emphasis to be placed on the understanding and interpretation of data.

Table 2, Research Time-table 2002, provides a summary of the main activities that were carried out during the research year. The data collection phase included twenty staff interviews and ten observation days (in which time relevant school documents were also collected) all carried out on site. During Term Three and Term Four on either a Thursday or Friday morning the researcher was available to staff on site to return transcript material, answer questions that research participants may have, and cross-reference previous data collected to assist in the formal clarification of all information presented. In addition to this, regular informal meetings with the Director of the International Students assisted greatly in the formal clarification of incoming material throughout the year.

In order for the researcher to gain 'thick descriptions', the analysis task "required the researcher to reach across multiple data sources and to condense them" (Merriam, 1998:156). A triangulation chart was used to display where the supporting evidence was collected from (i.e. observation, document, interview), and to highlight dominant events, issues and ideas (ie clarifying emergent themes). This use of triangular methods in this way helped the researcher understand the situation, answer the research questions, and demonstrate precision in the case. Hence the use of multiple sources of evidence contributed greatly to the study's internal validity as they "essentially provide multiple measures of the same phenomenon" (Yin, 1989:97).

**TABLE 2 RESEARCH TIMETABLE 2002**

SPECIFIC ACTIVITIES	DATE
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Apply for Ethical approval at Massey University and Villa Maria College.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Prepare interview questions.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Prepare draft material for Introduction and Methodology Chapters.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Collect Physical Evidence: School Magazine / Department tour.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Collect Statistical Evidence: School Records.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Collect Documentary Evidence: School Charter, Special Character Objectives, Policies for International Students.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Carry out on-site observations: Swimming Sports, Athletics sports, School Assemblies, School Mass.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Collect relevant sources for Literature Review.</li> </ul>	January - March
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Prepare Culture Models and supplementary literature.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Review and process (tabulated / notation) documentary and statistical data.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Preliminary interviews with Principal and Director of International Students.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Carry out on-site observations: Open day, Levels Assembly.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Continue Literature Review.</li> </ul>	April - June
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Carry out staff interviews. Transcribed interviews sent back to participants. Interview transcripts analysed and coded.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Carry out on-site observations: International Weed celebrations, Mercy Day celebrations.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Formulate Triangulation Chart.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Findings written up.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Continue Literature Review.</li> </ul>	July - September
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Literature Review completed.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Draft material sent to Supervisor.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Draft material made available to Villa Maria College for research participants to view and comment.</li> </ul>	October - November
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Final draft edits completed.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Thesis submitted.</li> </ul>	December - January

### 3.9 Culture Models

In summarising the literature and accumulated research data of this study three culture models were designed and presented within the body of the thesis:

Model 1 'Villa Maria College School Culture Model' which is unique to this school's setting has the purpose of:

- (i) Providing a holistic description of the school culture for the school under study.
- (ii) Presenting an educational view of the concept of 'school culture.'
- (iii) Exploring the relationship that exists between the unit culture concept and the school culture concept.

Model 2 'The Change Wave Process Model' unique to the school setting has the purpose of:

- (i) Presenting a visual representation of the cultural change process as described by participants involved in the research.
- (ii) Providing a framework from which change examples can be identified and explained.

Model 3 'Cultural Collaborative Effectiveness Model' has the purpose of:

- (i) Providing an analytical tool for future critical evaluation activities relating to the ongoing development of the international unit, as well as evaluating other aspects of the school culture for the purpose of providing ongoing effective education.

### **3.10 Concluding Remarks**

This chapter has explored the setting and the participants involved in this study. A description of the research design has been presented along with an outline of the main limitations and strengths of the research design. This is followed by a detailed description of the instruments used to collect data and an indication of the ways in which the data was processed. The chapter has concluded with a brief outline of the three culture-based models that have been designed to visually support the research findings. The next chapter will present and discuss the first part of the findings of the study that involves providing a description of the school culture, and identifying links between the concepts of 'culture' and 'unit culture'.

## **Chapter Four**

### **The School Culture**

In order to identify change in a school culture and its corresponding impact, it is essential firstly to establish a clear understanding of the community culture. My entry into and understanding of the culture of this educational organisation has been shaped by the views of research participants, on site observations and material contained within historical and recent school documents. The findings and subsequent analysis over the following four chapters seek to provide insight and understanding of some of the interactive patterns involving people in the development and functioning of the Villa Maria College school culture.

Any discussion of organisational culture has its roots in the work of Kurt Lewin, who demonstrated that understanding human behaviour requires us to consider the whole situation in which behaviour occurs. The term 'whole situation' is defined as meaning both the person and the environment (Owens, 1995: 89).

To capture the wholeness and uniqueness of the Villa Maria College school culture has required an inspection of the shared meaningful interactive patterns that have molded the people and their environment together. This chapter presents a description of the Villa Maria College culture through the use of a Culture Model that is designed to illustrate the uniqueness of this school culture and highlight the relationship that exists between the school culture and unit culture concepts.

#### **4.1 A School Culture Model**

The culture of Villa Maria College is best considered as a multi-layered interactive set of humanistic and materialistic elements that combined form a number of vertical and horizontal human relationships. There are learning relations, discipline relations, authority relations, social relations, spiritual relations and affirmed personal experiences that are at variance within a school culture. In order to build up a detailed description of the school culture of Villa Maria College that uncovers educational elements and relationships, this study provides a culture model that

identifies what is shared and what is valued within the various groups that exist in this particular organisation.

Using the Beare *et al.* (1989) Model as a guide, and drawing on overlapping attributes from other culture models (Hofstede *et al.* 1990, Schein, 1992) the Villa Maria College School Culture Model (as presented by the researcher) in Figure 2 is designed to:

- (a) Provide a holistic description of the school culture.
- (b) Explain the relationship that exists between the unit culture concept and the school culture concept.
- (c) Present an educational view of the concept of 'school culture.'

The special features of this Model include:

Physical Sphere: describes the historical development of physical and human characteristics contained within the school boundary.

Cultural Core: describes the key set of intangible and intangible elements essential to the functioning of the school.

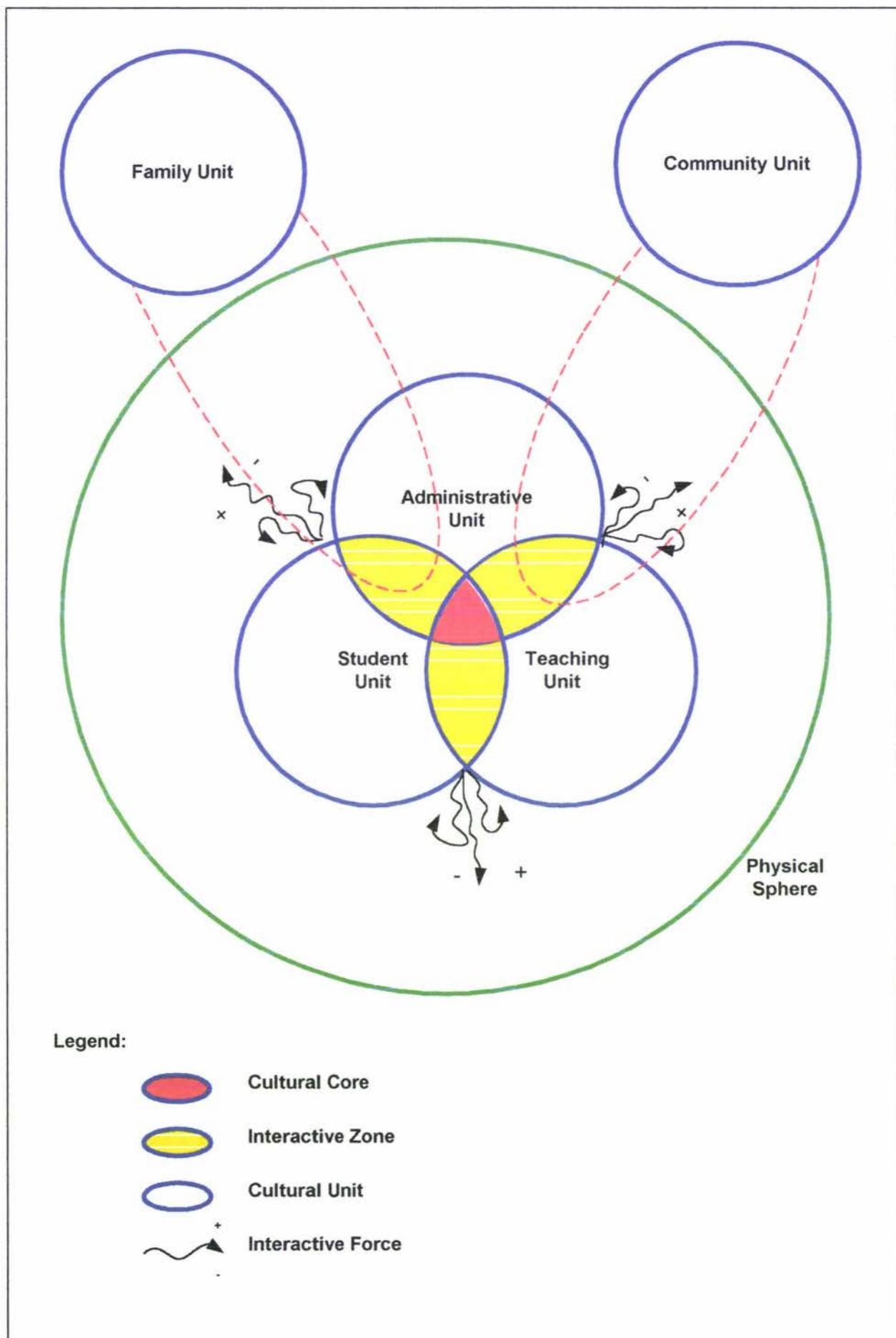
Cultural Units: describes five main identifiable human groups that contribute to the composition, creation and functioning of the school culture.

Interaction Zones: describes the shared verbal, behavioural and visual manifestations that result from the interaction between individuals or groups within the school community.

Interactive Forces: describes the positive or negative outcomes that can determine the strength of the organisational culture.

FIGURE 2

## VILLA MARIA COLLEGE SCHOOL CULTURE MODEL



## **Physical Sphere**

Held within the school boundary of Villa Maria College lies contextual and materialistic features that have been formed overtime through numerous interactive activities between individuals and groups as they work towards shared purposes in life. From the beginning through to today the people of Villa Maria College have shared in a common purpose to educate and develop young people in a warm, caring, Catholic environment.

The land on which Villa Maria College is situated, had been owned by Edward Jerningham Wakefield son of the famous colonist Edward Gibbon Wakefield. In 1865 Edward J Wakefield became financially embarrassed and was forced to relinquish his farm to Burnell and Sons. From the Burnells it passed to F.W. Delamain and then to others, some of whom subdivided the land. In 1880 Thomas W. Haslam, then professor in classics at Canterbury University bought the Villa Maria portion of the Wakefield farm. Haslam built a two storied home and beautified the grounds surrounding the home by planting the many English elms, oaks, cedars and natives, many of which are enjoyed by the members of the school community today. In time Haslam's property passed into the hands of the Joseph family who farmed the property until it was acquired by the Sisters of Mercy.

The first stepping stones in the cultural pathway of Villa Maria school were laid down in 1917 when the Villa Maria property, chosen and named by Bishop Brodie, was purchased by the Sisters of Mercy. The two storeyed building situated on the 15-acre property was redesigned to serve as a Convent, the Mother House of the newly amalgamated Communities of the Diocese of Christchurch.

The Order of the Sisters of Mercy is an international one, founded in Dublin in 1831. The focus of its work is the relief of suffering in every shape and form. The first Sisters of Mercy arrived in Auckland in 1850, and in Hokitika in 1878 from whence came the Villa Maria community. Renamed Villa Maria, the House of Mary, this house was not merely a place of learning, but one where the character was formed, and the art of living gospel values was developed (Principal, The Press, 2000).

The Foundress of Villa Maria, the first Mother General, Reverend Mother Mary Claver came into residence with her council on 2<sup>nd</sup> February 1918, and immediately set about laying a solid religious and scholastic foundation for a school that was to be based on traditional Catholic beliefs and values.

The Sisters of Mercy opened the school on February 18<sup>th</sup> 1918.

That day at least 14 young girls, most of school age, arrived to enrol. Among them were four boarders, two primary and two secondary. By the end of 1918 there were at least 26 girls on the school roll, most in the primary classes (Villa Maria College 75 Years 1918-1993:13).

Within a year, the boarding school block was added to the first building. In May 1920 Villa Maria was granted registration as a primary school under section 133 of the Education Act 1914, and from 1921 began serving as a parish school to both girls and boys. In 1922 a new gymnasium, a science room and a classroom were built to keep pace with an increase in student numbers. Professor Haslam's large drawing room was used as the earliest Chapel for prayer and Mass. Even though the school outgrew the chapel it still remains a special spiritual place for individual and class prayer. Since the 1960s Mass for the whole school has been celebrated in the College Hall.

The promising developments of the early 1920's were soon stemmed by the depression years of the 1930's. From the late 1920s through to the mid 1940s the Sisters of Mercy worked through a number of difficulties. In particular this period was marked by financial struggle and small numbers as Villa Maria School offered a Catholic education to both day pupils and boarders. With the opening of St Teresas' School in 1936 boys were gradually transferred from Villa Maria and it reverted to a girls' college in 1941. By the mid 1940s the Sisters of Mercy had seriously considered closing the secondary school as two attempts to gain registration as a private secondary school had been unsuccessful.

1946 saw the tireless efforts and shared faith of the Sisters of Mercy rewarded as their third attempt to gain full registration was finally granted. At this time teaching in the secondary school was undertaken by three Sisters, including the principal of

the secondary school. The efforts of the Sisters to keep the secondary school open and to gain registration was well worth their endeavours, as the secondary school numbers grew rapidly between 1950 and 1970.

In 1950 Villa Maria had 48 pupils in the secondary school, by 1970 that number had surged to 471 pupils. With an expanding school roll the Sisters of Mercy took the courageous decision to build a separate secondary school block of two classrooms, a science room, a library and a cloak room (Villa Maria College 75 Years 1918-1993:15).

This block was officially opened on July 13<sup>th</sup> 1952 by Bishop Joyce. The new block was named Claver, after the foundress and first Superior of Villa Maria Convent, Mother Claver. The Sisters were given an additional boost in 1952 with the formation of the Parent Teacher Association. In short this volunteer parent group built two tennis courts, a swimming pool and leveled the playing fields, and have since this time contributed greatly to the facilities of this school. In 1966 an additional classroom block was built to accommodate growing numbers, which included a staff room, sick bay and offices. In addition to this in 1967 another classroom block with a large library and laboratory was also opened.

The 1970s and 1980s marked three major milestones in the history of Villa Maria College. Firstly, in the 1970s families witnessed the phasing out of the lower primary school, with only Form One and Two remaining by 1977. Secondly, due to demanding repair costs required for the boarding accommodation, the Sisters of Mercy decided to inform parents in 1974 that the boarding school would close over a four year period. This closure marked the end of an era in the college's history. In 1979, Villa Maria became a day school only.

Thirdly the end of an era was soon to be marked by the start of a new era, as the college became integrated into the state school system. In the mid 1970's the Sisters set up a Board of Governors to assist with the integration of the college into the state system.

On October 9<sup>th</sup>, 1981 the Sisters of Mercy of the Christchurch Diocese signed an Integration Agreement with the Government whereby Villa Maria College became part of the state system under certain agreed conditions (Villa Maria College 75 Years 1918-1993:16).

In just over one month these conditions were met and on the 11<sup>th</sup> of November 1981 Villa Maria College along with St Thomas of Canterbury College became the first two secondary schools in Christchurch to integrate into the state system under the Private Schools Conditional Integration Act of 1975. This act was the result of several hard years of determined lobbying by Roman Catholic Schools in New Zealand for greater financial assistance from the government to accommodate expanding rolls and the growing parent expectations of education.

The Integration Agreement set down that Villa Maria continue to provide education of the 'Special Character' of a Roman Catholic School. In its general school programme and in its religious instruction the college had the right to live and teach the values of Jesus Christ (Villa Maria College 75 Years 1918-1993:17).

From this time the Sisters of Mercy invested much capital and effort to carry out improvements to bring the school up to state standards. In the years to follow the government also provided financial support towards various improvement projects.

As part of the initial integration agreement, a new block of classrooms, two laboratories, a clothing room and a resource room was built in 1984 and named Ashby, in respect of Bishop Ashby who supported the college for so long. In 1988 a two-classroom block was built and named Brodie, after Bishop Brodie. In 1990 a Bursar's Office was built, in 1991 areas were remodeled into a home economics suite and a computer room and in 1992 a video suite was built into the upstairs common room (Villa Maria College 75 Years 1918-1993:17).

These new places of teaching and learning also became additional places for the sharing of Christian values. The Sisters of Mercy were successful in their endeavours to fulfil the Proprietor's role under the 1975 Integration Act and their Company Board continued to work closely with the Board of Trustees (replacing the Board of Governors in 1989 as a change under 'Tomorrow's Schools') to provide facilities, resources and staff of the highest quality for the students.

After almost sixty years of teaching or as mistresses for boarders, the Sisters of Mercy who had established the foundational belief and values system of the College had started to move into other ministries and the teaching staff has since become predominantly committed lay men and women. In 1992, the present day

principal, a former student of the school, was appointed the College's first lay principal. Today the school values the presence of two Sisters on staff who, combined with dedicated staff members, continue in the traditional spirit of the Sisters of Mercy to maintain and sustain the life of this special character school. Evidence of the continuing Mercy spiritual strength and character is found on Mercy Day, which features as one of the most celebrated days of the Villa school year. "Mercy Day is a fun day to be shared with everyone, a day when we live the Spirit of Mercy" (Pupil, 1987 – 92, Villa Maria College 75 Years 1918-1993:88).

In the past decade the efforts of the Board of Trustees, the Principal, Senior Administrators and an enthusiastic Teaching Staff clearly indicate the desire to continue the work of the Sisters of Mercy in developing a spiritual place that suits the learning needs of all students. Recent physical developments indicate that the traditional spirit remains strong and constant with the completion of three major projects in the past five years. The new Gymnasium and Auditorium were opened and blessed by Bishop Cunneen in 1998, then, as part of stage one of a ten-year Capital Development Plan established in 1998 by the Board of Trustees, Staff and Proprietor and well supported by the PTA, a new Library and Information Resource Centre and Administration Block was opened on the 12<sup>th</sup> of August 2001. As with many previous facilities of educational significance the new Library was named after a dedicated person from the school and the Sisters of Mercy, Sister Pauline O'Regan. The opening ceremony included prayers, readings and a candle lit by the Head Girl to commemorate all those who had been part of Villa Maria's history.

"Education is always an exciting and challenging journey to which there is no end" (Principal, The Press, 2000). Along this journey, each decade in the living history of Villa Maria College has seen people working together to forge out the special Mercy school spirit that today permeates through every avenue of school life. Found within this spirit is the Villa girls' love, loyalty, compassion and commitment to their school and to each other. From a small school situated in a rural area, Villa Maria College has flourished into a prominent modern Catholic educational community in the city of Christchurch. Today the land on which Villa Maria College is situated now holds: 42 classrooms, a Chapel, an Administration Block and Staff Room, the School Hall, the Library and Computer Suite, a Student Centre, a

Learning Support Centre, the Career Offices, an Auditorium and Music Centre, a Gymnasium, playing courts, sports fields, two separate car-park areas and gardens. During the year 2002 Villa Maria College held: 745 pupils from Years 7-13, including 38 international fee-paying students and 85 staff members.

Many of the traditional features, values, beliefs and symbolic material created by the people of this school community still have prominence and relevance within the context of the present day school culture. Gaining insight into the historical development of Villa Maria College gave the researcher an understanding and appreciation of the unique foundational contextual and human qualities that constitute the culture of this school community. Establishing this information was essential preparation prior to on-site fieldwork involving school members and most relevant for ascertaining how the international unit contributed to the changing shape of the school culture in recent years.

### **Cultural Core**

At the heart of this schools culture is a 'cultural core', which is made up of a key set of tangible and intangible elements that are central to the functioning of the school. The cultural core elements of Villa Maria College have been formed through years of interactive activity between five main cultural units. These include the Administrative Unit, the Teaching Unit, the Student Unit, the Family Unit and the Community Unit. Whilst the Administrative Unit may have a strong influence over the make up of the cultural core elements, all cultural units have contributed to the creation, composition and strength of the cultural core of this organisation. The following essential elements make up the cultural core of Villa Maria College: the school philosophy, values, assumptions, and symbols.

## School Philosophy

*"The philosophy, beliefs, values and symbols of Villa Maria College are based on the Catholic Religion." (Principial, 2002).*

Articulated in official documentation, values, symbols and in the personal beliefs of members of the school community, Catholic beliefs provide the philosophical foundation for this school as a mission agent to the Roman Catholic Church.

*"We are a Catholic College that has a special character. We try to operate in everything that we do in the light of Gospel values and teachings. This involves mercy, compassion, understanding and love. We hope that through all our structural objectives, statements and mission we articulate the Gospel values and a Christian culture that comes through in practice." (Director of Religious Studies, 2002).*

The Catholic faith holds a philosophy that promotes a lifestyle and way of living that guides the work, curriculum and actions of people in this school. According to O'Donnell (2001:99) there are four features of this philosophy that are significant to the Catholic school:

It is Christ-centred, which gives the school its Catholic Christian identity. Life is modelled on the values, teaching and example of Jesus Christ.

It is a life-directing faith, providing answers to questions about the meaning of human existence and determining moral action and behaviour.

Catholic Philosophy is community focused.

Believers are called into a life of service. A Catholic Christian is the person who looks after the needs of others both within the Catholic community and in the wider world (O'Donnell, 2001:99).

*"Villa Maria College is a school that gives students the opportunity to understand and experience things Catholic. We have the desire to share and express the Catholic culture here at school and help others share that culture at home." (Mercy Chaplain, 2002).*

Also handed down from the Sisters of Mercy the Mercy Charism is a feature of this Catholic College that gives the school its unique character.

*"The character of our school is Mercy. That means trying to provide a warm, caring compassionate climate for our girls to feel happy and secure in their learning." (Mercy Sister, 2002).*

*"It is a Mercy school, not only by our connections with other Mercy schools and the Sisters of Mercy, but also in the stories that we tell and share, in the things that we celebrate and in the values that are unconsciously there and that have been part of the school for so long." (Mercy Chaplain, 2002).*

All involved in the school community are encouraged to practice the attributes of Mercy. These include:

- \*Education that is grounded in the Gospels.
- \*Respect for the dignity, worth and potential of every human person.
- \*Concern for the poor and disadvantaged.
- \*Concern for justice.

The primary focus of the Mercy tradition in this school is the provision of an education committed to the holistic development of women, as reflected in the school's Mission Statement:

To provide a Catholic Education of the highest standard encompassing true Christian values and a total environment where students are encouraged to reach their potential in spiritual, personal and intellectual development and learn to: Prize what is of value.

This statement is essentially a formal acknowledgement of the special character of the school. The mission gives meaning to the intangible forces that motivate the people of the school community to participate with purpose in teaching and learning. This Mission Statement reveals that Christian values and the development of the whole person are important features of this educational community, and that the members of this school are encouraged to value the learning process.

All students and staff, Catholic or non-Catholic, have exposure to the Catholic belief system in daily practice and at special ceremonial activities in which beliefs are acknowledged and expressed. Each student who is accepted for Villa Maria College is required to take part in Religious Education classes and in the religious life of the College in Mass, prayer, community service, retreats, and the general day-to-day living of the Gospel values. The Catholic, Mercy and personal philosophical elements are woven together to provide a framework that shapes the activities of people in this school. These three philosophical threads together strongly influence student and teacher motivation, student capability, teacher responsibility for learning and overall educational success of this school. These elements have also determined the various moral values that have become established at Villa Maria College.

## **Values**

Values consume every space visible and invisible in this school. Some are stated or identifiable on paper or held within the various symbols scattered throughout the school, while others found in the verbal and behavioural manifestations are often less obvious. Whether it is traditional, spiritual, educational or personal values, each in their own way guides the behaviour of the people of this school. In consideration of a school culture it is important to appreciate both the values that people hold as well as the value that people place on objects, as both influence personal and organisational outcomes. Rokeach's (1973) work 'The nature of values' offers the theory in which human values constitute the core concepts of all studies of culture, society, personality, social attitudes and behaviour (Cohen, 1978). Rokeach (1973) suggests that it is values such as freedom, achievement, security, pleasure, friendship and equality that form the basic concepts for determining and understanding human behaviour. These values combined with the following educational values hold specific relevance to the members of this educational community: meaning of life, creativity, ambition, environment protection, goal choosing, health, discipline, honour, and success.

A feature of this special character school is the accumulation of shared moral values encompassing spiritual, Christian and personal values that hold

significance to the overall organisational culture. It is clearly evident that at Villa Maria College the Catholic beliefs and traditions form the base from which most of the moral values have evolved. O'Donnell (2001) provides the description that:

The official charters of New Zealand Catholic schools clearly state that the core of their special character lies in the right of the school to live and teach the values of Jesus Christ as expressed within the Scriptures and the teaching of the Roman Catholic Church. In other words, these 'gospel values' or 'Christian values' not only determine the activity of teaching and learning, but, consciously and subconsciously, also shape the lived experience of members within the culture. They provide a guideline for behaviour, morality, and relationships for the Board of Trustees, the principal, staff, and students, and as such, they are interpreted and applied by members of the school culture in the daily context of school life (O'Donnell, 2001:108).

For this Catholic school it is the Mercy values established by the foundress of the Mercy congregation Catherine McAuley, and expressed in the work of the Sisters of Mercy that prevail as the dominant values to guide the behaviour of people at Villa Maria College. Values such as love, mercy, compassion, kindness, friendship, honesty, generosity, personal responsibility, hard work, determination, service, social justice, respect for self, others and tradition, are respected, nurtured and articulated in this school community. Further to this as a New Zealand Catholic school Villa Maria College is committed to the partnership values of Te Tiriti o Waitangi. It is this diverse range of educational, moral and personal value concepts that together "define a standard of goodness, quality, or excellence that under-girds behaviour and decision making, and what people care about" at Villa Maria College (Ott, 1989, cited in Deal and Peterson 1999:26).

### **Assumptions**

Drawn from individual perceptions, beliefs and the value system of an organisation, assumptions form a set of preconscious and taken-for-granted ideas that are often held in the minds of individuals and not written down. As Deal and Peterson (1999) suggest assumptions are "deeply embedded in the cultural tapestry, and they shape thoughts and actions in powerful ways" (Deal and Peterson, 1999:27). Due to the alignment of assumptions with beliefs and values it is often hard to find or even assess the relevance of cultural assumptions in the

functioning of a school culture. Interviews with administrators and teachers and a review of school charter documents revealed consistent descriptive patterns in relation to the perception of the underlying assumptions that are present at Villa Maria College. Some of the consistent patterns relating to organisational assumptions at Villa Maria College include:

(i) That teachers and students can work effectively and achieve obtainable goals within a Roman Catholic structure.

(ii) That teaching and upholding of Roman Catholic values in an educational environment is beneficial to Catholic and non-Catholic students.

(iii) That the Roman Catholic educational environment provides a warm, caring, and safe learning environment for all students.

Though sometimes invisible, and even taken for granted, it is this set of values, beliefs and assumptions that are intertwined to give meaning to the expressions and actions of members of this organisation as they work towards providing quality education through a Christian life. It is these three vital elements that hold the organisational structure in place. Evidence of this deeper meaningful structure of life is further reflected and transmitted through symbolic elements that are spread throughout the school.

## **Symbols**

As you move through this school the values, beliefs and underlying assumptions essential to Villa Maria College are regularly displayed, played and relayed through the panoply of symbolic structures, artifacts, activities, and language that hold religious, spiritual and personal meaning unique to this school. Essentially it is the symbolic matter of this school that “plays an important role in explaining the essence of a culture” (Fairfield-Sonn 2001:39).

Deal and Peterson (1999) have recognised that architectural physical symbolic elements can signal what is important, tie the community together, provide a

message of deeper purposes and values, and forge pride. In attempting to develop resources and facilities in keeping with the special character, members of Villa Maria College past and present have developed physical structures and symbolic resources that successfully achieve what Deal and Peterson (1999) have identified.

Certain physical features that communicate meaning to the people from the inside and out have marked a period in the school's history and thereafter have become part of the school's cultural heritage. The most recent examples have been the opening of the new Library and Information Centre and the Administration Block in 2001. These modern spacious buildings symbolise the schools move into the new millenium. Both facilities combine well with other buildings in a fusion of traditional and modern structures sharing a set of colours and resources that situate the members of this school community well into the modern professional educational era.

From the central symbolic hub of the new administration block through to the outer-most classroom this school holds a vast array of symbolic resources special to the people of this school. Table 3, Symbolic Examples, highlights features of the school that are strategically placed around school to transmit religious or educational messages of spirituality, respect, pride, unity and achievement. These symbols are a constant reminder of the historical progress and shared roots that are special to this organisation. It is this collection of symbols and others not mentioned that provides an outward display of shared meaning, which effectively provide direction, purpose and a sense of belonging for the people who pass through this school.

TABLE 3

## SYMBOLIC EXAMPLES

<p><b>Educational Symbols</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mission Statement.</li> <li>• School Charter.</li> <li>• Special Character Agreement.</li> <li>• School-wide Curriculum.</li> <li>• Teaching Resources.</li> <li>• Displays of students' works.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Religious Symbols</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pictures and statues of Mary, Mother of Jesus.</li> <li>• Crucifixes.</li> <li>• Photographs and paintings of Mercy Sisters.</li> <li>• School Mercy Crest.</li> <li>• School Motto: Ut Probetis Potiora.</li> <li>• Mercy, charism, values and goals.</li> <li>• Mercy dolls.</li> <li>• Building names.</li> <li>• House names.</li> <li>• Pictures of Catherine McAuley.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Achievement Symbols</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Historical and recent achievements: photographs, trophies and certificates relating to academic / cultural / sporting activities.</li> <li>• Mercy Awards.</li> <li>• Bishop Lyons Shield.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Diversity Symbols</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sister City Agreements.</li> <li>• International Flags.</li> <li>• Nationality Displays.</li> <li>• Culture club Advertising.</li> <li>• Nationality gifts.</li> </ul>

The main cultural core elements found at the heart of Villa Maria College, describe an educational community that is built on a set of common overarching values and beliefs and assumptions that are based on the delivery of an effective Catholic education. Even though each element is subject to subtle modifications as the continually changing contextual variables impinge upon interactive processes, the core elements described here have remained fairly constant and widespread throughout the life of this school for eighty-four years. The stable, underlying social meanings expressed in such elements continues to shape the activities and behaviour of individuals and groups which in turn determines the strength and stability of the overall organisational culture. Hence the core elements transmit invisible forces that bind the people together in cultural units.

### **Cultural Units**

This Model is supportive of the view that the culture of a school is made up of a mix of cultures (Mclaughlin *et al.* 1990, Huberman, 1992, Owens, 1995). As Owens (1995) points out:

In describing organisational culture we must be aware that sub-units of the organisation have cultures of their own which possess distinctive attributes (Owens, 1995:87).

This school is a multiple-culture organisation, not merely because it supports a mixture of ethnic groups, but because it is a complex environment made up of overlapping interactive human groups that are themselves composed of a varying range of cultural characteristics.

*“There are a variety of cultures in the school, nowadays that cannot be avoided because we are such a diverse society. We have ethnic cultures, academic cultures, cultures of music, singing, dance, drama and cultures of sport. Here at Villa integrated into each of these special cultures we have the attributes of special character. Each group is bound together by the special character of our school because that is what provides the foundation and the reason behind everything that we do here.” (Mercy Chaplain, 2002).*

Like most other schools, Villa Maria College is comprised of three main identifiable internal cultural groups, administrators, teachers and students and two external

cultural groups, family groups and community groups. These groups hold other definable units that contribute special humanistic characteristics towards school life. The five main groups regularly over-lap producing a vast array of intersecting zones that forms the binding fabric of the school. The underlying values, beliefs, and assumptions of the school's special character provide the basic threads that weave the various cultural units together as a close community. Through various interactive activities it is essentially the people of these groups who colour the fabric.

## **Internal Units**

### Administrative Unit

The main identifiable groups found in this cultural unit include: the Board of Trustees, the senior management team, heads of faculty, deans, and auxiliary staff. The primary roles of people involved in this unit are generally formal and professional in nature, though the various sub-units do contain their own informal rules and procedures. The shared responsibilities of members within these groups tend towards the more formal activities of managing the school policy, structure, curriculum, subject matter, performance indicators, rituals, ceremonies, discipline, staff development and pastoral care and faith development. The members of the Board of Trustees, senior management team and heads of faculty are heavily involved in the management of cultural core elements. Hence the members of this cultural unit are regularly involved in establishing and maintaining stable authority, discipline, spiritual and social relations with members of the other cultural units.

### Teacher Unit

The main identifiable groups found in this cultural unit include: peer groups, faculty groups, class groups, house groups, vertical form groups and special character groups. The formal and professional actions of teachers revolve around teaching practices, subject knowledge, discipline, student welfare, student performance and the faith development of students. Hence the members of this cultural unit are largely involved in coordinating and encouraging positive learning relations, discipline relations, spiritual relations and social relations. Essentially the teachers are the cultural leaders who act as value coordinators, coordinating interaction

between the various cultural units as they overlap. This co-ordination involves encouraging, promoting and reinforcing positive interactive patterns between individuals and groups.

### Student Unit

The main identifiable groups in this cultural unit include: peer groups, class groups, vertical form groups, house groups, team groups, support groups, and special character groups. Members of this cultural unit are involved in a wide cross-section of relationships across cultural units: learning relations, discipline relations, authority relations, spiritual relations and social relations. Apart from their peer groups, the students are involved with groups that would in most cases have a staff member coordinating or influencing group behaviour. Hence this cultural unit contains the most vulnerable members of the school community. While having formed their own personal values and beliefs, students may still take on values, beliefs or norms from people around them such as other peers or teachers, which can directly influence their behaviour in the organisation.

### **External Units**

There are two distinguishable units situated outside the school that at various times during the school year move into the inner school sphere to contribute ideas, support, and materials.

### Family Unit

The main identifiable groups found in this cultural unit include: parents and children, relatives, host families, and guardians. The members of this cultural unit are involved in authority, discipline and social relations with members of the other cultural units. As a special character school Villa Maria College has always maintained strong ties with the family groups. Within the family unit lies a rich fund of skills and expertise, knowledge and experience, kindness and faith from which the school regularly draws on. This valuable human resource contributes much to the educational and spiritual content of the school, as it is this group that delivers essential forms of coaching, encouragement, and inspiration to the child/children

necessary for them to achieve the personal goals set down within the school system.

### Community Unit

Like all schools, Villa Maria College has complex relationships with the local community and national organisations situated outside the immediate school sphere of influence. There are numerous groups situated beyond the school boundaries that pass through intercepting and influencing functions and outcomes within the school itself. The main identifiable groups found within this cultural unit include: government agencies, sports groups, cultural groups, and business organisations. The roles of people involved in this unit can be formal and professional in nature or informal and casual as relationships are primarily social and service based. Within this school community these are relationships that are jointly created, controlled and shared through close spiritual and communicative links. The most influential external group for schools in New Zealand is the Ministry of Education. People from within this sector share in formal responsibilities and activities that relate to the managing of school policy, structure, curriculum, subject matter and performance indicators of the school. While the relationship of this group appears on the surface to be primarily administrative, the input and influence of this group has widespread effects on other relationships throughout the school.

It is this agglomeration of highly interactive unit cultures meshed together in a symphony of overlapping personal and organisational action and dialogue that collectively contributes to the organisational whole.

*"From the point of special character each group contributes to the one culture."  
(Director of Religious Studies, 2002).*

### **Interaction Zones**

The symbolic bonds that are formed between individuals and groups are established within the interaction zones of this school community. At this cultural interface, interaction between individuals and groups produce shared verbal, behavioural and visual manifestations which make up the tangible elements which

are found more obviously at the surface of the school face. It is within the interactive zones that the culture of Villa Maria College is created, modified, transmitted or removed. It is within this zone that the actual relationship of the unit culture and the school culture concepts becomes a reality.

### **A Shared Cultural Network**

Often not visible, but always found within the interactive zones of a school is the presence of a formal and informal cultural network. According to Deal and Peterson (1999):

This network is actually the primary means of communication within the organisation; it ties together all parts... the network is important because it not only transmits information but also interprets the significance of the information (Deal and Kennedy, 1982:85).

Within the interaction zones the cultural network operates primarily through shared verbal and non-verbal expressions. The network actively operates as the transmitter of values, beliefs, ideas, knowledge, stories, and gossip.

#### Formal Communication

Within the formal network, verbal and non-verbal language is used largely to guide the actions, and to influence the behaviour of people. Like most schools Villa Maria College has an 'organisational vocabulary', or 'school language' that has developed over the years and continues to evolve in daily life, reflecting the special character of this educational organisation. According to Beare *et al.* (1989):

The language which people inside an organisation repeatedly use, and the ways in which it is used also reflect, either directly or indirectly, intentionally or unintentionally, a values base (Beare *et al.* 1989:180).

This is certainly the case at Villa Maria College as the beliefs and values of this school are regularly expressed through formal language and spiritual gestures used during formal situations such as in class prayer, school Mass, assemblies, special character group meetings, retreats, opening ceremonies or award ceremonies. The formal language that is communicated during such events on a

regular basis allows members of this school to gain information on how they should conduct themselves in certain situations. The formal language expressed in these situations provides a respect, safety and achievement guide for the members of this school community.

### Informal Communication

This school like any other holds its own informal language matrix found in daily communication inside and outside the classroom. A diverse range of site, staff and educational descriptive terms, jargon, slogans and chants can be found spread through the various activities of a school year. For example: on a daily basis or at special religious, sporting or cultural events throughout the year staff and students repeatedly use names such as Mercy, Brodie, Claver, McAuley and Ennis which are aligned to the Catholic character of the school as they signify important people, events or places relevant to this community. The members of this school use informal language to gain individual identity, relate to other students and gain a sense of belonging to a peer group, class, house group or the school as a whole. At Villa Maria College girls are encouraged to participate in informal communication during form class activities, special character group activities, or whole school sporting and cultural fixtures to promote the formation of positive relationships between individuals and between cultural units.

### **Shared Knowledge through Teaching and Learning**

Through the broad professional interactive activities involved in teaching and learning processes, the teachers and students of Villa Maria College combine together in the challenges and joys of many shared knowledge experiences that produce some of the more powerful interactive forces special to this school.

### A Shared Curriculum

At Villa Maria College the sharing of knowledge is not confined to the standard core curriculum subjects. This school is concerned with the holistic development of young women which involves the development of the person in all aspects of humanity. Through a Catholic education the school presents a full life experience

in which relationships with God and other human beings is provided through nurtured spirituality and faith.

As a special character school all girls of Villa Maria College take part in Religious Education classes through which they become familiar with a set of teachers, school beliefs and values, resources, and skills unique to their school. The religious curriculum of this school which provides the formal integration of the school's special character is not confined to the classroom; instead it is spread across all teaching situations where the students are further encouraged to share in their creative skills and to build on their faith together. A diverse range of shared Catholic religious activities and ceremonies throughout the school year visually and spiritually support the religious curriculum delivered in class. The shared knowledge gained from such experiences allows the girls to learn about how they should conduct themselves in school and outside of school.

There are a number of memorable extra-curricular activities that give the members of this school community the opportunity to celebrate the special character of Villa Maria College and leave the students with unique long-term school memories. For example, each year the students engage in spiritual retreats within their year groups. This involves a programme of reflection, prayer and activities that are designed to support students in their overall spiritual, social and religious development. Essentially, retreats provide opportunities for students to gain an understanding of their relationship with God and their relationship with others in their school.

Year 9 Retreat: Retreat a marvellous experience! A day full of fun, laughter and a time to reflect on our relationship with God, family and peers (School Magazine, 2001:10).

Year 11 Retreat: This day was a great learning experience. We learnt about God and his ways more deeply and thoroughly. It was not just about worshipping God; it was about doing fun activities with God involved (School Magazine, 2001:10).

In addition to this, important to the members of this school are the Mercy Day celebrations. This day opens with a School Mass and always sees the students openly share in the spirit of the Sisters of Mercy by giving to others.

Mercy Day is one of the most celebrated days of the school year. Last year we ran novelty races, chalk drawing competitions, a variety concert, and a coin trail for the people of Somalia. Every second year handicapped children are invited to visit us for the day when we entertain them with a concert, play games with them and have a shared lunch. Thus Mercy Day is a fun day to be shared with everyone, a day when we live the spirit of Mercy. (Student, 1992, Villa Maria College 75 Years 1918-1993:88).

Mercy Day is a very good day as it opens our eyes to those who are less fortunate than ourselves. We get to give a little bit and we help out for a good cause. Even though some are not as fortunate as others, we are all special and are here for a reason. I think it's great how the Villa pupils help out so willingly for the care of others. This day makes me value how lucky I am. (Student, School Magazine, 2001:9).

The religious knowledge that is shared at this school across the cultural units whether in formal or informal activities is filled with information about life, lifestyles, life choices, opportunities in life and enjoying life.

### Shared Norms

Through cultural interaction within various groups the Villa Maria College student soon acquires a set of organisational norms that strongly influence the development of their "perceptions, values and attitudes" while at school (Owens, 1995:89). A regular set of shared knowledge experiences formulated by students before coming to Villa Maria College, and those gained after starting at the school, allow students to quickly acquire a set of organisational norms. Organisational norms have been regularly formed, shared and modified by individuals in cultural units throughout the history of the school. At Villa Maria College the norms have developed informally and formally through the use of school rules, dress codes, religious ceremonies or as administrators and teachers articulate standards and appropriate ways to act and interact. According to Deal and Peterson (1999) "norms consolidate assumptions, values and beliefs" (Deal and Peterson, 1999:27). This is certainly the case at Villa Maria College where the members of

teaching groups and special character groups regularly reinforce positive Catholic norms by encouraging students to work and interact in a caring Christian way.

### **Shared Activities**

All schools are made up of a set of formal and informal activities through which members of the community share time, energy and emotion. Regular informal activities between cultural units generally form the daily rituals of the school, while the more formal activities signify important ceremonies special to the school.

#### Shared Rituals

Rituals unique to this school hold symbolic value that makes up an integral part of the cultural structure of the organisation. Villa Maria College has a strong set of routine behavioural rituals that the members of the school are expected to follow and many of which carry a multitude of meanings. Table 4, Ritualistic Examples, highlights specific rituals that are designed to promote social order, build security or connect members to the mission, values or beliefs of this school. Such rituals provide visible examples of what this organisation stands for. The ritualistic procedures of this school are clearly infused with Christian meaning and purpose that permeate throughout every avenue of this school. Such rituals are used as systematic and repeatable ways of conveying and confirming the spiritual and educational values, beliefs and symbols that hold relevance to this organisation.

TABLE 4

## RITUALISTIC EXAMPLES

RITUAL		DESIGN PURPOSE
Promote Social Order	<p>School bell.</p> <p>Vertical form class meeting.</p> <p>Levels assembly.</p> <p>School assembly.</p>	 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Time management.</li> <li>• Ease of administration.</li> <li>• Encourage school routines.</li> <li>• Enhance group affiliation.</li> <li>• Symbolise punctuality virtue.</li> </ul>
Promote Special Character and Social Security	<p>Peer tutoring.</p> <p>Prayer group.</p> <p>Rosary group.</p> <p>St Vincent de Paul group.</p> <p>Mercy Works group.</p> <p>Justice and Peace group.</p>	 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Build spirit and pride.</li> <li>• Enhance group affiliation.</li> <li>• Nurture informal relationships.</li> <li>• Provide pastoral care.</li> <li>• Promote a sense of security and belonging to the school.</li> </ul>
Promote Symbolic Connections	<p>Vertical House Group activities.</p> <p>Catholic rituals – Communal Worships, Rites of Reconciliation, Liturgies, Sign of the Cross, Class prayer, Assembly prayer.</p> <p>Te Ropu Kapahaka.</p>	 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Build spirit and pride.</li> <li>• Encourage belief and value expressions.</li> <li>• Promote a sense of belonging.</li> </ul>

### Shared Ceremonies

On a grander scale formal ceremonies mark important transitional points on the school calendar: these are used to celebrate school life, signify that something important has occurred, signify that education has taken place, acknowledge that the staff has successfully completed their duties, acknowledge and praise achievement and reinforce the meaning and purpose of education at this school. Table 5, Ceremonial Examples, highlights some of the significant ceremonial events of the calendar year at Villa Maria College, and indicates the purpose of each selected example. This list indicates that the students of Villa Maria College are frequently provided with a balance of formal, educational and spiritual activities that are designed to bind the people together. These ceremonies are events that generate mass attention and large-scale cultural impact. In particular the regular religious ceremonies of Villa Maria College have helped to keep Catholic values, beliefs and norms uppermost in the minds and hearts of the people. The pageantry that accompanies such formal enactments of culture reinforces the special character and religious spirit of this school. Whether they are extravagant or simple cultural events, formal ceremonies help this school celebrate their joys and sorrows, their achievements and their sacred symbols. Many of the shared ceremonial experiences form the activities which students and staff together remember for life.

**TABLE 5 CEREMONIAL EXAMPLES**

CEREMONY		DESIGN PURPOSE
Welcoming Ceremonies	Student orientation Powhiri.	 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Shape and mould new members.</li> <li>• Bind people together.</li> <li>• Communicate school beliefs and values.</li> <li>• Provide a sense of belonging.</li> </ul>
Sporting / Cultural Ceremonies	Swimming sports. Athletic sports. Bishop Lyons' Shield Challenge. Cross-country. Culture Group activities. International Week celebrations.	 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Celebrate and share school talents.</li> <li>• Generate school spirit and pride.</li> <li>• Encourage participation and competition.</li> <li>• Bind people together.</li> </ul>
Religious Ceremonies.	Opening Mass. School Term Mass. Ash Wednesday. Easter Liturgies. End of Term Mass. All Saints Day. Final Mass.	 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Celebrate, communicate and reinforce school beliefs and values.</li> <li>• Acknowledge special events on the Catholic calendar.</li> <li>• Provide a spiritual boost.</li> <li>• Provide a sense of belonging to the Catholic family.</li> </ul>
Life Celebration Ceremonies	Retreats. Mercy Day. International Assembly. International Week.	 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Celebrate, communicate and reinforce school and personal beliefs and values.</li> <li>• Reinforce school pride.</li> <li>• Practice the attributes of Mercy.</li> </ul>
Finishing Ceremonies	Prize Giving. Graduation.	 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Celebrate achievement and success.</li> <li>• Recognise special contributions of staff and students.</li> <li>• Farewell leaving staff and students.</li> </ul>

\* Each example is a celebration of life at Villa Maria College

## Interactive Forces

The various interactive activities that take place in daily life at a school produce forces that impact upon a wide range of individual or institutional outcomes. The positive or negative status of the outcomes will largely determine the strength of a school culture. In order to maintain positive interactive forces, a major goal for this school is that staff and students work closely together to acquire the knowledge, skills and attitudes needed to function effectively within the school culture, in their own unit, and across other units. The regular use and reinforcement of the shared meaningful Catholic and Mercy components carried out between the cultural units of this school ensures that positive interactive forces far outweigh the negative and that the school holds firm a strong and stable Catholic community culture.

For example:

*“During the year 2002 PPTA industrial action provided a number of difficult situations which the school community needed to work through. One situation in particular provided the opportunity for the school to dig deep and look at what the traditions say about dealing with difficult situations as a community. The school provided a special Catholic ritual during a normal assembly to reflect on the traditions that are important to the school and to utilise the traditional resources to address the issues at hand. This special ritual included: kneeling in silence to think about the issues, focussing on the cross, inviting Jesus to take the concerns of our hearts away, prayer, a lit candle that was taken to the Chapel where girls could go during the day to light their own candles and pray for peace in the school. This special ritual also gave the principal the opportunity to address the issues and place everything that had happened in the context of our Catholic and Mercy tradition. Often what stands out are those extraordinary experiences that nobody can predict. What helps us here is everyone working together to try and make it possible to dig deep into the resources that we have here, or in our own hearts or in the things that we have been taught to help ourselves as a community.” (Mercy Chaplain, 2002).*

## 4.2 Concluding Remarks

Villa Maria College is a conceptual and physical entity in which people collectively create, manage and maintain with their minds, their hearts and their hands. The social and phenomenological uniqueness and wholeness of this educational organisation is found entwined numerous tangible and intangible physical and human elements that together provide a central force generating an influence that permeates throughout every aspect of school life. It is a combination of Christian

belief and value formulas that largely determine the types of assumptions, norms, rituals and ceremonies that embrace this school. The cultural configurations presented in the Villa Maria College School Culture Model is one way of displaying the cultural patterns that are unique to this school, but not the only way.

Whilst the Villa Maria College Culture Model draws on contextual components of the Beare *et al.* (1989) culture model in order to analysis culture, it does further advance this position by providing visual and descriptive examples of how the cultural fabric of this school is formed. The Villa Maria College Culture Model builds on the Beare *et al.* (1989) model by presenting a conceptual frame that exposes the meshing together of tangible and intangible elements. This is further supported by research evidence that describes the human and material interactive patterns that have prevailed to form the culture of this school. This model prescribes to the view that the cultural units of this school while carrying their own distinctive cultural characteristics, form essential segments that contribute vital attributes necessary to the formation of a whole school culture.

The interaction patterns that are established between the various cultural units through numerous shared and valued activities in this school community contribute greatly to the overall composition and strength of the culture at Villa Maria College. The interactive zones indicated on this model have helped the researcher identify some of the relationships that exist between the main cultural units and the overall organisational school culture. This school has a number of shared activities that involve people across the various cultural units of the school. The relationships that are formed contribute vital cultural bonds that make up and sustain an overall organisational culture. The shared bonds that comprise the organisational culture of this school are based very much on a collective set of individual and institutional values and beliefs that are relevant to this school. It is evident from this model that the shared relationships that exist between cultural units within this school are indicative of supportive host relationships rather than dominant subordinate power relationships. These supportive relationships are developed and nurtured at this school for the shared purpose of helping people learn in a religious environment. Hence this model accentuates the significance of positive horizontal relationships in the composition of culture in this educational organisation.

## **Chapter Five**

### **The Change Process**

People bring about change. Introducing a new group of people to a school can change the cultural dynamics of an educational organisation. As a new cultural group is formed in a school, a number of changes will occur in the setup and early development years as the group grows and establishes itself as a unit culture within the body of an organisation. Changes to a school culture can be made directly, indirectly, intuitively and at times unconsciously by people associated with the school. Each change in turn will have a rippling effect on the people, the organisational structure, the overall culture or a combination of the three. Therefore it is the view of this researcher that these aspects require consideration when investigating cultural change and impact.

This chapter analyses data that was collected to address the second, third and fourth research questions of this investigation. The first section presents a cultural change process model that is designed to highlight and describe specific in-depth selected change process examples cited in the second section of this chapter. The change examples are used to trace the developmental path of the international unit at Villa Maria College between 1996 –2002. Following this, the final section summarises specific features of the overall cultural change process.

#### **5.1 The Change Wave Process Model**

Change is a complex phenomenon that is all around us. Schools are organisations that are regularly subjected to change due to either anticipated or unanticipated events that occur internally or externally. Changes can provide opportunities for schools to thrive and grow, and are in most cases designed for improvement purposes.

A cultural change process is made up of a sequence of events or activities that generally produce an outcome that can have positive or negative effects on the structure, culture and people of a school. In order to understand cultural change and differential impact, the functions of the different process components need to

be clearly identified and explained. Unfortunately the analysis of any change process is often time-consuming and complex and often left unattended. For example, the pace of educational reforms in New Zealand secondary schools since the early 1980s has made it difficult for principals, administrators, and teachers to find time to assess the true impact of the educational changes that have been happening around them. To complicate matters further, there are almost as many conceptions of the change process as there are writers on the subject, making it difficult for schools to consider relevant theoretical options.

Many authors, writers and researchers have attempted to describe and explain the steps or phases of the educational change process. This researcher follows in such tradition by presenting a change model applicable to the educational setting in this study that builds on the cyclical change ideas gathered from Lewin (1951), and Stewart and Prebble (1985). The following Change Process Model has been designed to display the change process as a sequence of interactive events that impacts on more than just the school structure. The Change Wave Process Model (as presented by the researcher) displayed in Figure 3 is a cultural conceptualisation of change that provides a summary of the main components involved in the cultural change process at Villa Maria College. This model identifies four key change activities involving interaction either between individuals or members of unit cultures that when combined, result in interactive forces (energy) and outcomes that can directly impact upon structure, culture and people, or a combination of the three.

The Change Wave Process Model is composed of three distinguishable features:

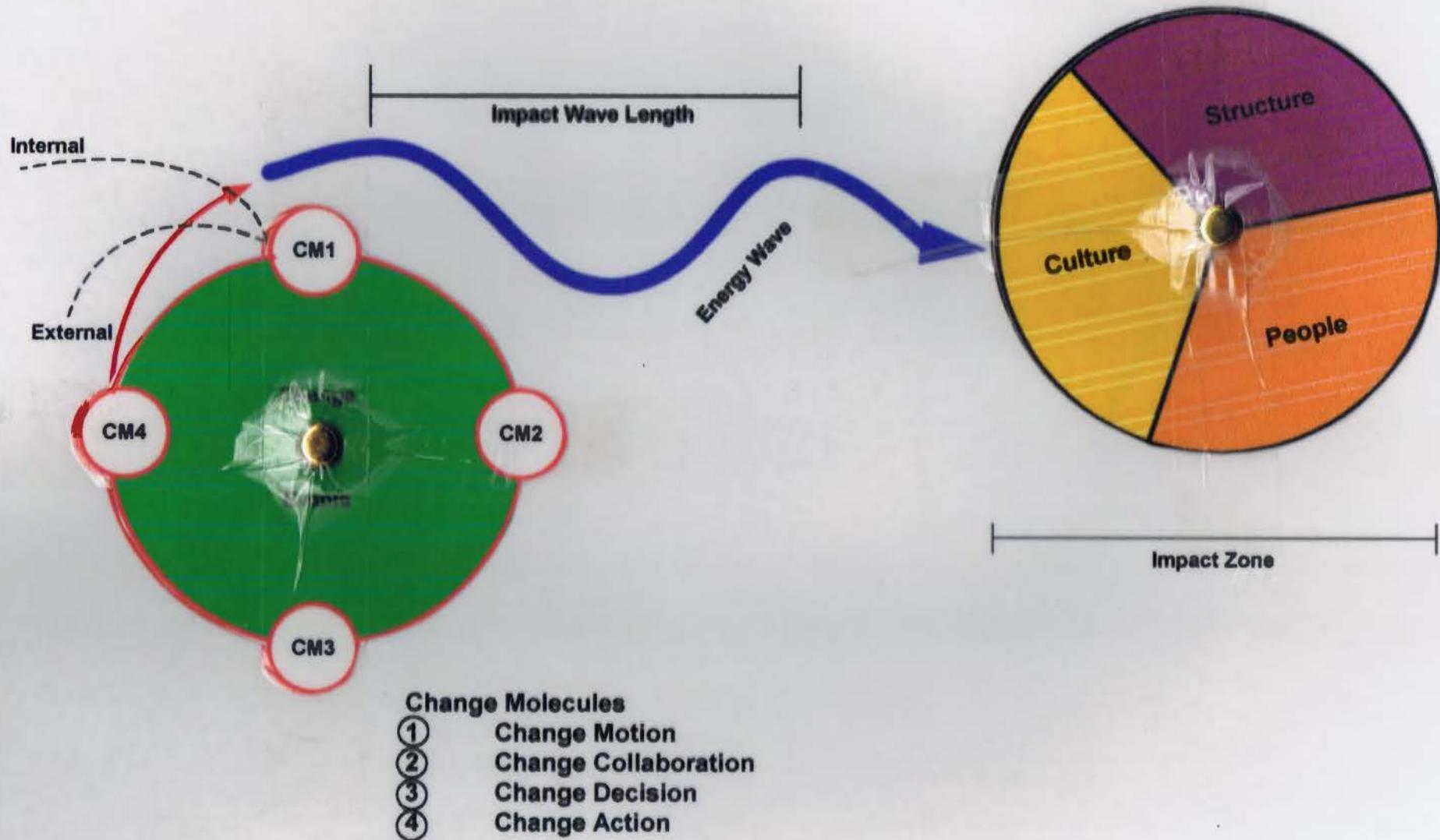
Change Molecules: describes the various interactive activities that take place between people involved in a change process.

Energy Wave: depicts an invisible human force or influence that comes from human interaction.

Impact Zone: identifies one of three components that can be subject to change as the result of human interaction for the purpose of change in a school.

FIGURE 3

THE CHANGE WAVE PROCESS MODEL



## Change Molecules

The change molecules make up the various steps or activities within the change process. These four change activities are referred to as molecules purposely to depict the idea of molecular movement in a circular trajectory that produces a wave of influence over the three main components identified in the Impact Zone. The change molecules include:

Change Motion: This is either an anticipated or unanticipated event that occurs internally or externally may result in a proposal to change. A change proposal can come from knowledge gained through research, information from internal or external sources, the introduction of new technology or a problem. The motion itself can appear in the form of an initiative, an idea, a plan, or an identified problem (social, political, environmental or economic). This step has cultural significance as the change motion belongs to a particular person or group of people. It holds something they value, as the motion is something they believe has value to the organisation.

Change Collaboration: This is the coming together of key individuals or groups to discuss the change motion. At this stage the process members are involved in “establishing moral and philosophical clarity and agreement about what the change means” (Hargreaves, Earl, Moore, Manning, 2001:124). This is the time when relevant data relating to the idea or problem that has arisen is gathered and discussed, hence this is when the people look at their culture and consider the moral and philosophical purpose of reform. This phase is often time-consuming and intellectually demanding on the members involved. School members and external agencies may be involved in this step, and they are either coerced or willingly give their time. Discussion at this point may result in conflict or resolution as the advantages and disadvantages of the change motion are thought through. At this step a course of action or detailed plan may be formed or put in place to assist in a smooth transition through the following steps. Molecule One may also be revisited to develop new ideas before continuing onto Molecule Three. The cultural significance of this step is found in the values, beliefs and symbolic

expressions used by the members involved, as well as consideration made for the values and beliefs of the people affected by the outcome of the final change step.

Change Decision/s: A decision or set of decisions will allow a change action to occur. The change decision may be documented at this stage in the form of a new policy, procedure, rule or form of acknowledgement. The decision/s made at this step may formally or informally reinforce traditional organisational values, beliefs and norms or bring in line a new set of cultural values, beliefs, norms or physical material.

Change Action: Change action is reflected in new behavioural patterns of people as they respond in a positive or negative fashion to the change decision. Change now becomes evident in practice as the implementation occurs and the reforms become integrated into the organisation. If it is a major change "it will eventually over time become institutionalised as it is built into ongoing practice" (Stoll and Fink, 1996:44). Evidence of this change activity may now lie within both the tangible or intangible manifestations of the organisation.

### **Energy Wave**

The line of energy indicates a flow of invisible force or influence that comes from within the various interactive change activities that is directed towards the three components within the impact zone. Each stage in the change process involves human interaction hence each stage exerts energy that can be released to impact on one or all three of the organisational components. The length of the energy wave is determined by the amount of energy exerted from within the process cycle.

### **Impact Zone**

As this research is driven from a cultural perspective it is imperative that this study identifies change impact that effects more than just the school structure.

This researcher shares in the view of Hopkins, Ainscow and West (1994) who have recognised that:

Structure and culture are, of course, interdependent, and the relationship between them is dialectical. Structure influences culture, but it works the other way around too. Structures are often regarded as the more basic and profound, in that they generate cultures which not only allow the structures to 'work' but also justify or legitimate them. On the other hand, changes in culture – that is, value systems and beliefs – can change underlying structures. The two go hand in hand and are mutually reinforcing (Hopkins, Ainscow and West, 1994:87).

While at a practical level it maybe easier to change and identify change to the structure of a school rather than to the culture of a school, it is essential to consider both components as equally important in understanding a change process. If the change activities result in positive impact forces then both the structure and culture can be further enhanced and strengthened. However if the change activities result in negative impact forces such as interactive conflict, then the structure and culture can be weakened. What is conclusive from most change studies is that people are always affected in some way by change. Therefore this model identifies the significance of all three components.

People: Each step in a cultural change process involves people and the outcome of the change process also impacts upon individuals or groups of people. Because people are always involved in a change process there are always personal values meshed with organisational values. This is essentially why the process needs to be considered as 'cultural'. The views, values and beliefs of people involved in the process are important for determining the approach and success of change. Whether it is during the process steps or on impact, change activities can affect an individual's "physical well being, emotional stability, social relationships, work life, intellectual life and even the spiritual dimension of a person" (Neville, 1992:110). Hence the impact of change starts from Step One of the molecular chain generating energy as the change eventually becomes a formal or informal reality within some part of the organisation. Change impact on people is evident with an increase or decrease in patterns of work, satisfaction, enjoyment, conflict, equality, freedom, responsibility and time.

Structure: According to Wilson and Rosenfeld (1990) organisational structure is:

The established pattern of relationships between the component parts of an organisation, outlining both communication, control and authority patterns. Structure distinguishes the parts of an organisation and delineates the relationship between them (Wilson and Rosenfeld, 1990:215).

Including the additional element of 'design by management' Bartol and Martin (1994) define structure as "The formal pattern of interactions and coordination designed by management to link the tasks of individuals and groups in achieving organisational goals" (Bartol and Martin, 1994:283).

Change impact on structure is evident with an increase or decrease in patterns of policy, programmes, procedure, communication and authority.

Culture: To consider change impact on organisational culture is to consider the many aspects of school life such as values, beliefs, assumptions, symbols, norms, rituals, ceremonies and human behaviour that are created, modified or removed in a change process.

There are a number of factors not present on the Change Wave Process Model, that need consideration when explaining differential levels of impact:

(1) The size of the change activities.

(a) A major change process may involve more people, more resources, more time and hold a number of important decisions. As a result, "major changes are likely to have wider, longer lasting, more significant effects on people and the organisation" (Edwards, 1990:4). It is a major change that produces long impact waves that often generate greater effects on the structure, culture and people of an organisation over a longer period of time. Major change activities also have the potential to modify the core cultural elements of an organisation, hence the sphere of influence can extend to the depths of the organisation.

(b) A minor change which generally occurs internally will generally involve less people, less resources, less time with decision making that is often quick and uncomplicated. Minor changes generate short impact waves that release less energy, hence the effect on the structure, culture or people or all three is minimal, short term and often unnoticed by many in the organisation. Minor change activities are more likely to modify tangible manifestations that are present on the school surface.

(2) The position of the underlying organisational assumptions: for example, the organisational assumptions at the time of the change process can and do sway decision making in certain directions.

(3) The environmental conditions in which the process operates: for example, the economic or political status of the school at the time of the change process occurring can effect the rate and success of the process.

(4) The rate at which individuals or groups move through the process: for example, the rate at which teachers accept and reinforce change can vary between individuals.

(5) The present status and strength of the overall organisational culture: for example, a strong stable culture is more amenable to change than a weak fragile culture.

In the following section The Change Wave Process Model is used as a conceptualised framework to highlight examples of cultural change and to identify the zones of impact at Villa Maria College.

## **5.2 Unit Culture Development**

This section firstly outlines the changing demographic patterns that have contributed to cultural change nationwide and at the study school and then highlights a set of selected change examples that have occurred at Villa Maria College over the last seven years as the international unit has been developed.

The selected examples presented in this study highlight major events that have contributed to the overall development process of this unit culture and that have impacted most significantly on different aspects of the school culture.

### **5.2.1 Demographic Patterns**

Discussion with Staff has revealed that Villa Maria College has experienced three distinctive periods in which distinguishable groups of international students have moved through the school.

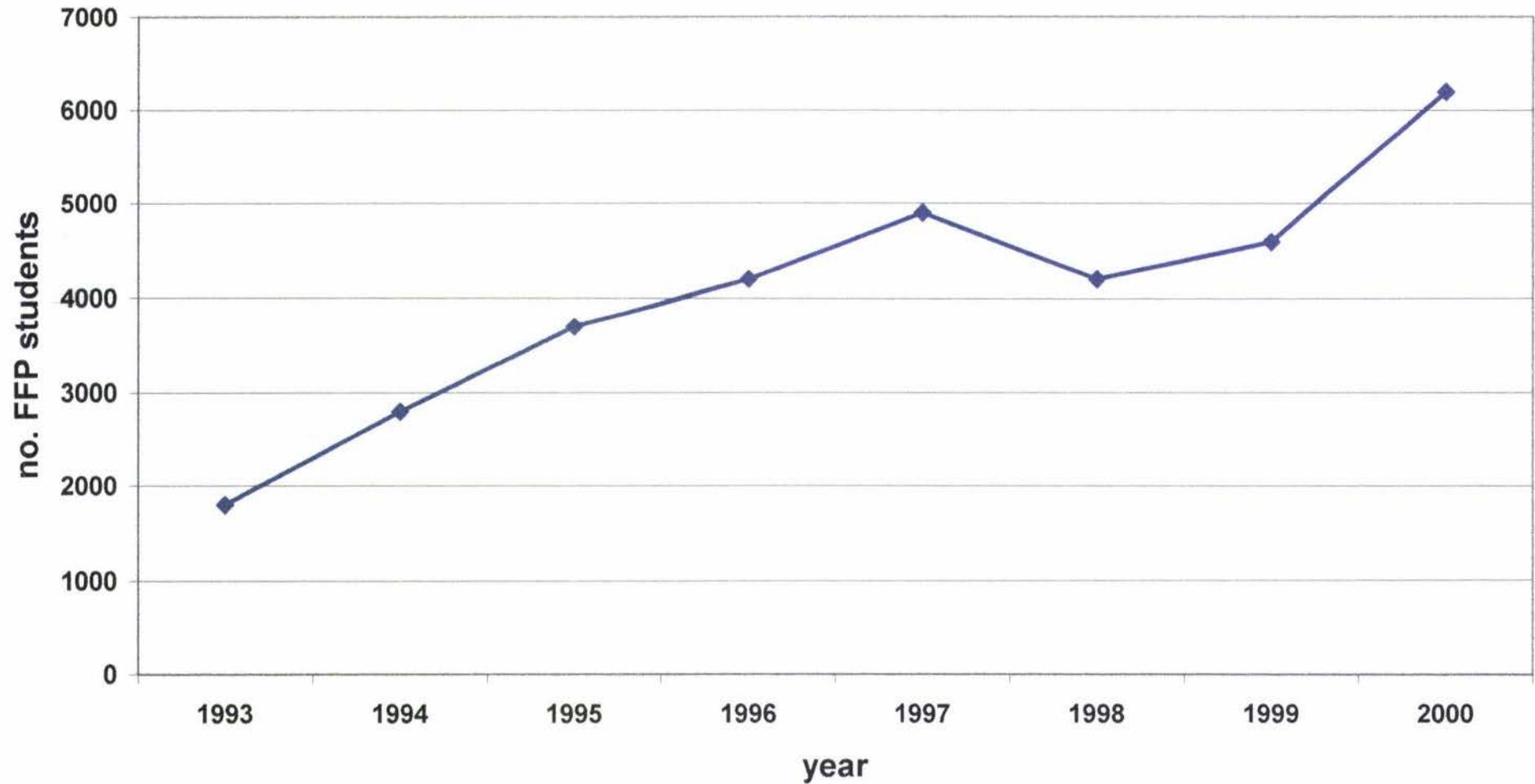
- (a) **First Wave:** During the mid to late 1980s Villa Maria College gained a number of Malaysian Christian students under the Colombo Plan who wanted one or two years at the school to improve their English and to gain University Entrance before going on to University. These students were generally good English speakers who required limited ESOL instruction. ESOL support was also provided for a number of permanent resident students of Polynesian descent during this time.
- (b) **Second Wave:** During the early 1990s the next new wave of students was made up of children from permanent migrant families settling in New Zealand. These students were well adapted to the New Zealand environment and required minimal ESOL instruction. These students, combined with a small number of students entering Villa Maria College who were prepared to pay for a New Zealand English language education, were primarily interested in acquiring English skills. The students of both groups came from the Asian continent including Taiwan, Malaysia, Korea, Hong Kong and China.
- (c) **Third Wave:** Since the late 1990s the influx of fee-paying students has featured as the most obvious pattern of movement in the school with this group now making up the total number of international students requiring ESOL instruction. The English language, educational and pastoral care demands of this group are very high as most students have limited English language ability and are living with host families.

Throughout each period this school has been fortunate to have an ESOL teacher who has been involved in most of the administrative and teaching tasks relating to international students. This staff member, who has recently retired, represents a true pioneer in the area of Export Education and ESOL teaching. Since 1986 this teacher has worked through many of the difficulties attached to early ESOL teaching and has contributed many of the foundational resources and ideas that have been utilized during the most recent changes. It is the view of this staff member, the school principal and other long serving staff at the school that it is the third wave that has brought the most significant changes that have impacted on school life at Villa Maria College.

The 1989 Education Act had presented a new set of provisions that led to schools throughout New Zealand becoming more actively involved in recruiting full fee-paying students from overseas. As a result of this change Foreign Fee-Paying students have now become an established part of the New Zealand education scene. Since the early 1990s the New Zealand secondary school sector has witnessed a rapid growth in the number of FFP students in schools. Figure 4 below illustrates an overall strong pattern of growth over the period 1993 to 2000.

Even though growth was interrupted in the late 1990s by economic stagnation caused by the Asian economic crisis the overall increase has been significant with student numbers growing from 1,748 in 1993 to 6,254 in 2000, contributing a total increase of 258% (Ministry of Education, 2001:14). The year 2000 was characterised by very strong growth, with the number of secondary foreign fee-paying students increasing markedly from 7,191 in July 2000 to 10,555 in July 2001. By the year 2000, FFP students accounted for 2.6% of the total secondary roll, with 91.1% of the students coming from Asia. Leading source countries include China, Japan and South Korea (Ministry of Education, 2001:1).

**FIGURE 4**      **NUMBER OF SECONDARY FOREIGN FEE PAYING STUDENTS**  
**1993-2000**



The distribution of the FFP students throughout New Zealand schools is particularly uneven, with three main regions accumulating the bulk of the FFP student population. During the 1993 to 2000 period the Auckland region received the largest group of secondary FFP students, with 40-50% of all Foreign Fee-Paying students concentrated in schools in this region. Canterbury and Wellington were the next two largest supporting regions, with Canterbury accounting annually for 15-20% and Wellington holding 8-9% of Foreign Fee-Paying students respectively over the same period (Ministry of Education, 2001:18). The obvious resurgence in growth in the last three years is expected to continue as preliminary data for the year 2002 indicates further growth.

The national demographic patterns depicted above are almost replicated on a micro-scale in the case of Villa Maria College. Villa Maria College can be included as a school recruiting fee-paying students after 1989. Table 6 below illustrates an overall pattern of growth of fee-paying students at Villa Maria College over the period 1993 – 2002 with particularly strong growth in the last two years.

**TABLE 6**  
**VILLA MARIA COLLEGE**  
**INTERNATIONAL UNIT COMPOSITION**  
**1993 – 2002**

<b>YEAR</b>	<b>TOTAL NUMBER OF INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS REQUIRING ESOL (INCLUDING FFPS)</b>	<b>TOTAL NUMBER OF FEE-PAYING STUDENTS</b>
1993	19	2
1994	22	0
1995	25	5
1996	31	4
1997	26	11
1998	19	11
1999	27	10
2000	30	14
2001	34	30
2002	38	38

The marked increase of fee-paying students in 2001 now sees this group maintain 5% of the student population at Villa Maria College. The majority of the fee-paying international students that have received education at Villa Maria College over the past seven years have been made up of students from the Asian continent with South Korea, Malaysia, Japan and China as the leading source countries. This trend appears to be set to continue with the requests for international student entry still dominated by fee-paying families from Asian countries.

### **5.2.2 Analysing the Change Process**

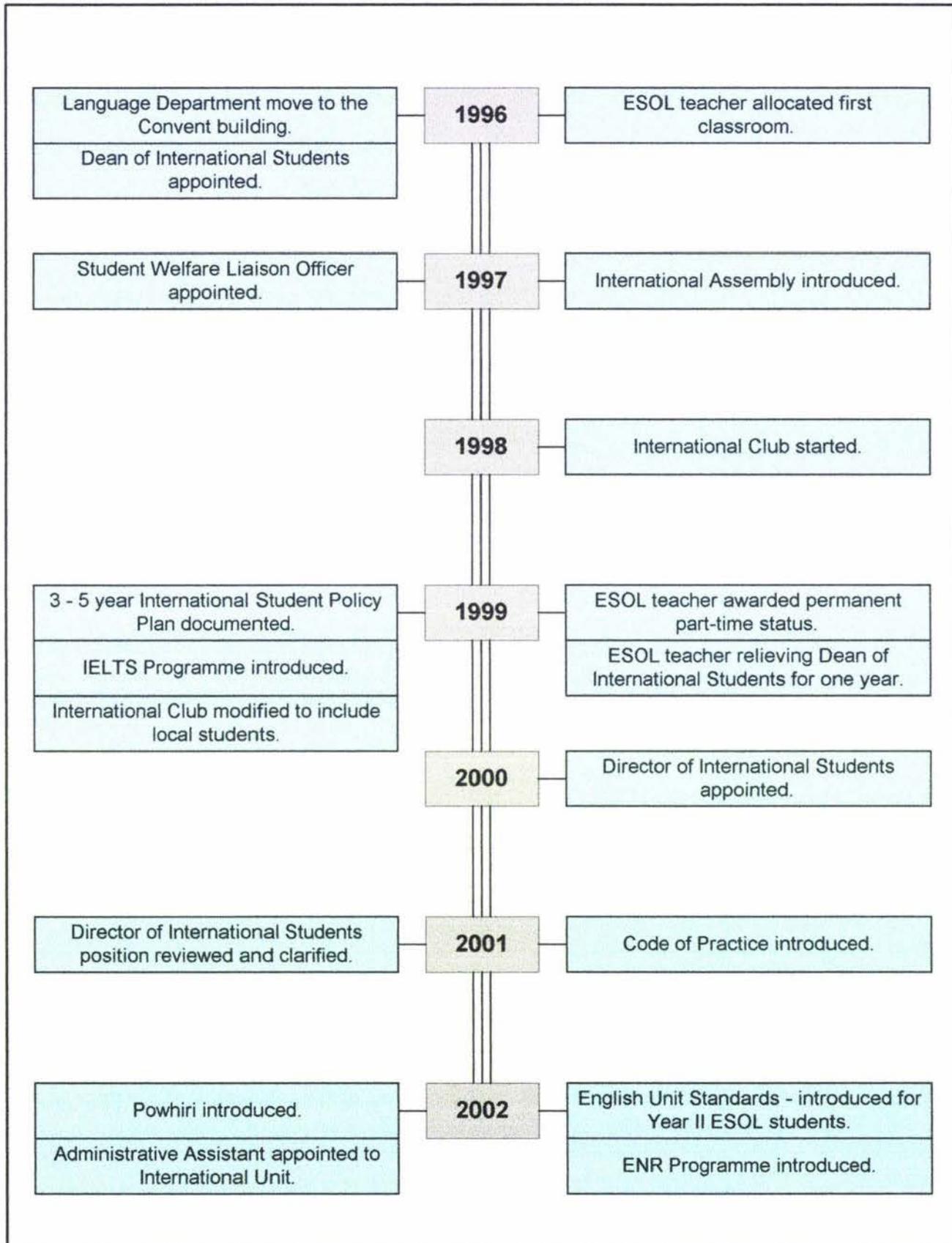
A change in an organisation can imply a loss or a gain for the people and the organisation. According to Neville (1992) the impact of change is clearly evident as individuals pass through various stages in a change process:

Dislocation from familiar, resistance, identification with the past, withdrawal, regret, acceptance of change, new language, new behaviours, new patterns established, taking the change on board (Neville, 1992:113).

This section highlights a number of these impact scenarios through the use of a set of change process examples that describe the development of the international unit. Figure 5, Villa Maria College International Unit Development Timeline, identifies the main changes that have impacted upon aspects of Villa Maria College culture since 1996. The change activities that have occurred in the school after 1996 have held the greatest significance to the cultural positioning of this school, hence this period is documented in order to identify and explain school culture impact.

FIGURE 5

**VILLA MARIA COLLEGE  
INTERNATIONAL UNIT DEVELOPMENT  
TIME-LINE  
1996 - 2002**



In the late 1980s the international students at Villa Maria College who required ESOL instruction were taught in small groups of 2-3 in a Reading Recovery room that was attached to the Special Needs area of the school. This room was later doubled in size to make room for 4-6 students and the ESOL teacher. An increase in the number of students requiring ESOL instruction in the early 1990s encouraged the transfer of this group to a larger seminar room which held 8-10 desks. By this time ESOL instruction had been placed under the care of the English Department. In 1996 the move of the Languages Department to the Convent building saw the international group comprising the ESOL teacher and 31 ESOL students brought under the Languages Department.

### **Change Example One: The Move to the Convent Building 1996 (Internal Innovation)**

**Change Motion:** The unanticipated move of the Sisters of Mercy in vacating the Convent building and granting the use of the building to the school initiated the change idea to move the Language Department to this area of the school. *“This move came about because we were given the Convent building to use.” (Principal, 2002).*

**Change Collaboration:** This involved the Principal, the Board of Trustees, the Head of the Languages Department, the Head of Religious Studies, teachers of the Languages Department and the ESOL teacher. Various meetings involved discussions relating to the advantages and disadvantages of this move, allocation of classrooms, and the appropriate time to move.

*“Not all people were happy with the move as they knew there would be problems with the temperature and being separate, though the Head of Department thought the move would bring advantages for staff and students.” (ESOL teacher, 2002).*

At the time the Religious Education Department was using a number of classrooms in the Convent building and expressed its concerns about losing established space in this spiritually significant location.

**Change Decision:** To move the entire Language Department to the Convent building and to include ESOL as a subject in this department.

*"The Languages Department move to this area was largely the choice of this group. This area provided a range of spaces to house all the teachers together." (Principal, 2002).*

**Change Activity:** The Languages Department moved into the Convent building in 1996. The international group became established as an integral part of this particular teaching group.

### **Place of Impact:**

#### People

This move was significant for the international group as it signalled the beginning of ESOL as a recognised teaching subject within a department rather than ESOL being viewed as a remedial activity. This new environment provided a location for the international group to settle and become established. The members of the international group valued being part of a recognised teaching group rather than being isolated, and this move gave the ESOL teacher and students a new sense of belonging somewhere in the organisation.

#### Culture

Even though the move initially meant a dislocation from familiar surroundings, it was a move that effectively represented relocation to a more desirable situation for the international group. This change signaled the first major physical development of the international unit, in that the ESOL teacher and the ESOL students together held a recognisable physical presence in a department of the school. This change was particularly meaningful to the ESOL teacher who valued the privilege of having her own recognised classroom in the school and who appreciated being placed within a unified teaching group.

*"During this move I was given a proper teaching room to teach Maori Language and ESOL. It has been really good to be part of a Languages Department where people hold strong professional bonds, work together as a team, openly share ideas and encourage each other." (ESOL teacher, 2002).*

### Structure

Changes to the time-table were required as a new set of classrooms was allocated for Language and ESOL classes at the beginning of 1996.

#### **Whose interests are best served by this change?**

Both staff and students benefited from the extra space made available in the new environment. This move gave the ESOL teacher and the ESOL students a renewed sense of status and belonging in the school.

**Improvement and Effectiveness:** This change symbolised a starting point for the international group as it effectively formalised the status of ESOL as a teaching subject in the school. In consideration of the features highlighted in Table 1, this example highlights the schools commitment to shared values and the importance of providing good working conditions for pupils and staff.

In this same year the school created a new Dean of International Students position to manage the growing student needs and administrative demands. The new position held by the Head of Languages and a newly appointed Student Welfare Liaison Officer employed in 1997 were both serious acknowledgements by the school that the management of international students was a diverse and demanding role and one that had now extended beyond ESOL teaching. These new positions, combined with the permanent status awarded to the ESOL teacher in 1999 indicated that the international unit had come to hold a more valued position in the school. The combined efforts of the Principal, the Dean of International Students, the ESOL teacher and the Student Welfare Liaison Officer in the years between 1996-1999 saw this unit culture further extend its physical presence and status to other parts of the school with the introduction of a new range of shared cultural activities.

#### **Change Example Two: The International Assembly 1997 (Internal Innovation)**

**Change Motion:** By 1997 the international group held students from nine different nationality groups. Staff of the international unit felt it would be an appropriate time to incorporate a special ceremony in the form of an international assembly into the

international studies agenda in order to symbolise the importance of international contact between cultures in the school.

**Change Collaboration:** This involved the Principal and the Dean of International Students in discussion about the design of the proposed assembly and the time of the year when this should be held.

**Change Decision:** To introduce an international assembly to celebrate school diversity and unity. The only resistance to this decision was generated amongst international students who were apprehensive about putting themselves forward in front of the whole school.

**Change Activity:** The international assembly was introduced for the first time during 1997 and has since become a regular ceremony on the school calendar to acknowledge the pride and spirit of unity in the Villa Maria College family:

*“International assemblies seem to get bigger and better each year. Senior Kapahaka students opened the assembly with a chant and a song. Then there were prayers for unity in Arabic, Brazilian, Chinese, Dutch, Japanese and Tongan. After that was a fashion parade, with girls dressed in the national costumes of China, the Netherlands and Malaysia. Then we were entertained with dances, some traditional and some modern, from Brazil, Ethiopia, the Netherlands, China and Malaysia. We ended with a song about unity, equality and love.” (School Magazine, 2001:26).*

#### **Place of Impact:**

##### People

Staff and students are able to share in this celebration of cultural contact and cultural diversity.

*“The international assembly was a very interesting and successful event with the entire school participating and enjoying themselves.” (School Magazine, 1999:37).*

*“The international assemblies have been a huge success. Good student leaders in the school have helped to make the assemblies work. The girls from the Culture Committee come and speak to the international students and encourage them to be involved, then the staff of the international unit contribute by picking out activities and gathering costumes that display aspects of life relating to each of the ethnic groups that we have. There is a lot of activity and excitement when the girls*

*get together to practice. These assemblies give the international girls confidence to get up on stage and tell the assembly about their country, speak in their own language, sing or dance.” (Student Welfare Liaison Officer, 2002).*

Through this ceremony students across the school are encouraged to be proud of their individual ethnic identities, as well as to share in the beauty of other ethnic identities. Domestic and international students alike are given the opportunity to extend their global knowledge and appreciation.

*“The assembly served as an opportunity for the school to appreciate the richness of the many diverse cultures in our community.” (School Magazine, 2000:37).*

Also by acknowledging the validity of other cultural perspectives this assembly has helped to enhance personal and educational values for students across various groups in the school. For the staff of the international unit this activity is rewarding to see the joy, excitement, respect and appreciation that is shared among the members of the school.

### Culture

This is a ceremony that has created a new pattern of shared behaviour. Extending the ceremonial activities of the school in this way has effectively enhanced cultural, moral and educational values that are important to members of this educational organisation. In particular the moral values of respect and appreciation have been emphasised in this activity.

*“The beautiful costumes and interesting forms of greeting, particular to each country, were warmly appreciated.” (School Magazine, 2000:37).*

The ceremony has introduced a multitude of new signs and symbols to the students that appeal as popular new learning resources. The invisible spiritual force of this special character school is evident when the cultures of the school come together as a whole to share in the activity prayer.

*“The international assembly always begins with a prayer and involves the girls praying in their native language. Everything we do has this spiritual focus.” (Principal, 2002).*

Hence this is an activity that produces positive interactive forces between the cultural units of this school community.

### Structure

This assembly is a new ceremony that is time-tabled and documented as a special event on the school calendar.

### **Whose interests are best served by this change?**

“An emphasis on appreciating everybody’s culture is a vital step towards helping everyone in a school get along well together” (Kennedy and Dewar, 1997:114). This ceremony is one important step designed to encourage the students to value and appreciate differences in the people in their educational community. It is a change activity that has provided beneficial outcomes for all members of the school. The interests of both staff and students are well served by this particular change.

*“When it is all put together it is a wonderful feeling for all. This ceremony gives us the opportunity to impress upon the students that their culture is very important, that they have qualities and gifts that they can give to one another, that we all learn from each other all the time and we are all the more richer from such experience. It gives the students the opportunity to blossom.” (Student Welfare Liaison Officer, 2002).*

The introduction of an International Student Orientation Programme in 1999 and the inclusion of a welcoming Powhiri at the start of 2000 are two additional ceremonial innovations that have impacted on the people and the culture of the school in a similar fashion to the international assembly. Further to this a new range of shared rituals has been introduced at various times over the past seven years which have impacted with similar results. For example the first International Club was formed in 1998 to encourage cross-cultural sharing between international students. In 1999 this club was opened to include domestic students in order to open the international unit to the whole school. In the year 2000 the International Club was replaced by a new set of shared activities that hold similar emphasis including an International Week at the beginning of Term Three, and Thursday lunchtime meetings to discuss administrative and social matters relevant to the students.

This growing set of shared activities has collectively contributed to the development of the global culture concept that is shared openly within this school today. The uniqueness of each ceremony or ritual is typified by a regular exchange of shared symbolic gestures such as appreciation, respect, care and justice which are characteristic of this Catholic School. The positive interactive exchanges that are carried out across the cultural units during such activities have served to help establish the international unit as a recognised and valued group that contributes to the holistic makeup of this special character school.

**Improvement and Effectiveness:** This change activity and others mentioned above have allowed a set of new positive cross-cultural bonds to become established or renewed during the school year. These ceremonial and ritualistic changes have further enhanced the visual learning environment of the school and have done much to encourage a new sense of belonging in this organisation. In consideration of the features highlighted in Table 1, this example and the others mentioned above highlights the schools' commitment to building spiritual and physical unity amongst the members of the Villa Maria school community.

The development and introduction of new positions and new shared activities has been made easier in the last three years with the introduction of a formalised school based Policy and Development Plan aimed to assist in the direction and management of the international students.

### **Change Example Three: School Policy Amendment: An International 3-5 Year Plan 1999 (Internal Innovation)**

Principles set out in the New Zealand Curriculum Framework (Ministry of Education, 1993) state that:

All young people in New Zealand have the right to gain, through the state schooling system, a broad balanced education that prepares them for effective participation in society (Ministry of Education, 1993:5).

A school is expected to establish policy and deliver a curriculum that reflects the multicultural nature of New Zealand society and provides all students with equal

educational opportunities by responding to their individual needs. However the reality of achieving such goals has not been as easy as the document may suggest. The task of setting up assessment procedures, student programmes and policy relevant to a diversity of student needs has proven an extremely time consuming and intellectually demanding task for administrators and teachers of schools educating diverse student populations. Even though the Ministry has provided guidelines for dealing with international students, without established structured policy or curriculum guidelines to work from Villa Maria College, like other schools throughout New Zealand, has been left to design and implement programmes and procedures relevant to their own situation. As a result many of the programmes, ideas and procedures developed in these early years have been prepared through trial and error rather than been guided by relevant working models provided by external agencies. Finding a balance between policy, curriculum and special character school priorities has proven challenging for the staff involved in these tasks at Villa Maria College. The introduction of the International 3-5 Year Plan in 1999 is one example that highlights the school's determination to meet this challenge (See Appendix IV).

**Change Motion:** The growing demand of fee-paying international students to enter Villa Maria College resulted in the senior administration and the Board of Trustees considering the formulation of a structured school policy document to guide the administration and teaching of international students.

**Change Collaboration:** This involved the Principal, the Board of Trustees, and at times the Director of International Students. Discussions centred on designing a plan to be reviewed at regular intervals that provided guidelines for delivering a culturally enriching effective education for the international students of the school. The purpose of such a plan was to ensure that new students were welcomed into the school, that they had the opportunity to learn about the school system and the school's expectations, and that they were given optimum learning opportunities to succeed in this educational environment.

**Change Decision:** To incorporate a 3-5 year plan into regular school policy. The aims of this plan included:

- A. To create opportunities to affirm cultural diversity.
- B. To enrich the multi-cultural nature of the College by participating in cultural exchanges.
- C. To maintain enrolment levels of international students.
- D. To provide opportunities for academic success (in NZ exams).

**Change Activity:** *“This plan is based on a model provided from another school. We used this model to formulate our own plan applicable to our own circumstances. It was formulated and drafted by a subcommittee of the Board of Trustees, then passed onto the Board of Trustees for approval.” (Principal, 2002).*

The Plan was documented into School and Faculty Policy in 1999.

*“A subsequent change has been made to the Plan. It was initially set out in the original Plan that the school would take in 20 fee-paying students; this number has now been changed to 5% of the student population which is 38 students.” (Director of International Students, 2002).*

### **Place of Impact:**

#### People

The administrative staff felt satisfied that their goal to maintain and administer Ministry policy and curriculum guidelines had been partially achieved through the introduction of this document.

#### Culture

Essentially the document symbolises the moral standards that guide staff and administrators in their work with international students. Dealing with people under the new plan has established a new ritual base that influences the behaviour of staff and administrators.

*“This plan was one step towards providing a formal structure and recognition to this group. It gave us direction of where to go as it was a projected plan, so it was seen as something we moved ahead with, rather than being seen as something to guide us for just one year.” (Director of International Students, 2002).*

Due to the nature of the plan it is effectively contributing to a broadening of the deeper underlying assumptions that are found in the organisational culture. This Plan is formal recognition that this international unit had become a valued and fully established unit culture in the school system.

### Structure

The plan became integrated as a formal document as part of the overall school policy.

### **Whose interests are best served by this change?**

For the school administration this document serves to fulfill national policy and curriculum priorities. The formalisation of standards set out in this document give the staff of the international unit a set of structured guidelines to work from. Such a document has been further reinforced by the introduction of the National Code of Practice in September 2001.

**Improvement and Effectiveness:** The phenomenological positioning of this plan with its conscious appreciation of human diversity essentially serves to extend the assumption base of the school. In consideration of the features highlighted in Table 1, this change is an example of visionary leadership in action as members of the administrative unit have attempted to develop consistent policies and practices that respond to present day and future social forces and build on a sound management structure.

The impact of the International 3-5 Year Plan was soon evident as it was used to help clarify the job description for the Director of International Students when the position came up for review in the year 2000.

### **Change Example Four: A Change of Status 2001 (Internal Innovation)**

**Change Motion:** The renaming of Departments combined with a sudden increase in the number of fee-paying international students prompted the administration to consider reviewing the management status of both the Head of Languages Faculty and the Director of International Students.

**Change Collaboration:** A number of discussions occurred with the Principal and the Director of International Students in order to formalise a job description for the Director of International Students and to establish the relevant management requirements for such a position.

*“When I was looking at the position for the Director of International Students I was involved in the updating of the job description. In a sense it was relative to what was happening in the school at the time. We did have difficulty with the idea of bringing in a Director of International Students management position in line with the management positions of other faculties. Traditionally the heads of faculties are curriculum areas and the management of international students is not curriculum-based. At that time because there was no specific Director of International Student status in the education community, it was regarded as a position that any experienced secondary teacher could do, similar to a Dean’s position. Whereas for languages it was a recognised position as such because your specialist skills were recognised in relation to teaching a curriculum. I suppose by giving the position equal status to the Head of Languages the administration was perhaps recognising that it was just as important.” (Director of International Students, 2002).*

**Change Decision:** In accordance with other faculty name changes at the time the Languages Department Head was appointed the Head of the International Languages Faculty which included the position of Director of International Students. Appropriate management units were to be issued with this change in structure.

**Change Activity:** *“At the beginning of 2001 the principal increased my hours to eight administrative hours to help cope with the increased workload. The management unit I had for the Director of International Students became part of the new Faculty Head position. I took over the position of the Head of International Languages Faculty including Director of International Students with two management units, one funded from a permanent unit and one funded from the international fund, and I accepted the extra hours to continue looking after the international students.” (Director of International Students, 2002).*

### **Place of Impact:**

#### People

All teachers accepted the change in the title of Heads of Departments and Department names and in some instances structural make-up of a Department. For the members of the international unit this change was further formal recognition that this group was valued in the school structure.

*"This change was welcomed by myself and members of the international unit. Effectively it is another step that signalled the formal acceptance of this group in the school." (Director of International Students, 2002).*

### Culture

The change in titles of the school departments put in place a new set of patterns that for some time created a dislocation from the familiar for most staff. This was a change welcomed by the staff of the international unit as it was another step that signalled an acceptance of the new unit culture in the school.

### Structure

New titles were introduced as departments were renamed into faculties and heads of faculties. The international unit was formally established as part of the International Languages Faculty although managed from separate funds.

### **Whose interests are best served by this change?**

The Director of International Students has been rewarded with formal recognition and management status that is applicable to such a position.

**Improvement and Effectiveness:** This change has brought about ease of management within the administrative unit. Clarification of role expectation through a renewed job description has reduced ambiguity over the responsibilities and duties of the Head of International Students. This has resulted in a further reduction of confusion between the administration and the staff of the international unit over the status, role and title name for the person managing the international group. In consideration of the features highlighted in Table 1, this example reveals a commitment by the administrative unit to establish a consistent and fair management structure that is applicable to present day and future educational trends in relation to the internationalisation of the school.

The commitment by the administrative unit to establish high standards for the management of the international unit was further reinforced by the introduction of the National Code of Practice in September 2001. Since 1996, a number of New Zealand providers of education to international students including Villa Maria College had been signatories to a voluntary Code of Practice that established

minimum standards for good industry practice. This Code was supported by a number of signatories who were working hard to provide excellent levels of pastoral care for their international students. Unfortunately by the turn of the century more than half of all eligible providers still remained outside the Code. This prompted the Ministry of Education to take more assertive action.

### **Change Example Five: Code of Practice 2001 (External Innovation)**

**Change Motion:** The growing concern about the large number of providers outside the voluntary Code and concern about the quality of care provided to some international students prompted the Ministry of Education to set about the process of developing a compulsory Code to raise the minimum standards for all export education providers.

**Change Collaboration:** The Code of Practice was developed by the Ministry of Education in consultation with a number of educational organisations. Draft copies of the New Zealand Code of Practice were sent to providers who enrol international students for consideration and submissions. The purpose of the Code of Practice was to set in place a set of minimum standards and good practice procedures for providers who wish to enrol international students. Villa Maria College responded to the drafts.

**Change Decision:** The Ministry of Education received sufficient support nationally from various educational organisations to establish a Code of Practice under section 238F of the Education Act 1989.

**Change Activity:** The Code of Practice became mandatory in September 2001.

#### **Place of Impact:**

##### People

For the educators involved, this is an external change that has nationally formalised procedures that have been in place for some time. For the administrators and teachers of Villa Maria College this document now provides a benchmark from which high standards can be maintained.

*“The Code of Practice has given the international group even more status and quality. We now have a document that we are bound by. It is a document that has been brought in to protect students and schools, by ensuring that high standards are maintained in the delivery of pastoral care services.” (Director of International Students, 2002).*

*“It is good to have the guidelines and structure of the Code of Practice to work by. It now means that I have got to visit every individual family when the whole family is at home and check out the home more thoroughly to ensure the home is a safe place for our students to be. The Code of Practice has increased the definition of what I need to do with regard to home-stay situations, in a sense it has helped to formalise my procedures.” (Student Welfare Liaison Officer, 2002).*

The maintenance of such standards is most beneficial to the international students of this school because it introduces a set of standards that promotes consistency and quality of service for these young people. Subsequently, the International Education Appeal Authority has been established by the Ministry of Education to ensure international students are treated fairly while living in New Zealand. The IEAA adjudicates complaints relating to recruitment, welfare and support received from international students, parents and guardians.

### Culture

This Document symbolises a new set of moral standards applicable nationwide that guide staff and administrators in their work with international students. Dealing with students and families under the Code of Practice has established a ritual base that influences the behaviour of staff and administrators, in particular the Director of International Students and the Student Welfare Liaison Officer. Due to the nature of the Act it is effectively contributing to a broadening of the deeper underlying assumptions that are found in the organisational culture. This new Act also symbolises the formal recognition that the international unit is a valued part of the school system.

### Structure

The Code of Practice was integrated as part of the overall school policy in September 2001.

*“It is a benefit to the school in that the documentation provides an important segment that contributes to the bringing together of the formal structure of this*

*group. This change provided a wonderful opportunity for us to bring together and coordinate all our policies relating to international students. It was a good opportunity for us to write down some of the practices that we do and put it all together as a formalised package.” (Director of International Students, 2002).*

### **Whose interests are best served by this change?**

The Staff of Villa Maria College now have a formal document to guide a range of professional activities. If procedures are followed correctly it is essentially the international student who benefits most in receiving a quality service. The International Education Appeal Authority now provides a support system for following up and working through serious issues.

**Improvement and Effectiveness:** This Document serves to establish and maintain high standards of practice within the Export Educational sector. In consideration of the features highlighted in Table 1, this change highlights the efforts of members of the administrative unit to develop practices that respond to external forces and that build on a sound management structure.

The doubling in numbers of fee-paying international students during 2001 saw the school once again respond by introducing two subsequent internal innovations at the start of 2002. In a response to the growing number of fee-paying international students and the increasing demands on staff to fulfill the complex learning needs of international students an additional support staff member was introduced to the international unit at the beginning of 2002.

### **Change Example Six: Introducing a Support Staff Member 2002 (Internal Innovation).**

**Change Motion:** Growing pressure came from within the school to facilitate this change as teaching staff across the faculties had encountered a growing number of communication difficulties dealing with an increased number of fee-paying international students who had limited English-speaking skills. The Director of International Students discussed with the Principal the concept of introducing a support staff member to the International Languages Faculty for the purpose of supporting staff and students with cross-cultural communication.

**Change Collaboration:** This involved the Principal, Director of International Students and the Board of Trustees. Discussion centred on the nature of the role and how the position would be funded.

*"It was not the intention to employ a teacher aide. We set out to employ someone who could provide a presence in the International Languages room from 10am to 2pm every day. So if students had any problems during interval, lunchtime or study time they could go to this place and this person would be available." (Principal, 2002).*

The Board of Trustees was supportive of the concept of introducing a support staff member though it showed resistance to the number of hours required for this support activity.

**Change Decision:** A collective decision was achieved by the members involved in the collaboration stage to create the new position of Administrative Assistant in the International Languages Faculty for twenty hours per week, this person being required to start at the beginning of 2002.

**Change Activity:** A new administrative assistant was employed at the start of the school year 2002, though was only available to work for one term. This situation made it easy to trial the position in the school. By the end of term one it was clear that the position involved less administrative tasks and more teacher aide responsibilities. At the beginning of term two the position was re-advertised and the new staff member was employed as an administrative assistant. The support member works closely with students and teachers to overcome cross-cultural communication barriers that exist in learning or social situations and to provide administrative assistance to the Director of International Students.

*"I am officially called the administrative assistant for the International Studies Department. My role involves liaising between staff and students a lot of the time, explaining assignments, directing the research of assignments, helping with any communication difficulties that occur in class relating to verbal or written terms or instructions, helping to sort out any school queries or social concerns that come up on a daily basis that the students need assistance with. Helping students with their academic needs, helping teachers in their work with international students, also helping the Director of International Students with administrative tasks. There are a lot of routine practical tasks and procedures that the international students are taken through when they start at the school and during the year. The role is*

*flexible; it changes from day to day as to what I am doing.” (Administrative assistant, 2002).*

### **Place of Impact:**

#### People

This change is appreciated by the members of two particular cultural units, the teachers and students, as this is a service that is about giving to the people.

*“This has been a brilliant change for the school. In the beginning we had difficulty with the terminology or the title of the position. The first term was very much a trial period as the person was employed mainly as an administrative assistant so we could work out what help we needed in this area. Because I still hold a job in which I am involved in the classroom, it has been wonderful to have someone available on site to follow up on students or staff who need help when I am not available, or to carry out an administrative task that requires immediate attention.” (Director of International Students, 2002).*

The students receive the benefits of extra support and care to improve the ease by which they receive their education.

*“For the students the change means they are being valued for more than just their fees and that they are being fully supported in their learning.” (Administrative assistant, 2002).*

The teaching staff has the opportunity to tap into a support service that can ease their workload and help them to establish strong links with their international students.

*“The staff of our faculty can now go and get assistance for years 11, 12, and 13 students if required. Also it is fantastic to now have a support person who can come and sit in the class to assist our international students with instruction and written work.” (Head of Physical Education, 2002).*

*“The introduction of the administrative assistant this year has been invaluable, I can say to this person: ‘I have given these girls an assignment. Could you spend some time discussing it with them and helping them work through tasks’. It has been great to have someone available who has the time to take the students through the concepts and explain the meaning of things. The administrative assistant is a necessary support service to have in the school, especially for the fee-paying students. When students are paying for their education we have to do our utmost to provide a good support for them. Having an administrative assistant in the class has also been beneficial for me. Watching this person interact and communicate with the students has helped me with my approach to communication.” (Head of Arts, 2002).*

This change essentially helps to enhance teacher-international student working relationships especially in subjects outside the ESOL area.

*“For us the students come first; if we can give them extra help or support through this support person then we are providing for their needs. I also think there was a real need to support staff. With international students coming in staff are not provided with additional training or support and they do not have ESOL as a background. By having this person as an assistant in the classroom they provide a real buffer, as they help to improve communication between staff and students and to improve working relations between both groups. I think many teachers see that this change is for them, and they feel less negative about some of the difficulties they face communicating with international students in the classroom. I also think the teachers see that the fee-paying students are receiving something for the money they put in.” (Director of International Students, 2002).*

### Culture

“The things these students require most of all at school in a foreign country is care” (Administrative assistant Report, March, 2002). The introduction of a support person to the staff of the International Languages Faculty at Villa Maria College in 2002 is evidence that the care value has been expressed in this organisation. This new support service is valued by people across all cultural units of this organisation. Positive behavioural manifestations have resulted from this change including: a renewed positive attitude from staff who have had difficulties in the past communicating with international students, improved classroom interactive patterns between staff and international students, and a growing sense of belonging to the organisation by international students as their classroom confidence improves.

### Structure

Employment and job description documentation needed to be produced for this new position. No additional time-tabling has been required for this new position due to the flexibility with regard to time and to tasks carried out.

### **Whose interests are best served by this change?**

This change process is effectively beneficial to individuals of the school and the organisation as a whole. Because the change motion was initiated from within the International Languages Faculty the people of this area have valued the motion and have been fully committed to the change process. Though there was some

initial administrative resistance, once support was established the change process seemed to move with greater ease. Even though the support staff member has been available only during the year 2002, early feed back from staff and students has indicated that this change has generated a number of positive outcomes for individuals and the organisation as a whole. In her Term One report to the Board of Trustees the Director of International Students writes:

There has been significant development in the support these students are receiving and in teachers' attitudes to having these students in the classroom. These students have different needs and most teachers have no ESOL training. Extra support in curriculum from the administrative assistant has been invaluable. The students seem to have settled quickly and well this year (Director of International Students, Board Report, March, 2002).

**Improvement and Effectiveness:** This staff change has allowed a renewed ease of communication between staff and students. This staff member has further enhanced the learning capabilities of international students and has done much to improve their sense of belonging in this organisation. In consideration of the features highlighted in Table 1, this example demonstrates the school's desire to provide good working conditions for pupils and staff. The administrative unit has made a commitment to provide competent professionals who contribute to the secure, supportive and caring make up of this educational environment.

The second internal innovation implemented in the year 2002 that has had a relatively immediate impact on staff and students has been the introduction of an English and Religious Education Programme designed specifically to assist the learning needs of international students.

**Change Example Seven: English and Religious Education Programme 2002 (Internal Innovation)**

**Change Motion:** The idea to introduce a new English and Religious Education Programme resulted from the identification of the problem that international students were encountering difficulties with Religious Education at Villa Maria

College and the knowledge and resources gained through a study carried out by an ESOL teacher on staff.

*“Because Religious Education is a compulsory subject the international students coming into the school were required to go to Religious Education classes. This was fine at the junior level but at years 12 and 13 these students were trying to come to grips with incredibly sophisticated concepts in a language they were also having difficulty with. These students were often a liability in the classroom as they were not interested and they did not get involved. So in terms of integrating them into the school it was not working; if anything it created further division in class. Other students saw them as isolated and not interacting. All of the Religious Education teachers wanted to find a way of assisting them to understand and to have a more integrated classroom.” (Director of Religious Studies, 2002).*

*“We had become increasingly conscious that the Religious Education programme posed an added challenge for international students over and above the cultural shock of coming into a new country and being placed into a totally new education system. These students were put into religious education classes that were totally Western and totally Catholic. Their response was often to do other work or fall asleep. So we decided we needed to address this. The coincidence of events was that one of our ESOL teachers was working on a project on Christianity towards an ESOL diploma that was applicable to our situation. Her needs for her project and the needs of our students could be met together through the new ENR programme. This has been a critical breakthrough for our school.” (Principal, 2002).*

**Change Collaboration:** *“During the course of last year consultation amongst the Religious Education Staff, the Principal, the Director of International Students and an ESOL teacher (who had developed materials to deliver a Christian programme). The idea was gradually developed with assistance from research into the timetable. There was complete support for this idea; the only issue was the logistics of time-tabling such a programme.” (Director of Religious Studies, 2002).*

All participants were in favour of such a concept being introduced as it was in line with the traditional Mercy value of social justice: ‘to care and meet the needs of people’.

**Change Decision:** *“We collectively arrived at the solution where the international students were taken out of Religious Education classes and put into the ENR class.” (Director of Religious Studies, 2002).*

This was a collective decision as all members involved in the process felt this was a positive change that could contribute to the institutional goal of delivering effective Christian education at Villa Maria College.

**Change Activity:** *“The ESOL teacher wrote the course programme and students went to this class at a special time which involved some of their own time as well as some class time in which they were excused from other subjects. These students are taught ESOL and religious content at the same time: its working brilliantly.” (Director of Religious Studies, 2002).*

This new subject has become established as part of the school programme within the International Languages Faculty. The ESOL teacher who wrote the units was given this new subject to teach. In consultation with the Mercy Chaplain the ESOL teacher prepared lessons combining both ESOL and religious components. The lesson content held material that is meaningful to the school, the students and the teacher.

*“The first part of the ENR programme was to introduce the students to the basics of Christianity. It was looking at the fundamentals of what it is to be Christian. Students then go onto the Catholic unit next.” (Mercy Chaplain, 2002).*

### **Place of Impact:**

#### People

The students receive the benefits of an additional learning experience to extend their English, religious and life-skills knowledge.

*“This programme has been a very successful innovation. What I like about it is there is the religious education side combined with additional ESOL time as it is set up in conjunction with the ESOL programme. Because this programme is interest-based and designed very much at the appropriate language and concept learning level for these students, they get to understand and appreciate what is going on around the place. It is also a great time for the ESOL teacher to explain things that are going on around school at the time, things that are happening in the life of the school. This is especially useful for the new students coming into the school to help them settle in. Even other international students who have been in the school a while have asked to do the programme. Even though it starts at one o’clock at lunchtime the students are always there ready to go; it has certainly been very popular.” (Director of International Students, 2002).*

*“This class gives the students a feeling of being included and being provided for. Also the material they are being taught helps them to be able to understand the culture around them at school. When there is some particular occasion coming up such as a Mass or Saints Day that we are going to celebrate then they are prepared for this. For example when we had the Easter Celebrations at the end of Term One we were able to spend time explaining Lent, Ash Wednesday and the various days that were involved, and they were well provided for by being able to*

*understand things better when we came to the Easter Liturgy. So it helped them to fit in with the culture of the school.” (ESOL teacher, 2002).*

*“This programme gives the international students the opportunity to gain an understanding about the many expressions, gestures or activities that we are involved with in the daily life of the school. Even though these expressions or activities could be meaningless to some of these students at least they are being taught why we do it, and they are receiving additional English instruction at the same time. If they feel that they can at least understand what is going on here then there is a movement towards better integration.” (Director of Religious Studies, 2002).*

Staff involved in this change process have been both challenged and rewarded by the experience as they have appreciated the faith that was given to them to initiate and implement an effective change for the school.

*“I have found it very satisfying being involved in the preparation and teaching of this programme.” (ESOL teacher, 2002).*

*“I value this programme because a non-Catholic staff member took the initiative to prepare this work and present this idea to the school to see if it could be useful for meeting school needs. The value of having a non-Catholic person involved in writing this programme means that in a sense this teacher is coming from a similar position to that of the international students. She has not got a heap of Catholic assumptions behind her upbringing like someone like me would have. At times we speak a different language. Here we had a non-Catholic though a very committed Anglican teacher who understands the special Catholic character very well, preparing a new religious programme for a Catholic school. This teacher felt there may be questions that would come up that needed to be answered by a Catholic so this is how I became involved in this activity to help check the content of the teaching material. At a personal level this has been a very rewarding experience for me: involvement in this work has certainly been a highlight of this year.” (Mercy Chaplain, 2002).*

The involvement of the Director of Religious Studies and the Mercy Chaplain in this activity has meant that other people have now become involved as part of this unit culture. Given the value support provided from the administration this programme has been able to flourish in this faculty in its first year. Early feed-back from staff and students indicates that this change is already producing the desired positive outcomes for individuals and the organisation.

## Culture

*“This situation provided the school with a golden opportunity to express the special character of our school. One of the reasons for the ENR programme was to help both students and teachers meet their curriculum goals.” (Director of Religious Studies, 2002).*

This curriculum change indicates that minority cultural group activities are seriously considered as a whole culture priority in this school. The introduction of this new activity has been valued by members across cultural units. Positive behavioural manifestations have resulted from this change including: an increased appreciation of organisation beliefs and values, a new interactive activity that incorporates the sharing of lifestyles, values, beliefs and symbols and a growing sense of belonging to the school community for international students.

*“I have seen these students work as a group in different dynamics to what they would be in other Religious Education classes. As time has gone on they have been more willing to ask questions in class which has helped to clarify the programme for us. When I see these students around school I have a connection with them and they know that connection as we now have a shared experience. When I am around the school they now come up and ask me questions that they would have never asked before. This has opened up other possibilities at other levels for these students.” (Mercy Chaplain, 2002).*

## Structure

The new ENR subject required time-tabling. Curriculum needs have been fulfilled with the ESOL teacher documenting the programme procedures and progress throughout the school year.

### **Whose interests are best served by this change?**

The purpose of this change is to improve the delivery of Religious Education to the international students and also to help these students enjoy their time at the school. Staff interests have been valued in this process as this is an activity that has provided an opportunity for the administration to promote staff satisfaction and professional development for staff of the international unit.

**Improvement and Effectiveness:** The international students are now given further opportunity to extend their English language skills and gain religious knowledge. This change has also provided increased ESOL support and an

increased sense of belonging to the school for the international students. Though small scale (at this stage), this innovative programme is a typical example of a school attempting to find a balance between curriculum, student and school priorities. The design of the ENR programme does much to:

(a) Meet curriculum priorities: by preparing international students to participate well within their own school environment and by providing a multicultural educational resource activity that is supportive of student individual needs.

(b) Meet student priorities: by extending ESOL and social support to international students. Through this programme students use ESOL instruction in a comfortable non-restrictive learning environment to establish an increased understanding and awareness about the organisation they now belong to. This programme gives the students a sense of belonging, as they learn about some of the primary values, beliefs, and spiritual symbols that surround them in their school environment. They are also given the opportunity to share their own language, cultural values, beliefs and symbols that are special in their lives.

*"In this class the international students feel comfortable trying to articulate and share some of their own experiences. There is a different starting point for these students in this class as we start from their own experience. Whereas in the regular Religious Education class a lot of understanding is already assumed because supposedly the experiences of most of the students are the same as they have shared Catholic experiences. It is important to help the international students feel comfortable to share what they know, so they can actually identify and understand the differences around them." (Mercy Chaplain, 2002).*

This is a positive move by the school; according to McKay and Scarino (1991) learning is more meaningful for NESB students when the curriculum incorporates the individual culture and first language needs of these students.

(c) Meet School priorities: by involving all students in the sharing of sacred organisational values and beliefs. This programme though small scale contributes greatly to the schools efforts towards enriching students with a range of cultural experiences and providing an atmosphere of inclusion and respect for other cultures in a Christian educational environment.

In consideration of the features highlighted in Table 1, this example demonstrates the school's desire and commitment to fulfil the needs of a diverse student population. This change also reinforces the high standards expected of staff so they are able to contribute towards purposeful teaching that helps to establish a secure, supportive and caring Christian educational environment.

All the change examples highlighted in this study signify steps in the schools cultural journey. As the international student numbers and needs have grown the school has responded by utilising the Catholic, educational and professional resources that are available in the school community.

### **5.3 The International Unit Culture**

Each faculty of this school can be defined by a set of class groups held under a faculty umbrella. Interviews with the principal and heads of faculties revealed that the faculties of Villa Maria College while sharing in the Catholic cultural strands of the school culture, also have distinctive cultures that contribute to the overall makeup of the organisational culture.

*"Each Faculty does exhibit and contribute its own culture. It is like a diamond, they each bring a different facet and colour of life." (Principal, 2002).*

The uniqueness of the various class groups that constitute a faculty is divisible by curriculum content, subject knowledge, resources used by teachers and students, material displayed, language shared, and personal goals. In practice the cultural composition of each individual class is dependent on the collective personal characteristics of the people that make up the group as the members of a class hold a wide range of differing experiences, expectations and values. As Handy and Aitken (1986) point out:

Each class is likely to develop or exhibit its own character or culture deriving from the make-up and background of the children in the group and in the person of the teacher (Handy and Aitken, 1986:15).

This is certainly the case for the members that make up the international unit. The development and functioning of the international unit at this school represents the

growth of a new unit culture (though different in personal make-up to other units) that contributes to the cultural body of this school in a similar fashion to other well established groups of this school.

*"This group has not been formed in isolation, even though we are over in the Convent building I feel that we are part of the whole team. Maybe that is because the international group is tied with the International Languages Faculty. Also I think the vertical group system has helped to reduce the isolation of international students into a set group. The principal has been very strong in encouraging the international students to be part of the whole school and not to be considered or seen to be a minority group." (Director of International Students, 2002).*

This unit culture has not evolved due to counter-school culture conflict involving resistance or opposition to authority or to a dominant culture. Instead Villa Maria College has undergone a process of geographical differentiation as the organisation has grown to a point where it has been required to form a new geographical unit. The organisational logic for such differentiation is attributed to the following two bases:

(i) The need to fulfill the educational and social needs of international students who require additional English support.

(ii) The need to uphold professional standards for staff which contribute to the education of international students.

Today the international unit of Villa Maria College has become an established and respected group that forms an integral part of the International Languages Faculty. This group now comprises 38 fee-paying students and six active staff members who are involved in various teaching, administrative, support and pastoral care activities. While this unit culture has been largely shaped by the prevailing school culture it is a unit that has developed its own character. Changes that have been addressed in recent years have allowed this group to flourish into a group that exhibits distinctive cultural characteristics that hold a place and importance in this school and that have meaning to the people who belong to this unit. Interviews with the staff of the international unit have revealed two distinctive features that are unique to this new unit:

(a) Difference in the interpretation of cultural matter: While this group when involved in teaching and learning processes shares many of the core organisational values and symbols, there is much of the organisational cultural matter that is interpreted differently or seems somewhat alien to the student members of this particular group. Limited language skills combined with difference in the cultural background of international students often accounts for the difficulties that these students encounter as they attempt to interpret, absorb and adapt to the cultural content of the school. This difference is recognised and respected by the staff of the international unit who work hard to improve the international students understanding of the cultural matter that surrounds them in order to give them a sense of awareness and belonging. For example the introduction of the ENR programme at Villa Maria College is one such step towards international students acquiring cultural knowledge that allows these students to work well and enjoy their place of education.

(b) Appreciation and acceptance of cultural difference: Because the international group includes students and staff from different nationalities who hold their own personal beliefs and values, there is a multitude of beliefs, values and symbolic material separate from the organisational core that holds relevance to members of this group. Unique to this particular group is the acceptance and appreciation of the different cultural forms that make up this unit culture. In particular the nature and style of teaching in the International Languages Faculty allows for cultural difference to be openly appreciated and shared.

*“Understanding, appreciation and respect for difference are key values important to this Faculty group. Students know this is a place where they are appreciated. It is a place where they share their own culture with other members of the school. They get to share their own home roots, values, beliefs and symbols that are important to them as individuals.” (Administrative assistant, 2002).*

*“The staff of the international unit embrace the qualities and gifts of all the people involved in the group. We really treasure these students. We see these students regularly on a one-to-one bases and we see them respond in a group. The staff of the international group do more than teach, we are also care-givers, we mother these girls so they feel at home in this place. We want the students to feel at home not only in the Convent building but anywhere in the school.” (Director of International Students, 2002).*

The staff of the International Languages Faculty regularly communicate that difference in understanding and lifestyle is accepted and appreciated in the school.

*“When you learn a language you learn about that culture. The two cannot be separated. Language is the way we express ourselves and our culture comes through our language. By learning another language we are learning that people are different, not better or worse, but have different ways. I think that people who study languages are broad-minded and tolerant, and are able to recognise and value difference. A key value in the broad context of learning languages is that it makes people aware that our mono-cultural way is not the only way. Also those learning a language are often more sympathetic and understanding of a non-native speaker coming to New Zealand. Staff and students of the International Languages Faculty are open and receptive to people of other language backgrounds. They have an acceptance of the fact that there are different values.” (ESOL teacher, 2002).*

This feature helps the international students overcome the difficulties of school cultural comprehension and gives these students a sense of purpose and belonging in the school. It also gives these students the belief that they have a giftedness to offer the school. The development and success of the international unit has seen this unit culture become a group that contributes variety, colour and the learning gifts of life to the composition of the Villa Maria College school culture.

#### **5.4 Features of the Cultural Change Process**

Twenty years ago, the meaning of change had a one-level message; if people don't find meaning in reform it can never have impact (Fullan, 2001:268).

The change examples represented in this study are comprehensive proof that this stance still exists in education. Because the people of Villa Maria College have collectively coordinated the change activities with intentions and efforts that have been filled with meaning and value they have produced predominately positive impacts on the school culture. Without substantial models or guidelines to work from, the setting up and coordination of the international unit at Villa Maria College has at times been a rather ad hoc process. The members of this school have attempted to best meet the needs of students and staff mainly by trial and error. Changes relating to the development of this new unit culture between 1996-2002 have largely resulted from internal innovation as members of this school

responded to the changing numbers, composition and needs of the international student group. As a result the change activities of this period has exposed a number of prevailing change features:

### **Motivation for Change**

(i) The development of this unit culture has occurred as the school grew in size and need. *"We attempt to address the issues, changes or challenges as they arise or come to our attention. We generally plan ahead for the next term or school year. We have planned for increases. As the demand opened up we responded with change and we have responded to the changing needs of the students. For most of the changes something has happened so we have planned ahead to accommodate this."* (Principal, 2002).

(ii) The increased number of fee-paying international students with limited English skills has increased the pace of significant change in the past two years.

(iii) All except one change example cited in this study have been motioned by staff from within the school for the purpose of improvement. Hence change innovation has been primarily school-based.

(iv) Changes after 1996 have been designed to improve teaching and learning conditions for teachers and students in the international unit and throughout the school.

### **Management of Change**

(i) This unit culture did not develop as a result of conflict with a dominant culture. In fact the main cultural units of this school have worked closely together to establish this new unit culture.

(ii) While the Principal has been actively involved in the change activities it has been the collective efforts of various members from within both the teaching unit and administrative unit who have been key coordinators involved in the management of cultural change.

(iii) The change activities sited in this study have accentuated the presence and importance of horizontal relationships that exist in this school between the main cultural units (key stakeholder groups). *“The members involved work closely together to work through challenges that arise during the school year.” (Principal, 2002).*

(iv) Enhanced collaborative relationships have appeared as administrators and teachers have worked and learnt together to create a working model that is applicable to this school (there have been no learned models from which to direct this development). Open, willing, caring participant collaboration among the professionals of this school has contributed to the ease of the change process and towards positive educational change.

(v) The teaching unit and the administrative unit have been involved in the change activities for the purpose of enhancing and improving the student unit and the school as a whole. The staff and student interests have held precedence in all the change activities carried out since 1996.

(vi) Maintaining stable international student numbers over this period has enabled the administrators and teaching staff to manage the change processes more efficiently, effectively and positively.

(vii) All change activities have been time-consuming and intellectually demanding on staff at the school. *“We are often constrained by time or funds as to how well we deal with the challenge or change.” (Principal, 2002).*

(viii) Change ideas have met with minimal resistance or discontent from members in each cultural unit, as the changes have been applicable to present educational trends.

(ix) The development of this unit culture has given staff awareness that many of the values, beliefs and style of education delivered at Villa Maria College are supportive and suited to the needs of both domestic students and international students.

(x) The Catholic philosophy has provided an underlying guide for the members of this school community in the overall management of the cultural change process. The facilitation of cooperation between cultural units in a caring Christian educational environment has allowed the staff and students of Villa Maria College to achieve goals together.

### **Change Impact**

(i) The people involved in the change process were not consciously trying to create or change the culture of the school, but rather contribute positively to the enrichment, enhancement and stability of the present culture.

(ii) The values of teachers and administrators have been openly expressed, exposed and appreciated in the search for successful educational change goals.

(iii) The introduction of new symbols, rituals and ceremonies has increased the cultural content of the school.

(iv) The introduction of new policies, procedures and professional positions relating to the education of international students has enhanced the cultural context of the school.

(v) There are a number of changes that signal the formal representation of this new unit culture as a valued part of this school.

(vi) The collective effort of people moving towards achievable, shared and valued goals has contributed to a new set of positive interactive forces occurring between cultural units. New behavioural patterns have evolved between members of the cultural units as change has been implemented.

(vii) Many of the changes implemented have become institutionalised.

(viii) Successful change activities at Villa Maria College between 1996 - 2002 have enhanced the school culture and also created new features that contribute to the

elementary hardware of the school culture. Hence in most cases the changes implemented between 1996-2002 have served to maintain or strengthen the school culture.

(ix) All change examples cited in this study indicate that the people and the culture of Villa Maria College have been affected by change. Hence the change examples cited in this study clearly articulate the view that educational change will always contribute in some way to a change in school culture.

## 5.5 Concluding Remarks

The following comment provides a fitting final remark to conclude this section on the cultural change process at Villa Maria College:

*"In some way everyone has gained from the changes made in the school. We are thinking about how they are integrating into their homestays, how they are integrating into the school, how we can best serve their needs. Also staff who are not directly related with the international unit are reaping the benefits of better organisation, structure and facilities for these students. I think we are witnessing better integration amongst all the students of the school. Yes there has been hardship and increased demands on staff with the development of the international group, though the changes that have been made in school look to make the situation better for staff and students. I think everyone's needs have been considered in all the changes that have taken place in school. It has been an equally difficult and equally rewarding experience for all concerned." (Director of Religious Studies, 2002).*

## Chapter Six

### The Impact

Schooling is an everyday practice that impacts upon individuals, groups and their physical environment. Through critical dialectic reflection members of this school community have provided the resource knowledge that carries the insight and understanding of the physical and social impact patterns that have prevailed with the development of the international unit over the past seven years. This chapter follows up on the selected examples identified in Chapter Five by describing the impact of the changes on the culture and the people of Villa Maria College. In particular this chapter presents an analysis of data collected to address research questions two, three, four and five (Chapter One, page 8).

#### 6.1 Tangible Aspects Subject to Change

This section considers the tangible elements of the school culture that have changed and the corresponding effects of change.

##### 6.1.1 Enhanced Physical Environment (Visual Manifestations)

There have been a number of subtle physical changes to the school environment in conjunction with the development of the international unit.

*"In terms of buildings there have been no major changes. It is only small physical things around school that have changed slowly: the main visible changes would be most obvious over in the Convent building where the decorations and displays reflect the different nationalities that now work in there." (Head of English, 2002).*

Essentially the location of the international unit in the Sisters of Mercy House marked a new beginning as it is situated on the site where the Villa Maria College educational journey began.

*"In 1918 when the school started, the first classrooms of Villa Maria were established in the upstairs area of the Convent building. The move of the Languages Department into the Convent actually completes a whole loop: the site*

*of teaching and learning has come back to where it originated in this school.” (Principal, 2002).*

It seems appropriate that the new beginning for this unit culture is situated in this spiritually significant place. The upstairs area of the Convent building is a place that now provides the international students at the school with a start to a new form of education, a sense of belonging to school tradition and a union with the school itself. The four classrooms, oral testing room, office and interview room situated in one area in this block brings the International Languages Faculty (including the international group) together as a close community of learners that share in a similar set of language learning needs.

*“When I take people around on tours I am very proud of the fact that our space is very homely, the little rooms for ‘this and that’ works well, it knits us together as a close group.” (Director of International Students, 2002).*

The presence of a welcoming atmosphere is evident throughout the rooms that are used to house the international students in the Convent block. For example the two ESOL classrooms holding visual material displaying a range of languages, symbols and landscapes are representative of a cultural provision set in place to provide a learning environment that supports diversity and the learning needs of NESB international students.

*“My ESOL classroom is a small, cosy non-threatening teaching environment. There are resources from many different cultures displayed around the room including materials that have been made or donated by the students.” (ESOL teacher, 2002).*

Essentially the teaching and meeting places of this block have been transformed into new places of security where the international students come to share their learning experiences as well as their daily life experiences in a new country. Participants in this study commented on how this area of the school has become a ‘comfort zone’ essential for international students working and living in a new environment.

*“The move of the Language Department to this area generated a new use for this part of the school. It has provided a new head office for our international students,*

*a place in which to feel comfortable. It is nice to have somewhere the girls can identify with as their place.” (Student Welfare Liaison Officer, 2002).*

*“For the international group this area has provided a collective focus, a place to be together, a home base.” (Principal, 2002).*

*“While the Convent provides a home base for students and they do congregate in room 34 for informal meetings, we have not provided a formal common room for the international students as we do not want to separate them from the rest of the school. As a result during informal times students do meet in different places around school: the library, the commerce room, the quad. These other places form part of the whole because they are not isolated.” (Director of International Students, 2002).*

The presence of this unit culture in this part of the school has improved the physical texture of this school. Situated in a place of pride, respect and faith, the location of the international unit in the Convent building has brought a renewed spirit to this area of the school. The upstairs area of this building has now become a hub for strengthening and spreading global culture throughout the school.

*“The international unit displays a unique atmosphere that relays a global culture. The upstairs of the Convent is a vibrant, colourful, lively place where students share their own culture.” (Administrative assistant, 2002).*

The physical cultural face-lift experienced in the Sisters of Mercy House over the last seven years has brought a renewed educational purpose and vibrancy to a spiritually significant part of the school. This area does much to transmit a new set of positive interactive forces that can be enjoyed by all staff and students of this school. Hence the physical transformations that have taken place in this part of the school transmit a new form of culture that has enriched the lives of teachers and students and contributed greatly to a physical enhancement of the school culture.

### **6.1.2 New Symbolic Matter (Visual Manifestations)**

The appearance of new symbolic material on the surface of the school face also indicates that a cultural shift has occurred since the international unit has been established. The new symbolic material that now adorns the walls, classrooms and hallways of the Sisters of Mercy Convent building has transformed this place from the spiritual hub of days gone by into the cultural hub of this educational

organisation. While the guiding spirit of the Sisters of Mercy remains strong in this building the appearance of a diverse range of cultural displays signifies that new educational goals are now being set and obtained in this part of the school. Geographical posters, origami, calligraphic displays and symbolic gifts scattered throughout the upstairs area allow the students to feel comfortable and at ease with items they are familiar with. The international students are stimulated by the visual resources that tie them to their home roots, or features that tie them to this learning environment and to other members of their class and school. Also the domestic students who pass through this block get to enjoy and learn from a vast array of symbolic matter that is present in this area, which does much to enrich their learning.

*“The symbolic material that is displayed throughout the Languages Faculty helps to make the local students aware that Villa is now an international school.” (Student Welfare Liaison Officer, 2002).*

As with the development of most new teaching groups, new resources have been introduced in order to meet the learning needs of the international student body. The teacher participants in this study expressed concern about the lack of adequate resource material available to assist in the teaching of students from many different backgrounds. Instead, like many other schools in New Zealand, Villa Maria College members have been required to develop many of their own resource materials to assist with student learning in ESOL and in other subject areas. For example:

*“In class the international students use a general science language dictionary provided by the ESOL teacher to deal with terminology problems in their work. The introduction of hand-held dictionary/thesaurus computers in class and in school tests have also become a feature in recent years, though they are not used in exams.” (Head of Science, 2002).*

*“The school paid a person to translate and write out into Mandarin and Cantonese a set of key terms regularly used in senior economics classes. It is a resource used to assist the students from China and Hong Kong. This resource helps to ease some of the subject language difficulties that were being encountered by students and staff.” (Administrative assistant, 2002).*

*“Last year a very helpful Math teacher made an effort to put posters up on her wall with labelling in Korean. She also prepared a bag of mathematical instruments with*

*labels on in English for me to use in the ESOL classroom and gave me notes ahead of time on what the students would be studying so I could prepare them for work with the correct vocabulary. Also an economics teacher gave me some old economics and accounting text so that I could collate the glossaries in the back to help their students. Other teachers have been very helpful in discussing the students and the difficulties they were having so we could provide for them by making new resources that can be useful in their subject areas.” (ESOL teacher, 2002).*

Symbols of welcome, learning, security and symbols that signify and celebrate cultural diversity are not confined to just the International Languages Faculty or the teaching rooms of this school. There are a number of new symbolic resources that have appeared around the school since the international unit has evolved. In the following passages participants comment on some of the symbolic resources that have been introduced to the school by international students over the last seven years.

*“Symbolic material is now more obvious around school. When you come into the foyer of the school the gifts and symbols of contact and diversity are there, and the teachers display gifts that they have received over a period of time on their tables rather than hiding them away in a cupboard. It is good to have this material around school as it forms part of a student’s complete education. It is a way to encourage all the girls to be aware of the different cultures around them. For international visitors coming into the school to enrol students this material around school allows them to make an instant connection.” (Student Welfare Liaison Officer, 2002).*

*“The introduction of gifts, souvenirs or symbols in the foyer or in other parts of the school has become more obvious in recent years. This shows that the school is making a conscious effort to represent the cultural groups of our school. The international flags in the assembly hall represent the different nationalities that have been part of the school. Each flag has been donated by an international student or by her family. When a flag is presented during assembly an explanation is provided about whom it is from and the significance of the flag or the story behind the flag.” (Head of Physical Education, 2002).*

*“This year the librarian encouraged the international students to set up international displays that could be beneficial to all students in the school. The international student librarians have brought along their own materials including pictures of their home country, symbols or gifts from their homeland and labels in their home nation language and in English. The students announced at assembly that they had put these displays together and that new displays would be presented in the library over a number of weeks. A lot of the students have come into the library to look at the displays or you often see students that are working in the Library stop to look at them. These displays are colourful and interesting, and*

*help to enhance the working environment for our students working in the Library.” (Mercy Sister, 2002).*

*“We have displayed brochures and posters made by the international students at various locations around the school. This material is presently situated in the library. These resources have been made in conjunction with the other international displays situated in the library. The posters introduce information about a student’s home country and the brochures provide written information in their own language. Currently we are doing a series on traditional sports that will also be displayed around the school.” (ESOL teacher, 2002).*

*“The new symbolic material displayed around school are examples of the ways in which we are extending our cultural diversity to other parts of the school. More people around school are now playing a part, getting involved in helping the international students to express themselves in this educational environment.” (Director of International Students, 2002).*

The presence of new symbolic material produced or donated by international students or donated by international visitors to the school has helped to further enrich the cultural fabric of this educational organisation. This new symbolic material:

(i) is evidence that new patterns of behaviour are becoming established in the school, as the international students are given the opportunity to express and display their own cultural roots.

(ii) further extends the visual cultural content of the school.

(iii) provides more educational stimuli for students of this school to enjoy and thrive on. Students can extend their symbolic base knowledge.

(iv) allows human diversity to flourish within a safe, caring educational environment.

(v) is an indication that cultural diversity is respected and valued amongst members of this school community.

(vi) is evidence that this school is committed to meeting the standards set down in the National Education Guidelines and the Curriculum Framework.

The physical and symbolic changes that have occurred at this school in the past seven years have clearly produced a positive physical impact. The development of this international unit has done much to visually enhance the school environment in a way that further enriches the lives of the people and the content of the school culture.

### **6.1.3 New Behavioural Patterns (Behavioural Manifestations)**

The growing number of international students (in particular fee-paying students) since 1996 has produced a number of new behavioural patterns in the school life of Villa Maria College. There are three main identifiable patterns that have featured during the period 1996-2002.

#### (1) New Demands for Teaching Staff:

##### International Staff

The development of the international unit at this school has brought a number of new roles that include extensive responsibilities and demands for staff within the international unit. Work in the international area is quite different to other faculties within the school. The tasks and responsibilities of staff involved in coordinating and teaching international students has grown with the student numbers and has proven as diverse as the students themselves. The following passages correlate well with the research findings of Kennedy and Dewar (1997), who found the role of International Student Coordinators in New Zealand primary and secondary schools to be complex and demanding. The Director of International Students participating in this study accounts for the aspects of her role.

*“At the moment I look after the international students who are actively in the school, and also the prospective students. I look at the marketing side in the sense that I am the front person for families approaching the school. I see my role as overseeing the whole programme and moving the programme in a forward direction. I am involved with ESOL staff in setting up programmes for international students, such as the ENR programme. I also liaise with other staff in the school to deal with issues they may have with international students. This position involves coordinating and communicating with ESOL teachers, classroom teachers, an administrative assistant, the home-stay and pastoral care coordinator, the agents, and the guardians. Now with the Code of Practice in place I am more involved with the school administration in working towards providing suitable school policies. Essentially I am involved in making sure that we have a quality product to offer*

*these students and that we meet their specific needs.” (Director of International Students, 2002).*

The Principal of the school supports the view that this position holds an expansive role:

*“The role of the Director of International Students has expanded with the numbers of students increasing. It has expanded as the needs of the students change and as our commitment to meeting the needs of the students has improved.” (Principal, 2002).*

Other staff working in the international unit have found that their roles have also become more complicated than the traditional teaching roles many of them were involved in prior to working in the international unit. For the ESOL teachers their roles soon expanded beyond second language acquisition and subject learning to become consumed by a considerable amount of extra-ordinary pastoral care work. Such tasks include: keeping regular communication lines open with families, helping to deal with day to day functional problems in class or around school, providing emotional and moral support for students, providing encouragement towards academic goals, encouraging students to communicate with their subject teachers, and encouraging students to become involved in school activities.

In addition to this the Student Welfare Liaison Officer who was employed in 1997 to ease pastoral care demands comments on experiencing an expanding role with the influx of fee-paying international students:

*“The complexity and demands on my role have increased 100% in the last couple of years especially now that most of our students require home-stays. The increased number of fee-paying international students requiring home-stays combined with the regulations of the Code of Practice has meant that time consumed arranging and inspecting the home-stays has increased, and the time available for working through settling-in processes in the home or at school has become limited. ” (Student Welfare Liaison Officer, 2002).*

Participants other than the international staff commented on the commitment of the international staff in their endeavour to provide assistance to international students and teaching staff in areas outside the international unit.

*"Having a Director of International Students and other staff in the international unit who have been given the time to help these students and the staff around school is great. The teachers' interests are being served better by having this support available to help with communicating to the international students in class. For me as a teacher I can go to the staff of the international unit and ask for advice on approaches to work or how to handle particular situations." (Head of Arts, 2002).*

*"From what I have observed around school the international staff and particularly the Director of International Students regularly go beyond their own area to liaise with staff from other faculties to advise or assist them with issues or demands that may be related to international students. In my area I know it has taken a lot of time and energy on behalf of the Director of International Students and the ESOL teachers to help the international students understand the importance of their involvement in retreats and the importance of their contribution. They are regularly encouraged and supported by staff to participate in such activities in order to become part of school life at Villa." (Mercy Chaplain, 2002).*

*"Helping our international students feel part of the school culture is probably one of our greatest challenges. Throughout our history Villa has developed a series of activities that are specifically designed to bring the girls together. Initially our international students have not participated well in special activities outside of the classroom. They would often take the day off to study English. In the last year or two the international students have started coming along to our special activity days and they seem to be enjoying the fun. They now enjoy being part of the moving rainbow of people that is displayed on our sports days. One of the really significant changes has been the time the Director of International Students and the ESOL teachers have put into the students explaining in detail repetitively what these activities are about and why it is important to be part of it." (Principal, 2002).*

The staff of the international unit work closely with teachers of other faculties to ensure the staff and students are receiving support beyond the international unit. Many of the participants commented about the importance of the positive horizontal working relationships that the international staff and heads of faculties have built in the school in recent years. Teachers feel comfortable that they have someone close by that they approach for advice in dealing with international students. The open collaborative approach of the Director of International Students and classroom teachers of other faculties has greatly facilitated the learning of international students as well as reinforced positive interactive patterns between members of staff. These positive working relationships have been essential for staff and students to overcome the difficulties they face in the classroom.

### Teaching Staff of other Faculties

Teaching staff outside the international unit commented that having NESB students in class has increased the demands on teachers in the classroom. Teachers have needed to become aware, sympathetic, sensitive and supportive of a new range of student needs socially and academically. In particular teachers have acknowledged that they have had to deal with classroom pressures arising from the limited language ability and cultural barriers of international students. In the passages that follow teaching staff comment on the demands they encounter in the classroom in relation to teaching situations.

*"Sometimes our international students have been very demanding: at times they want more from the teachers in terms of attention and time during or after class. Some teachers have found this incredibly frustrating while others are only too happy to make extra time at the end of class or during breaks for these students. I can understand a teacher's frustration when this demand is often present period after period." (Principal, 2002).*

*"Even with a small group of international students in my year twelve class I find myself doing things differently now. In my preparation I have to think if everyone in the class would be able to cope with the material I have prepared for a lesson. I find that I write on the blackboard a lot more so the international students have a chance to interpret what I am saying. Unfortunately I feel I am spoon-feeding the rest of the class a little bit too much by doing this. I find myself spending more time one-to-one with the international students rather than with the other students. Often I set the class working on an activity then go and help the international students. Time is consumed by explaining the nature of a task, concepts, or the comprehension of questions and written text. With assessment activities I have altered the assessments by choosing certain tasks that an NESB student can cope with." (Head of Arts, 2002).*

*"A lot of our international students come into science at a senior level with a high expectation of taking bursary subjects and going onto university the next year. Then they run into huge problems because they really cannot cope with the language. They have difficulty reading work, there is such a lot of terminology that has only one accurate way to present an answer, and there are too many alternative words so they often struggle to interpret, grasp or understand verbal or written questions. An obvious allowance made in class for NESB students is during class discussion. Generally these students do not participate so I tend to provide more mathematical questions or questions I think they can answer so that they can be involved, whereas if I asked these students to verbally explain scientific concepts I know the task is more than often beyond them." (Head of Science, 2002).*

*“In class the international students certainly have difficulty participating in class discussions. In English we encourage full class discussion but there are only a certain amount of questions that you can direct towards NESB students. If a student has real problems formulating a response to a direct question it is very hard to keep the flow of a discussion. Also from an English perspective when you get presented with work from an NESB student there are often things like spelling, punctuation and grammar that require a lot of attention. If you look at it in terms of handing the work back to the student it would be so full of red marks that it would be totally devastating for them. I have actually changed my standards for these students because I do not want to demoralize them. I would rather sit down with a student and go through the necessary changes and try to help them fix small parts gradually at a time as you know you cannot fix the whole lot in one go. So you do compromise in terms of the level at which you are aiming at.” (Head of English, 2002).*

*“In terms of teaching, having an increased number of international students in class has made a huge change in how I present my material and the amount of time I need to spend with the students. Many of the students have studied economics or accounting to varying levels so we have to start from the beginning with most students as we cannot assume they understand all the concepts we are going to use in class. Our teaching now requires a lot more explanation of basic concepts. Also the NESB students seem to prefer teacher-directed activities and written activities rather than interacting.*

*I have tried very hard to get the international students to answer questions: they now will answer questions though they do not seem to enjoy this and they are often very reluctant to be involved. A lot of the students will put their head down and not make eye contact. This is partly due to their lack of comprehension of the subject and partly their difficulty in using the English language to return-reply. This has meant that I have had to become a lot more structured in terms of providing less discussion in class and a lot more notes. I can at least be assured that if they do not understand me in class they can take away material to study to help them keep up in class. Also because of their reluctance to participate in discussion I will set more work during class time so I can get around the students to check on their understanding and give them more one on one time. This is only possible in my smaller class; in a larger class it is difficult to give the students this one-on-one time. This situation has had an impact on the other students: for example I have seen frustration from the New Zealand students with the amount of time it takes explaining things to the NESB students. Also the international students are generally very diligent and always trying so they often want to stay after class or after school to ask questions or ask for extra help, but this does take up a lot of extra time. Most students are polite and appreciative while some have certain expectations of service, meeting their needs at the level they expect can at times be very challenging for some of us.” (Head of Commerce, 2002).*

In addition to these increased demands in the classroom teachers have also become aware of and are challenged by obvious cross-cultural interaction difficulties that exist between international and New Zealand students. Many participants in this study share in the view that “close proximity does not

necessarily lead to social interaction” (Ward, 2001:14). Even though international students at Villa Maria College are given many opportunities to have formal and informal interaction with local students teachers have noticed the obvious feature of limited interaction between the two groups. In the passages that follow teaching staff comment on the limited student interaction patterns they are encountering in class.

*“Through-out the year the level of participation and enthusiasm of international students is generally fairly low. When we are doing group work the international students who join in often look a little lost. If you ask students to get into groups themselves then often international students will get left out because they are hard work for the other students. But when groups are randomly selected by staff then the students get on with it and involve everyone in someway. When the international students are put into a situation where they have to interact they do, and they do really well.” (Head of Physical Education, 2002).*

*“In class there is certainly a language and a cultural barrier between the students. In one class my Japanese students are very shy, they sit together and they don’t mingle with the other students unless I specifically do group work where I coerce them into interacting with the other students. I think the other students in class are very welcoming though they do not put themselves out greatly to include the international girls unless I set up a situation. The kiwi girls are not trying to exclude the Japanese girls but they are apprehensive about how to approach or interact with these girls.” (Head of Arts, 2002).*

*“Interaction between students in class at times can be difficult, and it is still predominately coerced interaction. In class I sometimes place students together in mixed groups and on other occasions I will place the international students into their own group. There is a fine line between helping each other particularly using their own language and supporting one another. I find involving kiwi students who are sympathetic and receptive of the international students has been useful during group work. This situation certainly requires a constant effort on the part of the teacher to keep the students focused and myself focused on establishing positive interactive patterns between students in class.” (Head of English, 2002).*

*“Staff regularly comment about the lack of interaction between local and international students. The staff try hard to encourage interaction between local students and international students. It appears that teachers are more successful in establishing interaction in the junior classes. In the senior classes staff are often more concerned about communicating the curriculum.” (Administrative assistant, 2002).*

Language communication and student interaction difficulties that arise within the classroom have called for the teachers of Villa Maria College to intervene frequently as the key coordinators of student interaction. The following comment by the Director of International Students confirms this situation:

*"I believe that teachers do worry about the interaction of international students and Kiwi students in class. Dealing with student interaction when you have language barriers in class does require teachers to develop new skills, because the international students will leave it up to the teacher to create interactive situations. In class the international student is looking for the direction of the teacher; very rarely will they initiate their own interactive situations with Kiwi students. Teachers are required to be more primary based by placing international students in group or peer situations. While it is good to place international students of the same language together there are times when they do need to be or want to be together. However the international students need to be told to do this by the teacher, they cannot do this on their own: it is way too hard." (Director of International Students, 2002).*

Teachers at this school are working hard to overcome the communication and interaction difficulties they are encountering in class by nurturing positive, yet mainly coerced interactive learning patterns between domestic and international students. Hence the new demands placed on teachers to modify their teaching methodology and to manage cross-cultural interactive patterns has in effect changed the dynamics of the classroom environment.

## (2) New Rituals

Changes to the timetable due to the introduction of new programmes of teaching (ESOL classes, ENR, IELTS and English Unit Standards) indicate that a new set of formalised rituals has become part of every-day life at Villa Maria College. During the school year teachers are flexible towards the various changes that take place within the school routine:

*"We have a certain flexibility with the timetable at this school, as things come up like Sister School visits or visiting students coming into the classroom for short term periods: teachers are certainly flexible in making allowances for such activities in their routines. These types of activities have become more frequent over the last five years." (Head of English, 2002).*

*"For some years the social studies classes have been used as a time slot for international students to do their ESOL class. For some year 9 or 10 students they have at times missed out on social studies classes. However it is possibly a good class to choose for their ESOL class time as social studies involves a lot of discussion and interaction which many of these students have difficulty with when they first come into the school." (Head of Social Sciences, 2002).*

The impact of the formal ritualistic changes relating to international students has been felt most by the staff working within the international unit sphere. For example:

*"There have been timetable implications. For the people involved it is difficult sorting out the timetables for international students, sorting out what subjects they can take and who will take them, as some subjects have a pre-requisite and others not. Trying to get the international students to fit into our mainstream subjects and cover their ESOL requirements can often prove a difficult equation." (Head of Commerce, 2002).*

*"Timetable changes due to the introduction of new programmes has certainly changed my routine considerably in recent years." (ESOL teacher, 2002).*

Hence the staff members of the international unit have been extremely flexible in accommodating ongoing changes to faculty numbers, student composition, the time-table, teaching programmes and the home situations of students. On a less formal scale there are a number of new ritualistic activities that have become features of school life at Villa Maria College over the past seven years.

*"We have a lot more international groups visiting the school. We have a lot more exchange students moving through the school. There is a lot more involvement of international students at assemblies nowadays. In assembly we have students of different nationalities giving prayers in their own language on occasions. There is also an international languages' week with different theme days in which the international students are heavily involved." (Head of Commerce, 2002).*

*"This year the international week celebrations were triggered off by the international languages week that was held in the school for the first time. This was another way to make these students feel part of the educational community. During this week we now also have a food festival. This is one way we recognise and celebrate the cultures of our school, but it is not the only way. We want all students to realise that the international students bring their culture to the school in many ways everyday. So the focus of the international week celebrations was to consider embracing culture over a longer period, rather than relying on one or two important occasions to make a feature of national culture. As a faculty this is our way of extending the special qualities of the different cultures that belong to the school to other parts of the school." (Director of International Students, 2002).*

Further to this, during 2002, on Thursdays, international meetings held in room 34 of the Convent block have become a regular ritual of value to all members of the international unit.

*“This meeting allows the Director of International Students to do a weekly role call and give notices to the students, update the girls on what is happening around school and also to clarify school rules. For example notices or rules that are read out at assembly or in class don’t always register with these students. This meeting allows for material to be relayed and repeated at a level they understand. This is a good time to sort out these things as the girls’ feel comfortable in a small group among their own people where they can ask questions which we can answer. They can all have a laugh among themselves. It is a good time for some of the girls to lend support to some of the quieter students; it is also a time for special care and for bonds to be shared among the students.” (Student Welfare Liaison Officer, 2002).*

*“This meeting provides the one chance for students and staff to see me when I am not racing here there and everywhere. It is a really useful time, as it is topical, it is about things that are happening in their lives at school or at home. It is just vital for us as a staff to help them through the little things so they can cope better with school life.” (Director of International Students, 2002).*

Such ritualistic changes whether formally documented into school policy or informally assumed as a norm are more often recognised as a structural shift rather than a cultural shift. However this study presents the view that all ritualistic change needs to be recognised as a shift to the organisational culture, because such change impacts upon:

(i) The work time, movement, behaviour and the personal values of administrators and teachers, as they work hard to ensure a smooth transition to changes in the timetable and in the classroom.

(ii) The physical environment, as new spaces are allocated then transformed by people involved in the ritual.

### (3) New Ceremonies

The introduction of a Powhiri, an International Student Orientation Day, the International Assembly and an in-class leaving ceremony for international students indicates that provisions have been made to suit the needs of the international student body. Each new ceremony small, large or extravagant is an example that shows that the cultural context of this school has been changed and the cultural content has been expanded.

*“One of the things about the Catholic Church is that it is about communion and interrelating. In countries throughout the world the Catholic experience is actually about being interrelated with other groups so that something of their giftedness that is God-given can be shared. It is about trying to make this happen through these ceremonies. Having the international students and their experiences has certainly helped us to broaden our giftedness base.” (Mercy Chaplain, 2002).*

These new public displays of culture accentuate the underlying beliefs and values of the school as well as signifying the sharing of other human beliefs, values or symbols special to other ethnic groups. The introduction of the new ceremonial activities can be seen as producing a new set of positive interactive patterns across cultural units that allow cross-cultural bonds to become established or renewed during the school year. Such changes highlight the people’s commitment to building spiritual and physical unity amongst the members of the Villa Maria school community. The ceremonial activities introduced to this school have further enhanced the visual learning environment of the school and done much to contribute to a strengthening of the overall school culture.

The three main behavioural changes outlined above have brought a mixture of positive and negative interactive forces to the surface of the school face. The development of the international unit has clearly introduced a new range of challenges for teachers and administrators to work through. Comments from participants indicate that many of the present school challenges have appeared to intensify in the past two years at Villa Maria College with the rapid increase of fee-paying international students. For some teachers the increased demands in the classroom that have accompanied the rise in the number of fee-paying students overshadows the advantages of cultural diversity, as the following comments indicate:

*“At the present time I believe the extra strains on the staff and the local students are far outweighing the cultural benefits of having an increased number of fee-paying international students.” (Head of Commerce, 2002).*

*“Apart from expanding our diversity, I think schools need to consider what are the real benefits of having increased numbers of fee-paying international students in a school. The Ministry of Education suggests that there are many advantages, though it is questionable. If we take the over-all cost of educating an international student and the teachers’ time consumed in meeting their learning needs it does*

*not necessarily work out as advantageous as people may think.” (Head of Mathematics, 2002).*

The members of this school community have collectively needed to call on their professional and spiritual resources to help them work through the challenges of meeting the complex learning and social needs of a diverse student population. By keeping the fee-paying international student numbers at a relatively low level over the past seven years administrators and teachers of this school have introduced, established and managed new behavioural patterns more effectively in the absence of sufficient external assistance or support. This has also allowed the school to minimise negative interactive forces and to keep a focus on the overall impact of internationalisation on the special character of this school.

*“We always consider the special character of our school with regard to changes in the composition of the population, policy or even to the environment.” (Principal, 2002).*

#### **6.1.4 New Language Networks (Verbal Manifestations)**

Even though the international unit has been established in the school for seven years the majority of research participants interviewed in the course of the study made reference to the minimal informal language exchanges that take place between international and local students. On the whole, language interaction exchanges between these groups of students are generally teacher-coerced and learning-based (such as asking directions or for assistance with work) rather than social. Instead the presence of new language home group clusters has become an obvious feature around school as the international students group together during informal periods such as break times, or at sports events to use their own language. The following comments of research participants describe the appearance of language cluster groups around school:

*“As the number of international students has grown (in particular fee-paying students) they have become a much more visible presence in the school. You do see the international students grouped together around school. I have noticed that there is a reluctance from both the Kiwi students and international students to interact together on an informal basis. I can understand this from the international student perspective because they are in a situation where they are being forced to deal with English, so in their free time they like to mix with friends who share their*

own language as opposed to being forced to integrate.” (Head of Commerce, 2002).

*“In the library we more than often see cluster groups of international students. I think they like to go somewhere where they can be together and talk their own language. They also like to come here to look up things on the computer in their own language. I think the international students group together on their own as it is probably the most comfortable situation. It is a natural process for these girls to gather together so they can communicate freely as it provides a form of security or comfort for them. Around school I very rarely see the international students mixing regularly with the domestic students, only in situations when they are coerced to do so. For example when they go to Mass or assembly they sit in their house groups away from social group friends.” (Mercy Sister, 2002).*

The following comments from members of the international unit help to explain the purpose of the language groups:

*“The girls tend to cluster together at informal times for ease of communication. When you have been in a classroom trying to concentrate, not only to learn the language but also to try and understand what the teacher is saying and translate the material in order to respond in class it is particularly hard work for the international students. So they need a time to be together with friends who speak their own language, to let go and to compare notes about their work at school or their situation at home and to help each other out. It is like a timeout for the girls to be able to go back to their own culture.” (Student Welfare Liaison Officer, 2002).*

*“Some of the cluster groups are not just monocultural, some of them are made up of mixed cultures. The purpose of these groups is primarily for friendship, support and communication. It is much easier for these students to make a break from their own culture to perhaps a similar culture before they break into a totally different alien culture.” (ESOL teacher, 2002).*

*“These groups provide opportunities for the students to develop friendships. We need to remember that these students did not know each other before they came to Villa. For the international students it is just as important for them to make a friend with a non-national student as it is a co-national student. We do find that the students with the limited English do tend to make friends with co-nationals first, as this is a natural process of security. Younger students with good English language skills often find it easier to mix and make friends with Kiwi peers, these students can be found in a multi-cultural mix at lunchtime. However it is much more difficult for senior international students coming into the school as there are many peer groups that are already well established at this level, so therefore most tend to situate themselves in co-national social groups.” (Director of International Students, 2002).*

Essentially it is the informal interaction periods that give the international students the opportunity to establish new language networks where they can enjoy

expressing themselves freely in their own native language and share with other international students their experiences about life inside and outside of school.

## **6.2 Intangible Aspects Subject to Change**

This section considers the intangible elements of the school culture that have changed and the corresponding effects of change. From the research evidence collected in this study it was evident that two subsurface aspects of the school culture have changed as the international unit has become an established feature of the school:

### **6.2.1 Broadening Underlying Assumptions (Subsurface Manifestations)**

Members within the administrative unit and the international unit of the school have worked together to develop an international unit model that is unique to this school. In a commitment to National Policy and Curriculum Standards the Principal, the Board of Trustees and the Staff of the International Unit have given a large amount of time and attention to the development of policies and programmes that address diversity and equality, that make particular reference to their international students, that address the wider issues of second language learning and cultural awareness, that make a commitment to meeting the needs of all students in the school and which are in line with the special character of the school. Most of the developmental changes and issues relating to policies and programmes, or the day-to-day running of the international unit have been largely handled internally within the school as minimal guidance and support has been available from external agencies. Unfortunately, due to the relative infancy of the Export Education Industry in New Zealand, there has not been sufficient relevant material available for developing school-based structure or culture models for the members of Villa Maria College administrative unit to work with during the 1990s. Instead *"it has been very much a 'learn as you go along process'."* (Principal, 2002). Policies or practices implemented as a result of the formation of the international unit at Villa Maria College include:

(a) Policies: ESOL Policy, Certificate of Academic Excellence or Achievement, NESB Policy, 3-5 Year Development Plan for International Students, The Code of Practice.

(b) Programmes: IELTS, English Unit Standards, English and Religious Education Programme.

While the policy and programme changes appear primarily structurally-based the implication of such changes do extend to the deeper cultural foundations of organisational life. To make a change to the structure of a school is to make a change to the culture, as these structural documents are the formulation of personal and organisational values of people who belong to this school. The values that are espoused in such documents have informed the behaviour of staff and students at Villa Maria College over recent years. While keeping in line with the objectives of the special character of the school, Villa Maria College has aligned the organisational assumptions relating to the management of mixed nationalities with the underlying assumptions that guide the National Policy and Curriculum Guidelines in New Zealand. Hence it would be fair to say that over the past seven years the underlying organisational assumptions of Villa Maria College have taken on a broadened sense of purpose in an attempt to acquire a symmetrical balance with regard to equality and acceptance of cultural diversity. The following comments by participants further confirm this situation:

*"Our cultural awareness and our cultural sensitivity as a school has expanded in the last seven or eight years." (Principal, 2002).*

*"Having the international unit has added value in terms of providing a rich cultural diversity that has given us all the opportunity to enjoy the differences and strengths of the various people in our school." (Physical education teacher, 2002).*

*"Since 1997 systems have been put in place to accommodate international students. I think the school community on the whole has become more aware of the needs of this group. I think the presence of international students in school has opened the minds of our Kiwi students by extending their global education. If we didn't have the number of international students in the school that we do have today the girls would have very little exposure to other cultures. Having the exposure has allowed the local girls to gain a better tolerance and acceptance of differences in their community. Living like we are today in a more global*

*community I think it is valuable for all students to gain a better appreciation of other peoples language, beliefs and lifestyles.” (Head of Arts, 2002).*

### **6.2.2 Heightened Values (Subsurface Manifestations)**

*“The presence of international students in the school has not changed the values that are important to this school, only the way they are expressed.” (Principal, 2002).*

The development of the international unit has done much to heighten the expression of certain moral values that are already well-established within the values system of Villa Maria College. The provisions made for international students in school policies and programmes for English Language and Religious Education at Villa Maria College has contributed to the heightening of both equality and justice value expressions in this educational environment. The change examples described in Chapter Five reveal that consideration for equality and social justice values (meeting the needs of all the people) have been given attention and openly expressed by staff in both administrative duties and in classroom activities since the international unit has become established.

In addition to this, values such as respect, tolerance and appreciation have also been accentuated as this school has adjusted to a new cultural position. For example the introduction of new features around school such as the Powhiri, the International Assembly, International Week, and nationality displays all signify the outward expression of respect, tolerance and appreciation values.

*“During international week we get to share the other languages, activities and food of the other nationalities that belong to our school. During this week things are put in front of us that help us all understand that we are not just mono-cultural around here, and that English is not the only language spoken, or that our way is not the only way of doing things. These types of activities are expanding the local students’ understanding, appreciation and tolerance for other cultures.” (Director of Religious Education, 2002).*

Staff participating in this study acknowledged that there has been a definite increase in the awareness and expression of such values for both staff and students as they together have become more openly aware and sensitive to the needs, views, property and behaviour of all people in their school community.

*"I think having international students in my class has helped me become more tolerant of their situation, especially when I think about these young students coming into a foreign school and being so far away from their families and not knowing what is going on around them. It has opened my mind and challenged me as a teacher to be more patient and understanding of their situation. For example in history if we are dealing with a period of history that could be sensitive I am careful how I handle information and put it across to the class. I hope that my example is useful to the local students in class."* (Head of Arts, 2002).

Teacher participants in this study comment that it is not uncommon for them to find themselves in situations in class or around school where they are teaching students to appreciate, respect, tolerate or celebrate cultural differences within their school. In most situations teachers are imparting knowledge about cultural difference and lifestyles in order to facilitate understanding for all students, to reduce tension between students and to provide a caring learning environment for all students to flourish in.

*"Over the years having international students in school has given us all a broader understanding of life in other cultures and more tolerance as individuals and as a group. Teachers are gaining experience in dealing with the mixed needs of our student population. All students are gaining exposure to new life experiences and the opportunity to broaden their own outlook on life."* (Director of Religious Studies, 2002).

The increased relevance of traditional spiritual values has also been a feature of the cultural shift at Villa Maria College. In particular members of this school community have drawn on their religious resources and spiritual values to assist in their support of the international students, to make them feel welcome and to give them a sense of belonging to the same family. For example the introduction of the ENR programme for NESB students has provided additional ESOL support in a traditional Catholic manner. This special class is helping to nurture students carefully into this Catholic educational environment. The purpose of this class is not to convert the international students to Catholicism, rather it is to make them feel they belong to this family.

*"The ENR programme has arisen out of the desire to help the international students feel that as individuals or as a group they are an important part of the Villa community and to help them understand more about their school. Coming into a new culture would be a very difficult thing. There are possibly a large number of things that we assume or take for granted in our lifestyle which isolate these*

*students. It is about trying to make it possible for them to feel comfortable in this environment, it is about helping them understand what are the things that we assume. There are a lot of assumptions that need clarification for these students.” (Mercy Chaplain, 2002).*

Learning about each other's national culture and the educational culture of the school through shared learning experience and shared Gospel values of this kind can be informative, enjoyable and rewarding for new students. This caring Catholic approach is an example of members of this school community working together to build a unified Christian school culture, rather than providing a dominant culture that supports minority groups. Hence the presence of international students within the context of this school has done much to reinforce the strength of the values system that is in place at this school. In developing the international unit certain school values have certainly become openly expressed and positively accentuated as the people of this organisation work towards building an education that suits individuals from all backgrounds.

### **6.2.3 Beliefs Remain Unchanged**

There is no substantial evidence amongst the research data that indicates any significant change to the status, presence or situation of organisational beliefs at Villa Maria College. However one feature that can be mentioned is the open sharing and visual appearance of new beliefs carried by international students that have been recognised, expressed and valued in general school life.

### **6.3 Issues Requiring Ongoing Attention**

The comments of research participants in this study have highlighted a number of issues relating to the development of this unit culture that will require further attention as the group continues to grow. The main issues that have surfaced in this study include:

### 6.3.1 The Need to Value Peoples Efforts

Ten years ago an experienced teacher with responsibilities for ESOL and overseas students in a large Wellington Girls College wrote: "For too many years ESOL has had little or no status in secondary schools in New Zealand" (Lawson, 1992:12). Considering the complexity of ESOL teaching and the demands on staff working in the international arena today, it is surprising to find that the clarification of roles and status (tenure) of staff in this sector is still a concern for schools today. The following comments indicate that the roles, responsibilities and status of staff working in the international unit at Villa Maria College have at times created uncertainty and challenge for members of this school community over the last seven years.

*"The position and workload of an ESOL teacher and the Director of International Students has not been truly valued or appreciated in the same way as other teachers are in other faculties. This is evident in the lack of recognised positions or teacher security for many years. I had no security of tenure for a long time because I was part-time not permanent part-time: I did not get permanent status until three years ago. Before the Dean of International Students was introduced I had to keep an abundance of detailed records relating to international students that the Ministry required in order to get funding that was available to the school for permanent resident students. I had no contract of any sort, no job description, it was all rather mickey mouse. Effectively I had a role and responsibilities that held no real status or recognition." (ESOL teacher, 2002).*

*"In 1997 I was employed as the Student Welfare Liaison Officer: since then I have been referred to as the Home-stay Coordinator as well, especially now there are so many more students that require this service. When I first started at Villa I felt like I was drowning, as I didn't know where I was heading. At the start I was told I had to create the position. Even though I had a job description in the beginning I still felt like a fraud as I didn't know what the role really involved. I didn't have someone I could go to get advice about the role as it was something new to the school. Now that I have got some direction, the group is more structured and there are more people involved with experience, I feel more confident and happier about my role." (Student Welfare Liaison Officer, 2002).*

*"When I took over the position of Head of Languages Faculty including Director of International Students the position held two units, one funded from a permanent unit and one funded from the international fund. Maybe this is another way that the school sees this position as separate as it wasn't part of the main school management fund. I see my position as very separate. I see my role as two completely different roles that have been put together as a package." (Director of International Students, 2002).*

The nature of the self-managing school has meant the administration unit of Villa Maria College has had to work through concerns and issues relating to the clarity and value of new positions of international staff with limited direction, support or funds. The following quote confirms that the true valuing of staff is important to members of this school community.

*“It is good that the staff of the international unit have finally been given a title, a defined role and status. Just by employing these people and defining their roles accurately the school is valuing the needs of the staff and the international students.” (Head of Arts, 2002).*

This particular issue accentuates the need for the Ministry of Education to work more closely with schools to set in place provisions that recognise the real status value of a new set of professional people working in this area of education. One step towards this has been the introduction of new training courses and qualifications for ESOL teachers over the last five years. It is time to follow up on such initiatives with regular professional training and professional recognition for a cross-section of specialist staff that now work in this area.

The valuing of people’s efforts need not be confined to the international area alone. All secondary teachers and administrative staff who work with international students need to be respected and appreciated for their efforts, especially when most have little or no prior training in teaching second-language learners or in developing programmes, policies and resources for international learners. The teachers and administrators of diverse student populations need to be acknowledged and rewarded for their efforts through regular research support, advice, resource support, professional recognition and funding that can help them better provide for all their students and allow them to feel valued for the service they provide.

### **6.3.2 Providing Professional Development Applicable to School Change**

Today in New Zealand most secondary teachers come in contact with international students in their regular classrooms: however a high percentage of these teachers have little or no pre-service or in-service training to help them provide for these

students. Even though professional development initiatives and advice is available on school site and externally, unfortunately the amount and availability does not necessarily serve the high need for this practice at the present time. In the attempt to meet the needs of all students in our schools it is essential that the needs of the teaching staff is given similar attention. Five years ago research by Kennedy and Dewar (1997) found that "there seems no doubt that more training opportunities for teachers and support staff would enhance the teaching and learning opportunities of NESB students in all schools" (Kennedy and Dewar, 1997:181). From the comments of participants in this study it would seem that this requirement still remains a high priority for teachers in this school today.

*"We have had the occasional talk from the ESOL teacher regarding working with NESB students, though we have had no formal training or guidance on a regular basis. What would be useful is to have written material with ideas that could be generic for everyone, where you could sort through the ideas and identify relevant material that is applicable to your subject or department." (Head of Science, 2002).*

*"We were given some advice last year about how we can assist international students with our speaking and instruction, though this type of assistance is not available on a regular basis to be fully effective or applicable to our subject area. It would be useful to gain knowledge about ways to assist the international students better in the delivery of physical education." (Head of Physical Education, 2002).*

*"If we had professional development training relating to NESB students I think it would be useful to have curriculum-related training. For example I would like to learn ways in which other people have successfully taught bursary economics and accounting to NESB students." (Head of Commerce, 2002).*

The development of the international unit over the last seven years at Villa Maria College has accentuated the importance of providing professional development training that is applicable to changes in the culture of a school. The development of this particular unit culture is unique in the fact that it has highlighted the need for professional development to be regularly extended to all teaching staff who have contact with international students not just second language teachers.

*"I think regular professional development would be beneficial for all staff, not just for the international staff. I think all staff could benefit from more structured advice or assistance relating to classroom cultural awareness and simplified teaching*

*strategies or language skills useful for dealing with NESB students which are applicable to their own teaching subjects.” (Administrative assistant, 2002).*

Or as Barnard (2000) suggests:

The issue of staff development goes beyond language teaching. All teachers need to know about and be sensitive towards the social, cultural and religious backgrounds of these students; without such knowledge and sensitivity, they have little chance of properly incorporating the prior experience of NESB students into the school curriculum (Barnard, 2000:17).

### **6.3.3 New Needs Require New Resources**

The demand for new teaching resources is not uncommon when a new teaching group is being established in a secondary school. In the past decade the internationalisation of secondary schools in New Zealand has witnessed a new level of resource demand, as there is now a dual requirement with regard to teaching international students. Like other secondary schools in New Zealand Villa Maria College has been required to develop resources that are firstly suitable for teaching a diverse range of second language programmes and secondly resources have been developed to accommodate international students and teaching staff in other subject areas of the school. Unfortunately the reality of providing adequate resources to meet the needs of international students and teachers can prove difficult for a school, this is evident from the following comments:

*“It has been difficult enough for the school to provide resources for the standard teaching programmes both in the time and funds let alone new resource demands required to teach international students. To produce and provide extra material for international students requires the school to use fees from the fee-paying students to develop their own resources.” (Head of Mathematics, 2002).*

*“Because there is no curriculum for ESOL no school has been able to say ‘this is what we have to teach and this is what we need’. Every school has had to work out what it needs to do for their students; much time was spent writing their own units of work. When you haven’t actually got a curriculum, because your seen to be there to prop up individual needs rather than deliver a proper course of study, its seems rather ad hoc at times. It has been up to each school to work out what materials are best for its students.” (ESOL teacher, 2002).*

*“There is certainly a need for more resources in class that can be provided for international students to assist them with their language in class, though it is very much a developing process as teachers learn what resources they need and how to use them. For the teachers themselves they have so many extra demands that it is difficult for them to find time to prepare additional resources for international students. I think it would be most beneficial if external agencies could provide new resource materials for schools such as term translations or subject literature in different languages instead of the schools being left to reinvent the wheel for each different class.” (Administrative assistant, 2002).*

*“Every school is putting time and energy into reinventing the wheel. The modern self-managing school is funded to deliver the curriculum, these students pay for this service so there is the expectation to develop your own service. School’s in competition with each other is where the prerogative ventures have broken down. The limited sharing of resources between schools has come as a result of competition for students.” (Principal, 2002).*

### **6.3.4 Curriculum Concerns**

The huge demands of the National Curriculum that are placed on international students and teaching staff is a concern for teachers and administrators of this school. According to Hargreaves *et al.* (2001),

*Working with dedication, imagination, and passion to connect the curriculum to young people’s prior understandings, when they come to their learning from different cultures and backgrounds, is exceptionally difficult work, even for the best teachers (Hargreaves, *et al.*, 2001:196).*

Due to the obvious language barrier, students and teachers of Villa Maria College together have found themselves often burdened by the over-burgeoning requirements of the National Curriculum with its emphasis on activities such as problem-solving, interactive learning, communication and presentation. The majority of staff interviewed in this study expressed obvious concern about curriculum commitments.

*“At the senior level where we are so driven to get through the content and assessment components of the curriculum it is harder to work on promoting interactive activities: getting the international students to interact in class can be a real challenge at times.” (Head of Arts, 2002).*

*“In science it is difficult to change the presentation of work to make it any easier for NESB students. I still feel I owe it to the vast majority of the students to get through*

*the material as we are often limited for time to get through the curriculum.” (Head of Science, 2002).*

*“Nowadays the majority of the NESB international students coming through our classrooms do not have adequate English skills to cope with the standard objectives of the course curriculum. In both Social Studies and Geography we have found that international students have difficulty dealing with the terminology. In particular in Geography where students are required to use technical terms to describe geographical patterns these students get completely lost. For the international students their method of learning is quite different from the Kiwi students. They are not as receptive to critical thinking or discussion activities. So in Social Studies they find it difficult to be in a class with so much discussion and interactive activities, so often they appear lost and withdrawn. Many of these students are very intelligent people who in their own language would probably cope well with such activities, though because they are being encouraged to participate with limited English skills these students don’t show up as being achievers, even though they work really hard.” (Head of Social Sciences, 2002).*

*“Because we do not have prerequisites for these subjects at senior level we take in most students. Some international students at the start are way below the level they need to be to get through Bursary. I actually question the wisdom of allowing some of the NESB students to sit Bursary subjects. In recent years the averages have been moving down, I recently had an example of an international student who got 7% in a University Bursary examination. In terms of performance indicators I find this situation personally very frustrating as teachers are assessed or judged on the average for our subject. I do not feel this is appropriate when you have a large number of NESB students in your senior classes. We have tried to address the issue though the students are insisting on doing these subjects as they are at the age where they feel they can. I personally feel it is not fair on the students to put them in this situation, I get to see the stresses they are under. The NESB students who perform well do so by relying on using rote learning.” (Head of Commerce, 2002).*

*“There are certain difficulties in class with time and delivering the curriculum. Meeting curriculum demands in mathematics never used to be a problem as many of the international students were often amongst the brightest students in this subject area. This is no longer the case especially in the last couple of years: the fee-paying students coming through don’t appear to have the same academic ability or the language skills as previous international students that have been in the school. You only have so much time in class to give each student, so we try in class to be seen as being fair to each student in class. I give what assistance I can but if I cannot get through to NESB students because of language difficulties then I encourage the student to seek additional assistance or tuition. Even though I know I am able to help the NESB students I am often left wondering if I am really doing enough or the right thing for these students.” (Head of Mathematics, 2002).*

Villa Maria College is not alone in dealing with curriculum concerns of this nature. This school and schools nationwide will require further ongoing practical

assistance in ways to take action so that they are better prepared to bring their international students up to a consistent level where they can achieve the same curriculum objectives as their English speaking peers. Hence if the number of international students continues to grow (to the projected numbers suggested in the ERO Report outlined in the Literature Review section 2.4) and the government is serious about the cultural impact of such projections, then curriculum issues will require immediate consideration within any future preparations for secondary schools in New Zealand.

### **6.3.5 Allocating Appropriate Levels of Entry for the International Student**

For the majority of staff participating in this study English language acquisition was clearly the catalyst for academic and social issues relating to international students. Staff of this school expressed concerns about whether international students (in particular the recent wave of fee-paying students) held the correct or appropriate levels of English understanding required for entry into the school and for particular subjects in order for them to receive an effective education and achieve personal goals.

*"In the context of managing international students the only thing I would like to see happen differently is that the girls come into school at an age where they can deal with English language and with the work at particular levels. This would enable us as teachers to give them a better chance at succeeding in their work. We need to stress to the international students that their English needs to be at an appropriate level for each subject they are requesting to take when they come into school. In recent years the demands particularly of the fee-paying students as to what classes they want to take has often determined which classes they end up in. Unfortunately their own choice does not necessarily match their ability to cope in class."* (Head of Science, 2002).

*"I think the entry testing of international students coming into school at the senior level should be suitable for the level they are going to be taught at. Some students may require more time at years 11 or 12, or more time at a language school to prepare for University Bursary. The entry level testing should be higher for students entering certain subjects at a senior level: I think this would be fairer on the international students, on the rest of the class and the teachers. These students are often bright intelligent girls who do not have the level of English required to be able to read and write questions in subjects at a senior level. ESOL should be seen as a major priority to preparing these students better for senior level subjects; it should be part of the requirements for these students and they*

should be given the opportunity to reach a certain standard before they leave school.” (Head of Commerce, 2002).

*“If we are going to have international students it may be more beneficial for them to come into the school at a younger age around year 9. These students have more time to gain the confidence and language skills to establish normal interactive patterns with local students rather than coerced interaction. They can come through the school and get the opportunity to gain positions of responsibility in houses like our Head Librarian has done this year. Also by the time the international students come to leave Villa they have been in the school long enough to actually achieve some qualifications. At the moment if they come in at year 12 or 13 we are pushing it to get them qualifications. With students coming in at year 12 and 13 the school gains the cultural diversity but we do not gain normalised patterns of interaction between students. Some must leave school feeling it was a waste of time as they have not achieved much. As a teacher I feel guilty about that, sending a student off without a qualification.”* (Head of Physical Education, 2002).

*“If an international student cannot keep up with course work or curriculum requirements because of their language problems then the school needs to look more closely at the type of entry testing that is given to international students and consider whether it is applicable to the environment and subjects they will be entering. As a school, we also need to consider why are we taking the fee-paying students into the school: is it for monetary reasons or is it for the sake of the international students or for the school as a whole? These are questions that require further investigation. My main concern lies with fee-paying international students and their English language level of entry into schools in New Zealand. I believe these students need to have a far higher standard of English language skill before they enter the school so as they can cope better with the expectations of the New Zealand education system, their teachers and their parents. When you see these students pay so much money to end up struggling to get through the work and having limited interaction with their Kiwi peers, it leaves a teacher wondering whether it is such a worthwhile exercise. I believe we may need to do things differently in order to balance the expectation equation for all concerned.”* (Head of Social Sciences).

It would appear that the issues raised in this section still require attention beyond the school gates of Villa Maria College. The wider educational community of New Zealand needs to address collectively such concerns in order to reduce negative interactive forces impacting on teachers and students in secondary schools.

## **6.4 Concluding Remarks**

The comments and examples expressed in section 6.1 and 6.2 illustrate the interactive forces and patterns that have emerged in this school since the new unit culture has been formed. What is conclusive from the material provided in these two sections is that the development of the international unit has clearly created a true shift in the school culture of Villa Maria College between 1996-2002. This shift is one that can be described as a process that has challenged, enhanced and strengthened various physical, contextual and human content elements that together contribute to the composition of the whole organisational culture of Villa Maria College. Section 6.3 highlights some of the main issues that have arisen as a result of school change that are impacting predominately on the people of this school, in particular the teachers. The research participants of Villa Maria College feel that these issues will require serious consideration from both the school itself and from external agencies if the continued internationalisation of the school is going to produce positive physical and social impacts on the school culture in the future.

## Chapter Seven

### Praxis

To be critical is to assume that humans are active agents whose reflective self-analysis, whose knowledge of the world, leads to action. (Kincheloe, cited in McLaren and Giarelli, 1995:75).

Praxis can be thought of as practical action, as participants are informed by theory then make attempts to change various conditions. This practical action in the context of the school involves the research participants appreciating the current realities and their critical attempts, then using the knowledge gained to further evaluate and if necessary implement changes that further enhance the cultural context of their school. Therefore in accordance with the critical approach the researcher encourages the research participants of this study to consider building on the knowledge gained in the research to formulate a course of action that is appropriate for their own ongoing critique of this research topic. Hence this research exercise does not stop with the conclusion of this thesis in the next chapter. Instead this chapter provides a tool for the purpose of continuing the practical critical research exercise beyond the final conclusions made in this particular study. The following model is a useful cultural analytical tool for the critical evaluation of future developments in the international unit and the school culture at Villa Maria College.

#### 7.1 A Model for Effectiveness Evaluation and Improvement

Models of school effectiveness evaluation for this new millenium need to create the kind of problem-solving and critical thinking that gives guidance or stimulus to how positive cultural change can be achieved. Critical practical action involves the members of a school community working together in a critical framework in an attempt to continually improve practice. Critical action sees the members of a school community becoming “aware of their own value commitments, the value commitments of others and the values promoted by the dominant culture” (Kincheloe, cited in McLaren and Giarelli, 1995:74). Essentially this form of practical action provides the opportunity to expose relationships that exist between personal values and practice, and the opportunity to further strengthen

professional relationships as members of the various cultural units work together to fulfil joint emancipatory needs. In a sense this form of critical practical action is a “consummate democratic act” as it allows the members of a school community to determine the cultural conditions of their own educational environment (Kincheloe, cited in McLaren and Giarelli, 1995:74).

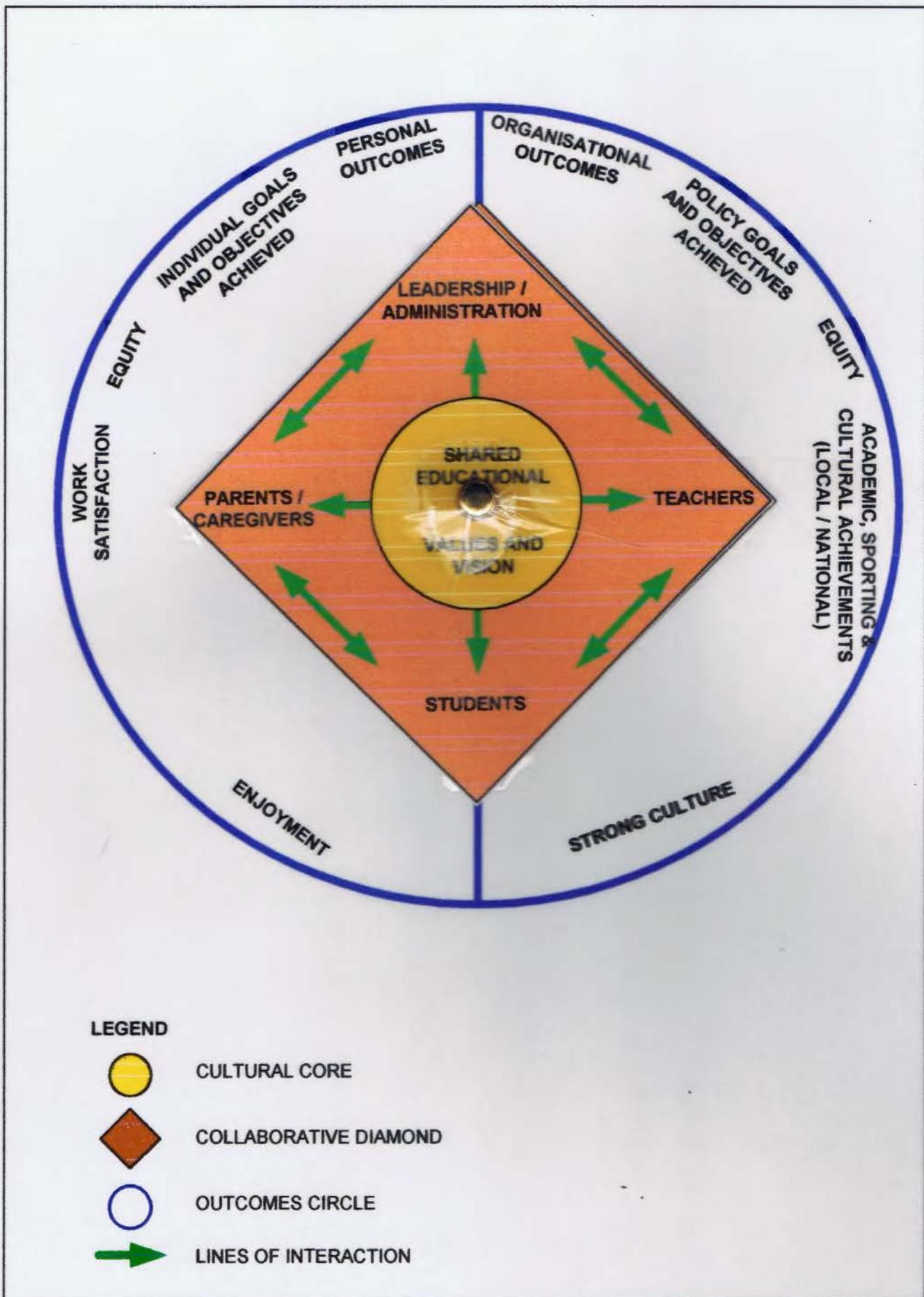
Building on the knowledge gained in the previous two chapters of this research, the following model is the next step in the critical process. The Model presented in Figure 6 is designed for the purpose of providing a suitable framework from which critical practical action can be initiated and carried out within the school environment in the future.

### **7.1.1 The Cultural Collaborative Effectiveness Model**

The school effectiveness movement has seen a drive towards schools considering effectiveness evaluation methods that contribute to both school improvement strategies and to the enhancement of school culture. Sound effectiveness evaluation systems provide an approach to goal-setting while linking school objectives and values to the performance of individual staff and individual students at a school. Regular interaction and communication between administrators, teachers, families and students will help ensure the members of a school community meet personal and organisational goals and objectives. The Cultural Collaborative Effectiveness Model (as prepared by the researcher) in Figure 6 provides a resource that is useful to the members of Villa Maria College community in their quest to be involved in ongoing critical cultural effectiveness evaluation and school improvement. Features of this model include:

FIGURE 6

CULTURAL COLLABORATIVE EFFECTIVENESS MODEL



### Cultural Core

The inner core symbolises something that is central and important. It is a focus, the heart of the organisation. This is the foundation, the stage where effectiveness begins. This is where the school prepares a plan unique to its own environment. The formation and evaluation of school beliefs, values, assumptions, school policies and school procedures at this stage provides the directives for a school throughout the school year. At this stage the following activities are essential:

(a) Developing, formalising and expressing shared values:

If the educational, moral and spiritual values special to the school are strongly shared and widely enacted, then the school will be on the right path to developing a strong culture. The shared values between members of the school are conceptions that formulate a picture of what is desirable within the organisation and what members need to do to be successful. If members know what their school stands for, if they know what standards they should uphold, then they are more likely to make decisions and behave in a manner that will support those standards. According to Hoy and Miskel (1991): "They are more likely to feel part of the organisation and to feel that organisational life has important meaning" (Hoy and Miskel, 1991:215).

(b) Providing and working towards a shared vision:

This involves formulating a shared vision that everyone (from each cultural unit) can visualise, and everyone can work towards. A shared vision is more than the mission statement or a collection of descriptors. It is a governing force that guides each member of the organisation. The school vision is simply not just one person's view articulated to another, but a shared set of common images that provides a school with the answer to the question - "What do we really want to create?" (Scheetz and Benson, 1994:49). A shared school vision cannot be created and sustained without collective dialogue and action. The most positive approaches to change come from collective efforts and energy between cultural units to resolve problems or work towards shared goals together.

### Collaborative Diamond

The diamond symbolises something that is natural, special and valued. This is how the humans, their groups and their relationships within a school should be represented. It is the interaction and the relationships that exist between the four main cultural units (administrators, teachers, students, families) that holds the key to school effectiveness. As Hopkins *et al.* (Study Guide) suggests:

Effective schools encourage and create positive relationships within the school, and with the wider community that help create a supportive climate for learning (Hopkins *et al.*, Study Guide:18).

If the interactions and relationships that develop between the main cultural units are nurtured and regularly displayed in a positive manner then they will inevitably produce positive personal and institutional outcomes.

### Outcomes Circle

The Outcomes Circle is symbolic of something that is continuous and achievable. Each of the outcomes referred to in Figure 6 are features that belong to members of the entire school, and are achievable goals that can provide regular positive interactive forces that can inevitably enhance or strengthen culture. Individual and organisational outcomes fed-back throughout the school year provide positive interactive forces that contribute towards the desired results of the organisation. It is this regular feedback that is the vehicle for providing a school with information about the results that the behaviour and decisions of humans are producing.

Most of the outcome features highlighted in this model are characteristic of many effectiveness models, although the inclusion of equity and enjoyment makes this model stand out above others of its kind. These are two aspects that require serious consideration for schools that hold a diverse student population. If a child is treated fairly and finds learning enjoyable then academic, sporting and cultural achievement outcomes will be obtainable.

### Model Mobility

Like school effectiveness the model is not static, it is constantly evolving. The apex points on the diamond can each be placed on an outcome. This indicates that the

members of each key group can influence the outcomes of a school. The movement of the cultural core in association with the collaborative diamond also suggests that the interactive forces that result between members of the cultural units are constantly evolving to form the shape and context of the organisational culture. Therefore if a school wishes to improve, it must continually evaluate effectiveness appropriate to its own particular human and physical characteristics and circumstances.

### **7.1.2 Evaluating School Effectiveness**

Administrators have the school as their text, and society the context. Understanding the school can be seen as the equivalent of understanding a work of literature: it is multi-faceted, complex and tells a story. How the story is written depends on the characters involved. The administrator is not the author, for this text is jointly conceived (Foster, 1986:29).

It is the responsibility of all members of a school to be critical and to reflect on the coherence of the text, on its significance and on the development of both plot and characters. Thus far this research exercise has seen the members of the administrative unit and the teachers unit at Villa Maria College engage themselves in such a process. The researcher of this study now encourages members of the school to use the Cultural Collaborative Effectiveness Model to continue the critical evaluation process beyond the completion of this study. This would involve practitioners taking the step beyond the standard evaluation procedures (questionnaires and surveys, appraisal procedures, report processes, effectiveness reviews) and make use of critical thinking and reflective practice to evaluate the cultural effectiveness of their school. Critical evaluation is a non-time consuming practical procedure that can involve members from all cultural units in the pursuit of obtainable organisational and personal goals.

#### Administrators

Critical theory is about conscious self-reflection and it is also structured reflection on economic, social, political and cultural conditions and the ideologies that support them. In a sense, a critically informed theory is not only moral decision-making but also an analysis of the entire cultural context of an organisation. Through critical evaluation of self, role and institution, administrators can look at

their dilemmas in reflective terms. Reflection is a human activity in which “people recapture their experience, think about it, mull over it and evaluate it” (Boud, Keogh and Walker, 1985, in Loughran, 1996:3). It is this experience that can help a school learn about itself. Schools are about people, about human issues, and the resolution of moral dilemmas, therefore critical evaluation must be informed by moral questions. Administrators need to raise legitimate questions about social structure: questions of class, culture, power and responsibility. Such questions may include:

- (a) How does the culture influence the people?
- (b) How do administrators contribute to the make up of the school culture?
- (c) Does the culture of this school allow for different and varied forms of expression?
- (d) What are the school goals, how do they contribute to the cultural vision in the school, who benefits and whom do they harm?
- (e) Whose interests are served by changes to the school culture?
- (f) How do groups impact on elements of the school culture?

While other evaluation methods can contribute to providing answers to such questions, recording personal reflection through diaries, journals, or taped discussions is sufficient means to enlighten administrators and others on such questions.

### Teachers

Teachers are engaged in a profession whose purpose is to make a difference. The joy of being a teacher is to recognise and understand that each individual makes a difference. If teachers apply critical evaluation and reflection to their work they can discover how their work efforts may impede or contribute to the learning and

progress of pupils, hence they discover how they, as individuals, can make a difference. A valuable start for teachers may be applying questions such as:

- (a) Who benefits and who is harmed by my teaching methods?
- (b) How does my teaching contribute to the vision of the school?
- (c) Where are my personal values and beliefs placed within the school culture?
- (d) How do I contribute to the school culture?

### Students

Student involvement is crucial to the evaluation process. Under the direction of parents or staff, or by using school resources, a student can formulate questions, then reflect and record information that is significant to themselves and their school. Useful questions may include:

- (a) What influences my education?
- (b) Do I have individual goals/objectives. What are they? How do I get there?
- (c) What do I value in my education?
- (d) Where are my personal values and beliefs placed within the school culture?
- (e) How do I contribute to the school culture?

### Families

It is stated in a recent Government Document (1998) to the people of New Zealand: "Where parents support their children's learning, children learn and perform better" (Government Document, 1998:15). Participating in evaluation processes is one way that parents can support their child's learning. For example parents/family members/host families/guardians can also question their own role in the education equation:

(a) Do we/I take responsibility for seeing that our/my child is well prepared for school?

(b) What social controls do we/I place on our/my child and how does this influence her learning?

(c) Do I/we value the education our/my child receives?

(d) Where are our/my family values and beliefs placed within the school culture?

By applying moral questioning then reflecting on their own activities, the four key groups can discover what decisions and changes they need to make to contribute towards effectiveness in their school. Essentially these groups are discovering how, and if, they are contributing to the effectiveness of the school. The major advantage of this evaluation procedure is that it involves an ongoing evaluation process to determine the effectiveness of a school, rather than waiting for long-term outcomes such as examination results.

### **7.1.3 Taking Charge of Change**

In this time of self-managing schools, administrators and teachers in New Zealand are more regularly left to their own devices and resources in order to implement and manage school changes that may contribute towards improved teaching and learning conditions for members of their school community. This research holds empirical evidence that substantiates this situation. Members of Villa Maria College have responded to social and environmental forces by choosing innovative activities that address needs they see and feel around them. According to Goldring and Rallis, (1993) "Dynamic schools are schools that take charge of change" (Goldring and Rallis, 1993:23). By participating in this research exercise and continuing the critical evaluation process, the members of Villa Maria College are seizing the opportunity to improve and strengthen the school culture, hence they are taking charge of their own cultural change processes. With the ongoing application of the Cultural Collaborative Effectiveness Model, members of Villa Maria College will be able to focus on two key areas in particular:

(i) Teachers and Teaching:

As a group, teachers shape the daily operations of the school. "Teachers are the agents of change" without them, implementation cannot take hold and change will not occur (Goldring and Rallis 1993:6). To enhance pupil achievement the teaching/learning processes must be well understood and well-directed. It is essential that schools encourage teachers to look at themselves and others, and to promote collaborative activities. Positive change processes and school improvement is most surely achieved when:

(a) Teachers engage in frequent, continuous and accurate talk about their teaching practice. Teachers develop a shared language adequate to the complexity of teaching, with members of other cultural units.

(b) Teachers frequently observe and participate with each other in teaching and training, and provide each other with useful feedback about teaching.

(c) Planning, designing research, evaluation and preparing resource materials is carried out by groups of teachers. By joint work teachers share the burden of development that is required by long term improvement.

(d) Teachers teach each other the craft of teaching.

Through joint interactions, teachers can exchange ideas and support one another as they engage in change. As Scheetz and Benson (1994) suggest:

When individuals are contributing their talents, skills, experiences, energies and ideas within a team structure, the effectiveness of the sum of each individual is increased as a result of the whole (Scheetz and Benson, 1994:24).

Therefore to support their press for improvement, the school needs to provide increased opportunities for this type of valued teacher interaction.

(ii) Management of the school culture:

Many agree that it is the culture of the school that holds the key to improving the quality of pupil learning. Though it is a difficult and demanding task to understand and manage a school culture, using such frameworks will assist in some way to the examination and management of the culture. Schools are complex institutions, and they grow more complex as pupils, teachers and parents become more articulate in expressing their preferences. The management of a school culture is largely concerned with managing the interaction and relationship between the main cultural units. Successful management of a school culture can be achieved by the school leader and administrators promoting the following:

- (a) A united school vision.
- (b) Positive interactions and collaborative relationships between the cultural units of the school.
- (c) Open and clear communication throughout the school.
- (d) Sharing the responsibility and decision making of culture management across all cultural units.
- (e) Motivation, reward and praise for staff and student effort.
- (f) Research.

If the organisation operates in such a way as to generate positive interactive activities between cultural units that far outweigh negative activities then there is an increased chance that resulting outcomes will work to strengthen the organisational culture. For a strong and coordinated culture, there needs to be close correspondence between the intangible foundational elements and the tangible outward expressions in practice. By placing sensitive emphasis upon and making adjustments to some of the organisational characteristics can result in a constructive and coordinated school culture which will bring benefits to students, teachers and families.

## 7.2 Concluding Remarks

“Interest amongst policy-makers, the public and researchers in the quality, effectiveness and improvement of schools” has grown rapidly in the past two decades (Gray and Wilcox, 1995:1). The findings of school effectiveness research have demonstrated “that schools can make a difference to their students’ educational outcomes and that the difference can be substantial” (Sammons, 1994, in Ribbins and Burr ridge 1994:46). To make this difference, schools like Villa Maria College need to look at themselves as unique organisations’, they need to gain insight into their own cultural identity. Schools must assess and evaluate their own qualities, choosing effectiveness characteristics that assist them to strive for standards that are appropriate and attainable within their own geographical, physical and cultural boundaries. The Cultural Collaborative Effectiveness Model proposed in this study suggests that school effectiveness and improvement is constantly evolving, it is dependent on particular context, goals, values and vision. Effectiveness, therefore, cannot be static: it must be continually reassessed for each school in its own particular circumstances.

By promoting such activities the entire school becomes involved and responsible for shaping and managing the school culture, not just the main administrative body. If a school is aiming for improvement, it needs to develop this type of ‘collaborative culture’. A collaborative culture is one that is supportive of the teaching process, it is one in which all groups can learn how to improve and be effective. This type of collaborative cultural activity allows members of a school community to use their shared language for describing and interpreting classroom and school life. This behaviour essentially allows all cultural units to take responsibility and to value the development of the school culture. Having the members of the school community involved in the critical evaluation of the teaching, learning and the overall cultural process of the school, allows them to avoid mis-conceptualisation and abstraction. This approach to evaluating school culture brings new strength and vigour to collaborative practical critical research and theory. Most importantly it provides a healthy mechanism for improving educational practice and managing educational culture.

## **Chapter Eight**

### **Summary of Research Findings**

This chapter links together the main theoretical and practical ideas that have been formulated throughout the course of this investigation. The first section provides a summary of the main research findings that are presented in light of the research questions that have guided this study. The second section discusses possible limitations of the present study and the effects of this research on the participants involved. The chapter concludes with some suggestions for future direction of work on this topic and a final concluding comment from the researcher.

#### **8.1 Summarising the Answers to the Research Questions**

Over the past seven years, members of the Villa Maria College community have combined physical, human and spiritual resources in order to develop an international unit model that provides an appropriate learning environment to meet the educational and social needs of all students. As the number of international students has increased various provisions have been put in place to cater for their language and cultural backgrounds. What is significant about this particular unit culture is that its formation has impacted on many aspects of the school life. The research evidence presented in Chapter Five and Chapter Six reveals that the changes and provisions that have been made to accommodate an influx of international students to Villa Maria College since 1996 has resulted in a cultural shift in this educational organisation. Because the members of Villa Maria College have carefully managed the flow of international students into the school, keeping numbers and management issues to a minimum, the cultural shift highlighted in this study has had a predominately positive impact on the cultural positioning of the school as a whole. While most of the changes developed have mainly impacted on surface manifestations of the school inter-face there is evidence that deeper manifestations have also experienced a shift. In order to provide a brief but concise review of the main research findings it is appropriate to discuss the findings in terms of the research questions that have guided the study.

### **8.1.1 Question One: What does the current literature suggest with regard to the impact of an international unit on a school culture?**

Due to the apparent lack of studies relating directly to the research topic, the literature review presented in this study instead highlights relevant theoretical and practical material that had inspired the call for this particular research topic to be investigated. There were four identifiable themes that influenced the formulation and direction of this research:

#### (1) School Culture:

Researchers (this one included) considering the cultural approach to organisational change have been challenged by the complexity of the culture concept. Culture has proven to be an elusive concept and one that has been defined in a variety of ways. Within the multitude of definitions or descriptions have emerged common strands that link the culture concept to business, educational and societal organisations. In light of the literature and the research evidence presented in this study it is clear that the most common denominator joining the primary strands across culture descriptions appears to be 'something meaningful that is shared within a human group'.

The increased interest in educational cultural research in the last two decades has seen an overall broadening of the school culture concept with the inclusion of the shared knowledge and shared moral strands having been included in descriptions of educational culture. The rapid rate of educational reforms and the complexities of educating a diverse student population have meant that the holistic and pluralistic views of culture have found strong appeal amongst educationalists.

The holistic approach of the Beare *et al.* (1989) Model that focuses solely on educational attributes was chosen for this study as it provided a justifiable framework for building an accurate description of a school culture. The Beare *et al.* (1989) model combined with Catholic school models presented by O' Donnell (2001) provided suitable theoretical resources for formulating a detailed description for a Catholic school culture. The final description presented in this study is a visual and descriptive model unique to Villa Maria College and one that

represents a special blend of overlapping descriptors articulated specifically by the research participants. The school culture model presented in Chapter Four reveals that as a special character Catholic school, it is the Roman Catholic philosophy that gives meaning to the shared components which bind the people together at Villa Maria College. This model provided the base from which to identify elements of the school culture subject to change.

#### (2) Influence of Subcultures:

The task of defining organisational culture has been made more difficult as organisations try to differentiate whether they have one culture or a variety of cultures. The literature pertaining to school culture strongly articulates the view that schools are made up of a multiple of cultures generally referred to as subcultures that contribute to the overall organisational culture. This study is supportive of this view as the majority of research participants commented that members of subject faculties express learning in their own way, and in doing so espouse a variety of attributes that constitute important segments that contribute to the character of the whole educational organisation.

Unfortunately across the social science disciplines the 'subculture' concept has become a rather loosely coupled concept that has lacked unified consensus with regard to definition and application to organisational culture. The research attention that has been given to this area has concentrated on the central theme of the power-positional relationships that exist between these two concepts. Between the 1970's and 1980's power-positional relationships between subcultures and the dominant culture of an educational organisation consumed much of the educational research and literature. In recent years the view of Owens (1995) presents a subculture model that accentuates the positive components of power-positional relationships. Owens provides a definition that links the 'subculture' and 'culture' concepts, and suggests that the appearance of differential cultural forms between sub-units can contribute a multiplicity that can bring the people of an organisation together.

The work of multiculturalists in the last decade has also contributed greatly to the accumulation of more positive developments in subculture research. In particular

multiculturalists have revealed that simply valuing cultural differences amongst groups does not sufficiently contribute to equality across groups. In order to gain positive educational outcomes greater emphasis needs to be placed on life chances and choices for all groups, rather than just emphasising minority lifestyles and subordination, which has dictated multicultural education in the past.

While this study has considered the power-positional representation of the unit culture concept in relation to the overall culture of an organisation, this study focuses predominately on the positive positioning of the subculture and culture concepts. In this research the subculture concept is considered in line with contributing shared knowledge in terms of lifestyle, choices and chances for the whole school community. This study has revealed that the formation of the international unit at Villa Maria College is the result of geographical differentiation rather than conflict or competition between members of the organisation. In particular the formation of this group has highlighted the value of individual and group contribution to organisational cultural wholeness. People have worked together to meet individual, group and organisational goals and provide opportunities within the organisation for members of the international group to gain a sense of belonging and to share their cultural giftedness.

Another example of the positive conceptualised view of organisational culture espoused in this study is the use of the term 'unit culture' instead of the 'subculture' term. In justification of the critical approach it did not seem ethical to attach an inferior label such as 'subculture' or 'sub-unit' to the minority group involved in the international unit at Villa Maria College. The term 'unit culture' used throughout this study, denotes a group of people who are related by a set of shared social characteristics that belong to or are associated with (as an attached unit) an organisational group that shares in a common set of meaningful social characteristics (some of which may differ from the smaller unit). In this study the unit culture concept is seen as a contextual component of organisational culture, though further research will be required to develop this concept and its relationship with organisational culture.

### (3) The Cultural Change Process:

The rise of culture research in the last two decades has also extended its influence into the area of educational change theory as educational writers and researchers began to turn their attention towards change approaches that considered reculturing schools alongside restructuring them. The complexity of components involved in a cultural change process has made it difficult for schools and researchers to clearly ascertain “whether culture can or should be consciously changed” and if so, which aspects of a school culture require changing in order to produce improvement (Fairfield-Sonn, 2001:48). Aware of the difficulties of studying cultural change processes the researcher took a simplified approach by attempting to identify the organisational culture components of Villa Maria College that had been changed and ascertain if changes had resulted in improvement for the school community. The evidence presented in this study supports the view that physical or contextual changes to a school will in some way change the culture of the school, and if the changes are made and valued by people then the people will perceive improvement.

Research evidence that has emerged from within the fields of ‘school effectiveness’ and ‘improvement’ clearly recognises that an understanding of organisation culture is a practical and positive means to making schools more effective. More specifically, an established consensus between the researchers of these two fields has also revealed that while change is often structure-orientated, it is essentially about people, and that the intention to change is to achieve improvement for the people of the organisation. As a result increased research interest has been placed on the value and importance of the teacher in the change process. The level of interest is clearly evident in the growing amount of educational research and literature relating to organisational change that places emphasis on teacher development and the building of productive working relationships among teachers.

This investigation has followed the above path by giving increased attention to the value and importance of people and their working relationships in the cultural change process. The use of the Change Wave Process Model in Chapter Five to analyse change examples relevant to the development of the international unit,

revealed that effective change at Villa Maria College has resulted from the productive use of collective human and spiritual strengths of the people within this school community. The educational provisions that have been put in place to accommodate a rising number of international students, in particular fee-paying students at this school, have been made to improve conditions for students and teachers. The administrators and teachers of Villa Maria College have needed to rely on collaborative professional relationships and the appropriation of shared responsibilities in order to coordinate effective change processes in their school.

#### (4) International Impact in Secondary Schools:

Recent demographic trends in the New Zealand education system had ignited early interest in an investigation that considered whether there is a link between demographic shift in a school population and a shift in the school culture. Unfortunately, due to the youthful status of Export Education in New Zealand schools, the availability of substantial empirical evidence that corresponds directly with international students and change to school culture is still limited. A recent report prepared by Ward (2001) for the Ministry of Education found that the availability of research relating to the impact of international students on educational organisations is sparse and mainly conducted from the perspective of the overseas student, with the views of the local students and the teachers remaining relatively unexplored. This has meant there is not as yet sufficient empirical data or information available to give an accurate picture of the true impact of internationalisation in New Zealand secondary schools.

Although research is patchy it is the view of this researcher that research and literature pertaining to internationalisation can be correlated to organisational culture change or impact. There are a number of resources across the educational spectrum that hold relevant material giving insight into a number of tangible and intangible aspects of organisational culture that have been modified. For example TESOL management research and literature has uncovered numerous demands placed on TESOL managers, coordinators and teachers that reveals a new set of behavioural manifestations which are now found in this area of education. Also inter-group relationships and cross-cultural differences in the classrooms of educational organisations are two dominant themes within educational research

and literature that clearly exposes a range of positive and negative behavioural patterns that could be linked to school culture impact. Further to this, investigations or descriptions that highlight modifications to educational policy or curriculum can be considered as useful resources that offer insight into the impact on deeper cultural elements of an educational organisation.

It is the view of this researcher that for New Zealand to establish evidence-based practice in policy, teaching, programme development, training, and TESOL management, then research that investigates internationalisation processes alongside organisational culture change processes is certainly required. Educational research needs to explore avenues that gain information into both the surface and sub-surface institutional impacts that occur within educational organisations as a result of changing student populations. This will require investigating the positive and negative impacts of internationalisation on the actions and decisions of administrative staff, teaching staff and domestic students in secondary schools. Ideally this can be achieved if all members of an educational community are given the opportunity to consider how demographic change impacts on organisational culture.

#### **8.1.2 Question Two: Which elements of the school culture have been subjected to change as a result of the development of an international unit within the school?**

Since 1996, there have been a number of tangible and intangible elements of the Villa Maria College school culture that have been changed as the international unit has developed. Table 7 provides a summary of the main elements of the school culture that have been subject to change. This table reveals that positive interactive forces generated from cultural change processes have outweighed the negative interactive forces contributing to a positive shift in the cultural position of the school. The development of the international unit culture with the formation of new policies, programmes, ceremonies, rituals, resources and symbolic matter has contributed greatly to the physical and contextual enhancement of this educational environment.

**TABLE 7 THE IMPACT OF THE INTERNATIONAL UNIT ON THE SCHOOL CULTURE OF VILLA MARIA COLLEGE**

TANGIBLE EXPRESSIONS		
Visual Manifestations:		
Type	Description	Interactive Force
Facilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Allocation of space and equipment on the second storey of the Convent building.</li> </ul>	} Visual enhancement of the physical environment <i>Positive force</i>
Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Language dictionaries.</li> <li>- Terminology resources.</li> <li>- Hand-held computers.</li> </ul>	} New resources contribute to an ease in the teaching and learning processes. <i>Positive force</i>
Symbolic Material	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- National posters and language brochures.</li> <li>- International gifts.</li> <li>- Sister City Agreements.</li> <li>- International flags.</li> <li>- National displays in the school library.</li> </ul>	} Visual enhancement of the physical environment. <i>Positive force</i>
Behavioural Manifestations:		
Teaching and learning	i) Introduction of new teaching programmes: ESOL / Unit Standards / IELTS / ENR.	} Inclusion of new programmes as a valid part of the overall school curriculum. <i>Positive force</i>
	ii) Changing teaching methodology to accommodate a wider cross-section of learning needs within Subject classes. Reduced discussion time, more written material provided. Increased one-to-one time for international students.	} Increased demands on teacher time, energy and professional skills. <i>Negative force</i>
	iii) Limited interaction between local students and international students.	} Impaired relationships. <i>Negative force</i>

	iv) New professional responsibilities introduced.	} Clarification of job description for members of the international unit <i>Positive force</i>
Rituals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- New programmes for international students generate timetable alterations.</li> <li>- International prayers at assemblies.</li> <li>- Weekly meetings for international students.</li> </ul>	} Extension of ritualistic activities. <i>Positive forces</i>
Ceremonies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Powhiri.</li> <li>- International Assembly.</li> <li>- International Week activities.</li> <li>- Leaving ceremony.</li> </ul>	} Broadened ceremonial base. Cultural content expanded. Opened expression of organisational values. <i>Positive force</i>
<b>Verbal Manifestations:</b>		
Language	- Social networking in international cluster groups.	} Friendship, support and ease of communication. <i>Positive force</i>
		} Visual evidence of limited integration. <i>Negative force</i>
<b>INTANGIBLE EXPRESSIONS</b>		
<b>Type</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Interactive Force</b>
Assumptions	- International Unit Model established with policies programmes, practices and professional people to address cultural diversity, equality and meeting the educational and social needs of students.	} Broadening the underlying organisational assumption base. <i>Positive force</i>
Values	- Opened expression of moral values, appreciation / tolerance and acceptance of cultural diversity.	} Reinforces the strength of a well established values system. <i>Positive force</i>

The effects of creating and accepting new changes relating to an influx of fee-paying students has however produced a number of negative interactive forces as change has impacted on the time, energy and values of people in this community. The demands and challenges of creating a new school model to cater for the needs of a diverse student group has fallen heavily on the administrators and teachers of this school. In order to facilitate and implement positive changes with limited resources or funds the administrators and teachers of Villa Maria College have been required to draw on their personal, professional and Christian experience and resources. All changes highlighted in this study have in some small way exposed the true nature of this special character school in action.

Hence it is essentially the special character elements: 'the shared meaningful Christian components' that people have drawn on in order to facilitate and manage the shift in the organisational culture. While this study recognises that the culture of this school has changed, it is important to note that much has remained unchanged. The concise words of one research participant clearly sums up the current cultural position of this school.

*"The culture has changed over the years to some degree but in essence it is still a caring Christian culture." (Head of English, 2002).*

### **8.1.3 Question Three: Has the changing cultural position resulted in improvement for the members of the school community?**

This study has illustrated that the cultural change processes that have occurred over the past seven years at Villa Maria College have resulted in a number of improvements for members of the four main cultural units of the school community.

#### **(a) Administrative Unit:**

The Principal, Senior Management, the Board of Trustees and the Director of International Students have all gained valuable professional experience and knowledge from working together to develop an international unit school model that accommodates the learning and social needs of a diverse student group. In a response to demographic change and social forces the administrative unit has contributed to a sound management structure by developing consistent policies

and practices that are in line with the standards of the national policy and curriculum priorities as well as with the special character of the school. Over the last seven years the changes have brought about an ease of management within the administrative unit. Clarification of policies, procedures, roles, responsibilities and expectation of teachers and the international staff has, with time, reduced confusion and ambiguities over how to manage the international group in the school.

Further to this, the marked increase in the number of international students, especially fee-paying students and the corresponding school changes have accentuated the expression of strong caring horizontal working relationships between faculty heads and the staff of the international unit. People of different subject areas have kept open lines of communication and supported each other in order to meet professional and individual needs.

(b) Teachers Unit:

Developing a formal structure for the international unit comprising policies, programmes and professional people has contributed to the formal representation of this unit culture as a valued part of the school community. The formalisation of standards set out in school policies, job descriptions and the Code of Practice have given the staff of the international unit professional standards that guide their work and behaviour in this unit. Teachers of this unit have appreciated the confidence that has been extended to them to initiate, design or implement change relating to the international unit in the school. For example, implementing the ENR programme has been a rewarding experience for all staff involved. While teachers have valued the opportunity to be involved in changes that provide improvement for their students or for other teachers in the school, they feel that further improvement could be achieved with increased assistance and support extended through external agencies.

For teachers outside the international unit many of the changes introduced over the last seven years have brought minimal improvement to their work situation. Instead, increased numbers of fee-paying students in the last two years has done much to increase the workload of teachers and to change the dynamics of many

classroom environments. However one significant change that has brought improvement to the working conditions of teachers, and is valued by teachers themselves, has been the introduction of the Administrative Assistant at the beginning of 2002. Teachers outside the international unit feel that this additional support person has helped to ease some of their curriculum load and has helped them to establish better communicative links with their international students.

(c) Student Unit:

Most of the changes that have been implemented over the past seven years at Villa Maria College have been designed for the purpose of improving the educational conditions and opportunities of international students. All changes implemented internally by the school have contributed in some way to providing a better quality educational service for international students. Changes highlighted in this study have generated the following improvements for the international students of this school:

- (i) Having on site a committed and caring group of professional people available for educational and social assistance.
- (ii) Providing programmes that are designed to help international students adapt to other curriculum areas and to gain a sense of belonging to the school.
- (iii) Having their own learning space to share and to express their cultural roots.
- (iv) Providing regular opportunities are provided for the international students to express themselves and their culture within the school environment.

While most of the changes cited in this study were implemented to meet the educational and social needs of the students within the international unit, the local students have also gained from school change. The introduction of new symbols, rituals and ceremonies has increased the cultural content of the school and in doing so has provided new learning resources from which all students of the school can benefit. For example the Powhiri, International Assembly and International Week activities have been designed to help all students value,

appreciate and accept differences in the lifestyles of people in the school and world-wide. Such activities are opportunities for students to gain or feel a sense of belonging and unity within this Christian educational community.

(d) Family Unit:

Because this study did not include interviews of family members there is not sufficient data available to suggest that members of this cultural unit have experienced improvement. However, it can be said that over the last seven years parents and caregivers of international students would have witnessed changes made by the school that have introduced professional people, resources and services to provide an improved educational service for their children. In addition to this the parents of fee-paying students can be comforted by the introduction of the Code of Practice in 2001 which ensures high standards and procedures are maintained by the school and by the families hosting their children in New Zealand.

#### **8.1.4 Question Four: In what way has cultural change impacted on school effectiveness?**

Drawing from the effectiveness characteristics highlighted in Table 1, Chapter Two Section 2.3.1, and the research evidence presented in this study, the researcher concludes that a number of key effectiveness characteristics have been illuminated during the development of the international unit at Villa Maria College between 1996-2002. Cultural change processes carried out by members of this school community have contributed to a number of positive outcomes that have accentuated the following effectiveness features:

(i) Building on a sound management structure, the administrative unit of Villa Maria College has been committed to maintaining a **consistent and fair management structure** that is applicable to present day and future educational trends in relation to the internationalisation of the school.

(ii) **Collective visionary leadership** has been exposed in action as members of the administrative unit and teachers unit have worked together to develop

**consistent policies and practices** that respond to demographic and social forces in the school. In doing so, administrators and teachers combined have established **improved learning and working conditions** for international students and teachers.

(iii) The change examples highlighted in this study has revealed that a high standard of **professionalism and purposeful teaching** provided by teachers ensures a **secure, supportive and caring Christian educational environment** is available for international students at Villa Maria College.

(iv) The expression of shared Christian and personal values by members of this school (through the introduction of new activities) has collectively contributed towards building a strong spiritual and physical **sense of community** in this educational environment.

Each change example highlighted in this study demonstrates the school's desire and commitment to fulfil the needs of a diverse student population. Educational communities like Villa Maria College that are internally utilizing the skills of their professional people need to be congratulated for their efforts as they work towards creating and achieving effectiveness outcomes that are designed to impact positively on all the people who belong to the school community.

#### **8.1.5 Question Five: What issues have arisen as the result of cultural change?**

The comments of research participants in this study have highlighted five key issues that have surfaced since the international unit has become established in the school.

##### **(1) The Need to Value Peoples' Efforts:**

Meeting the learning and social needs of international students is a complex and demanding task for staff across a secondary school. The roles and responsibilities of teachers and support staff have expanded with the increased number of international students entering the school. The Ministry of Education needs to get

more involved with schools to set in place provisions that recognise the real status value of a new set of professional people that now work in this area of education. All teachers who teach international students need to be supported, appreciated and rewarded for their efforts as they work towards overcoming obvious language difficulties or cultural barriers in their classrooms and around school.

(2) Providing Professional Development Applicable to School Change:

In order to fulfil the needs of all students in a school it is essential to consider the learning needs of the teaching staff. In periods of rapid reform teachers require professional development training in the teaching and learning that relates to changes that are apparent in a school. Today at Villa Maria College teaching and learning processes involve international students in all school activities, therefore it is essential that professional development is extended regularly to all teaching staff, not just second language teachers. A high percentage of the teachers at Villa Maria College who come into contact with international students in their regular classrooms have little or no pre-service or in-service training to help them provide for these students. Even though professional development initiatives and advice has been provided, the amount and availability needs to increase to serve the high need at the present time. Regular professional development programmes relating to curriculum delivery for all staff would help the school to deal more effectively with cultural change processes involving international students.

(3) New Needs Require New Resources:

The development of this new international group at Villa Maria College has brought an increased demand for new teaching resources school-wide. Villa Maria College has witnessed a new level of resource demand with a dual requirement need in relation to teaching international students. Firstly, new resources have been created or collected that are suitable for a diverse range of second language programmes of teaching and secondly, the staff at Villa Maria College have been working towards developing teaching resources that accommodate international students and teachers in other subject areas. Teachers of this school felt that extra resources could be produced or made available by outside agencies to provide assistance to teachers and international students in specific subject areas.

#### (4) Curriculum Concerns:

A major area of concern for staff participating in this study relates to the huge demands of the National Curriculum that are placed on international students and on the teachers. Because of the obvious language and cultural barriers encountered in class it is not uncommon for international students and their teachers to feel challenged by the requirements of the National Curriculum with its emphasis on activities such as problem-solving, interactive learning, communication and presentation. This school and schools nationwide require further ongoing practical assistance so that they are better prepared to bring their international students up to a consistent level where they can achieve the same curriculum objectives as their English-speaking peers

#### (5) Allocating Appropriate Levels of Entry for the International Students:

The issue of curriculum demand is tied in closely with the issue of allocating the appropriate English language entry standards for fee-paying international students. The majority of staff participating in this study felt that most of the curriculum difficulties and social issues relating to international students could be overcome if the standard of English language entry was higher or was set at an appropriate level for the students to both achieve and feel comfortable in their new environment. This is an issue many feel needs to be addressed and resolved first and foremost by the Government rather than being left to individual schools to grapple with.

## **8.2 Methodological Limitations of the Study**

Two main limitations exist with single site ethnographic culture research. Firstly, a single site case study is not generalisable to other case study material. It is only possible to draw conclusions from the cultural position and internal relationships that pertain to Villa Maria College, as this study is not representative of other Catholic girls' schools in New Zealand. While this case study presented a diverse range of data collection resources available for triangulation, the apparent absence of ethnographic methods not used in the study such as student and parent interviews goes some way to limiting the meaning of the findings in this case study. This lack of relevant research data has not allowed for decisive

generalisations to be made across all the cultural units belonging to the research site. Hence there is a need to consider representative views held from within the cultural spectrum that contribute to an organisational culture to fully substantiate the findings reported in this study. Unfortunately due to time and geographical constraints (many parents of fee-paying international students live outside New Zealand) this task was not achievable in this research exercise.

Secondly, the nature of culture research itself is problematic. Culture is a broad complex topic with a wide exploratory scope, which often means that relevant meaningful details are inadequately investigated or left unexplored. While the Beare *et al.* (1989) Model provided a useful framework for investigating and describing the school culture of Villa Maria College, it was clear at an early stage of the investigation that it would be difficult to cover all culture components in a single research initiative. This situation became particularly obvious during the first two preliminary interviews where the researcher discovered that the interview schedules prepared for the Principal and the Director of International Students contained too many detailed questions for the time allocated for each interview. As a result the researcher was required to review the types of question relevant for the study and reduce the number of questions in the interview schedules for the second series of staff interviews. By reducing the number of questions and focusing primarily on the culture elements relevant to the study, the researcher was able to allow the research participants to give lengthy reflections that provided substantial overlapping relevant data that still achieved the research goals.

Unfortunately the broadness of this research investigation has increased the possibility of relevant material being misappropriated, left unattended or even left out. The absence of other aspects such as organisational metaphors, rules and regulations, parental and community interaction patterns not detailed in this study, could suggest that the culture of the school, the change processes described and the impact descriptions have been insufficiently explored, examined and explained. Further to this, it is an underlying dilemma of culture research as to whether the main aspects selected for a study are sufficiently covered in the course of the investigation. For this particular case study the researcher felt that

the descriptions and conclusions provided relating to organisational assumptions and values are two distinctive areas that could have been given further attention.

### **8.3 Research Effects on People**

Culture research can impact upon the time, professional status and personal privacy of people participating in a research process. The examples, expressions, views and opinions articulated by members of the Villa Maria College community in this study are, on completion of the document, inevitably exposed and opened to critique from the wider Catholic and educational communities in New Zealand and internationally.

Qualitative research on culture inevitably results in telling stories and describing the perceptions and reaction of organisational members. Such data can be highly persuasive, but relies largely on the author's insight and intuition for judging which stories and perceptions are most representative of the organisation as a whole (Denison, 1990:192).

The commitment and interest of staff to participate and reflect freely on this research topic made it easier for the researcher to process material and identify organisational trends. For the researcher the task of finding patterns in the words, actions and records of people participating in this research exercise was a process that required careful selection of data and constant sensitivity towards the people who belong to the school and consideration of the reputation of the school. Throughout this research exercise during each preparation stage: communicating, interviewing, processing interviews, observing and presenting written information for inspection, the researcher held a heightened awareness of the potential harm that could be imposed on the people involved in the research process. In order to reduce any form of risk, harm, deception or embarrassment to individuals or the school as a whole, the researcher made a commitment to ensure the ethical standards set out by the Massey University Ethics Committee were maintained at all times throughout the course of the research period. Data was collected, and carefully processed (using Bogan and Biklens (1992) method of processing interviews) and written in a manner that aimed to demonstrate prevailing trends representative of the organisation as a whole rather than representative of the researchers' views. Further to this the researcher employed a number of practices

that were aimed at reducing time and minimising personal or professional effects on the people:

(i) Regular communication through letters or on-site informal discussion was maintained with the School Principal and the Director of International Students to ensure research development and progress was openly shared.

(ii) Appreciating that teachers and administrators have demanding workloads, the researcher carried out interviews at a time and place convenient to the research participant and attempted to keep as close as possible to the allocated interview time.

(iii) In preparing transcript material or written information for the final report, the researcher regularly applied the following question: is this information in any way harmful to individuals or to the School?

(iv) When highlighting sensitive examples or issues the researcher made reference to the wider New Zealand educational community or outside agencies in order to disperse or reduce potential implicative impact on the research school.

(v) During the course of the study period a research folder was available at the school to enable the research participants the opportunity to view and comment if necessary on information that had been prepared by the researcher and inspected by the research supervisor.

Even though all these procedures were put in place as with most culture research the dilemma still remains as to whether there are any unforeseen aspects of the report that may produce harmful outcomes.

#### **8.4 Suggestions for Future Research**

There is a definite need to explore cultural change and impact across a wider range of schools to substantiate the findings reported in this particular study. While this single site case study does not allow for generalisations to other similar school

case studies, it does at least provide the understandings and analytical tools useful for future research into the area of cultural change and impact at a Catholic school. Each culture model presented in this study can be utilised for the purpose of exploring cultural concepts. The critical approach taken in this study enabled the researcher and the research participants to consider a course of practical action applicable to the ongoing investigation of this research topic. In particular the Cultural Collaborative Effectiveness model presented in Chapter Seven raises a number of complementary questions that can be used to address the ongoing evaluation of this research topic and others studies that consider organisational culture impact involving unit cultures. By involving practitioners in this way the people of the organisation are given the opportunity to be involved in positive change processes that they can value and appreciate. Culture is essentially about people, so in order to contribute to the growth of cultural change theory it is imperative that the people of an organisation are in some way involved in the research process. The critical cultural approach is a productive means from which to gather a cross-section of views from the people involved in the internationalisation process in New Zealand secondary schools.

There is a genuine need for future organisational culture research to have a change of focus with regard to the attempts to define or describe the culture of educational organisations. Researchers and practitioners need to work together to formulate descriptions of a school culture that are applicable to a given setting rather than spending time searching for a universal model, or attaching unrealistic corporate models to a school. School culture descriptions need to reveal the unique physical and human qualities of a specific organisation; in particular the shared and meaningful qualities and expressions that bind people together for the purpose of effective education need to be uncovered.

Researchers wanting to discover the mechanisms that operate to transform educational culture will also need to direct their attention towards exploring the concept of 'subculture' and its relationship with the 'culture' concept. As suggested in Chapter Two the introduced concept of 'unit culture' can be seen as a contextual component of organisational culture that can be defined in terms of shared social characteristics, although further research would be required to develop this

concept and its relationship to the organisational whole. Subsequent studies that narrow the culture focus and concentrate on specific culture elements or the interactive and impact patterns of various unit cultures within an organisation may provide additional in-depth insights and understandings of the cultural change processes that operate in our education system in New Zealand. For example, the exploration of specific culture elements such as a values shift, a symbolic shift or an assumption shift involving international groups may give further insight and understanding of unit culture influences on organisational culture.

Finally any knowledge that provides insight and understanding of culture concepts, process and management of organisational culture will always prove useful to practitioners aiming to deliver effective education.

## **8.5 Concluding Remarks**

The influx of international students into New Zealand secondary schools in the last decade has impacted on the cultural positioning of many schools nationwide. This trend is likely to continue well into the next decade. In order for present and future secondary school educators to deliver quality education to diverse student populations they will need to become familiar with the knowledge, skills and values that are required to manage the culture of an educational organisation effectively. This will require educators nationwide to seek opportunities, advice and assistance for exploring the cultural positioning of their school. Such a task requires educational researchers and practitioners to work closely together to build the theoretical and practical resources required for dealing with demographic, social and economic implications that come with culturally diverse classrooms and schools.

The development of an international unit gives a school exposure and places it on the global map. The reputation of New Zealand schools is no longer limited to the local community, it now extends to places beyond the edges of our shorelines. Therefore it is imperative that teachers and staff of secondary schools throughout New Zealand receive support internally and externally in their endeavours to deliver quality education to a diverse student population. A step in the right

direction is for members of schools to become familiar with and utilise cultural concepts and theory that is applicable to their own practice and setting. The members of a school community need to be encouraged to look at the uniqueness of their own organisation and to search for information that exposes their own cultural characteristics and identity.

Schools like Villa Maria College that take the time to assess and evaluate their own qualities, choosing effectiveness characteristics that assist them to strive for standards that are appropriate and attainable within their own geographical, physical and cultural boundaries, are progressive. In order to provide an effective education for a diverse student population, schools need to involve members from all cultural units in a range of evaluation procedures. This type of practical action combined with information drawn from a theoretical base and appropriate support from the Ministry of Education will enable schools in New Zealand to discover how to improve from within the organisation as they meet and manage future cultural change processes.

**APPENDIX I Data Recording Sheet 1****Literature Survey****Resource Number:** 1**Title:** Fifteen Thousand Hours: Secondary Schools and their Effects on Children.**Author:** Rutter, M. Maughan, B. Mortimore, P. Ouston, J.**Date:** 1979.**Effectiveness Features:**

Seven factors cited by Rutter *et al.* (1979) in their UK study:

Pupil control system, with effective schools using rewards, praise, encouragement and appreciation more than punishment.

Good working conditions for pupils and teachers.

Involvement of pupils, opportunities to participate in the running of the school and in the educational activities in class.

Academic development of pupils, positive use of homework, setting clear and explicit academic goals, high teacher expectations of pupils' capabilities.

Teachers providing good role models.

Classroom management: well prepared lessons, maintained discipline, focus on rewarding good behaviour, dealing swiftly with disruptive behaviour.

Management structure: firm leadership by head combined with decision making processes in which all teachers felt represented.

**APPENDIX I Data Recording Sheet 1****Literature Survey****Resource Number:** 2**Title:** Effective Schools for the Urban Poor. Educational Leadership.**Author:** Edmonds, R. R.**Date:** 1979.**Effectiveness Features:**

Edmonds (1979) found five characteristics which seemed to be the most tangible and indispensable in effective schools:

They have strong administrative leadership

They have a climate of expectation in which no children are permitted to fall below minimum but efficacious level of achievement.

An orderly atmosphere conducive to learning.

A pervasive and broadly understood instructional focus.

Pupil progress that is frequently monitored.

**APPENDIX I Data Recording Sheet 1****Literature Survey****Resource Number:** 3**Title:** Effective Schools: A Review.**Author:** Purkey, S. C. & Smith, M. S.**Date:** 1983.**Effectiveness Features:**

Composed of 9 organisational and instructional variables, 4 process variables:

1. School site management.
  2. Instructional leadership.
  3. Staff stability.
  4. Curriculum articulation and organisation.
  5. School wide staff development.
  6. Parental involvement and support.
  7. School wide recognition of academic success.
  8. Maximised learning time.
  9. District support.
- 
- i. Collaborative planning and collegial relationships.
  - ii. Sense of community.
  - iii. Clear goals and high expectations commonly shared.
  - iv. Order and discipline.

**APPENDIX I Data Recording Sheet 1****Literature Survey****Resource Number:** 4**Title:** The Characteristics of Successful Schools.**Author:** Ramsey, P. Sneddon, D. Grrrenfell, J. Ford, I.**Date:** 1987.**Effectiveness Features:**

Eight characteristics which seem to distinguish the 'successful' from the 'less successful' school in the study:

1. A clearly articulated philosophy or statement of goals.
2. Patterns of communication.
3. Decision-making procedures.
4. Records of pupils' progress.
5. The use of community resources and community relationship.
6. Successful schools developed a much-used set of resources.
7. Improving the schools environment.
8. A supportive caring environment.

**APPENDIX I Data Recording Sheet 1****Literature Survey****Resource Number:** 5**Title:** Good New Zealand Schools. National Education Evaluation.**Author:** Education Review Office.**Date:** 1994.**Effectiveness Features:**

The conclusion in the ERO publication Good New Zealand Schools identifies:

Diversity.

Not being perfect.

Having a shared vision.

Consistent policies and practices.

Being dynamic.

Focusing on students.

**APPENDIX I Data Recording Sheet 1****Literature Survey****Resource Number:** 6**Title:** Key Characteristics of Effective Schools. A Review. SER.**Author:** Sammons, P. Hillman, J. Mortimore, P.**Date:** 1995.**Effectiveness Features:**

Eleven factors for effective schools:

1. Professional leadership.
2. Shared vision and goals.
3. A learning environment.
4. Concentration on teaching and learning.
5. Purposeful teaching.
6. High expectations.
7. Positive reinforcements.
8. Monitoring progress.
9. Pupils rights and responsibilities.
10. Home-school partnership.
11. A learning organisation.

**APPENDIX I Data Recording Sheet 1****Literature Survey****Resource Number:** 7**Title:** The Four Imperatives of a Successful School.**Author:** Beck, L. & Murphy, J.**Date:** 1996.**Effectiveness Features:**

Beck and Murphy (1996) focus on four specific conditions that are crucial to any successful school:

1. Strong yet approachable leadership.
2. Capacity-building resources for teaching.
3. Commitment to school and community.
4. Powerful consistent focus on learning.

**APPENDIX I Data Recording Sheet 1****Literature Survey****Resource Number:** 8**Title:** School Effectiveness and Research.**Author:** Elliot, J.**Date:** 1996.**Effectiveness Features:**

Corcoran and Wilson (1989) study of exceptionally successful secondary schools generated a list of common elements:

Positive attitude towards the students by the teachers and the principal.

Strong competent leadership.

Highly committed teaching staff.

Highly expectation and standards.

An emphasis upon high achievement in academic subjects.

Intensive and personal support services for at risk students.

Stable leadership and pupil support in the catchment area of the school for a period of years sufficient to implement new policies.

**APPENDIX II Data Recording Sheet 2**

**Observation Sheet**

**Date:**

**Time:**

**Site:**

**Activity:**

**People Involved:**

**Observations Made:**

## APPENDIX II Data Recording Sheet 2

## Observation Sheet Sample

Date: 19.7.02

Time: Lunch hour

Site: Villa Maria College quad

Activity: International Week Activity

People Involved: International Students, staff of Languages faculty,  
students purchasing food.

## Observations Made:

- International students set up stalls, food labelled according to country of origin.
- Food had been purchased by staff or prepared by international students at home.
- International students sold the food to students during lunch hour.
- Local students purchasing food discussed with international students - the origins of the ethnic food.
  - how the food was prepared.
  - what ingredients were used.
  - taste.
- This was a popular activity enjoyed by all involved.

## **APPENDIX III INTERVIEW SCHEDULE**

### **Principal Interview Schedule One**

Date:

Interview Number:

#### **Section 1. School Culture.**

1. How long have you worked at Villa Maria College?
2. Do you think a school has one culture, or is made up of a variety of cultures?
3. Do you consider the faculties of this school as fractional cultural units that contribute to the make up of the school culture?
4. Do you think groups of staff and students (belonging to a faculty, class, teams, peer groups) exhibit attributes that give them distinctive cultures?
5. What or whom do you think is responsible for creating the various subset cultures that exist within the school?
6. Can you describe the culture of Villa Maria College?

#### **Section 2. Identifying Change.**

1. Can you explain why the international unit was formed at Villa Maria College?
2. Who were the main people (titles only) or groups involved in the set up of this unit?
3. Who are the main people or groups involved in the ongoing development of this unit?
4. Does the school hold policy or charter statements regarding international students?
5. What role has the Board of Trustees played in determining new policy or practice concerning international students?
6. Can you describe the changes that have taken place at Villa Maria College between 1996-2002 as the international Unit developed? Siting significant events, incidents, or phases.
7. Can you describe what the role of the Director of International Students involves?
8. What do you think the school gains from having international students?

## **APPENDIX III INTERVIEW SCHEDULE**

### **Director of International Students Interview Schedule One**

Date:

Interview Number:

#### **Section 1. School Culture.**

1. How long have you worked at Villa Maria College?
2. Do you think a school has one culture, or is made up of a variety of cultures?
3. Do you consider the faculties of this school as fractional cultural units that contribute to the make up of the school culture?
4. Do you think groups of staff and students (belonging to a faculties, classes, teams, peer groups) exhibit attributes that give them distinctive cultures?
5. What or whom do you think is responsible for creating the various subset cultures that exist within the school?
6. Can you describe the culture of Villa Maria College?

#### **Section 2. Identifying Change.**

1. Can you explain why the international unit was formed at Villa Maria College?
2. Who were the main people (titles only) or groups involved in the set up of this unit?
3. Who are the main people or groups involved in the ongoing development of this unit?
4. Does the school or faculty hold policy or charter statements regarding international students?
5. Can you describe the changes that have taken place at Villa Maria College between 1996-2002 as the International Unit developed? Siting significant events, incidents, or phases.
6. What do you think the school gains from having international students?
7. Can you describe what your role as the Director of International Students involves?

## **APPENDIX III INTERVIEW SCHEDULE**

### **Principal Interview Schedule Two**

Date:

Interview Number:

#### **Section 1. School Culture.**

1. Can you describe aspects of the school culture that you consider are traditional features of this special character school. (ie stood the test of time, remained unchanged).
2. What would you regard are the primary core values of the school? Values that link the members of this school community.
3. Do you think the international unit has it's own unique culture?
4. Can you describe the culture of this group?
5. How have the NESB international students been made to feel they belong to the school culture? (as they do not have a previous history).

#### **Section 2. Identifying Change.**

1. Do you think the development of the international unit has changed any of the following elements of your school culture? (if so how):
  - (a) School philosophy.
  - (b) School values.
  - (c) Beliefs.
  - (d) Symbols.
  - (e) Rituals/ Ceremonies.
  - (f) Teaching Practices/roles/responsibilities.
  - (g) Learning Styles.
  - (h) Student/teacher/administration interaction patterns.
  - (i) School rules.
  - (j) Language patterns, terms/phrases/slogans/comments.
  - (k) Teaching resources.

- (l) Curriculum.
- (m) Physical environment.
- (n) Support systems for teachers or pupils.
- (o) Parental/guardian interaction patterns.
- (p) Community interaction.

### **Section 3. The Change Process.**

1. Was change planned or unexpected?
2. Were you intentionally trying to change the institution?
3. Can you site examples of external or internal pressures that resulted in organisational change?
4. What procedures did you use to handle the change process?
5. Were Catholic values a consideration in the change process? How?
6. In what way was change aimed at the people?
7. Has there been resistance to change over this period? Can you site examples?
8. Do you feel that the changes that occurred over this period occurred:
  - (a) Slowly.
  - (b) At a moderate pace.
  - (c) Fast.

### **Section 4. Impact of Change.**

1. Were changes reviewed with regard to positive and negative impacts on the people and the institution?
2. In what ways has the development of this unit contributed to improvement in the school?
3. In what ways has the development of this unit contributed to the delivery of effective education at Villa Maria College?
4. Whose interests are best served by the changes made in the past seven years?
5. What are some of the main issues relating to international students at this school, requiring attention at this time?

## **APPENDIX III INTERVIEW SCHEDULE**

### **Director of International Languages Faculty Interview Schedule Two**

Date:

Interview Number:

#### **Section 1. School Culture.**

1. Can you describe aspects of the school culture that you consider are traditional features of this special character school. (ie stood the test of time, remained unchanged).
2. What would you regard are the primary core values of the school? Values that link the members of this school community.
3. Do you think the international unit has it's own unique culture?
4. Can you describe the culture of this group?
5. How have the NESB international students been made to feel they belong to the school culture? (as they do not have a previous history).

#### **Section 2. Identifying Change.**

1. Do you think the development of the international unit has changed any of the following elements of your school culture? (if so how):
  - (a) School philosophy.
  - (b) School values.
  - (c) Beliefs.
  - (d) Symbols.
  - (e) Rituals/ Ceremonies.
  - (f) Teaching Practices/roles/responsibilities.
  - (g) Learning Styles.
  - (h) Student/teacher/administration interaction patterns.
  - (i) School rules.
  - (j) Language patterns, terms/phrases/slogans/comments.
  - (k) Teaching resources.

- (l) Curriculum.
- (m) Physical environment.
- (n) Support systems for teachers or pupils.
- (o) Parental/guardian interaction patterns.
- (p) Community interaction.

### **Section 3. The Change Process.**

1. Was change planned or unexpected?
2. Were you intentionally trying to change the institution?
3. Can you site examples of external or internal pressures that resulted in organisational change?
4. What procedures did you use to handle the change process?
5. Were Catholic values a consideration in the change process? How?
6. In what way was change aimed at the people?
7. Has there been resistance to change over this period? Can you site examples?
8. Do you feel that the changes that occurred over this period occurred:
  - (a) Slowly.
  - (b) At a moderate pace.
  - (c) Fast.

### **Section 4. Impact of Change.**

1. Were changes reviewed with regard to positive and negative impacts on the people and the institution?
2. In what ways has the development of this unit contributed to improvement in the school?
3. In what ways has the development of this unit contributed to the delivery of effective education at Villa Maria College?
4. Whose interests are best served by the changes made in the past seven years?
5. What are some of the main issues relating to international students at this school, requiring attention at this time?

## **APPENDIX III INTERVIEW SCHEDULE**

### **Staff of the International Unit Interview Schedule One**

Date:

Interview Number:

#### **Section 1. School Culture**

1. Do you think a school has one culture, or is made up of a variety of cultures?
2. Do you think groups of staff and students (belonging to a faculty, classes, teams, peer groups) exhibit attributes that give them distinctive cultures?
3. Are there distinctive features of the international unit that give it its own unique culture?
4. Can you describe the culture of the international unit?
5. Can you describe the culture of Villa Maria College?

#### **Section 2. Change.**

1. Can you explain why the international unit was formed at Villa Maria College?
2. Do you think the formation of the international unit has brought change to this school?
3. Can you describe the changes that have taken place at Villa Maria College between 1996-2002 as the international unit has developed? Siting significant events, incidents, or phases.
4. Can you identify any examples of change to the physical environment of the school as a result of the international unit being formed? (ie Buildings/Resource material/ Symbols).
5. Can you identify any examples of change to other aspects of school life (routine, symbols, rituals, ceremonies etc) since the international unit has been formed?
6. Can you identify any social changes that staff may have recognised within the classroom or around school that relate to international students?
7. Whose interests are best served by these changes?
8. What do you consider are the main issues relating to international students at this school, that will require attention in the future?
9. How does the school deal with issues relating to international students?
10. What do you think the school gains from having international students in the school?

## **APPENDIX III INTERVIEW SCHEDULE**

### **Head of Faculty/Department Interview Schedule**

Date:

Interview Number:

#### **Section 1. School Culture.**

1. Do you think a school has one culture, or is made up of a variety of cultures?
2. Do you think groups of staff and students (belonging to a faculty, classes, teams, peer groups) exhibit attributes that give them distinctive cultures?
3. Are there distinctive features of your faculty that give it its own unique culture?
4. Can you describe the culture of Villa Maria College?

#### **Section 2. Change.**

1. Can you explain why the international unit was formed at Villa Maria College?
2. Who were the main people (titles only) /groups involved in the set up of this unit?
3. Has your department been involved in any way with the development of international unit in the school?
4. Do you think the formation of the international unit has brought change to this school?
5. Can you identify any examples of change to the physical environment of the school as a result of the international unit being formed? (ie Buildings/Resource material/ Symbols).
6. Can you identify any examples of change to other aspects of school life (routine, symbols, rituals, ceremonies etc) since the international unit has been formed?
7. Can you identify any social changes that your staff may have recognised within the classroom or around school that relate to international students?
8. Whose interests are best served by these changes?
9. What do you consider are the main issues relating to international students at this school, that will require attention in the future?
10. How does the school deal with issues relating to international students?
11. What do you think the school gains from having international students in the school?

## APPENDIX III INTERVIEW SCHEDULE SAMPLE

Coded  
Unit!

### HEAD OF FACULTY INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

Date: 18.07.02

Interview Number: 9

#### Section 1. School Culture.

**Do you think a school has one culture, or is made up of a variety of cultures?**

Our school is made up of a variety of cultures that contribute special things. Our school has a religious culture that binds everyone together, we also the different ethnic cultures and we have distinctive cultural and sports cultures.

School  
Culture

**Are there distinctive features of your Faculty that give it its own unique culture?**

Our faculty is about promoting that we are all different, that we accept that every person is different, and that everyone has got something very good about them. We try to teach our students to be accepting of other people and to value our differences. I think this is starting to come through in the students.

School  
Culture

**Can you describe the culture of Villa Maria College?**

The culture of Villa Maria College is based on religious values not just catholic values but any form of Christian value. In the way the students react with each other, how they behave in class, in house groups. This school has a supportive family atmosphere the students know that we really care about them and their education.

School  
Culture

#### Section 2. Change.

**Has your faculty been involved in any way with the development of International unit in the school?**

I am aware that there are ESOL rooms and a room where the international students can have their lunch or meetings.

TA  
Physical  
Environment

**Do you think the formation of the International Unit has brought change to this school?**

Yes. Having international students has added to the school.

**Can you identify any examples of change to the physical environment of the school as a result of the International Unit being formed? (ie Buildings/Resource material/ Symbols).**

I have noticed groups of international students gathered together around school.

TA  
Behavioural  
Manifestation

The introduction of gifts, souvenirs or symbols in the foyer or in other parts of the school has become more obvious in recent years. This shows that the school is making a conscious effort to represent the cultural groups of our school.

TA  
Symbolic  
matter

- \* TA Tangible Aspect  
IA Intangible Aspect

The international flags in the assembly hall represent the different nationalities that have been part of the school. These flags have been donated by an international student or their family. When a flag is presented during assembly an explanation is provided about whom it is from and the significance of the flag or the story behind the flag.

TA  
Symbolic  
matter

The nationality displays in the library have also become obvious recently.

**Can you identify any examples of change to other aspects of school life (routine, symbols, rituals, ceremonies etc) since the International Unit has been formed?**

The international assembly that we have each year has been beneficial to the whole school. The other girls really enjoy and appreciate watching this international performance.

TA  
Ceremonial  
eg.

We are have become more aware of features significant to other cultures for example the Chinese New Year, we know when this celebration is occurring as some of our students will be away or returning late to school.

TA

**Can you identify any social changes that your staff may have recognised within the classroom or around school that relate to International Students?**

Some of the girls come in and they are very willing to participate in most things. Then you may get a group of girls through that are not willing to get involved in swimming or anything energetic. This is often when the language barrier means they do not understand and they do not bring gear. This can be a real struggle for teachers who are trying hard to encourage these students to get involved.

TA  
Behavioural  
manifestation

Because many of these students are not so keen on participating in energetic activities absenteeism has at times been a problem.

When we are doing group work the students know that it is random selection and the girls seem to get on and help each other out to achieve what they need to achieve. For the international students who join in they often look a little lost but they are more than often encouraged by the other students around them to get through a task.

If you ask students to get into groups themselves then often international students will get left out, because they are hard work for the other students. But if you have a situation where you have an international student in your group then the other members do not want the group to look silly so they get on with it and involve everyone in some way. It may be in a minor way, but they always get them involved. This same situation occurs for students who have physically limitations.

Behavioural  
manifestation

I think if the international students are put into a situation where they have to interact they do, and they do really well.

Through out the year the level of participation and enthusiasm of international students is generally fairly low. It is not necessarily because the student dislike Physical Education it is more than often the cultural constraint that many of the students are not use to participating in such a wide range of physical activities in their school life.

TA  
Behavioural  
Manifestation

The colour, vibrancy and festival atmosphere of our sports days possibly helps the international students to participate, certainly in the informal house events.

The staff of the international unit explain to the international students what happens during sport days. Without these additional explanations the girls would often get totally lost. The Director of International Students certainly promotes having a good time on these occasions. She jollies the students along encouraging them to participate and have fun.

TA  
Behavioural  
Manifestation

During Wednesday sports activities if the international students participate it is generally in badminton.

#### **Whose interests are best served by these changes?**

I think the changes that have taken place in school to date have been beneficial to the international students in that the school is creating ways to support their learning needs.

} Change  
Process .

The changes have also been beneficial for staff. The staff of our faculty can now go and get assistance for year 11, 12, and 13 students from the international staff if required. In particular it is fantastic to now have a teacher aide who can come and sit in the class to assist our international students with instruction and written work.

The school benefits economically from having international students in the school.

#### **What do you consider are the main issues relating to International Students at this school, that will require attention in the future?**

It is very difficult for any senior subject teachers trying to get international students through their internal assessment requirements. This is the first year I have had a year 13 international student in my class and because of the nature of the course being fully internally assessed I have noticed it is very difficult for this student. I have to be careful how I guide this student and how much I help her, at times I feel like I am doing the work for her. The other girls can get upset and you often see them watching to see how much attention I give this girl. I can guide this student but it is difficult to do this equally, I learnt from the first assignment that this student needed a lot more help than everyone else.

Issue  
Curriculum

I think for teachers the extra demands of international students in class or after class can at times be tiring. Knowing that when you have a question it is not going to take three minutes to answer.

Issue

In the junior school our international students have difficulties getting through the aquatic and athletic goals, while they give it all a go they are struggling in this area.

Issue  
Curriculum

For the teachers in Physical Education we have developed an acceptance of this situation, we are aware of the barriers that we are all trying to work through. Our big push in Physical Education is that not everybody is going to be an athlete, that Physical Education is good for everyone and participation and enjoyment are key elements of this subject.

I think it would be useful to have more background knowledge about what these girls do for Physical Education or physical activity back in their country of origin. Also it would be useful to gain knowledge about ways to assist the international students better in the delivery of physical education.

Issue  
Professional  
Development

I think the international staff would be struggling just as much as we are with regard to delivering the curriculum.

We have been given some advice last year about how we can assist international students with our speaking and instruction. Though the assistance is not available on a regular basis or applicable to our subject area.

Issue  
Professional  
Development

Generally with international students in the class they will sit together I guess this is a comfort thing.

At the beginning of the year we talk to our classes about individual strengths and weaknesses, co-operation, tolerance and participation which is relevant for a cross-section of students not just international students. I think all students would gain from some extra instruction on how to overcome language barriers or cultural barriers they encounter in the school.

Training

### **What do you think the school gains from having International Students in the school?**

The money gained from having fee paying students is certainly beneficial to the school.

I think if we are going to have international students it may be more beneficial for them to come into the school at a younger age around year nine. These students have more time to gain the confidence and language skills to establish normal interaction patterns with domestic students (rather than coerced interaction). They can come through the school and get the opportunity to gain positions of responsibility in houses like our Head Librarian has done this year. Also by the time the international students come to leave Villa they have been in the school long enough to actually achieved some qualifications. At the moment if they come in at year twelve or thirteen we are pushing it to get them qualifications. With students coming in at year 12 and 13 the school gains the cultural diversity but we do not gain normalised patterns of interaction between students. Some must leave school feeling it was a waste of time as they have not achieved much. As a teacher I feel guilty about that, sending a student off without a qualification.

Issue  
Allocating  
appropriate  
level of  
entry

I think everyone is more accepting now of the various ethnic cultures that move through our school.

IA.  
Values/  
Assumption

## APPENDIX IV 3-5 YEAR PLAN

Each student makes her individual contribution from her own cultural heritage to the life of the College community. Cultural exchange students and international fee-paying students are enrolled to best meet their individual needs and are an added richness by their contribution to the cultural diversity of the College.

Funds generated from the enrolment of international students are used to benefit both the individual international students and the College as a whole.

### Aims:

#### A To create opportunities to affirm cultural diversity.

- 1 To ensure pastoral care policies and procedures are sensitive to cultural needs of individual students.
  - 1.1 Each February, the Assistant Principal and the Director of International Students review existing policies and procedures and adjust them to meet the needs of International Students.
  - 1.2 The Director of International Students chairs a meeting for staff to address questions/issues related to the teaching and learning of international students.
  - 1.3 All school contact with parents/caregivers/guardians is initiated through the Director of International Students.
  - 1.4 A "Welcome" sign at the main entrance in several languages, i.e. Te Reo, English, Samoan, Chinese, Japanese, Korean, Arabic
- 2 To encourage international students to share their cultural heritage with the College community
  - 2.1 The Director of International Students sets dates for international assemblies each year. and maintain the International Students' Club.
  - 2.2 Mark appropriate international cultural and religious days and festivals through the College Newsletter, daily notices and assembly items
  - 2.3 The Director of International Students to arrange a display of cultural artefacts, symbols, dress, craft, etc in each of Term 2 and Term 3.
  - 2.4 Build a cupboard to display gifts and artefacts in new Administration area. Director of International students responsible for rotation of display.
- 3 To encourage participation of parents/caregivers/guardians in College activities, e.g International food stalls as part of PTA fundraising
  - 3.1 Director of International Students speaks with students prior to Report Interviews and explains the process.
  - 3.2 Invite parents/caregivers/guardians to meet with teachers at the usual times.
  - 3.3 Emphasis that interpreters, who may be older students/siblings, are welcome
  - 3.4 ESOL Teacher will also encourage students and parents/caregivers/guardians to come to interviews.

#### B To enrich the multi-cultural nature of the College by participation in cultural exchanges.

- 1 Ensure that all exchange students are welcomed to the College at Assembly
  - 1.1 Ensure that all exchange students have the opportunity to address students on their arrival and at their departure from the College.
- 2 Encourage senior German students and teachers to participate in the German exchange programme
  - 2.1 Welcome German exchange sisters into the College

- 3 Welcome short and long term exchange students (individuals and groups) from Japan.
  - 3.1 Facilitate groups of Villa Maria College students and Staff to visit Japan
  - 3.2 Maintain Sister School Relationship with Asahigawa and Ritsumei Kan Schools
- 4 Negotiate with McAuley High School, Auckland, to make the internal exchange an annual event
  - 4.1 Investigate the possibility of a Villa Maria College student going to McAuley High School.
- 5 Ensure that all departing exchange students are given a memento of their visit i.e VMC mug, magazine, etc.
  - 5.1 Invest in a range of suitable gifts to give to overseas visitors and exchange students.
- 6 Advertise and promote recognised exchange programmes such as AFS, IIU, Rotary
  - 6.1 Promote sister city relationships, i.e Kurashiki, Seattle

**C To maintain enrolment of twenty International Students each year**

- 1 Explore the various International Student recruiting organisations and plans of action by 31 July 1999.
- 2 Cultivate one or two particular agents who deliver students of required calibre
- 3 The Principal and/or Director of International Students visit one or more home countries each year and contact student families and local schools and parishes
- 4 Investigate the viability and benefits of participating in organised marketing tours, particularly the initial marketing trip
  - collaborate with St Thomas' College
- 5 Work with NZCEO to facilitate links with the Philippines and South America
- 6 Be open to new areas of opportunity, i.e Indian sub-continent
- 7 Judiciously use agents and pay commission to introduce suitable students.

**D To provide opportunities for academic success (in NZ exams)**

- 1 In Department orientation programme for at least two weeks
- 2 Ensure that the students have intensive ESOL to meet their study level needs especially on entry
- 3 Careful selection of subjects at various levels in order to meet student needs, ability and English level.
- 4 Ongoing support in mainstream classes using teacher-aides and alternative programmes devised by Department.
- 5 Establish a "home base" with supervision to allow focussed studies with English assistance at all times.

- 6 Progress monitored each half term – IEPs – interview with Level Dean/Vertical Group Teacher or International Director.
- 7 Ensure that staffing levels match demand of International students.

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