Chapter 6: Design and Gardening Projects

In Chapter 4 I drew out the legacy of educational policy and a long-term prioritisation of school buildings over school grounds. Throughout Chapter 5 using school biographies I have observed the current state of school grounds and the general poor level of care that is bestowed upon them. The Chapter brought to the fore the themes of architectural legacy, the low priority of school grounds, low levels of finance available to school grounds, the lack of expertise and poor levels of student participation with respect to the grounds and the resulting often homogenous, dull school landscapes that do not meet the needs of a diverse body of pupils.

Through analysing a report which describes a set of School 7’s preferences for its grounds, by carrying out some design work with pupils at Schools 4, 7 and 8, and via working with a gardening group at School 8, this Chapter will illustrate and assist the understanding of the processes involved in the design and maintenance of secondary school grounds (Aim 1). Working with Schools 4, 7 and 8 alerted me to the less tangible dimensions of power as discussed by Buchanan and Badham (1999), who highlight the importance and embedded, apparently insignificant procedures, practices and societal expectations. Pupil and teacher participation in all of the design processes gave me an insight into: i) the challenges of good design projects; ii) the efficacy of student voice; iii) the meaning and relevance of the school outdoors for children; iv) what pupils would like or not like to see in a school garden; v) the level of teacher support and level of expertise; and vi) and the extent of senior management input. This Chapter will reinforce the earlier finding that when it comes to schools, there is a society constructed importance of buildings in preference to the outside; making the premise that school buildings, rather than grounds, deserve to be developed. The notion of care as a process in developing school gardens will be illustrated through the closer examination of student participation, memory gardens, key individuals and the role of finance along with time. Although hard to separate, these themes will form the structure of the Chapter.

6.1 Student and Teacher Participation in design and practice; garden design and gardening

I begin by exploring the role of student and teacher participation and level of student voice whilst designing school grounds and gardening with a gardening club. Titman
(1994) and Billimore et al. (1999) have stated that it is essential to have pupils, teachers and the whole school in on a school grounds project from the beginning, from the earliest development of the ideas, project brief and design to maintaining the finished gardens. My evaluation of the student and teacher input starts with an example of a School 7 design consultation process conducted under the auspices of Cornwall Council before moving onto considering my experiences of designing with pupils at School 7, School 8 and school staff and pupils at School 4 and gardening at School 8.

Previous to my visits to School 7, Cornwall Council convened a day ‘Developing our School Grounds’ in November 2007. It consisted of four consultation workshops during one day which brought together staff and students to engage with designers, the Cornwall Council building project manager and a Cornwall Council Capital Strategy Team member (the summary report is shown in Appendix 7). The rationale was based around the benefits of developing the school grounds in conjunction with the building development planned for the School’s new main entrance and canteen (Cornwall Council Capital Strategy Team member, 2007). The Capital Strategy Team justified the event by reference to the importance of including ‘student voice’ as a participatory tool in the design and management of new elements of the school, including the grounds. The then Labour Government provided a ‘backdrop policy’ for promoting client/public engagement and the promotion of student voice slotted into this agenda (Cornwall Council Capital Strategy Team member, 2010). Workshop 1 was with the student council, workshop 2 the Year 8’s, workshop 3 the teaching staff and workshop 4 the senior leadership team. This consultation process corresponds to the initial design stages discussed in the Methods Chapter. There was definition and analysis of the site to be developed and general ideas were generated similar to Koberg and Bagnall’s (1981) steps outlined by VanDerZanden and Rodie (2008) and summarised as a Report; Appendix 7.34

The Report identified potential problems/negative features of the current grounds; site security, quality of outside features (especially with regard to wear and tear and vandalism), lack of seating provision throughout the school grounds, dull colouring, featureless grounds, poor planting in the grounds, the presence of seagulls, litter in abundance, bins were broken, no recycling facilities were present, flowers were absent

34 Appendix 8 has been altered from the original by the removal of names and direct identification features.
as was shelter from both the rain and sun. These views were identified by both staff and
the Year 8 pupils. The teachers also identified that there were too many places for
children to hide or where pupils could smoke, also the lack of a quiet staff outside area
away from pupils.

Pupils and teachers identified (Appendix 7) a need in the future school grounds to
improve security with gates, lighting and more fences. Shelter was needed primarily
from the rain when moving between school buildings and in at social times. Quiet
spaces and relaxing areas for talking as well as a greater variety of locations to have
seating were desired by pupils and teachers. As the School had a ‘sports’ specialism the
pupils felt sports facilities and opportunities could be improved by including a
skateboard park and obstacle course. Various art forms were considered to enhance the
outdoor environment including murals, mosaics, a graffiti wall, coloured walls,
sculptures, flowers, flags and outdoor theatre. The School would have liked to become
more sustainable with the inclusion of recycling facilities, vegetable growing, eco
gardens and animal husbandry. Teachers also would have liked an amphitheatre,
outdoor games, lots of colour, plants, a fish pond, a wind turbine, spaces such as a poly-
tunnel for growing vegetables and a farm area to produce food for the canteen (though
this finding contradicted by the views of the science staff when interviewed). The
negative view towards the improvement of the existing farm area is discussed in the
School Biography Chapter. A fish pond already exists at the front of the school but
seems to have been unnoticed by some of the staff.

The process that School 7 experienced initially seemed to be inclusive (following Hart’s
1992 and 1997 ladders of participation), well-structured with an efficient report
published at the end (Appendix 7). After the departure of the Cornwall Council
representative from the workshop a member of staff had asked the architect present about the
likelihood of getting any of the design elements that the pupils and staff had listed. The
architect responded that it was very unlikely (personal communication with Deputy
Head 10.10.2009). The resulting design was not negotiated with the School and the
construction was criticised for its poor quality and that it did not meet the brief
established by the School at the workshop (Figure 34). This left a cynical and bitter
staff attitude towards Cornwall Council, the architect and the construction company.
The design process that School 7 underwent appears afterwards to have been a ‘token’
of participation and a tick-box exercise similar to many examples of student voice
(Mason, 2007; Wyness, 2003).
I now move onto my own experience of designing with staff and pupils at School 8. It was the wish of the Religious Philosophy teacher (Jane)\textsuperscript{35} at School 8 to create a Peace Garden beside the productive space and pond that she and other humanities staff had constructed in the summer 2010. This was a good opportunity for me to assist the pupils in participating in an actual design process and observe their ideas of spatial development of a small aspect of their school grounds. Designing a Peace Garden would highlight any pupil gender or age differences in terms of design process and garden content.

\textbf{6.2 Analysis of the Design Process in School 8}

There was initial pupil input into the design of the Peace Garden was through a Wellness Day held at the School in mid-November 2010. The Wellness Day was an annual event where the whole School went off-timetable for the day and pupils selected three options for various activities on and off site. Jane and I had a few meetings beforehand where a lesson plan was generated (Appendix 9). I was to help Jane and a couple of the other humanities staff run the activities three times with different groups of pupils one after each other. I created three PowerPoint presentations and work sheets which introduced the three aspects of design for the pupils; the overall design, planting and detailing. The following is part of my diary entry for the day;

\begin{quote}

The first group after carrying out the design work went outside to do some weeding and work in the greenhouse. Some stayed inside (girls) to do more detailed designs. I went outside to see how the weeding of the raised vegetable beds was progressing.

It was a stunningly sunny day but quite crisp and cold. There was such a positive feedback from both staff and students. One lad who was traditionally regarded as being naughty was doing really well saying he loved this activity. The Geography teacher was finding the whole experience liberating and kept reiterating how great it was to be outside, with the children, doing something physical. She could not believe how well behaved some of the 'naughty' boys were (personal diary, 17.10.2010).

It was obvious by the second group that there was a distinct split; some students preferred being outside, whilst a notable group liked doing the design work indoors in a classroom. All who participated in this option really enjoyed themselves. Some boys who were due to go to another group in the afternoon asked to stay and continue their

\textsuperscript{35} Name changed for the thesis.
cleaning tasks in the glasshouse. We had some students who were meant to be with the chef sorting out the kitchen garden but the chef had not shown up and the students felt let down. However, they were absorbed into our option and continued gardening. The relationship between staff and pupils appeared to be more relaxed, there was little shouting and both worked alongside each other on weeding, digging and planting bulbs.

The Head of Year 9 considered the grounds to be an under-utilised resource and would have loved to be able to take pupils outside more. By lunchtime teachers were tired but thought of it as a healthy physical tiredness rather than the mental fatigue associated with a normal school day. The Geography teacher equated the ‘Wellness Day’ with being outside rather than indoors doing the design work. This then manifested itself into letting the pupils choose what they wanted to do. By letting the pupils garden it gave them the opportunity to be an agent of change along the notions of Sancar (2006), discussed earlier. Pupils worked alongside the teachers and both could see each other as equals, with adults directing the pupils, rather than there being an obvious operation of power and control of the pupils.

A selection of pupils’ design work is given as Figures 39 to 50 inclusive. They show what elements pupils would like to see in their School Peace Garden. Some pupils felt comfortable cutting out pictures and sticking them on the sheets, others liked drawing on the faded image (Figures 42, 43 and 44), drawing on a plan or just drawing a picture. No pupil chose words or a narrative for inclusion in the Peace Garden. A distinct entrance was given by one Year 8 boy and other boys had included topiary. The girls really turned to colour, flowers and fruits. A pond or fountain with fish was also popular. The CND International symbol was drawn a few times as some pupils had been covering the topic in RP and I had shown an image of a front garden with the symbol. It is a hard decision in the design process between showing inspirational images and influencing the designs people then produce. Participation in the design process produces a variety of garden elements that the designer can then dip into in order to create a garden that the pupils can feel that they have contributed to.
Figure 39 shows a pupil’s ideas for the Peace Garden which incorporate hedging as border to the already existent path, hedged-archways as entrances and grass surrounding a fountain.

Figure 40 shows an idea based upon a winding fence with gates for entrances around a fountain and grass area.
Figure 41 shows a girl’s idea which uses the CND International symbol created from seating and flower beds to give colour.

Figure 42 shows a series of patterns surrounding a fountain; no further detail is given as to how the patterns may be achieved.
Figure 43 shows a fenced in garden with an open arch, patterned ground incorporating the CND International symbol.

Figure 44 has paths, trees, a variety of flowers and a mural on the side of the Elliot hut.
Figure 45 shows a detailed plan that includes religious symbols around brick paths and grassed areas. The garden is fenced in from the path with gated access.

Figure 46 and 47 show the flowers cut and pasted on to the sheets by a couple of girls.
Figure 48 displays ponds with fish, paths and the CND International sign.

Figure 49 and 50 display choices of flowers for the garden including vegetables and poppies.

Figures 39 to 50 inclusive show the diversity of detail that pupils would have liked to incorporate into a design. Some considered the garden to be separate to the rest of the school grounds and wished it to be fenced in with a distinct entrance that may indicate a different type of behaviour was expected in the space. Other pupils wanted an open garden without barriers. Ponds and fountains were popular as were winding paths made
of various materials. All of these represent a display of care and a desire for a multi-sensory experience.

From the pupils’ drawings I then created two designs which tried to bring together elements of the pupils’ work and teacher expectations of the future space (Figures 51 and 52).

**Figure 51** shows an open design to the Peace Garden incorporating flowers and colour to the right adjacent to the Elliot hut.

**Figure 52** is an enclosed option where entrance to the garden is via a gate.
With both designs I created an outdoor classroom and social space (meeting the demands of staff and pupils) by extending an existing mound of soil around into a horseshoe shape and grassing the bank over to create seating. Shade was provided by the inclusion of small trees, for example maples or alder. Both designs included the use of sawn sections of tree trunks that could act as seating, stepping stones, were easily moveable and inexpensive. Flag poles invited flag creation by the pupils and potentially gave all-year colour. Bark chippings were to be used as a mulch ground covering, keeping weeds down, moisture in and effectively lowering maintenance costs. Flowering bulbs and shrubs were included around and adjacent to the Elliot hut to give colour in late winter.

The difference between the two designs was the use of fencing and gate to enclose or have an open garden as the pupils had offered in their designs. I presented the designs to the Gardening Club\(^{36}\) and to the humanities staff to seek views and thoughts. All liked both designs but the overwhelming preference was given to Figure 39’s design. A plan was drawn (Figure 53) and given to Jane along with a poster featuring the design to be used for fund-raising in order to try and pay for the garden (Figure 54). The poster was displayed to the School in the corridor outside the humanities classrooms.

As a designer I had to work carefully to include pupils’ ideas into a design brief and blend them into a design using a common language (Stine, 1997). It is worth giving feedback to the pupils explaining which elements are the pupils’ and which ideas could not be placed in the design and why.

6.3 Gardening Club at School 8

School 8 became the main focus of study and I worked on a weekly basis at the School with the ‘Gardening Club’ and Jane the RP teacher. My diary recorded activities and observations whilst at the School and has enabled the following critical discussion of the day-to-day happenings in a school which otherwise a researcher would not be privy to.

What follows is a critical analytical account of my experience trying to assist in a Gardening Club. Lekies and Sheavly (2007) state that children need to be fully engaged

\(^{36}\) Gardening Club was instigated by Jane and I as a way of achieving the Peace Garden. She also thought that it was important to offer the pupils the opportunity for gardening as a therapeutic good, a way of growing fruit and vegetables as well as gaining new skills (personal communication, 2010).
Figure 53 is the plan view of the selected design for the Peace Garden.

Figure 54 is the publicity poster created to publicise the new Peace Garden and the selling of books to raise money for its creation.
in the design, implementation and maintenance of garden projects. They, after working with younger children, identified research gaps in our understanding of youth and gardening, adult and youth relationships when gardening; and youth and peer relationships. My observations and analysis of a Gardening Club partially addresses this gap.

The Gardening Club set up by Jane and I was in competition with the Gardening Group run by the School Chef. Whereas Jane saw her group as open to anyone who was interested the Chef saw the pupils that he had as being “wayward kids” (personal communication with the Chef, 05.05.2011). They were the ones that other staff had problems with but who enjoyed themselves with him in the kitchen and outside. Work with the Chef as a key individual is discussed later.

At an initial lunchtime Gardening Club (12.01.2011) Jane and I discussed with the pupils how often we should meet. They wanted a weekly club and were keen for hands on gardening. However, the bulk of the first meeting was spent with considering ways in which the Club could raise money to build the Peace Garden and the design that the Garden would take and I think that the amount of time spent doing these tasks may have put some pupils off from returning, when the pupils preferred the practical gardening.

A later Club meeting we went through the design process for a competition for schools being run by a national company that made awnings and was going to show a large garden design at the Chelsea Flower Show 2011. It offered a competition to schools to design a garden for wildlife, a productive space or one that was sustainable. The winner would receive the plants used at the RHS Chelsea Flower Show 2011 Garden which they could then keep and use or maybe sell as a fund-raising project. The competition was discussed with the pupils, using the principles of Hart’s Ladder of Participation rung 6, and the topic of wildlife was chosen. I worked with the pupils, who then drew some ideas for me to work with as a final design (Figure 55).

The overall design incorporated the pupils’ idea for the inclusion of the Cornwall St Piran’s flag, stone walls, a coastal theme and the inclusion of water. Their work is included in the design of an A2 poster (Figure 55, top left-hand side). Therefore the resulting design was heavily influenced by the pupils’ ideas, concepts and wishes. The pupils loved seeing their work included in the poster as well as being blended into the final design itself (personal diary entry). Unfortunately the design did not win, which left the pupils and teachers disappointed. The design was displayed outside the
humanities classroom for the School to see but I never witnessed anyone stop and look at the display.

Figure 55 is the finished design that was printed as A2 and submitted by School 8 to the ‘Win a Chelsea Garden’ Competition.

The process of gardening and cultivation gives the sense of taking care of the garden and of oneself via an emotional attachment involving body and place, and creating memories (Bhatti et al., 2009). I was hoping that the opportunity for the pupils to practice some gardening would enhance their enjoyment of the process and they would continue it when I had left the School. Numbers of participating pupils were never that high (around 4 regulars), considering the numbers that had expressed an interest at an initial School meeting (approximately thirty Year 7 and 8 pupils). I started with 6 regular Year 7 attendees (2 girls and 4 boys) but this dwindled and there were even some days when no one showed up during the lunch time sessions towards the end of year. I spent the time with the pupils or on my own weeding, sowing and planting the School house-coloured-raised beds. I brought perennials (globe artichokes, herbs and soft fruits) from home to establish a structure to the raised beds and give an element of easy maintenance for when I left the School. As notes from my diary reveal, the pupils
found it hard to fit in attending the Club as well as getting lunch from the dining room, eating it and then gardening. The raised beds were adjacent to a Year 7 tutor base, where pupils hung around at lunchtime, and Gardening Club members were made to feel self-conscious. They were easily distracted by peer-banter. The favourite gardening activity was the harvesting of produce (Figure 56), whereas the weeding and seed sowing proved to be more onerous for the pupils.

The lack of attendance was due in part due to pupil ambivalence. The classic ‘not bothered’ attitude, illustrated by Catherine Tate in her comedy sketches, was in evidence. This echoed my findings during Activity 4, discussed later. It also echoes the ambivalence to participating in the redesigning of schools, as highlighted by Horton and Kraftl (2010) and supported by Walker and Shove’s (2007) work on policy, sustainability and ambivalence. Horton and Kraftl (2010) found that pupils had underlying feelings of scepticism and disappointment and made stinging critiques of the BSF process. They found that where pupil participation did occur it was on a small scale as teachers were concerned over the loss of teaching contact time. It seemed that the design process of a new school was not considered as being embedded within the curriculum but rather as an extra add on taking up time and resources. Walker and Shove (2007) argued that ambivalence was not a mask for a deeper politic, but an end product in itself. I think that when analysing the effectiveness of the Gardening Club the pupils just preferred to socialise and eat food. I gave them the opportunity to participate and intervening factors came into play such as observation by their peer group. If a gardening club ran after-School, when the majority of pupils had left the site, a different scenario may have occurred.

6.4 Fate of the Peace Garden

For this Peace Garden I think that I achieved a negotiated space created between pupils and designer. It is a garden that I hoped would be built using funds gathered by staff
working creatively with school budgets that are usually separate. Money was raised from a stall at the School summer fete, from funds already accrued in the science department and a donation made by the Quakers after Jane had requested a donation in a letter explaining about the Peace Garden. In total, when I finished working with the School, the fund was just short of £2000.

However, the Peace Garden was not constructed, as the new Business Manager appointed at School 8 had ear-marked the site, where the Garden was to be sited, to be the place for another Elliot hut, to partner the ones already there to the south of the space. The Business Manager did not offer and alternative site in the School Grounds, which resulted in tremendous disappointment from Jane and the pupils who had spent time designing the potential garden (personal communication with Jane). The priorities were different for the Business Manager and did not seem to be negotiated with the teaching staff. A different School agenda had been created with the Head communicating a new sense of School priorities to the Business Manager, regardless if this clashed with the building of the Peace Garden. I now move on to look at the process of designing memory gardens.

6.5 Memorial and Memory Gardens

One new aspect of research to come out from my working with schools was the presence of and desire for school memory and memorial gardens. Borgen and Guldahl (2011) consider what actually constitutes a memorial garden as opposed to any other garden space. They concluded that, apart from the stimulation of the senses and encouraging communication, it should bring out memories. Stenner et al (2012) argue that memorial gardens should be: i) ‘naturalistic’, allowing contemplation of ‘being in’ the garden; ii) nostalgic where the garden occupies us, it is for remembering feelings towards others; iii) a pragmatic space, where people can engage with the garden as a workable space and; iv) a mimetic space where people can take ownership and relate to the garden, a space for socialising. Irvine et al (1999) looked at the case-study of the Alex Wilson Community Garden where the whole garden was planted in memory of the individual and that the planting reflected the person’s character. Baring these notions in mind I worked with Year 7 pupils at School 7 and staff and pupils at School 4 on designs for a Memory Gardens. As previously discussed I maintained Hart’s (1992, 1997) principles of participation.
In exchange for working with the pupils, School 7 wanted me to design a Memory Garden incorporating two flowering cherry trees and a fish pond already sited at the front of the School. I had pre-visited the School to measure the space and draw up a scaled plan for the pupils to be able to design as well as take a set of eye-level images that the pupils could draw over. These were put together with space for detailing, textures, colours, any narratives, words or poems that the pupils may want to include. I designed a PowerPoint presentation that gave some inspirational images for a memory garden and included some images on the worksheet. A small selection of the pupils’ work is shown as Figures 57 to 60 inclusive. The designs shown all come from boys (as the majority of girls did not get very far due to excessive chatting and did not draw anything) and feature lots of topiary. I had not mentioned topiary to them yet they had discussed it and decided that it would be nice feature (echoing the boys designs for the Peace Garden at School 8). Apart from bonsai, topiary demonstrates the most small scale power and control over nature. It is time-consuming, requires high levels of expertise, is expensive and the complete opposite to the natural environments that Titman (1994) considered children wanted. I doubt that the boys thought of the practicalities and in reality thought that it was just some fun.

A fountain was suggested for the already existent pond as were rubber chip paths and a ‘memory bench’. I am not sure as to the significance of the watermelon plant in a memory garden; suspicions are that it was a joke. Some of these design features were impracticable due to their initial cost or management need (such as the topiary). This highlights the difficulty of creating a design that reflects pupils’ ideas, expectations, easy long-term management, which is durable and affordable.

The Year 7 pupils’ design work showed that they wanted beauty, trees, points-of-interest, detail and texture. There is a mismatch between pupils and staff’s ideas as to what would ideally constitute components of their school grounds and what the landscape architect and building company consider the school will have in reality.

I tried to bear in mind that the grounds maintenance man was illiterate at School 7, was not horticulturally trained, and the School was in deficit with no finance available for the garden to be made (personal communication with Deputy Head 10.10.2009). I created a design, incorporating a wood-based pergola structure running the length of the space with a selection of climbing plants (clematis, jasmines and roses) that could be easily trained and maintained but would give colour and scent. A wood-chip mulch
covered the ground and a series of benches was placed around the garden offering views to spots where, in the future, pupils’ sculptures might stand, and the already existent fish pond. I had planned on the fence being removed from around the pond and instead the planting of a living willow hedge to be planted around the garden with a gate placed at the entrance.

Figure 57 and 58 were drawn by two year 7 boys. They have included much topiary, a chipped-rubber path with flowers borders and benches.
Figures 55 and 60 are similar to the previous examples. The boys were sat together and pooled ideas.

I thought that the design included elements of the pupils’ ideas, could be created with the minimum of expertise and expense following Stenner et al’s (2012) and Borgen and Guldahl’s (2011) notions. It would be a reflective space that was dynamic for the
School in that elements could be added as and when someone wanted to be remembered and/or budget allowed. I visited the School in the spring of 2013 in a different context and the garden had not been created due to a lack of finance.

School 4 wanted to have a memorial/memory garden; a quiet space that celebrated achievements, where people could be remembered and a space that had the potential for academic use by teachers and their classes. John\textsuperscript{37} recognised that although the grounds were new there was nowhere quiet to sit, especially during inhospitable weather, resulting in pupils requesting access to classrooms (personal communication, John, 16.03.2010).

John said that there had been a memorial garden design that had been created by a professional landscape architect/ pupil’s parent. The design was not what the school wanted in terms of concept (a tropical beach effect with large palms) or within the small budget. John wanted Beth\textsuperscript{38} and me to put forward designs that he could take to the senior management team. A meeting took place 13.05.2010 in John’s teaching room where John had invited a few pupils (if they were interested) myself and Beth to discuss what we considered would constitute a memory garden. He was really keen to incorporate student voice and saw it as an essential way of ensuring any design would meet pupils’ needs. This effectively was rung 6 of Hart’s Ladder of Participation where there was teacher initiated pupil participation. The following is a selection of the discussion that took place;

\begin{quote}
Girl 1: “I have concerns over it being ruined by other children.”
John: “Hopefully it will not be mucked around with.”
\end{quote}

Girl 1 and Boy 1 have a debate about the lack of access at the front of the school.

\begin{quote}
John: “Hopefully the garden will be designed with a feeling of respect.”
Girl 1: “Will there be a tepee? Willow?”
John: “What would make it feel quiet?”
Boy 2: “Seating with climbing plants.”
Boy 1: “Area without teachers looking.”
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{37} John (pseudonym), was my liaison teacher who taught biology at School 4.

\textsuperscript{38} Beth (pseudonym) worked with pupils on the School farm, in a part-time capacity.
Boy 2: “Slightly wild area.”

Girl 1: “Bird table? [Discussion was held on the problems of seagulls.] Smells!”

Girl 2: “Colourful.”

Boy 2: “Water sounds.”

Boy 3: “Something picturesque; to see and make art.”

Discussion then followed as to whether pupils wanted to be as a group or on their own. The general consensus was that the pupils wanted the opportunity to have space to be on their own.

Girl 1: “A graffiti wall and a tree to tie message on to.”

Boy 1: “A garden that is changeable, adaptable.”

Girl 2: “Things to eat.”

Boy 3: “Something picturesque; to see and make art.”

John liked the idea of natural, informal stone and water being present as a stream. There was a discussion on the formal versus the informal. John also considered it valuable that the garden appeared to be separate from the School. Other discussion was based upon metaphorical representation of rivers and stones being akin to pupils’ time spent at the School. I talked about the possibility of stone cairns being created by pupils as a way-marker when they leave the School. These features act as a type of cultural marker similar to those used by immigrants in their home-gardens to represent their cultural heritage (Mazumdar and Mazumdar, 2012).

This brain-storming sequence illustrated the difficulties that a designer may encounter when trying to get a feel for design creation. In terms of children’s geographies research this is an insight into children’s ideas of a memory spaces. The separation of the garden from the School when the building literally shadows the perspective site was a hard task to achieve. Beth and I measured the site in order to draw up designs that would incorporate the group thoughts. My design was based upon the lyrics of the Waterboys’ 1985 hit ‘The Whole of the Moon’ (as the song’s sentiment was one of travelling or staying at home and the experiences that a person can accrue from doing either in a life-time) and involved crescent and whole moon shapes, engraved timber-lined winding paths with pupil quotes, crescent-shaped seating and the garden being named after the song. Coincidently, it was quite similar to Beth’s design (Figure 61). I had not put as much detail into the design and the School 4 senior management team
chose Beth’s design. Beth costed the garden out at around £25K, which presented the next problem of funding for the project and is discussed later.

Figure 61, Beth’s design for a memorial garden for School 4.

Beth’s design includes many of the elements that were discussed. It offered privacy, a discrete space and would provide a multi-sensory experience, yet a specific facility for pupils to record written messages was missing. There would be an opportunity to hang flags and/or messages from the mature overhanging oak tree. Again the garden was not created due to the original budget being spent and no new monies forthcoming and so
could not be evaluated. In schools there seems to be a close relationship between cost and teacher time when something new is being considered.

There is still a research opportunity to explore the nuances of a school community and their memory gardens both at primary and secondary school levels. As the Chapter has revealed these projects are dependent upon the motivation, energy and commitment of key individual and the thesis moves onto this focus.

6.6 Key Individuals

Through working closely in schools, this research has highlighted the role of the key individual who has a vision to offer something new and make a change from what has gone before (Levay, 2010). I will be discussing the role of John, the science teacher at School 4, who wanted to create a memory garden and embed horticulture as a main part of the School curriculum, and the Chef at School 8, with a mission to improve the quality of School food.

John, desperately wanted to develop the School grounds to include a memory garden as well as initiate the RHS Level 1 Award in Practical Horticulture which in turn would require the upgrading of outdoor facilities to enable the teaching of the qualification. Beth was already in place running a gardening club which ran with the Business Studies students. She cared for the productive area of the grounds alongside raising plants for growing on-site and for selling. Her time was paid for from a School grant awarded by Creative Partnerships; the focus being design and technology. This money was rapidly running out and both John and Beth were keen on the gaining of further funding to ensure the future development of the School grounds and the long-term sustainability of keeping Beth in her professional capacity. John was also aware that the current focus upon the productive space might be seen as a ‘white elephant’ by the Head of the School and other staff. Therefore, for the development of the school grounds to be seen as being positive for the whole school John emphasised the benefits of the grounds improvements to other staff and stressed how teachers would be able to use the outdoors as a resource. He used similar notions to Seyranian and Bligh’s (2008) ideas of successful presidential leadership when carrying forward social change.

The Chef at School 8 was improving the food in the canteen whilst also running a separate gardening club for pupils identified by the School as being problematic, winning national acclaim and trying to get the Food for Life Silver Award. I had heard
of the reputation of the School Chef whilst being at the School yet it was part way through the School year before I managed to make an appointment to meet the man who had radically turned around pupil lunch-time eating habits. Concurrent to establishing, from scratch, kitchen prepared and cooked food he also converted a dining-room-adjacent-courtyard to a productive space aided by pupils who were problematic to the School in terms of behaviour.

School 8’s Gardening Clubs were an opportunity for pupils and adults to interact in less academically formal surroundings. Chef did some produce-growing after School in the area adjacent to the dining room and at the glass house. I only witnessed a couple of pupils helping when I was at the School. Pupils seemed to enjoy Chef’s friendly banter judging by their responses to him when seen during lunchtimes. He very consciously worked at the relationship with pupils “you have to get on well with children; treat them with respect and dignity, as customers. Ask children what they think and what they want. Allow them to make decisions about what they eat. Take them seriously and act upon it. Have a laugh, get to know them and make a personal link” (advice Chef gave at a Cornwall based sustainability conference, 10th June 2011). He was talking about food as a whole at school yet the statements are a good indication of the ethos he was trying to deploy across all School activities. In return pupils gave the Chef the respect that was not seen with the pupil interaction with the lunch time supervisors. Chef spoke the same language as the pupils (Stine, 1997) and did not use the power of jargon as a means of control.

Bilimore et al (1999) discuss the teamwork needed to proceed with grounds development projects. I have shown that although there may be a key person (John at School 4 or the Chef at School 8) who has the idea for change, for the project to be successful that person needs the support of the school and the grounds have to be a whole school priority. When teachers tried to show initiative by developing an aspect of the School grounds, they were not supported by senior management or many fellow teachers, they became demoralised and in John’s and Jane’s (the RP teacher at School 8) cases both gave in after spending much time and effort. As Norris (2000) has shown there is a problem with unintended consequences when a key, charismatic individual leaves a school. John, left School 4 leaving Beth in a vulnerable employment position. Although still employed she is on a temporary part-time contract as part of the grounds maintenance team. The Chef at School 4 has made a reputation for himself due to his charisma with the pupils and radical menus in the School refectory. Theoretically it
would be easy to replace a chef at a school in terms of cooking skills and management of the kitchen yet his charisma is a more difficult to find others.

6.7 A Lack of Finance and time

An underpinning barrier to the development of school grounds that have been identified through the thesis and by Dyment (2005b) has been the lack of finance given to the construction and maintenance of school grounds, except where monies were voluntarily ring-fenced by Cornwall Council when School 4 was rebuilt. Bilimore *et al* (1999) consider that budgeted maintenance costs should decline over time if more of a school site is being cared for by pupils and parents, therefore freeing some maintenance money via savings. Fund-raising suggestions also come from the schools’ parent teacher associations and grant proposals. Closely related to finance is the lack of time teachers have had available to work on school grounds’ development projects (Dyment, 2005b). Schools 4 and 8 did not give time off in lieu to the teachers concerned or pay for cover when teachers have wanted to work on a garden development. This particularly came to the fore with John at School 4, whose case-study I now discuss below.

As I have already noted, John at School 4 wanted to construct the Memory Garden, keep Beth working developing the School farm and develop the RHS Level 1 Horticultural course. School 4 had no money to construct the memory garden and what little money was left from the Creative Partnerships grant was being used to cover Beth’s wages. Therefore, during a meeting, we discussed means of raising money via a National Lottery Heritage bid that would focus upon the rural skills development of pupils, parents, and the wider community. Some capital expenditure would be needed to expand upon the existing facilities and include the means for students to construct the memory garden as a practical element of their skills programme. Courses offered would over time be self-sustaining and become independent of Lottery funding. As a small team we held many meetings, carried out market research and submitted an initial expression of interest. The Heritage Lottery looked upon the initial application favourably. John then approached his line manager at the School for some freed up contact time in order to focus on the Lottery application for about £150K. He was turned down and told that he was free to pursue this in his own time. This resulted in a meeting between John, Beth and myself, where in the middle he said, ‘do you know what? I haven’t got the time to do this’. The lack of support from the School senior management team completely deflated John, all impetus was gone for the planned
proposal and it folded there and then. John was time-starved, was without senior management or designated administration support and the School was without finance. John left the School and took up a new teaching post, Head of Science, moving out of County. He hoped that he would then be able to utilise outdoor spaces in his new school.

This scenario illustrated that if the school grounds fall out of a school’s development priority then the school is unwilling to support staff either financially or with time. If there is a lack of senior-management support then this is also a barrier to grounds development. Schools that want to develop their grounds, like community garden projects, often depend upon voluntary parental support for expertise, time, gardening skills, grant applications and to save money (Dyment, 2005b; Glover, 2004).

Jane spent much of the time when I was at School 8 preoccupied with the safety aspect of the 3.5m diameter circular pond that they had dug adjacent to the would-be Peace Garden the year before. A boy had gone through the winter ice due to it being unprotected by a fence, signage or covering and parents had complained. I suggested to the School that a safety mesh could be fitted that sat just under the surface and would be strong enough for anyone to stand upon. It was priced out at about £1000 and the information passed on to the Premises Manager. He was in the throes of leaving and the solution to pond safety lingered around Jane. She was concerned that monies raised for the Peace Garden would go for the pond mesh as no one else could find a budget to cover it. This was evidence of the lack of finance for the school grounds, the lack of leadership with dealing with outdoor issues that may have arisen and the time spent by a teacher whose good will is being undermined by a tangential issue.

As a well-qualified garden designer and experienced gardener I had social capital, acting as a volunteer for School 8 and assisting in School 4’s draft Heritage Lottery bid (Glover, 2004). I was able to assist Jane by putting together funding proposals for grants offered by the Ernest Cook Trust and the British Dragonfly Society for the Peace Garden and pond respectively. I spent considerable time putting the grants together, which then had to be sent away on School-headed paper, so passed them on to Jane who passed the applications forward to the new School Business Manager for completion re School details. Jane informed me that the School Business Manager was keener on larger grant proposals for elsewhere in the School and did not send the applications away.
Although at face value Jane had support from the Head, Deputy Head and Head of Humanities, she was not given the time, training or budget to get the Peace Garden further than the pupil based designs I drew. This contrasted with the success of the Head’s trim trail and health centres that are discussed in the next Chapter. Differences in support for ideas emanating from the Head, teachers or pupils leads to distrust, scepticism and issues of political motivation along the lines discussed by Buchanan and Badham (1999).

Due to Jane’s personal circumstances, gardening club folded after I finished assisting. The Peace Garden site had been lined up for a new Elliot hut showing that any outside developments are really treated as being of a temporary transitory nature and that time and money may easily be wasted if school grounds use is thought of as being long-term.

6.8 Chapter Summary

Through using active participatory research in case-study Schools 4, 7 and 8, via the processes of design and gardening, I have highlighted the issues of working with secondary pupils and staff whilst trying to follow Hart’s (1992,1997) principles of the Ladder of Participation. There has been little published research within children’s geographies and design literature that explores the processes of designing and gardening with pupils in secondary school grounds. Some similarities to Horton and Krafft’s (2010) work on pupil ambivalence were noted and further research would be desirable on this theme.

By Schools 7 and 4 asking me to design memorial and memory gardens and seeing memorial gardens at Schools 2, 7 and 9 I have exposed the research gap on these types of school spaces. Working with Schools 4 and 8 indicated the importance of key individuals with new ideas, yet unless they work within a supportive framework the projects do not get very far from the drawing-board. School 7 has also made apparent the impact of not having a key individual concerned with the grounds development, the wasted grounds’ resources that were identified in the previous Chapter, and the Memory Garden not being completed.

The gardens designed did not get created at the end of the design processes nor was there an expansion of the curriculum to include a more practical horticultural option for pupils or the continuation of the gardening club at School 8. This was due to those school elements that Titman (1994) and Billimore (1999) said need to be overcome.
before any grounds improvement started; namely ensuring it was a whole school activity and future management would be viable by involving the wider school community. The overall message has been that the Schools are not giving the development of School grounds priority in terms of teacher time or finance and that the squeezing of School budgets by Governmental educational policy has implications across the school including the grounds.

The discussion moves from looking at the processes involved in the creation and maintenance of school grounds to how pupils use their school outdoor spaces.
Chapter 7: Spatialities of Pupils and the Design of Secondary School Grounds

This Chapter will explore the spatialities of secondary school pupils in terms of their out-of-school activities and their occurrence within the school grounds during the school day responding to Aims 1 and 2 discussed in the Introduction. My analysis is based on the findings from the Activity sheets pupils worked on in Schools 4, 7 and 8. These will be summarised, looking at how pupils spend their time out of school and the spaces utilised for out of school activities, what sort of outdoor spaces they consider to be ideal and what is liked/disliked about their school grounds. I will illustrate my arguments via a narrative from a School 8 lunchtime experience as well as lunch time observations from Schools 3, 4 and 7.

The Chapter is divided into the sub-headings of ‘pupils’ out-of-school outdoor spaces’ and ‘pupils in school grounds’, which is explored via ‘territoriality’, ‘discipline and surveillance’ and ‘ecological metaphor’. Several theoretical tools are used to construct an interpretive account. They bring to the fore different aspects of use, design and function of the grounds. Foucault’s notions of power and surveillance will be used to deconstruct the social inter-relations seen in secondary school especially between teachers and students in the school grounds. I also use the concept of ‘nudging’, which draws on the literature of libertarian paternalism (Jones et al, 2010) to show the subtle manipulation of pupils’ behaviour in the grounds. I will also be using Bronfenbrenner’s (1979) ideas of the meso-ecological scale to theorise competition, and ‘mutualism’ in the grounds as an alternative to the established theorisation of the ‘hidden curriculum’.

By using this tool box I can bring to the fore different critical aspects of use, design and function of the grounds within a spatial context.

I begin with a discussion of how pupils use the outdoors whilst not at school in their ‘free’ time. Although this thesis is exploring school grounds it is useful to be able to understand what young people like doing outside when not at school and what sort of 39

39 The Chicago School of Sociology used ecological principles as a foundation to ‘human ecology’ when looking to explain urban structures during the early to mid-twentieth century (University of Chicago, 2012). Here I am using the principles at a different scale and as a challenge mechanism to the traditional concept of the ‘hidden curriculum’.
spaces they may inhabit. This may then illustrate any similarities or differences that occur in pupil expectation whether in school grounds or a local park.

7.1 Pupils’ Out-of-School Spaces

Before focusing on the spatiality of pupils within a school grounds context I want to briefly look at the wider context of pupil spatiality by considering what pupils do out of school hours in their ‘free’ time. Activity 1 (Appendix 5) was designed primarily as an ice breaker between me and the pupils but it did also give an idea of what pupils liked doing out of school hours and whether these activities and types of spaces that they enjoy could be translated to school grounds. I had a total of 141 responses made up of 68 boys and 73 females, from years 7 to 10 inclusive from Schools 4, 7 and 8. All the pupils asked participated in a wide range of sports and social activities out of school including hanging around in open spaces and at friends’ houses. Many pupils did a variety of sports and physical pursuits, some of which would take place outside, including sailing, horse riding, surfing, cycling, running, football, fishing, wind-surfing, hockey and netball (the majority of which are organised by a third party enabling the participant to just join in).

Activity 2 starts to trace out differences between genders and age in their use of outside spaces and show how pupils’ expectations of school grounds are different to non-school open spaces. The tallying of the pupils’ responses to Q 1 - Activity 2 showed that one of the most popular places to spend time was the park with 50% of pupils choosing this option over hanging around in the town/village or staying at home. In a broad sense, school grounds have many similar characteristics to parks: they are large open-grassed spaces with a few trees and shrubs, and so the researcher may initially expect the pupils to have similar sentiments towards both parks and school grounds. Considering the subject position of the pupil through a Foucauldian approach that considers how disciplinary regimes are inflicted upon the body via the spaces a body may inhibit, may start to give an indication as to why school grounds have a different pupil expectation to similar park spaces.

These findings correspond to Matthews’ (1992) discussion around children’s favourite places to go after school and at weekends. Much of Matthew’s discussion was based around Moore’s much earlier 1986 research in England working with 9 to 12 year olds. He too found that the most popular place to spend time was formal/official open spaces (parks, playgrounds and sports facilities), followed by home/relatives/friends, then
streets with their associated spaces, the least popular being commercial centres and institutions. Although Moore’s children were of a slightly different age group, the trends of activity and place were similar. As mentioned above, parks could be considered very similar spaces to school grounds but they are free of rules that tend to be in place when at school. Schools limit when pupils have access to the playing fields during lunch time between arbitrary times of the year (for instance between Easter and October half-term) regardless of the condition of the weather or state of the playing fields. Parks often are quieter, have less litter and more seating in comparison to school grounds, making parks more pleasant places to dwell. School grounds also have that greater likelihood of being seen doing something which is considered by the school to be undesirable, whereas parks do not often have surveillance by adults with power. Also time is a tremendous constraint in schools with lunch time often reduced to 30 minutes in many of the Schools visited, putting pressure on pupils to eat quickly rather than enjoy quality social time, whereas pupils, if in a park, have the time to socialise whether with food or not. The focus for schools, by cutting lunchtime, is theoretically to reduce behavioural problems by giving just enough time to get and eat food. These notions of socialising in groups out of school are further supported by Q6 - Activity 2 which is discussed below.

Q 6 - Activity 2 found that when not at school 43% of all pupils felt safest out with a group of friends socialising. The trend was for girls more so than boys to become more confident about being out on their own as they got older where the boys became less confident. Only one year 7 boy (out of 29 year 7 responses) did not like going out either alone or with friends and felt uncomfortable outside the home. With regards to Q7 – Activity 2, Year 7 showed that 67% preferred outside spaces (gardens, parks, countryside) to have places to hide and be full of activities, whereas the trend diminished to 23% of year 10s. Within this type of environment boys also preferred to have places to hide and do activities more so than girls, 57% and 36% respectively. The option of ‘having trees, flowers, seats and looking gorgeous’ was popular with the girls at 43% especially as they progressed to year 10. However, the boys were less keen on this option reducing from 28% in year 7 to 0% in year 10. The attitude of ‘not being bothered’ as a response to question 7d crept in with age increases of both genders, with 3% response in year 7 to 30% in year 10.

Activity 2 starts to show that subtle differences in outdoor expectations occur with gender and age. Younger secondary pupils have similar demands to those in primary
schools where there is a desire for activities to be provided (Casey, 2007). The differences between gender and age of pupil expectation is also borne out in Activity 3 where pupils drew and put into words their favourite out-of-school outdoor space, discussed below.

Activity 3 helped me explore Aim 1 (to explore the politics underpinning the use and function of the outdoor landscapes of secondary schools) and involved the pupils drawing and/or writing about their ideal outdoor environment; one in which they would feel happiest. The most popular year 7 outdoor environment was the home garden with 43%; ‘my garden has a lot of stuff to do’, with the park, bedroom, town, beach, skate park and a bench by a road being listed. As the year groups went up to Year 10 the park (26%) and beach (19%) became the most popular along with ‘a garden’ but not necessarily their own at 17%; ‘big open space, field with nice short grass, things to do, surrounded by trees, somewhere to sit and shelter, clean and safe’ was also quoted by a year 10 pupil.

On the whole the children are choosing to be in contact with park-like areas as their preferential outdoor space, tying in again with Moore (1986). Not one pupil chose their school grounds as their favourite place to dwell. This suggests that there is something else about the school grounds beyond their visual appearance that makes the space unpopular. It is the rules and constraints that schools place upon the school spaces, whether real or perceived, that make them different to parks which tend to be rule free. School grounds have tremendous potential to be a space in which pupils enjoy dwelling with their friends, especially when considering it is the one space in which it is socially acceptable for young people to be seen and that it is a safe environment.

Some students spent an incredible amount of time and effort on Activity 3 and produced beautiful sketches and pieces of writing; a selection of which are shown as Figures 62 to 71. This technique is similar to Payne’s (2010) use of imagination and storytelling to discuss encounters with nature rather than Jones (2010) and Cloke and Jones (2010) who based children’s relationships with nature mostly on adult based memories and literature. Skår and Krogh (2009) note the trend of children to have more planned, adult-controlled and adult-observed time outside rather than spending time in disordered wild spaces. Figures 62 to 71 only show a preference rather than the only space that they were allowed to be in, or that they regularly experienced more disordered spaces but liked what they have shown more.
Figure 62 shows a girl’s images and text from year 7. It has her grandmother’s garden, the pond and her horse. She notes the colours, the flowers, that it is peaceful and has places to hide.
Figure 63 shows a year 7 boy’s response to Activity 3. He seems to have been particularly taken by the fun at Glastonbury Festival and the activities in his local park enjoyed with his friends and dogs.
Figures 64 and 65 are from year 9 pupils and both from girls. The former is quite descriptive, placing the house in its surrounding fields adding detail of flowers and vegetables. The second image is the only one drawn that had a romantic sense. There is the association of being happy anywhere with her partner but particularly loved the experience of the park being in the shade under a tree with ‘beautiful leaves’.
Figures 66 and 67 have a ‘tree’ focus with an element of running water. Solitude of the pupil enabling the ability to listen to the water and sounds of the insects is an important aspect of the space and one which is hard to achieve in school grounds.
Figure 68 shows an estuary landscape which again seems to offer quiet, a view, a beach and the opportunity to go fishing.

Figure 69 is a picture and description of the drawer’s grand-parents’ farm which offers the chance of getting away from everything. She enjoys walking in the fields and exploring woods without getting bored. She also enjoys sitting on the wall at the entrance to the farm and doing what she wants on her own.
Figure 70 shows a year 9 boy's favorite outdoor space as being woods with a river and rocks; again he finds it a peaceful place.

Figure 71 is of another year 9's view of a key outdoor space. This time it is a local beach, with a lake behind where he can watch the fish. To get to the lake he enjoys climbing over the rocks and looking at the rock pools.
Figures 62 to 71 give a sense of freedom that the beach has to offer as well as the freedom felt on the farm especially if they are on their own yet with a chance of being observed. Cloke and Jones (2010) showed that children like disordered spaces that offer opportunity and possibility away from surveillance. Looking at all of the pupils’ images, trees are a prominent feature and offer a variety of options for interaction (climbing, sheltering, sitting under) along with a place to sit and enjoy the space. Pupils have drawn and written about rocks, water, flowers, peace, tranquillity and somewhere to hide from view, concurring with Cloke and Jones’ (2010) view. The pupil’s example of sitting on the wall is a form of relabeling the space akin to Cloke and Jones (2010) metamorphosing a space. She has made it her own space by changing the function of the wall to a seat that offers her a vantage point, a view and solitude; hence disordering the original adult created form/purpose of the wall. The only picture (Figure 65) has the enjoyment of sharing the outdoors with another individual, sitting under a tree. There is also an element of familiarity to their favourite place, quite often being their own or a relatives’ garden, sometimes a local park or local beach giving a spectacle of nature (Jones, 2010). Man-made design elements such as traditional playgrounds were sometimes included (swings, and climbing frames), particularly by younger pupils, echoing Skår and Krogh (2009) work. This may be because when younger the children are dependent on adults taking them to the park unlike older children who have the freedom to reach places on their own. Activity 3 led the pupils into Activity 4 and gave an insight as to the sorts of landscapes the pupil prefer.

Activity 4 helped me consider Aims 1 and 3 (explore critically the local spatialities of childhood of secondary school age children) by using picture cards of different landscapes to see what the pupils related to either positively or negatively in a landscape. The pupils chose their favourites, least favourites and explained why they gave the response they did (the images are given in Appendix 5). Out of the 160 pupils (male and female) that did this exercise the overall favourite was image 2 of the sea, which is not probably that surprising when living in Cornwall. It is of course not a scene which could be used in grounds design unless it was part of a borrowed landscape if a school was situated within view of the sea. Not many reasons were given by the pupils for their choice of image but some words and phrases included ‘relaxing’, ‘bright and colourful’ and ‘I just love the sea’. The second most popular image, especially with the older Years 9 and 10, was number 11; the savannah. It was seen by pupils as being ‘open and quiet’, ‘because you could walk for ages and never find your way out’, ‘wild
Africa’, ‘there is lots of open space with trees and beautiful scenery’ and ‘I like this one because it is not busy and it has an amazing view’. The popularity of this image fits in well with Kaplan and Kaplan’s (1989) view of savannah as a place of refuge and prospect. As discussed in the Literature Review, savannah has those qualities which give a predisposition for people to do well in evolutionary terms. The closest visually similar environment that the pupils experienced to the savannah was the school playing field; especially where it was augmented by tree planting and a little height offered for a better view. Many urban parks often have a similar outlook. However, as discussed before, it is not just the visual quality of the school grounds that is of importance but the rules that operate in the space and lack of choice of space in which to dwell. Older pupils seem to prefer the savannah image corresponding to their territory being further from school buildings and often around the playing fields.

Image 3 was popular with younger pupils; the path disappearing into a densely vegetated garden. A pupil is quoted as saying “it looks like an interesting place to explore”. This tied in well with the younger pupils being seen by me whilst in schools to be more active, wanting to chase around, as observed at School 8 and discussed later. Some Year 7 boys particularly liked image 8; the sunflower (Appendix 5). No reasons were given but I suspect it may be the regular mathematical pattern displayed by the seeds as discussed by Moss who explored thematic and cogitative visual preferences (Moss, 2009). Alternatively a favourite with the Year 9 girls was image 7; the tulip. Again no reasons were offered but this corresponds to Moss’s notions that females prefer bright colours and flowers (Moss, 2009). This also ties in with School 7’s research on grounds design given in Appendix 7 and discussed earlier in this thesis, where pupils particularly wanted to see colourful plants.

The third most popular image was number 15; the woodland scene. It was described by some pupils as ‘calm picturesque’, ‘light and dark’, ‘I like this one because it’s peaceful and green’, ‘looks dark and cool’, ‘peaceful’, ‘calm’, ‘nice scenery’ and ‘it is natural and calm’. The favourite three images depict vegetation. The description of these images as ‘calm’ and ‘peaceful’ suggest that the pupils seem to recognise the restorative qualities of the landscapes depicted in the images as proposed by Kaplan and Kaplan (1989), and the desire to be close to green open spaces (Wilson (1984) and Louv (2009)). This is accentuated when the most disliked images are of urban areas and include many people. Images 12 and 10 (of urban areas) attracted comments such as ‘too noisy and too many people’, ‘concrete’, ‘no plants’, ‘dull monotone’ and ‘not
relaxing’. Images 5 and 9, which contained other children, also did not appeal. Therefore it could be surmised that these school children may struggle with their school buildings, paving and tarmac packed full of noisy people when what they find ideal is quiet, calm and nature in which to reside.

The more abstract image of the Eden Project boot coming out of the ground was not seen as being humorous but rather interpreted by the pupils as being ‘scary’ and associated with ‘mud and dirt’. Surprisingly the most disliked image by the girls more than the boys was image 4. It was an image of a single London Plane leaf lying in a puddle on some paving. Pupils held a quite different perception of it being ‘dead’, ‘wilted’ and ‘muddy with no green or blue’. Therefore, the children who did this activity seem to prefer a quiet, non-urban, tidy, clean, non-muddy, green with trees, flowers, semi-open aspect, a little mystery but with a vantage point (see but not be seen).  

The results of Activities 3 and 4 were a good prediction of what elements pupils wanted to include as part of Activity 5 (discussed next) and School 4’s pupils when they had free-reign with a camera around the School grounds taking images of the landscape aspects that they liked and disliked. Common themes of colour and trees being liked and grey buildings and dirt being disliked in Activities 3 and 4 resonate in Activity 5.

### 7.2 Pupils’ Views of Schools’ Grounds

This next section, in response to Aims 1 and 2, initially explores the pupils’ views of their schools’ grounds by looking at the results of Activity 5 and relating them to Activity 4 followed by the application of theories of territoriality, surveillance and discipline and the use of ‘coded mutualism’ as an ecology metaphor.

School 4 carried out Activity 5. Year 9 pupils used a camera to record areas of the school grounds that they liked or disliked during a science lesson. According to John, the liaison teacher (personal communication, 13.05.2010), both groups apparently loved the Activity and freedom of going around the school with a camera. They took similar images. This was also found by Schratz and Steiner-Löffler (1998) who working with children assessing the interior of a school discovered the enjoyment and self-empowerment pupils had when given the freedom to take images themselves. A

---

40 Images not discussed in the body of text drew few, if any pupil opinion.
montage of their 260 images is given below; first the aspects of the school grounds the pupils liked followed by a selection of their dislikes.

The first set of images depict areas of green, with aspects of trees (trunks and the detailed patterns of twigs), flowers and detailed textures shown by cobbles set in cement or granite crystal structures shown by the granite ball. The dirty old Mister Men toy has been found and has added some humour to the landscape. The sun was creating some patterns with light which the pupils have picked up as being interesting. The pupils’ images mirror Burgess et al’s (1988) findings, who used a range of qualitative techniques to assess the public value of green space in London as being of social and cultural importance, challenging planners’ view of parks as in need of management as historical legacy. Burgess et al (1988) showed that people wanted diverse environments and that their encounters with nature are an intrinsically pleasurable experience encompassing all of the senses. People expressed a desire for an aesthetically pleasing place to socialise and dwell, challenging elitist assumptions about aesthetics. The images are also dominated by aspects of plants and stones illustrating ‘biophilia’ (Wilson, 1984). Wilson discusses the human desire for the ideal environment in which to dwell and the lengths that landscape designers and gardeners will go to create spaces similar to a savannah, with genetic echoes of human origins. This links back to Activity 4, previously discussed, where the savannah was the favourite image.
Pupils have framed the images with specific details being centred in the image whilst wide framing has been used for general areas of trees or sections of grounds. The preferred areas of the grounds are spaces with colour, details in texture, minutia patterning, interesting vistas and plants. The trend for images of the land beyond the school grounds or the flower is also akin to Schratz and Steiner-Löffler’s (1998) secondary school findings as these images represent freedom from the Foucauldian (1976) school regimes by including scenes beyond the school boundaries. There are also links to the findings of the previous two Activities as well as the value that people place on an aesthetically pleasing landscape to enjoy. This is in contrast to the grounds’ images shown below which show the characteristics of the School grounds that the pupils disliked.

These images show dominance of the colour grey, patches of thin, eroded grass, failed plants, incomplete structures, and larger expanses of ground. The suggestion is that the School has not cared for these areas of the grounds and the pupils dislike obvious neglect. Schratz and Steiner-Löffler (1998) noted that secondary school pupils took images of disliked areas that represented school control and this can be seen in the above images when fences, bins and buildings have been included. This has implications for where pupils may want to spend time during break-times, tying in with my observations during a lunch-time at School 4 that showed that there were few pupils
in the newly designed and constructed wide brick and tarmac spaces shown in these images compared to the original small grassed spaces and astro-turf/MUGA.

These images linked in well with the pupils’ preference of images shown by Activity 4: both sets show the multi-sensory appeal of colour, texture and detail. Both Activities 4 and 5 begin to show a clear picture as to environmental elements that pupils like to see and those which they perceive as being ugly and not constitutive of a pleasant school landscape. These images have the potential to show pupils’ spatial preferences around the School; clean, pretty easy-on-the-eye pastoral environments as opposed to mud and dirt. If pupils have visually appealing or repelling environments in mind when finding a space to spend their break or lunch, it leads to tremendous competition for space within the school grounds, as observed when visiting. Extra pupil pressure could be placed upon popular sites, increasing ground erosion and wear and tear on furniture, then making it an undesirable spot for the future and a place to be avoided.

The relational interaction between pupils, and pupils and adults, leads into the next sections on territoriality and surveillance, discipline and power (Aims 1 and 2), where the meetings of pupils within the school landscape is scrutinised in more detail.

7.3 Territoriality in School Grounds

This section refers to Aim 1 and begins to ascertain the complex negotiations between pupils and the influence the school grounds may have over these negotiations during lunch-time. The meeting of different genders and ages of pupils will be considered ‘relationally’ using the theory of territoriality (Kelle, 2000; Kutnick et al, 2005; Sack, 1986; Thomson, 2005). To illustrate the pupils’ outdoor social relations I will refer to observations made at Schools 3, 4, 7 and 8 as well as images taken at School 8 when I made a lunchtime tour accompanied by ‘Jane’.

As the discussion of the School landscape will show, there tends to be both a gender and age segregation of pupils. In the Schools’ grounds, boys dominated in terms of overall numbers and occurred in larger groups than girls; as boys appeared more visible by their levels of
mobility and volatility within the School grounds. Often active in large numbers playing football/tennis, they appeared comfortable in the open environment where school facilities seemed to better match their needs. Currently, as pupils can choose to go outside (as compared to it being compulsory), the majority of girls select the indoor option no matter how beautiful a day. If girls were outside they positioned themselves as ‘observers’, surveying boys’ activities, especially in the older years. Years 7 and 8 may be seen in a mixed gender group, usually outside of their form playing and larking around.

The following observation has come from an audio recording I made when touring School 8 at a lunch time and notes the pupils playing and who is interacting or observing:

At the far north of the school site were two tarmac areas, then equipped for tennis. Here younger boys played tennis on the courts nearest the school main building and older years played on the furthest courts and those set out on the upper tier.

At the front of the school Year 8 pupils were hanging around a couple of benches. Many of the Year 8 boys were playing with an American football and a few girls were playing games reminiscent of primary school. This area of the school was potentially well observed by front of school staff, surveillance cameras as well as an adjoining nursery and anyone parking their car and walking up to the main entrance of the school. Bags marked out territory and litter was in evidence, showing that pupils had been present even if not utilising the space when we walked past.

In all the Schools visited, most boys were observed to be engaged in some sort of sport; typically soccer, American football or tennis, as shown in the previous images. This
supports Catling’s (2005) work, which explored primary school landscapes and how group games spatially dominated the large flat areas, pushing others to the periphery. My observations of school grounds in the secondary sector and their layout show there to be a natural segregation of boys playing team sports, divided further by year groups playing games among themselves. The use of bags and jumpers to mark territory is likened to Tucker and Matthew’s (2001) research discussed in the Literature Review; they suggest that girls avoid spaces marked by boys and are in conflict over space. However, when I have observed school grounds the girls that were seen on the periphery of football or tennis games seemed to be content observing the spectacle rather than being hit by a ball.

Mixed gender groups occurred within all years but tended to be of small numbers. Girls, when seen outside, were sometimes on their own, in twos or small associations – usually chatting or playing simple games, heads close together in private worlds. Overall, if not doing sport, most pupils effectively ‘hung-out’ during lunch and socialised.

I now consider the notions of surveillance and discipline to partially analyse the pupils’ territorialisation of the school grounds before the thesis explores surveillance and discipline per se. Territorialisation of the school grounds by year groups is caused in part by the potential decreasing levels of surveillance and discipline that occur with an increase in distance from the school buildings. Around school grounds there seems to be an inheritance or a ‘succession’ of space from one year group to the next as the environmental needs of the pupils’ changes with age. This culminating with the Year 11s being furthest away from the school buildings, inhabiting the ‘best’ spots during the summer, when pupils can choose to go anywhere on a school estate (as seen at School 8). I liken this process to ‘autochthonous succession’ where plants are generally considered to create a suitable environment for the next group of species to germinate and exist. At School 8 Jane has noted how the Year 10s have invaded the previous Year 11 space on the grass bank overlooking the football field. The space offered views of the immediate school landscape as well as distant views of the landscape beyond. CCTV or adult surveillance was not felt to be needed by the pupils as the cameras did not cover the area and staff rarely ventured that far during lunch. If pupils wanted to carry out illicit activities such as smoking then hidden spaces were sought with the least chance of observation, as shown over as pupils have been caught smoking in a clear
territory marked with graffiti. The territory has been marked giving a clear message as to the illicit activity may occur at this place (Tucker and Matthews, 2001).

Younger pupils stayed closer to their form rooms, and were keen to get to their room when the bell rang. They seemed to feel safer when they may be observed by camera or through window. Therefore, the different school grounds’ characteristics may control the extent of the year groups’ territories within the grounds in line with Thomson (2005) and Titman (1994).

Leyshon (2011) explored rural youth identities where it became apparent that walking around the village and surrounding countryside was used as a means of gaining knowledge of a space, as a means of self-empowerment and subverting adult control. It was found that the village youth chose friends based upon common interests rather than proximity of others. A parallel scene was noted with school life course changes which although not explored via a longitudinal study in this thesis, have been found to be in evidence where inherited territories change hands as pupils move through the school over time. Unlike young students, older pupils had had time to establish more nuanced friendship groups within years and would occupy space further afield. Year 7 were often in large form groups and acted quite boisterously with uneaten food sometimes being used as missiles. I have witnessed on numerous occasions at School 8 food being flung at pupils, seagulls and the pond. On one occasion, a lone Year 7 girl sitting on the ground, marginalised, between two raised vegetable beds that I was weeding, in the sun and protected from the wind just away from her fellow classmates, received verbal abuse and had the remains of a chocolate muffin thrown at her. I asked the girl if she often spent time on her own at lunchtime. She responded that she liked the spot because of its protection from the wind but was weary of a fellow form pupil who did not like her for some reason. Her individual territory was hard for her to defend, she appeared quite vulnerable; her peer group did not respect her desire for peace and quiet nor did it seem that the School was meeting her lunchtime needs. This is a similar scenario to Leyshon’s (2011) examples of young people who marginalised themselves as they did not feel that they fitted into village youth culture.
Social mixing between school year groups has been noted for not occurring, either playing football, tennis or socialising. This results in clear territoriality of the school grounds along Sack’s (1986) notions of territories as applied by Thomson (2005) to the primary school playground and by my observations in the case-study secondary schools. Sack saw that spatial segmentation was a source of power with ‘control’ being exercised both over the activities being carried out in the space as well over the people entering and leaving. Territory has been established in the school grounds based upon gender and upon age combined. Boys played football in their age groups, the younger ones being nearer the school buildings. Girls as well stayed in their year groups and again years 7 and 8 were adjacent very often to the form rooms or nearest door to reach their form room. Territories then become inherited, with moving up the school, confidence is matched by increased distance from the buildings and reduced surveillance and the girls are increasingly keen to observe the boys whilst they play sport. Brown (1987) and Altman and Chemers (1980) considered territoriality as being an instinctive or learned behaviour and what I have shown to be occurring on secondary school grounds may be an example of this process.

The discussion moves on to considering how the school uses surveillance, discipline and power in its control over pupils during their free time in the school day when in the school grounds (Aims 1 and 2).

7.4 Surveillance, Discipline and Power

It is very difficult to separate the ideas of surveillance, discipline and power out from each other or from their close links with territoriality when considering schools and their grounds in particular. Foucault’s notions of power, resistance and surveillance are discernible at various times when observing pupils during lunchtimes at Schools 3, 4, 7 and 8. The following list are some examples of differentiated emphasis of power in a school that have been noted: when a pupil is outside versus inside, also eating inside or outside, whether pupils have school dinners or packed lunches (Pike, 2008), boys
dominating the outside space by numbers and their activities, the lack of mixing between the age groups, the extent of direct adult supervision, the use of surveillance cameras, students leaving litter, graffiti, mild acts of vandalism and carrying out activities such as smoking, tree climbing, being loud, mucking around and talking.

The observations made of the case-study Schools during lunch have highlighted the pressures on the outdoor landscapes at lunchtime. The facilities cannot match the demands of anything up to 1800 students wanting to eat some food; whether packed lunch or school canteen meal. Yet the school grounds at lunchtime are the complete antithesis of the conforming interior environment that students experience during formal lessons. As Foucault noted schools have taken a monastic parallel, where interior confined spaces allow for high levels of surveillance and control, whereas when outside the pupils are automatically given more freedom as surveillance is more difficult to achieve (Marshall, 1996).

Blatchford and Baines (2006) found that teachers considered lunchtime to be a time for pupils to let off steam whereas pupils valued lunchtime as a time for eating and socialising and were concerned over the shortening of lunchtime by the school. The shrinkage of lunchtime by schools has been a response to the demands of an ‘expanding curricula’ but schools also use it to control bullying (personal communication, Deputy Head School 3, 22.02.2010). Therefore, the management of time has become a school’s easiest means of restraint upon the pupils at lunch rather than managing the space that they are allowed to dwell.

Changes to the guidance given to teachers about break time supervision has altered the way schools deal with the students. Many schools’ insistence that pupils go outside during break times, if the weather was not inclement has stopped and many schools allow pupils to stay indoors if desired, effectively producing a gender-differentiated interior/exterior school environment. The ‘School Teachers’ Pay and Conditions Document’ (STPCD) DfE (2011b) (that first came out in 2002) and the NUT (2011) guidance for ‘Teachers’ Working Time and Duties explain the demise of teacher surveillance of the school grounds during breaks and the problems that Blatchford and Baines (2006) identified when lunchtime supervisors took over the former teacher role.

Teachers are currently under contract to work a total of 1265 hours per year of directed time. This time includes registration/assembly, mid-session break, teaching time, ‘Planning, Preparation and Assessment’ (PPA) time, ‘In Service, Education and
Training’ (INSET) days, supervisory time (getting children to classrooms), parents’ meetings and open evenings, staff meetings, other duties (seeing individual pupils) and contingencies (NUT, 2011). When it comes to the midday break teachers are not required to undertake pupil supervision and must be allowed a reasonable break for lunch (one hour) and not be expected to attend meetings, undertake duties or remain on site. If a teacher undertakes midday supervision they are then entitled to a free school lunch.

NUT policy expects midday supervision to be carried out by midday supervisors (NUT, 2011:17). This policy began with debate back in the 1970s where America union leaders were encouraging teachers to stop doing unprofessional chores, which included playground duty (Colin, 2002). Colin (2002) noted that at the time teachers were concerned that other people brought into school to supervise the pupils during lunch would not bond with the pupils. Lunchtime supervisors are employed to cover the pupils because of teacher ‘directed hours’ having to be made up by teaching and other activities, lunchtime supervision and often teachers physically having their lunch separately from the pupils. Schools have then missed lunchtime as an educational opportunity.

By letting pupils stay in the school buildings they are more easily supervised than when outside, by way of incidental supervision by teachers who may be inside. Head teachers and senior staff are able to do lunchtime duty as their direct contact time would be less than an ordinary teacher. Jane (the RP teacher), at School 8, commented whilst accompanying me on a lunchtime tour, that she really disliked the experience of being outside during lunchtime, as she felt compelled to tell the pupils off for misbehaviour, flouting uniform regulations and smoking, as she was breaking her contract obligations as a teacher. She would not have experienced the ‘outside’ lunchtime for many years as outside supervision is not in her teacher duties. Her description of the pupils as ‘feral’ seemed to come as a surprise to other humanities staff.

Foucault (1982 in Faubion 1994:338) noted how ‘power relations are exercised, to an exceedingly important extent, through the production and exchange of signs’. It is the semiotics of the lunchtime school landscape that lead to the pattern of behaviour acted out by the students. The lack of an adult presence outside at lunchtime can give the pupils the impression of freedom and risk-taking if carrying out an activity such as smoking. Being allowed onto large open spaces suggests that pupils could be active,
run around and plays team sports, whereas the slopes would encourage sitting and observation. If tennis nets were up and football goals were left out, then tennis and football could be played. If the school has not provided enough seating, then a pupil has to have lunch standing or sitting on another surface. If a pupil has a packed lunch and no eating facilities are provided it may make the packed lunch a poor relation to the school dinner. Pike’s (2008) paper is useful for exploring the importance of Foucault as an interpretive tool for deconstructing power and governmentality in the primary school dining room. Lunchtime supervisors were noted for being openly critical of packed lunches and the space given over to eating them was far from being of an equal quality to the diners. Following this through to secondary schools observed, eating school diners inside is a disciplined, observed occasion whereas outside the pupils eating packed lunch are undisciplined and occasionally observed.

The following images and written extracts from an audio recording I made when touring School 8’s grounds during lunchtime accompanied by the RP teacher Jane. They illustrate how there are a lack of eating facilities for the pupils outside and how minor testing of School’s power and surveillance occur by some year 8 boys.

Outside there was a throng of pupils eating, dominantly standing up as the seating both inside and outside was inadequate in quantity for the potential
800 regular diners as well as the other 400 students with their packed lunches. Yellow bins began to rapidly fill, accruing with fast food like packaging. Litter was also being dropped where the pupils ate or deposited just short of a bin. Groups of boys were on the whole more active, mucking around whilst eating.

Girls, if seen with food, would try to find a space to sit on the ground to eat and talk or watch others. A new art installation at the front of the school doubled up as a seating area for Year 9 girls.’

At the end of an old stone hedgerow, 2 Year 8 boys jumped down from the arm of a middle aged oak tree and joined their mates clustered at the base; the group muttered, mumbled and moved away, self-policing their activity and managing to avoid being told off.

The meeting between lunchtime supervisory adults and pupils is ‘relational’ as opposed to ‘intergenerational’. My observations from numerous visits to schools reveal that most pupils have little if no respect for lunch-time supervisors as opposed to senior teachers, as Pike (2010) noted in primary schools. This shows that pupils understand that all adults do not have equal power over them. From a lunchtime supervisor at School 8 and a teaching assistant (TA) at School 4 I have gleaned several insights into their dislike being outside with pupils at lunchtime. The first account was with a lunchtime supervisor who was doing a post-lunch litter pickup for an hour 19th May 2011 School 8. I was weeding the raised vegetable beds when she arrived; “I used to be a pupil at this school when it opened as a new school. Education didn’t seem to do much for me.” I asked her if she had a lot of hassle as a lunchtime supervisor. “They frighten me!” She admitted as they (the pupils) give a lot of “lip”. For one instance, she reminded a boy that it was time to go in and his response was “does it look as if I give a fuck?” Her response was that she didn’t either but that it was her job to remind him. I asked her about reporting such behaviour, she replied that “the paperwork was too much and too off-putting to bother with”.

From all the time that I had spent at School 8 the five lunchtime supervisors employed always went around as two or more and were rarely seen outside. The pupils’ contempt was also felt by a TA/lunch-time supervisor at School 4, who on one occasion had tried to tackle a boy on a behavioural issue and had then been subjected to verbal abuse. What really annoyed her was then the respect the same boy gave a teacher when one was brought into resolve the situation.

These examples may indicate the lack of respect held by pupils towards non-teaching staff in some schools. The School 8 and School 4 lunchtime supervisors’ anecdotal
evidence of a lack of respect also supports Blatchford and Baines (2006) survey of break-times in schools where they concluded that lunchtime supervisors were on the whole few in number in proportion to pupil numbers, untrained and poorly paid considering the amount of ground they had to cover and the number of students they had to look after. I suspect that the supervisors do not like going outside as the chances of them being verbally abused by pupils is greatly increased as there were few teachers around compared to the indoors. CCTV coverage does not include audio recording and so there is a lack of evidence supporting supervisors if they want to complain.

Schools 4 and 7 were similar to School 8 in that only lunchtime supervisors were seen outside when I visited and carried out observations. In School 3 I was accompanied by the head of the lunchtime supervisors 23.07.2010 (named here as Judy). We came upon the Deputy Head twice, as well as two senior teachers, when we toured the different areas of the site (the School is divided into junior and senior sections with years 7 and 8 having one area, year 9 a separate area and years 10-13 having the rest). In reply to my question regarding smokers Judy replied “Mr. ... is normally out there and is quite vigilant, around the car park and bike sheds, the senior end has trees, which there is some problem”. When asked about the number of staff Judy said that “there were always two senior management and Mr. ..., who all have radio links”.

Judy seemed very comfortable with being outside among the pupils and had a rapport with some she came across; all seemed to have special educational needs. This was not surprising as this was the group of students on whom the lunchtime supervisors focus, making sure that vulnerable pupils were OK during lunch. Judy explained that the students who had difficulties mixing with the rest of the pupil body were encouraged to spend lunch either indoors if raining, playing games in a particular room or if a fine day outside, at the front of the school, effectively segregating them away from the others and creating a new territory. This space of the School (Figure 20, area 10) was the tree lined avenue and the most aesthetically pleasing garden of the whole School grounds. There was an adjacent lawn area to one side of the avenue but this had restricted pupil use due to staff being visible through the staff female toilet window that looked onto the grass. I did point out that I thought that it was a shame the pupils did not have access to the space and that it seemed a simple problem to overcome. Judy agreed about the space but was unsure of any remedy to the window situation. The School had taken the path of least resistance by banning pupils from the space, rather than installing blinds or curtains at the toilet window.
The spatial relationships between adults of all kinds and pupils in school, is complex. My observations of school lunchtimes have shown that teachers guard their privacy, almost hiding away in often cramped staffrooms at break times rather than going outside. Teachers have commented upon the lack of school grounds facilities for their lunchtime needs, away from pupils but have not been seen to establish a territory of their own; I have seen teachers sit in their cars or more unusually go for a walk.

The Years 8s and 9s that appear in the adjacent image at School 8, around at the front of the School, are in the area that has the greatest chance of surveillance; cameras, senior management team office windows, reception, the nursery and visitors to the School. Yet there was a high dependency on CCTV as an outdoor lunch supervision tool, positioning the adult as a discrete and discerning voyeur separated by distance (Taylor, 2010, 2011; Hope, 2009, 2010). Taylor (2011) points out that at the time of publishing 85% of UK secondary schools had CCTV as did all of my case-study schools. Therefore, CCTV is considered by schools the main tool for observing pupils around the school. The Schools I visited had CCTV images being viewed in the administration workroom or by the receptionist, neither of whom continually viewed the images. Imagery is only closely scrutinised if an incident has occurred as a type of evidence rather than to prevent bullying in practice. Rooney (2010) considered the surveillance of children in terms of trust, risk and responsibility. As a society, she argued, we trust children less, as well as not trusting those who may be around children and use surveillance techniques as a means of control rather than building trust by other means. Hope (2010:319) refers to a ‘surveillance curriculum’ as an overt type of curricula where a culture of observation is normalised and continually monitoring of the pupils is accepted. The pupils may then carry-out ‘playful acts of resistance’ against this surveillance (Hope, 2010:2319). Foucault (1977) saw surveillance as being a disciplinary mechanism, where all can be recorded and the location of the individual confirmed by the people in control. This is found in the process of school external surveillance although there tends not to be continual observation of surveillance cameras but instead recordings are replayed if an incident
occurs and a culprit is sought; highlighting the different issues of i) the discipline of pupils in the school and ii) keeping the pupils safe. Other schools have been completely fenced in with 3m high security fencing as with PFI School 5. The PFI representative when interviewed (19th March 2010) saw the fencing as the only way of making the school completely safe for its pupils. (Other secondary and primary schools in Cornwall have fenced in their sites due to continual vandalism problems (personal experience and communications 2007 at my daughter’s school and its neighbour). The pupils and parents at the school that I was most familiar considered the school to now look like a prison.)

Another example of the school exerting its suggestive power over pupils in the school grounds is the installation of a trim trail by School 8 which can be explained by Thaler and Sustein (2009) concept of libertarian paternalism and the use of nudges to encourage behaviour into a desired outcome. Schools may have a whole buffet of potential ‘nudges’ as choices during and after the school day. Obvious ones would include the joining in with after-school sports clubs which would improve physical ability and allowing access to playing fields during the summer term for recreational football during lunchtime. School 8 have been seen to provide further nudges by the integrated health centre set 75m away from the School building in the grounds, a fitness suite, and the growing of fruit and vegetables in productive spaces the main one being adjacent to the School dining room as discussed earlier.

The Head of School 8 gained a post-graduate qualification in the health promotion and wellbeing of secondary aged pupils at school. She has been keen to put into practice the research by the construction of health centre in the grounds where ‘it is more than just a desk’ (Head of School 8, pers. comm. 06.01.2011). The School 8 pupils helped to design the centre, where the open middle area is available for classes and information/guidance is available discretely. There are three possible entrances to the building enabling the opportunity that pupils can enter unseen. The Head saw the blurring of the interior with the exterior when entering/exiting from the building as the immediate school landscape was meant to provide a calming experience. By having this resource on the doorstep for pupils it has the potential to nudge their behaviour into being well and taking an active interest in their own wellbeing.

When the Head of School 8 was interviewed, the trim trail (Figures 72, 73 and 74) was out of bounds for health and safety reasons but was then officially opened later at the
School’s summer fete. Its existence proved to be quite controversial. Some staff considered there to have been little or no consultation as to the design of the obstacles and felt that they offered a very limited potential for use by the pupils, which goes against Colls and Evans (2008) notion of group responsibility. A PE teacher had told Jane that this was not the ideal set of equipment and that it was incidentally thousands of pounds more expensive than what he wanted. He went on to explain to Jane that the exercise potential of the trim trial was limited to use by older boys and girls would struggle with the demands on the upper body strength and younger pupils would not be able to reach (personal communication with Jane, 22.07.2011).

Figure 72 shows the starting obstacle of the trim trail at School 8. There is no overall plan of the trail, the next obstacle can’t be seen, and there is no indication as to the direction the participant should go to continue.

These concerns were reinforced by the views of the pupils when their opinions were sought by Jane via a brief response sheet. The majority of the responses showed that the pupils thought that the trim trail was a good idea and that it could in theory improve their fitness, but unless it was used during a PE lesson they would not have time to go around the trail during the school day and that its use would be after school. Some older pupils (Year 9) recognised that some of the younger, smaller ones would struggle, many had not heard of the trail or know where it was. The trail is open to use by the wider community but none of the pupils linked this to their safety and strangers being on the school site out of view of the school building or surveillance cameras.

This seems to be an example of a failed ‘nudge’ one that has not been fully planned for children but in reality is aimed for nudging the adjacent community (who can access the unfenced site at any time) into becoming fit and ultimately less obese.

From considering the workings of power, surveillance and discipline that the case-study Schools have been seen to use, the following moves on to an adaption of ecological
theories referring to succession and mutualism as a means of understanding some aspects of pupil spatiality in the school grounds.

Figures 73 and 74 show detailed signage by the first station of the trim trail at School 8. The Maths Dept. use the grounds for a maths quizzes sometimes during the School year. A box with the quiz lay just below the sign. I did not observe anyone collecting a sheet or walking around to solve the clues when the trail was officially opened at the School summer fete.

7.5 Using Ecological Principles

The ‘hidden curriculum’ was first defined by Philip Jackson (1968), a sociologist who coined the term to cover all messages that emanated from the school at one level or another that were not part of the subject-specific education given to the pupils. These include behavioural expectations about respect, anti-bullying, being punctual and looking after the school environment. Since, others such as Titman (1994) have referred to the ‘informal’ curriculum as one where social messages (such as those listed above, often coming from school ethos or mission statements, school policy documents and unexamined teaching done in tutorials and citizenship classes) are different to the ‘formal curriculum’ where there is a set subject curriculum and examinations. Titman (1994) refers to the ‘hidden curriculum’ as a series of coded messages that are not part of any curriculum, formal class, examination or conscious decision making process.
Instead it is the interpretation that pupils (or anyone else) can place on school environmental elements and/or aspects of school buildings.

The hidden curriculum is not so much ‘hidden’ as the school, on the whole, does not purposefully ‘hide’ messages as the term suggests. Although pupils do not seem to have a problem ‘reading’ their landscape (Titman, 1994), equally the school does not check with its pupils that they understand meanings presented in the school landscape. For example pupils are not normally consulted as to whether they would prefer tarmac to a bonded rubber surface on which to play; one being grey, hard and painful when fell upon whilst the other can be multi-coloured, bouncy and not painful in an accident. Neither is it a ‘curriculum’ where the time is planned, learning objectives identified, outcomes are tested, progression and continuity are plotted out by the school as with other curriculum subjects. Therefore, the ‘hidden curriculum’ does not work as a means of expressing that alternative view of the school landscape that Titman (1994) suggests. Instead I offer as an alternative concept: ‘coded mutualism’.

I have used the term ‘coded’ in preference to ‘hidden’ as the meanings given in the school landscape are open to interpretation and Titman’s (1994) work shows that pupils do have common interpretations of the school elements. For instance, broken benches, graffiti and litter are seen by pupils as a sign of school grounds neglect by the people in charge at the school.

Campbell and Reece (2002) discuss how the mutualism relationship in nature between two species can be beneficial for both even though they can function independently. I chose the image of the shark and the pilot fish (Figure 75) as in this instance the large shark dwarfs the pilot fish. I thought it appropriate example as the budget and the extent of care spent on school buildings dwarves that spent on school grounds. The interior and exterior can exist independently but, no matter what quality of education is delivered indoors, an ill-thought out, unplanned, neglected or underutilised outdoor space diminishes the educational experience for the pupil. Both can function independently up to a certain point without the full attention of designers, architects, utilisation by teachers or rigorous maintenance programme and as a result pupils receive a considered education when in the internal environment but not from the current levels of thought placed in the external environment. Often it is the building that receives all the attention from design, attention to detail, acknowledgement during Ofsted
inspections, with disproportionate sums of money spent on construction and maintenance compared to the school grounds.

Figure 75 shows the healthy fish species living together. The pilot fish eat the shark’s parasites and benefit from food leftovers whilst the shark offers the pilot fish protection (BBC, 2013).

Yet if the school grounds had a greater considered input by teachers and the school gardens were included as an everyday environment for learning across the National Curriculum subjects, Blatchford and Baines (2006) and Titman (1994) consider the social development and academic ability of the pupils would improve. The school would operate more effectively as a whole rather than considering its interior and exterior to be mutually exclusive.

To illustrate the theory of coded mutualism I have included below a case-study of images from School 8 where there has been a micro-scale formation of desire lines (eroded pathways) indicating pupils’ choices in where to walk between points, the difference between the internal and external pupil eating spaces and the redesign of the entrance to the School.

The official paved footpaths are either inadequate in width to allow pupils to move between destinations in the group size that they find ideal or the path is in the wrong position and pupils will not walk along the given route and take a direct short cut as seen in the examples below taken at School 8.
These trampled areas resulted in compressed ground that became water logged and muddy. Students then created new or wider pathways to avoid the mud as well as then walking mud into the school building causing cleaning problems. The bare patches of ground are also unsightly. These landscapes are similar to those seen in the images taken as part of Activity 5 at School 4 as part of the ‘not-liked’ aspects of the School grounds. At School 8 the pupils are reading the areas of the school grounds that are coded and adjusting their walking to avoid the mud but effectively make the situation worse. This may be compared to the monitoring of pupils’ use of corridors in School 8 where I have observed teachers trying to keep an orderly, efficient flow of pupils between lessons. The corridors themselves are clean, well-cared spaces covered in pupils’ work and statements of achievements; a sharp contrast to their external counterparts.

A similar story of coded mutualism is seen with the difference in quality of interior and exterior eating facilities. At School 8 and 3, some teachers let select pupils eat their lunch in the classrooms (pupils that were trusted not to be loud and messy) as the dining rooms are not large enough to cope with the numbers of pupils having school dinner let alone pupils eating a packed lunch. School 8’s problem was being remedied, in part, by a £250K make-over of the kitchen and adjacent dining room which was to be extended to increase seating by about 80. There was to be no corresponding external seating improvements. The current dining room could seat about 180 pupils and had windows looking out onto the courtyard where the chef had his vegetable growing area. Seating outside was at a premium and all surfaces were considered options, as shown by the images including walls, the sides of raised beds and the sculpture at the front of the
School. The coded messages that the School was expressing about how and where to eat and the form that experience may take are interpreted by the pupils. The School has a vested interest in maximising the up-take of school dinners by the pupils and so is trying to improve the internal dining arrangements, whereas the majority of pupils eating packed lunches or fast-food from the canteen are discriminated against being forced to eat outside in less than an ideal environment (without shelter from gulls, sun, wind or rain).

If both inside and outside had received refurbishment investment the pupils may have been given a balanced positive message about sitting, eating and socialising around food when inside and outside the School.

An example of where School 8 had given greater consideration to the exterior in relation to the interior was the development of the School’s main entrance. School 8 had a major problem with its external main entrance from the car park to the building (Figure 76). The original main path was inadequate and had gravelled areas added to try and accommodate the large numbers of pupils who entered and departed the school at either end of the school day. A new desire line was being created and the school was trying to prevent this by the section of crash barrier seen to the left of Figure 76.

The School’s use of gravel had failed as the gravel was being walked into the School. It also proved uncomfortable to walk on underfoot, as noted by the Head of the Capital Strategy Team (personal communication). The gravel was being eroded away leaving an ugly appearance of the plastic liner dividing gravel from the soil (foreground of Figure 76). For the School to try and gain control over the footpath use and get the pupils to conform to the footpath capacity, raised beds were constructed either side of

Figure 76 is the former entrance pathway to School 8, where it had been widened with gravel in an attempt to meet pupil demand.
the paved path, the gravel was removed and the grass extended to the edge of the path with strategically placed large boulders (Figure 77).

Although this development has superficially beautified the main entrance, the raised beds have compressed the groups of pupils trying to enter the doors. I have observed on many occasions pupils running and jumping across and over the raised beds trampling plants. The beds could have been given wider tops to enable pupils to sit and socialise but instead pupils have been observed perching and leaning against the beds. The front of School landscape has become an agent of the School assisting in the co-creation of a school identity; a similar notion to the interpretation of the role of the desert landscape in the film ‘Ice Cold in Alex’ (Leyshon and Brace, 2007). By giving the front of the School agency it becomes more than it is. There is now a message of care, design and maintenance, openness of the landscape suggests an openness inside the School to visitors.

The School’s development of the front-of-school was done as a promotion exercise and called attention to the difference in landscape quality between the front ‘public’ and rear ‘pupil’ views of the School, as discussed by Hendricks (2001). Perhaps if the Head of School 8 had used a garden designer and considered the pupils’ use of the front-of-school the design errors of the positioning of the raised beds in relation to the width of the path and its lack of seating provision could have been avoided.

The most common outside development that is the closest to a ‘coded mutualism’ and to meet an aspect of formal curricula is the use of a pond to illustrate fresh-water ecosystems in Year 7 Biology. Ponds were present as teaching tools at Schools 3, 4 and 8, at School 9 as an ornamental pond and had been installed at Schools 1 and 7 but were now neglected and empty of water. As discussed in the School Biographies, the ponds
were poorly maintained by science departments and were often found with litter. At School 8, Jane and I had spent 3 hours tidying the large, new pond, making it shallower and introducing various plants. The water had now cleared, it looked better tended and the amount of rubbish entering the pond had greatly reduced. Figure 78 shows Jane retrieving stone that had been previously thrown into the pond by pupils and organising stone around the edge. Plants had been taken from the well-established pond by the science department by gardening club pupils and placed into this pond to improve the water quality and appearance.

Figure 78 shows Jane, at School 8, improving the pond adjacent to the productive space and site for the Peace Garden.

Interviews with biology teachers at Schools 4 and 8 revealed that the Year 7 pupils had the practical experience of pond-dipping for insects and amphibians and described how they had benefited from this as opposed to just reading about ponds in a text-book.

A fenced-in copse at School 4 has also been used to good effect as a teaching tool and is maintained by the ecology group. This and the farm area at School 4 and ensured that the school grounds have in part been acknowledged as being an important opportunity for teaching, learning and giving a variety of pupil experience.

I have tried to show the application of the concept of a coded mutualism when considering the relationship between school buildings and grounds. Currently that relationship is very unbalanced but the potential is there for the grounds to be developed to the mutual benefit of a pupil’s whole education experience beyond the classroom. Analysing the relationship between school buildings and their landscape as coded mutualism offers both researchers in children’s geographies and landscape design a tool through which to critically evaluate a place as a whole rather than buildings and grounds as being mutually exclusive entities. The balance of care shown to be bestowed on
buildings and gardens/grounds is an indication of the priorities of the establishment and has the potential to be expanded to incorporate other institutions in academic research.

7.6 Chapter Summary

This Chapter has demonstrated and illustrated an understanding of what children like and dislike in terms of an outside environment and how this may manifest itself in terms of interpreting the school grounds from a pupil’s view. Active boys’ needs are met by either tarmac or large flat grassy surfaces where games of football can be played. Girls and quieter individuals seem to have the need for somewhere to sit, or explore (especially if younger), calm, quiet away from groups of people. These types of environments tend to be few and of a poor quality in school grounds. Colour, texture, flowers, plants, fruits, vegetables, trees and water all seem to feature as being important components for ‘ideal’ school gardens; in other words an aesthetically pleasing interesting place in which to dwell during lunch or break time. Pupils seem keen to be surrounded by green planted spaces with trees, shrubs and grass along the lines of Wilson’s (1984) ‘biophilia’ and Titman’s (1994) wild elements of a school grounds. There is also the human preference for a safe, natural environment in which to dwell and feel happy (Kaplan and Kaplan 2002). The pupils did not like the images in Activity 4 which could not be read easily or gave a mixed message (images 14 and 16). However, Kaplan and Kaplan (2002: 236) discovered that the adolescent group in particular had a greater tolerance for certain types of developed areas particularly if the image suggested activity and action. Therefore a greater diversity of images may have given different result to the one shown from Activity 4.

Pupils equipped with a camera clearly depicted what they liked and disliked around a school, echoing their image preferences of Activity 4. Their designs highlighted the huge differences between what young people would like in their school landscape and what they have in reality. However, when pupils are given the opportunity to garden and design with a real output, very few took up the opportunity, and ran with it being more conscious of it being ‘un-cool’ in their peers’ eyes.

Including students in an aspect of design begins to push upwards on Hart’s (1992, 1997) ‘Ladder of Participation’ discussed earlier. Consulting pupils in terms of design as an adult initiative corresponds to rung 6 of the ladder (Figure 6). A critique of Hart’s Ladder could be seen with the example of School 7 where consultation took place,
ticking the good participation practice box but in reality none of the views were taken on board with the design.

I have offered selected theories from Foucault, the notion of Thaler and Sunstein’s (2009) ‘nudge’ as a Paternal Libertarian perspective and how this does not take on board a group responsibility encouraging pupils into a healthy life-style, as suggested by Colls and Evans (2008). I have used the ecological principle of mutualism as defined by Campbell and Rees (2002), blended with the traditionally used term ‘hidden curriculum’ to give a more nuanced term ‘coded mutualism’ as a tool to exemplify the relationship between school buildings and their grounds. This has the potential for the wider academic community to critically evaluate the current quality of the relationship between buildings and grounds and offer future developments that would maximise the opportunities that a balanced level of care would give. The relational aspects of a heterogeneous pupil body in the school grounds have also been analysed. The grounds are territorialised by year groups and gender as suggested by Kutnick et al (2005) and Thomson (2005). It appears that the school lunchtime is not so much free time but a contrived experience that is succumbing to a series of Governmental nudges. Various levels of discrete and indiscrete supervision (mostly via controversial CCTV, Hope (2010) and Taylor (2010), results in a self-discerning pupil who selects their position within the school landscape during lunchtime to enable their chosen activity.

The next Chapter, the Conclusion, draws together empirical findings from the School Biographies, the Spatiality of the School Grounds and the Politics in operation. I respond, in summary, to the initial Aims stated in the Introduction, bringing together the big geographical ideas. Lastly I will give suggestions as to possible future research in the field of educational geographies in relation to school grounds.
Chapter 8: Conclusion

This thesis has examined the politics of design of Cornwall’s secondary school landscapes and the extent that care is bestowed upon them. In this thesis I have shown that school grounds are a product of the historical legacy of educational policy that has spanned over 100 years and that their design, maintenance and management continues to be impacted by national, regional and local policy and politics. In this conclusion I will be returning to the thesis aims. First, I will unpack the political influences that have dominated ideas about what constitutes the design, use of a school’s grounds and how the grounds have then been treated over time as mostly un-cared for spaces. Second, I will be summarising the ‘school biography’ tool as a means of critically evaluating school grounds. Third, I will show how I have used and contributed to the academic debates surrounding Foucault’s (1976, 1977 and Faubion, 1994) concepts of power and restrictive practices. I have also used the notion of territoriality to understand the nuances of pupils’ spatialities in school grounds, adding to the application of this theory. The conclusion will detail how this thesis has contributed to the academic debates in education, landscape design and children’s geographies before looking ahead to future research on the outdoor landscapes of secondary schools.

8.1 Review of the Aims and Research Questions

8.1.1 Aim 1 – To explore the politics underpinning the design, redesign, use and function of the outdoor landscapes of secondary schools.

This section is divided by scale; initially conclusions will be drawn from the macro-scale of political input followed by the meso-scale and lastly the micro-scale influences into the design, use and management of school grounds.

8.1.1.1 Macro scale - It is the macro governmental scale of educational policy that has had both a direct and a trickle down influence upon school landscapes, their design, use and maintenance and the attitudes of teachers and senior managers towards grounds. Throughout the raft of Educational Acts, policy documents and related texts that have emanated from governments since the early 1800s, school grounds are, paradoxically, seen as a positional good but hardly legislated for, what legislation exists is sparse compared to that related to the indoors. Governments have remained reticent about the quality of education pupils may expect when in the grounds beyond the ‘foundation’ years of education where Ofsted has guidelines and expectations.
During the latter stages of the Labour 1997-2010 Government the importance of education out-of-doors was acknowledged and a suggestion was made by the House of Commons Education and Skills Committee (2005) that school grounds should receive as much consideration as innovation displayed by new school buildings. Yet this was not being publicised or appearing as documentation that local authorities were referring to when designing a new school. Emphasis was being placed by Labour on the benefits of visiting off-school attractions as the major contributor to outside learning. This subtle shift from school to non-school experience had the benefits of: i) being a cheaper option, where cost is a lot less and transferred from school/Government to parents; ii) the school does not have to worry about cost and quality of maintenance and monitoring of the school site to the same extent; iii) external venues provide risk assessment, lesson plans and facilitators; iv) a visit elsewhere keeps the pupils interested as opposed to staying at school; and v) there is an economic multiplier effect with expenditure occurring to businesses beyond the school gates. The disadvantages of not developing the school grounds is that: i) schools provide poor environments in which to linger and instil negative messages via the ‘coded mutualism’ concept as to the value of the outdoors compared to the indoors; ii) school grounds are not good examples of sustainability; iii) pupils do not receive a regular, considered outdoor education rather than learning outside being a treat; and iv) school grounds remain unhealthy spaces where wellbeing is not related to the quality of redevelopment outdoor environment.

With a small budget offered, it was cheaper for the previous Labour Government to sponsor school visits off-site rather than school grounds to meet a variety of educational needs.

Under the BSF Programme only a modest encouragement was given to design/redesign grounds via a small array of Government sponsored texts. However, I have shown that more often than not the grounds were designed from an adult perspective, with a lack of variety to meet a heterogeneous pupil body, for easy management, with the scraps of funds remaining from the building construction and still with a lack of seating and shelter.

The change of Government in 2010 and the cancelling of the BSF Programme foreshortened the opportunity for an increased design emphasis of secondary school grounds. Despite the Coalition’s appetite for localism, the James Review did not propose that student voice should have an input into the Priority Schools Building Programme. Future English new school builds, centrally funded academies, will have a
central, generic school building design that will be tweaked locally to fit the site. Free schools are being allowed to be started by the Coalition Government that do not have grounds or outdoor sports facilities as such. Instead, these schools utilise already existing buildings and attain funding for building refurbishment and use sports facilities elsewhere. The lack of student voice will mean that the building contractors and architects will not be considering to any great extent the pupils’ and teachers’ perspectives on the outdoors when building new schools, unless the school’s senior management team have particular interest in that area of the school.

8.1.1.2 Meso-scale – As Campbell (2000) outlined there has been a continued decline in Local Authority input into schools since the 1987 general election campaign. Within the New Labour Government, local authorities in England had a reduced role limited to; i) articulating Government aims; ii) acting as a vehicle to improvement; iii) ensuring equality and; iv) managing tensions between parents and schools (Campbell, 2000; Laffin, 2009). I then witnessed this role diminish further with the Conservative-led Coalition Government and the promotion of centrally funded academy schools. Goodwin (2011) and Wright (2012) analyse the removal of the Local Authority level of education policy by the Coalition Government and its modelling of education on market forces (Berry, 2012). The short timescale for analysing the outcomes of reducing the Local Authority role in education has meant that there is no published literature to date.

Cornwall Council’s recent role has been one that subjectively acted upon and administered governmental policy to schools with an ever dwindling control over school building design and maintenance. School grounds are not normally a concern of local government as their development does not count as capital and also does not normally require building regulations or planning permission (unless a wall over 2m is planned within close proximity of another building).

In Cornwall the grounds only really became a focus in recent rebuild projects when new school buildings have been required and a decision had to be reached about siting the new-build whilst retaining some sports facilities. As discussed in the School Biographies Chapter, Cornwall Council possesses land-use maps of all state schools in the County. These have been constructed by the County Principal Land Surveyor and his team using set descriptors given by government and drawing the maps in Autocad. The maps have a huge potential to identify areas of educational and recreational use but are not shared with the schools or used by the Council in an educational way. When I
compared the maps to the sites, inaccuracies and short-comings of the government-based categories became clear as did the limited extent of the maps’ usefulness in identifying school grounds’ potential: i) the maps were purely quantitative in nature designed to assess whether schools provide a legal minimum such as sports pitches but gave no qualitative element; ii) some of the categories effectively overlapped such as pupils’ use of hard-surfaced sports areas for recreational use; iii) the maps were not able to be the instigation for change if deficits were seen to occur; iv) the maps were drawn remotely to the schools and little ground-truth data was obtained; v) the seasonality of grass spaces was not accounted for; vi) habitat spaces had a unique non-ecological meaning in that habitats in this sense were miscellaneous outdoor spaces that spaces did not fall into another category; vii) steep slopes, often grassland or shrub borders, where deemed unusable yet in reality were valuable habitat space (ecologically defined) and had the potential to be used as such by the school as an educational resource; and viii) the maps did not show the extent of pupil access. In all the school land-use maps reflected the lack of importance and significance to policy that school grounds have over school buildings and the inadequacy of standard government criteria; no change is likely to occur in this Government session.

To have plans for a new school accepted, by the then DCSF, guidance had to be followed that was set out in the ‘Schools for the Future’ series of Government/DCSF publications. Hints and suggestions were given in the books on the possibilities new school grounds design could offer but the main text focus was on building design and content. If there was progression to a new school build or refurbishment the application of the DQI and BREEAM quality measures of construction process, buildings and sustainability focused on buildings; the inclusion of the grounds in any school measure was incidental.

The Capital Strategy Team had no budget for school grounds and voluntarily ring-fenced a small budget when a new-build was planned; the priority was with building design and sustainability of the construction. Where Cornwall Council used to maintain school grounds by their in-house team, this became privatised and schools are now free to organise their own grounds maintenance contracts or employ an in-school groundsman.

Centrally funded academies and free schools will have less control from local authorities who will become merely strategic bodies rather than service providers
This research has shown that for the schools built post World War II Cornwall Council architects and builders played a key role. Therefore, the significance of the Local Authority based Education Building Officers Group (EBDOG) will be reduced as fewer schools will be using council services when considering new building developments.

8.1.1.3 Micro-scale - At the micro-level it is the school ethos that dictates the level of importance that schools place upon aspects of its education programme including the development and use of the school grounds (Griffiths et al, 2006). Current legal and bureaucratic structures, especially around decision making, budgets and maintenance, do not encourage or facilitate the planned or spontaneous use of grounds by school communities. With the decline in the school governance role of local authorities and the shift in responsibility of education provision to the school, the school governors are now involved with ensuring school policies are adhered to. To achieve this they need to have more business acumen and be aware of the market forces operating in a local setting (Wallace et al, 2011). Pressures to innovate and be accountable emanating from Central Government as ‘localism’ and ‘big society’ agendas has put extra pressure on school heads rather than the pressure being on the Local Authority (Wright, 2012). School grounds do not appear to warrant a school policy document as such and the grounds may be only referred to in a health and safety capacity which would cover sports equipment and fencing. A school may choose to have a sustainability focus which may then utilise the school grounds. However, this seems to be an uncommon school policy and even rarer for a school to develop their grounds sustainably. ‘Quick wins’ can be achieved through reducing energy costs or simply recycling paper.

In all but two Schools explored, grounds maintenance was contracted out to an external company whose employees typically just mowed the grass, strimmed and hedge-trimmed. A wider range of horticultural skills were not deployed. Conversely, on-site horticultural trained grounds-men used at Schools 2 and 9. Both these Schools had small elements of their grounds which may have been considered more garden like, with smaller, intimate spaces with restorative properties similar to those environments discussed by Ulrich et al (1991).

Chapter Six explored the micro-political processes that occurred when pupils and staff were involved with school design projects and gardening clubs. In new school builds there seems to be a gap between pupils’ desires for a school landscape and what is
created by professional designers even when pupils have been given the opportunity to contribute to the brief. Garden design is a great opportunity for pupil participation, achieving high rungs on Hart’s (1992, 1997) Ladder of Participation. Yet pupil and staff expectations were raised at School 7 by the participation exercise to be then dissipated when the grounds were built. Pupils and staff at Schools 4, 7 and 8 have been shown to want a safe, colourful environment, with trees, seating, shelter, small intimate spaces, pieces of art, flags and an outdoor theatre; these elements were not seen to occur at the Schools. I found it hard to design with a pupil voice, as their lack of experience as to what was achievable in reality was hard to match with a realistic design. Pupils’ hopes seemed to be easily raised and then there was disappointment when the final product did not meet their expectations. Therefore, when working with pupils the designer has to be honest about realistic design outcomes by giving contemporary exemplars (not exotic), demonstrating scale and showing that elements of pupil suggestions are included by labelling them as such. I have shown that to develop school grounds there has to be a whole school approach, where both pupils and staff have a vested interest incorporating aspects of the curriculum, across all subjects, so the school has a vested, routine interest in the grounds’ use concurring with Titman (1994), Stine (1997) and Billimore et al (1999). Flagship new builds (Schools 4 and 5) look wonderful yet their grounds did not get the same level of consideration as the grounds, which remain marginalised by the schools and their care and maintenance neglected.

Difficulties arose designing a space which had a memorial legacy. Schools have been shown to often have a memorial space that very often was in a poor state of repair. Information regarding these spaces was lacking and pupils very rarely understood the significance of a tree planted as the person it commemorated may have died years previously. It was the staff who held most value to these garden spaces as pupils moved on; staff were reluctant to see changes to memorial spaces. This often left the school head with careful negotiations if he or she wanted to develop the space. This topic of schools and memory also revealed a research gap that needs further exploration and build on the work of Borgen and Guldahl (2011) and Irvine et al (1999). School 4’s plans for a memorial garden and the failure of the Peace Garden project at School 8 highlight the Schools’ attitudes towards outdoor spaces compared to buildings. There was a message emanating from senior management (School 8) that any grounds developments should be treated with a sense of temporality that was not expected of buildings. It did not matter that a garden space may be nurtured over years it needed to
have the potential to be easily built upon or have an Elliot hut placed upon it. Therefore, any garden features needed to be moveable or potentially lost in the future which suggests that there is an inherent lack of attachment expected of any new garden space.

Given the opportunity both pupils and teachers enjoyed gardening and found it less stressful than being in the classroom. Pupils with behavioural issues were seen to be better behaved. However, during break times pupils were embarrassed to be seen gardening by their peers as it was thought to be uncool. The Royal Horticultural Society is trying to counteract this image with its ‘Growing in Schools’ campaign.

When Schools 3, 4, 5, 7 and 8 wanted to develop their grounds there were issues of time, resources, skills, apathy, cynicism, coordination, experience, money and a will. It was down to one or two teachers trying to struggle with the school system in order to get anything done. There was often a lack of real support from senior management teams (mostly by not allowing some time in lieu), a lack of support from other teachers, a lack of teacher training and no financial backing. The mismatch between the horticultural growing year and school holidays was also a problem. Schools often seemed reluctant to allow pupils with adult support on site to maintain fruit and vegetable gardens during vacations.

From research conclusions regarding the political I now show how successful the ‘school biographies’ method has been when used as a tool to evaluate the quality of secondary school grounds and Aim 2.

8.1.2 Aim 2 - Using an understanding of the politics of design in Cornwall’s secondary schools, and with greater awareness of the spatialities of childhood, to develop recommendations for the planning and evaluation of secondary school outdoor landscapes through the qualitative tool of school biographies.

I developed school biographies as a new, critical, contextual tool for evaluating and monitoring school landscapes, improving and expanding upon Erikse’s (1985) criteria, the schools’ DQI (2009) and BREEAM by highlighting the potential of currently underused or poorly used spaces for curriculum or social uses. The biographies showed that although every school is unique, a similar set of issues was coming to the fore: a lack of variety of space to meet a heterogeneous pupil body, a lack space given over to formal curriculum use by staff; little money was being/had been spent on school
grounds; grounds were usually of a poor, bland aesthetic quality (dominated by tarmac and grass) and were often poorly maintained. Car parking often dominated some sites at the front; site security was achieved by unattractive fencing; and the PFI system did not enable the adaption of the grounds to meet educational, social or recreational needs. Yet all the Schools had tremendous potential that went unfulfilled.

The current design and state of most school grounds in Cornwall is a result of historical legacy. The majority of Cornwall’s school are post-World War II constructs and these schools’ grounds are the product of the race to build cheap schools. The grounds are merely the spaces between architecturally designed buildings. Modularised 1950s and 1960s single-storey buildings needed light, ventilation and a means of emergency exit so necessitating outside spaces to be left between classrooms. No consideration was given by architects as to how these spaces were to be used by the school. Very often they had been included with ‘modernistic’ architectural features such as concrete lined ponds, paving and odd pieces of sculpture. Yet pupils did and do not usually have free access to these spaces unless they are a corridor to a wider outside facility. Sometimes benching has been added to give pupils with packed-lunches somewhere to sit but these spaces are usually featureless, prone to litter and seagull attack and not well maintained. Therefore, school grounds of the 1950s and 1960s time period were not designed to meet school need.

Some elements of school grounds were akin to vernacular, bland corridors and I likened them to Augé’s (2008) non-places. These spaces had pupils passing through just to get from A to B with no need for consideration by the user as to the character of the space. Where Augé had critically explored airport terminals and leisure facilities (including modern hotels) he had not considered schools as having these features. Like airport terminals having a universal design and functionality, I would argue that old schools, when they were built, with their interior and exterior corridors also have a similarity of function. The trend of the new BSF school designs to be based upon a central atrium akin to indoor shopping centre (Project Manager for School 4) or free schools to be located in office buildings (Carpenter, 2013) suggests that there is a commonality of usage of that space between school members, shoppers and office staff. As den Besten et al (2011) point out in their exploration of interior corridors, atria and halls in a couple of BSF case study schools, pupils and staff just want to be able to move smoothly around the school without concerns of congestion and disorderly activities. Den Besten et al’s (2011) research did not extend beyond the interior and I consider that Augé’s
(2008) non-places have still been designed into external as well as the internal corridors to enable easy circulation.

Eriksen’s (1985) comprehensive primary school landscape evaluation criteria when applied to secondary school grounds were not met. Few aspects of the grounds suggested that pupils or adult would want to linger and rest and the grounds offered little education value. The school grounds appeared to be spaces where pupils could be if they wanted to with little variety to accommodate for the various pupil needs unless the pupils were boys wanting to play football or maybe tennis in the summer.

Where professional designers had been used by the case study Schools there had been disappointment felt by the staff either towards initial designs or with the final product. This feeling was also expressed by the pupils by the lack of Year 9s in their bespoke space at School 3 and the clustering of pupils at School 4 on the sports facilities and not using the newly designed spaces.

I therefore recommend for future planning and evaluation of school landscapes that: i) use the school biographies technique to establish the current condition and potential of the school grounds; and ii) working with these findings, identify spaces that lend themselves to develop more for the subject curriculum, recreational use, eating or active space for instance and carefully consider the age, gender, physical ability and extent of use of the people using the site along the lines of Titman (1994), Bilimore et al (1999) and Stine (1997).

The conclusion now looks to the observed spatialities pupils showed when in their School grounds.

8.1.3 Aim 3 – To explore critically the local spatialities of childhood of secondary school age children (11-16).

This aspect of the thesis was discussed in Chapter Seven. I have shown that the current physicality of school grounds do not facilitate a wide variety of pupil recreation need or pedagogic use. Pupils surveyed at the case-study Cornish Schools took part in a whole raft of outdoor activities, typically sports, outside of school as well as formal/official outdoor spaces, such as parks, where they hung out with friends and were free of rules (unlike school grounds which at the face of it were similar in outlook but included school’s set of regulations). Not one pupil chose school grounds to be their favourite
outdoor space and the range of out-of-school activities was not replicated to occur in school grounds.

Amongst those I surveyed, young people’s confidence being outside of home grew with age and so it was older children who went to the park, whereas younger people would utilise the home garden. This pattern was observed to be replicated as territorialisation in school grounds. Year 7 and 8 pupils spent their break-times as near to their form rooms as possible when outside, often in their peer group, actively playing primary school type games. If they played football it was the nearest pitch to the school building that was used. Older pupils either did not want to be observed by the school or did not feel it necessary. They spent time further afield, out-of-view of surveillance, chatting, observing peers, carrying out illicit activities (typically smoking) and playing football. Territories were often marked by bags, blazers, coats and litter and were inherited once the Year 11’s left school. This was a life-course process which came with age and the desire for increased independence.

The spaces that children were favouring, when asked, were those that had trees, water, flowers (if girls) and rocks. By showing them various images of diverse outdoor images, I confirmed Kaplan and Kaplan’s (1989) notion that we hold a subliminal evolutionary attachment to landscapes akin to savannahs, offering refuge and prospect. It was areas of the school grounds that had the closest qualities of a savannah landscape that the older pupils preferred in summer, such as those at School 8 where there was a slope between two sets of sports pitches, where pupils sat under trees and observed boys playing football. The School grounds, I observed, are dominated by boys in terms of numbers and the space they occupy; as it is the boys of all ages who play football within their year groups and hence by the nature of the sport take up most room. This is in line with the findings of Thomson (2005) who looked at territoriality in primary school playgrounds. As Thomson (2005) noted, ‘others’ who want a quiet lunch time experience that is non-sport based are pushed out to the periphery. I observed pupils wandering aimlessly in ones and twos. On occasions, lone pupils appeared to be vulnerable and prone to abuse by their peers as they did not seem able to access spaces that were quiet and where they could be alone.

The application of Foucault’s (1976) notions of a pyramid of power and regulation is revealed in the case-study Schools and their grounds. Using Foucault as an analytical tool, Pike (2006) showed the discrimination between those pupils having school dinners
and those bringing in and eating packed lunches. I found a similar situation with the focus Schools, which also do not appear to have adequate seating facilities to cope at lunch and those with packed lunch are discriminated against, left to find space outside with very little seating, even in inclement weather.

Regulation and power seeps through to school grounds from the school system via, for instance, abstract dates when pupils are allowed or not allowed to utilise grass sports areas during break times. Surveillance, as Foucault identified, is a power tool and manifests through the covert use of CCTV, as secondary teachers no longer supervise pupils outside due to modern teaching contracts; unless they are senior management on duty. Lunchtime supervisors who are employed by schools are treated with disrespect by the pupils, usually walk around school in groups for support and avoid the school grounds. Although lunchtime supervisors are adults, there is a complex relational power position between them and pupils. Pupils recognise that the supervisors have little power and not well-supported by schools and therefore can be rude and abusive to them. Support-staff are deemed to be at the base of Foucault’s pyramid of power below pupils. The pupils have more power as they rise through the school, theoretically requiring less surveillance and developing larger territories. Younger pupils draw comfort through the CCTV that someone may be watching and that bullying is less likely to happen. This helps to part explain the close proximity of younger pupils to their form rooms. In reality CCTV footage is only observed after any incident has occurred and does not include audio recording of possible verbal abuse.

Different quality outdoor spaces attracted or repelled pupils. Aspects of school grounds that pupils appreciate are the ones that are clean, offer texture, detail and colour; tree branches and twigs against the sky and granite features. However, areas of the school grounds which showed wear and tear (very often where desire lines have been created), dead or poor quality plants and unfinished poorly maintained spaces were disliked and avoided. Therefore, the restorative potential of outdoor spaces identified by Louv (2009) and Ulrich et al (1991) is not achieved in the school grounds. Fitness is encouraged by schools deploying Thaler and Sunstein’s (2009) technique of ‘nudging’ where pupils are encouraged to use available sports facilities during break times and by the construction of features such as School 8’s trim trail (although in this instance ill-conceived) and leaving tennis nets erected on hard-sports surfaces. This encourages further territorialisation by gender, age and physical ability as it is only older, able-bodied male pupils who can access the facility.
I now turn to the academic contribution that this thesis has made to school grounds related research.

8.2 Academic Contribution to Research

I will summarise my contribution to ‘research’ based upon themes brought to the fore through the thesis under the divisions of landscape design practice, cultural/children’s geographies and outdoor education. By using the ‘school biographies’ as a new evaluative tool I have opened up school spaces to be understood and monitored in a geographical context. I have shown that secondary school grounds are a political manifestation from a succession of national policies and local delivery. By using school landscape design, as a process, I have experienced and highlighted the difficulties that the school community undergoes when trying to develop their grounds. This research has then bridged the void between garden design and cultural geography by understanding the complex processes that exist when designing in a secondary school setting.

8.2.1 Academic Contribution to Landscape Design Practice

I have shown that secondary school grounds are like their primary counterparts in that they are bland areas dominated by grass and asphalt, they are not homogenous spaces in terms of pupil use and that territorialisation exists between pupils of differing ages and genders (Thomson, 2005; Titman, 1994). For the worst quality utilitarian outdoor corridor type spaces I have made comparisons to Augé’s non-places as a means of interpreting the space and the movement of pupils along these areas of school grounds.

I have offered the notion of renaming school grounds as gardens and by doing this simple measure a whole semiotic of care is introduced which is at present missing from these outdoor school spaces at present. By designing a series of gardens around a school building the school body have the opportunity of an aesthetically pleasing space in which to dwell and recharge in a restorative environment, complimenting the views of Louv (2009) and Ulrich et al (1991). The heterogeneous gardens would then fall more sympathetically with Erikson’s (1985) qualitative criteria for evaluating schools’ outdoor spaces discussed in Chapter 3 and referred to in Chapter 5.

Using the work of den Besten, et al (2008, 2099, 2011), who explored pupil participation with the design process of BSF schools, I used an active participatory research technique that highlighted the difficulties of working with schools, teachers
and pupils in particular. Bearing in mind Hart’s Ladder of Participation, I demonstrated that pupils and teachers can be offered a voice through a design process along the lines of Transformative Design discussed in Chapter 2. The principles of the programme of Activities that I devised could be adjusted and used as a tool by other designers (or geographers) working in schools evaluating the history, use and maintenance of the grounds. There is then the potential for richer, more dynamic designs to be created, which reflect the results of the Activities rather than the current practice of designing based on a workshop with a select few members of a school as seen with Schools 1, 4 and 7.

I have shown that to meet the needs of a heterogeneous school body both in a formal and informal educational sense the design of school grounds has to be equally diverse in its variety of space offered to a school’s pupils and teachers along the lines of Titman’s work in the primary school sector. There is also room to plan school grounds to incorporate aspects of sustainability involving pupils with recycling, growing and researching planting to assist in micro-climatic control to reduce heating costs in winter and producing shade in summer similar to Sullivan’s (2002) work on gardens and micro-climatic control. I have shown that designers need to be careful not to mislead members of a school over scale and the content of mood-boards, both of which have been shown to be wanting when giving false impressions.

8.2.2 Academic Contribution to Cultural/Children’s Geographies

This thesis has contributed knowledge to geographical work on the secondary education sector. Research in the more popularly studied primary sector has shown that outdoor spaces are essential for young people to develop, play, socialise and experience a formal education.

This research initially touched on the concepts of intersectionality, intergenerationality and life-course but found them to be inappropriate and ‘wanting’ in the context of exploring secondary school grounds. Instead the more detailed ‘relational’ consideration of pupils meetings with other pupils and staff was more useful a tool, encompassing the theories of territoriality, libertarian paternalism and Foucault’s ideas on power. The nuanced relations that I have noted between school year groups is a new aspect of children’s geographies.
There is research on children’s spatialities, yet as Horton, Kraftl and Tucker (2008) identify, there has been a dearth of geographical research on education, schools and the secondary sector in particular. Kraftl (2013) has recently looked at the geographies of minority, alternative educational settings, such as Steiner schools, forest schools and home education. This still leaves the majority of the secondary pupil body and their school experience (190 days a year and up to seven years (at secondary level)) little explored. There are 3260 state-funded secondary schools in England (DfE, 2013a) and by focusing my research on some Cornish case-studies I have gained an insight into the main secondary school sector and have begun to plug the research gap.

In terms of the theoretical debate around Foucault’s (1976, 1977 and Faubion, 1994) notions of restrictive practices, power, governmentality and the control of the individual to conform to wants of society Foucault often referred to schools as being akin to prisons, hospitals and or places where masses of people need a common behaviour pattern. These restrictive practices Foucault refers to as occurring within the building especially the classroom when the pyramid of control is most evident. When passing a school during break-time it may seem to the casual observer that the children are free pursue what activity they want. I have shown that Foucault’s ideas are equally relevant to the school grounds as to the buildings, where surveillance is not so obvious as within buildings but is still present via CCTV, clipped shrubbery, windows and occasional patrolling supervisory adults. Restrictions are placed on the areal extent of play with seasonal variation when play can occur on grassed areas. The surfaces of tarmac and grass restrict the types of activity that can occur on them. The lack of seating in schools suggests that children are not allowed to sit. Schools provide facilities to play team sports, football and tennis but not to sit quietly and read a book. Older children test the boundaries of these restrictive practices and behavioural controls by moving away from buildings and the chance of surveillance during breaks; a pattern previously un-commented upon in Foucault’s literature.

This thesis has highlighted the lack of research focused on school memorial/memory gardens in terms of children’s geographies (as well as educational context and garden design). There is scope to transfer the work of Mazumdar and Mazumdar (2012) and the cultural meanings embedded by immigrant families in their gardens to analyse children’s associations with memorial spaces. Similarly, a closer examination of the peer influence of gardening as an activity by youth and school pupils is needed adding to my initial observations of gardening being an embarrassing thing to do and the
ambivalence that pupils can display to gardening akin to Horton and Kraftl’s (2010) research on school redesign and Walker and Shove’s (2007) ideas that ambivalence is an end product.

In a broad school sense I have identified the importance of key individuals as means of instigating and championing new ideas and trying to overcome indifference among staff (Howell and Higgins, 1990). Current research explores the role of key individuals in a variety of employment situations including the headships of schools, yet there appears to be a dearth of research looking at the role of key individuals who are not senior management and the implications when there is a lack of staff support.

8.2.3 Academic Contribution to Education based Research

The thesis looked at the educational potential of the school grounds under the educational theories of formal, informal and the hidden curricula. My research supports the findings of Dyment (2005) and Titman (1994) amongst others, which identifies the potential of school grounds as an educational tool, for teachers of all subjects to use school grounds as part of their everyday teaching. Yet as I have noted elsewhere in this thesis, this potential is not being realised in formal or informal secondary curriculum settings. My research supports the educational notions of Titman (1994, 1999) in that there are barriers present that seem to impede a member of school staff who may wish to develop and maintain the school grounds: lack of finance; lack of access to design expertise; lack of senior management support; teacher apathy and cynicism; pupil apathy and peer pressure about gardening being used; poor teacher-training for taking pupils into the grounds; and a lack of whole school willingness to participate in school grounds projects.

In contrast to the primary sector, the secondary sector has not considered the opportunities of social development that may take place in the school grounds to the same extent (DfEE, 1999). My research has confirmed this view: none of the Schools visited had an informal curriculum policy; instead piecemeal use of the school grounds was noted with ‘nudging’ being in evidence. Titman’s (1994) use of the term ‘hidden curriculum’ to describe the grounds’ semiotic messages I have found to be wanting, with semiotic messages not being hidden as the term suggests and no form of curriculum being produced by a school. For an alternative, I have then redefined the theory of hidden curriculum as a ‘coded mutualism’. By using the term ‘coded’ I extend its meaning to include the opportunity for semiotic interpretation by pupils and by
borrowing the ecological competitive principle of mutualism as a metaphorical tool, the strength of relationship between school buildings and its grounds can be evaluated. To establish the most efficient education potential that both buildings and grounds could offer both should be developed equally to meet the demands of both the formal and informal curricula.

It is very hard then to develop school grounds as places which exhibit a message of care and wellbeing when there is a legacy of power and control engrained into the school landscape. The Coalition Government Policy on free schools (such as St Michael’s in Camborne) does not insist that school grounds are needed. Not having school grounds saves money in terms of maintenance, behaviour and discipline are easier to administer with reduced outdoor space. This is semi-paradoxical when recent Government policy (both under Labour and the Conservative-led Coalition) has highlighted the educational benefits of an outdoor experience for all young people yet has given preference to off-site visits over developing school grounds, noted by the £30 million to support school visits and creation of visit coordinators in schools (House of Commons Education and Skills Committee 2005:4 and Ofsted, 2009). Prohibitive health and safety paperwork and the fear of litigation against teachers, identified by the Science and Technology Committee (2008) as barriers to working outside, would be drastically reduced if pupils carried out work within the grounds as opposed to taking them off site.

I will now take a closer look at the prospects of school grounds in the future and potential research.

8.3 The Future for School Grounds and Future Research

The future for school grounds, as a whole, is not a happy one. With schools under huge financial pressure to account for every pound and new school construction not having the grounds as a priority under the current Coalition Government, any grounds development rests on the inspiration of a head teacher or a teacher with senior management support in order to be successful. Meanwhile, the Coalition Government has relaxed the rules concerning the preservation of school playing fields and would look more favourably on any school request to sell land as a means of raising some finance.

The most recent mentions of school grounds under the Conservative-led Coalition come in the Priority Schools Building Programme, which suggests that the grounds are to be
left to be designed and created at a later date after the redevelopment of the buildings. This Governmental poor attitude to the school grounds is also reflected in the low status of gardening and horticulture in current and future curricula. Practical and vocational school subjects are now not considered towards school scoring when in league tables and David Cameron recently compared gardening to an unskilled activity like litter picking (Gray, 2012). Gardening has also been included, by the Government, as a work placement for the unemployed in the 2011 Welfare Reform Bill, likened to working in charity shops and street cleaning (Merrick, 2012). This has led to a heated response from the TV presenter Alan Titchmarsh who has pointed out the value to the UK economy of the horticultural sector (£9 billion employing circa 200,000 people). Titchmarsh also considers that the horticultural sector has ridden the recession well and will need a huge influx of young people to replace the ageing-sector workforce (Gray, 2012). Titchmarsh pointed out in his interview that “the current education policy is not helping raise awareness of horticultural careers to young people” (Gray, 2012: unpaginated). The Government attitude towards gardening, gardens and horticultural activities exemplifies a wider lack of understanding of the potential uses of school grounds for education, play and recreation which is further reflected in the combination of apathy and frustration shown by educators on the ground.

New ‘Free’ schools seem to be considered feasible without any outdoor space if nearby outdoor resources were available. Not enough detail has been released on the building criteria underpinning the Priority School Building Programme to foresee the design implications for the outside landscape. The James Review (2011) recommended a standardisation of school design with adjustments made for local environments; his recommendations have been taken on board. He has also asserted that there had been an overuse of ‘student voice’ in the BSF Programme, making the possibility that designs will be enforced rather than negotiated.

Research with regard to school grounds would have to be placed within a practical framework. For teachers to be persuaded of the benefits of using the grounds as a teaching tool, research would be needed that would embed the outdoors vertically and laterally across curriculum subjects. As school grounds still make-up the greatest percentage of school site area, I maintain that school grounds need to earn their keep through: i) use as a teaching resource; ii) provision of a range of recreational spaces; iii) as an aid school sustainability via strategic planting to create micro-climates and potentially provide food; and iv) develop new skills in students. The potential for the
school grounds to provide a canvas for pupils to develop practical horticultural skills is a strong one, despite the Coalition Government’s negative messages on to the validity of practical subjects not being equal in value to the academic. LANTRA (2011) has shown that as a country there will be a huge shortage of suitably qualified persons entering the horticultural and agricultural employment sectors in the future with serious implications for food security.

There is a potential for research into the European Landscape Convention to be applied and incorporate schools, their buildings and grounds. As suggested by Jones (2007), pupils past and present could be included in assessing the quality of school landscapes and consider schools as a heritage for the future. Comparative school grounds studies could be done with inner-city schools which suffer from severe spatial pressures.

Ideally the way forward for secondary school grounds would be that they are considered equal to school buildings. Devolved capital expenditure would include a ring-fenced percentage dedicated for school grounds design and maintenance. Teachers would receive training enabling them to develop the grounds to become an effective educational tool. The grounds would display an array of quality settings that matches a heterogeneous school body and that the grounds become gardens in name and meaning.
References


Compasito (2010) Participation, accessed 10.06.10


Cornwall Council (2008) Cornwall’s Children and Young People’s Plan 2008-2011, Cornwall’s Young People’s Partnership, accessed 09.01.12

Cornwall Council (2009a) ‘School 4’: BSF Pathfinder, Website accessed 07.09.10

Cornwall Council (2009b) Parish Populations, accessed 09.01.2012

Cornwall Council (2010a) Building Schools for the Future (BSF), accessed 20.04.10

Cornwall Council (2010b) Cornwall in Context,

Cornwall Council (2010c) Council Background, accessed 07.12.10


Cornwall County Council (2007) Planning (Development Control) Committee: Proposed replacement secondary school, accessed 07.09.10


DCSF (2008d) Planning a Sustainable School: Driving school improvement through sustainable development, accessed 03.12.12

DCSF (2009a) Background to Every Child Matters, accessed 19.11.09
http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/everychildmatters/about/background/background/.


Dennis, N. (2010) Kalahari Scene, Kgalagadi Transfrontier Park, arid grassland savannah with camel thorn trees, South Africa (65000), accessed 27.01.10


DfE (2011b) School Teachers’ Pay and Conditions, accessed 11.02.2013,

DfE (2012a) Academies Work, accessed 01.02.12,
http://www.education.gov.uk/schools/leadership/typesofschools/academies.

DfE (2012b) About Academies, accessed 01.02.12,
http://www.education.gov.uk/schools/leadership/typesofschools/academies/b0061252/about-academies.

DfE (2012c) School grounds, accessed 03.12.12
http://www.education.gov.uk/schools/adminandfinance/schoolscapital/buildingsanddesign/a0058252/school-grounds.

http://www.education.gov.uk/schools/leadership/typesofschools/freeschools/a00200099/find-free-school-site.

DfE (2012e) Length of School Day/Year, accessed 30.01.2013


305
http://www.education.gov.uk/schools/leadership/schoolethos/a0064979/collective-worship.


DfES (2006b) Indicators of Deprivation for use in School Funding: September Draft of Note for Authorities, accessed 22.04.10


Directgov (2010a) Types of School, Website accessed 20.04.10

Directgov (2010b) Applying for a school place: admissions criteria, accessed 26.11.10


http://www.montessori.org.uk/what_is_montessori.


Morrow, V. (2208) Ethical dilemmas in research with children and young people about their social environments, Children’s Geographies, 6(1):49-61.


OECD (2009) Our Mission, accessed 10.11.09
http://www.oecd.org/pages/0,3417,en_36734052_36734103_1_1_1_1_1,00.html.


Ofsted (2007b) Inspection Report - School 5, Ofsted, UK.

Ofsted (2008a) Inspection Report – School 1, Ofsted, UK.


Ofsted (2009c) Inspection Report – School 6, Ofsted, UK.


Ofsted (2011b) Inspection Report – School 9, Ofsted, UK.


http://www.bristol.ac.uk/poverty/Regional%20poverty_files/cornw96/Sec_1.pdf.


Tuan, Yi-Fu, (2001) *Space and Place: The Perspective of Experience*, University of Minnesota Press, Minneapolis.


Appendix 1: List of statutory policies and documents (The Key, 2012: unpaginated)

Statutory policies

- Charging and remissions policies
- Performance management policy
- School behaviour policy
- Sex education policy
- Special educational needs policy
- Teachers’ pay policy
- Data protection policy
- Health and safety policy
  - Risk assessments (linked with health and safety policy)

Other statutory documents:

- Admissions arrangements
- Accessibility plan
- Central record of recruitment and vetting checks
- Complaints procedure
- Freedom of information publication scheme
- Governor’s allowances (schemes for paying)
- Home-school agreements
- Instrument of government
- Minutes of, and papers considered at, meetings of the governing body and its committees
- Premises management
- Publication of equality information and objectives (Public sector equality duty)
- Register of business interests of head teachers and governors
- Register of pupils
- Staff discipline, conduct and grievance (procedures for addressing)

Policies and documents which are not listed by the DfE

The DfE explains that from September 2012, subject to parliamentary procedure, maintained schools will no longer be required to hold a:

- Curriculum policy
- Prospectus

The following policies and documents were listed as statutory in Annex 2 of A Guide to the Law for School Governors 2010, but are not included in the DfE’s updated list:

- Allegations of abuse against staff (policy on)

From September 2012 ... schools will no longer be required to hold a curriculum policy or prospectus

Attendance targets
• Child protection policy
• Collective worship (policy on)
• Community cohesion
• Curriculum policy
• Designated teachers
• Disability equality policy
• Early Years Foundation Stage
• Exclusion of pupils
• Gender equality policy
• Governors’ annual report to parents
• Prospectus
• Race equality policy
• Review of staffing structure document
• School companies
• Staff appraisal policy (linked to the performance management policy)
• Target setting for schools
Appendix 2: initial letter that was sent to twelve of Cornwall’s secondary schools inviting them to assist in my research.

set208@exeter.ac.uk

Dear .......................................,

I am a PhD student in the Department of Geography, University of Exeter (Tremough Campus; Penryn) undertaking research on the design and use of the outdoor landscapes of secondary schools in Cornwall, which has been approved with Mr Wood (head of Service West CSF). As part of an initial survey of Cornwall’s secondary schools I was hoping to make a brief visit to take images of the outside environment of the school, maybe in conjunction with the site manager (obviously no children would be included in the images).

I will ring you in the next few days to arrange a suitable time and date for a meeting with either yourself initially or a representative as well as the site manager.

I have a recent degree in Garden Design and have been teaching/lecturing in Geography since 1991 in the FE sector (with a PGCE in secondary geography). I am now combining these two aspects of garden design and education into my PhD research, sponsored by the Arts and Humanities Research Council and in part by Cornwall Council. I have had a CRB check done via Cornwall Council and a copy is enclosed.

Please contact Dr Wendy Mason or Barrie McIntosh at the contact details below if further confirmation of my credentials is required;

Dr Wendy Mason (Head of Capital Strategy Team) Barrie McIntosh (Professional Assistant)
wmason@cornwall.gov.uk bmcintosh@cornwall.gov.uk
Ground Floor, Oceans House 01872 32(6986)
Truro Business Park
Truro
TR4 9LD
01872 32(6978)

Yours faithfully

Mrs Sarah Thomson
Appendix 3: Is the DQI presentation with notes, used by the Cornwall Council Architect when he facilitated the DQI in Schools 1 and 4.
Appendix 4

Pupil Activity Sheets

Re the outdoor spaces that pupils enjoy

First Name ............................................. Surname ..........................................................

Year Group ............................................. Tutor Name ..........................................................

Activity 1

Ring the activities that you do in your spare time plus give more detail if relevant.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>emailing</th>
<th>reading</th>
<th>listening to music</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>texting</td>
<td>watch TV</td>
<td>computer games</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wii</td>
<td>artistic stuff</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Internet sports played- (list )

walking society groups e.g. scouts (list )

hobbies (list )

hanging out with friends (inside/outside) (where )

part-time work cycling

Other (list )
Activity 2

I would like you to tell be about your home, garden and outdoors through the following questions. Please ring the descriptions which best describes your home.

1) A Your home is situated in the centre of a town  
B Your home is situated on the outskirts of a town  
C Your home is situated in a village  
D Your home is isolated in the countryside

2) A Your home has 2 bedrooms and no garden  
B Your home has 2 bedrooms and a small garden (the size of a car)  
C Your home has 2 bedrooms and no garden  
D Your home has 3/4 bedrooms and a medium sized garden (the size of a classroom)  
E Your home has many bedrooms and a large garden  
F You live on a farm  
G You would describe your home as something different – Please describe

3) A You spend lots of time outside no matter the weather  
B You spend lots of time outside if the weather is good  
C You sometimes go outside  
D You rarely go outside and prefer doing indoor stuff

4) If you have a garden (if not go to Q5)  
A It is a fantastic place which you really enjoy  
B It is an OK place but not that great really  
C It is pretty desperate and you hate it

5) A You go to the park/beach and hang out there  
B You go to town/village and hang out  
C You don’t go out but you see friends at home indoors

6) A I feel safest when out with a group of friends  
B It doesn’t bother me being out on my own  
C I prefer being out on my own  
D I don’t like going out and feel uncomfortable outside

7) If I had an outdoor space to be in  
A It would be large, with trees, flowers, seats and look gorgeous  
B It would have places to hide and be full of activities  
C It would be basically covered in grass  
D Not bothered
Name:

**Activity 3**

Describe **and/or** draw/doodle your outdoor space that you feel happiest in when outside in your non-school time. This space maybe your garden at home or a friend’s, the local park, a bus stop, area of waste ground, under a tree by a road, a bench in town or on the beach. (Please include labels.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Drawing/doodle</th>
<th>Name of site:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Activity 4

From the 16 images on the cards look at them carefully and choose 3 favourites and 3 least favourite. On the space below write the card number and try to describe the reasons why those cards were chosen under each category. **Clearly highlight the overall favourite.**

Favourites:

Least Favourites:
Image 8 – unknown photographer (2010)
Image 11 – Dennis (2010)
Name:

Activity 5

Today you will be going around the outside of the school and taking images of areas that you like being in and those areas which you don’t like. Next week I will get the images on the screen and we will look at them together and discuss the pictures you have taken.
Activity 6

Role Play: Garden Designer with the brief to:

‘Design a School courtyard into a space that pupils of all ages can enjoy during their break and lunch times’. I’m hoping that the finished designs will be displayed!

1) Get yourselves into small groups of 4 or 5 and give your group a name – something fun like ‘The Garden Worms’.

2) Brain storm on some things that you would like in the garden with the aim of creating a ‘mood’ board. There are plenty of resources for you to look at and cut and paste onto the board. Think of - a theme (eg Mediterranean, Roman, Funky, Cornish, Modern), colours, textures, aromas, patterns, seating, shade, standing areas, shapes, plants......................

3) Try to sketch on the plans and or on some paper where things may go in the courtyard. Remember to label and write about what is going on in the courtyard.

4) The finished design may include a collage on the plan, a labelled plan, some drawings of what the garden may look like and some text describing the space and what you hope to achieve in the space. Give the Garden a TITLE/NAME! Don’t forget to put your names on the work!

Have fun and Good Luck!
Appendix 5: University of Exeter ethics approval application.

School of Geography, Archaeology and Earth Resources Ethics Committee

Application to the Ethics Committee

Descriptive Title of Project: This project explores the politics underpinning the design, construction, use and function of the outdoor landscapes of secondary schools in Cornwall, focusing on the active participation of children and young people in these processes. Here, “politics” refers to the complex negotiations between people (policy makers, budget holders, school leaders, pupils, teachers, governors, landscape architects and others), practicalities (policy priorities, funding structures, accountability, consultation, and management structures) and school strategic vision and ethos.

Investigator: Mrs Sarah E. Thomson  
Postgraduate Room  
School of Geography  
University of Exeter  
Penryn  
Cornwall  
TR10 9EZ

Supervisors: Assoc. Prof. Catherine Brace and Dr Michael Leyshon  
School of Geography  
University of Exeter  
Penryn  
Cornwall  
TR10 9EZ

Beginning: 05.10.09   Ending: 05.10.12

Research Questions:

- What are the current arrangements for designing and redesigning outdoor spaces in secondary schools?
- What are the current methods of consulting with school pupils and to what extent are their views built into the final plan?
- How are the use and function of secondary school outdoor landscapes understood by pupils and what actual use is made of these spaces by different groups of children?
- What is the usefulness of concepts of intergenerationality, intersectionality and life course to explaining this use, and in understanding the needs and expectations of school pupils (11-18) in respect of the outdoor landscapes of their schools?
- How can we develop methods of consultation that are participatory and finely attuned to the different needs of different groups, cleaved by age, gender, sexuality, ability, ethnic origin?
- To what extent are the selected schools incorporating their outside landscapes into the overall ethos of the school and what is that school landscape ethos?
- How do current tools of landscape design evaluation help us when examining the outdoor landscapes of secondary schools?
- How do the many constituents of the school community (pupils, teachers, governors, head teachers, school managers and parents) regard the cultural, educational and environmental value of their outdoor landscapes?
- How do the organizations involved in the planning, design and management of schools (Ofsted, Cornwall County Council, planners, landscape designers) see their role in the design of the outdoor landscapes?
- What recommendations and guidance could be given to secondary schools as a way forward in planning and evaluating their outdoor landscapes?

Method:
In this study, the participation of young people between the ages of 11-18 is required. Discussion with school heads will identify the extent of contact allowed with the pupils. A legal requirement for 'transparency' and 'informed consent' in the collection of data will be met. For the young people under the age of 18, informed consent will be sought from both the individuals themselves and their parents, via completion of a consent form, distributed via schools. Signed consent forms will be kept by the University of Exeter as a written record of evidence of consent to participate. Participants will be assured of anonymity and given the right to withdraw from the study at any time. All participants will be given the opportunity to review and recall personal data, and provision will be made to distribute full and summary reports on the research findings to participants. All participants will be made aware that translation, language support and disability support services are available at all points in the research process.

Participants will be recruited upon advice from the head who will wish to consider the constraints of the teaching schedule as well as the suitability of individual pupils to participate in the research. Ideally both male and female pupils from across the age range of the secondary school will form a group for discussion and school landscape evaluation. Participatory research through a class-based practical design exercise is also envisaged and so the number of participants will vary with class size. Approximately 6 schools will be researched in detail, involving about 50 pupils per school in discussion and class-based exercises. In each school, the activities of the entire population of pupils are likely to be remotely observed during break-time and permission for this will be given by the school head.

There are no physical or psychological risks involved for the participants.

Personal data will be retained in locked facilities or in password protected electronic files on institutional premises. The participants will be anonymised in the write-up and sensitive data will not be described in detail or will not be used at all.

Debriefing will take place with pupils and teachers through a summary of what has been discussed at the end of the pupil research sessions in the schools.

**Ethical Considerations:**

The researcher is due to partake in the University of Exeter Graduate School 0904B: Ethical issues in Social Science Research and Data Protection Act, April 2010, which address ethical issues of sensitivity and confidentiality in research.

Consideration needs to be given with all aspects of interaction with children. The researcher is PGCE qualified and is well experienced working with a broad range of children of different ages and abilities. The researcher has undertaken training under the ‘Every Child Matters’ agenda, whilst a parent governor and with previous employers. A CRB check has been successfully completed.

The subject matter is not of a sensitive nature, yet the exercises may inspire pupils to want an improved outdoor environment which may become apparent through student voice at school council meetings.

**Signatures:**

Sarah Thomson – Investigator

Assoc. Prof. Catherine Brace

**Date:**

347
Appendix 6: Consent letter sent out to pupils in order to get parental approval for taking part in the research.

Consent Form – for both pupils and parents/guardians to sign

Research Project Title: Exploring Cornwall’s School Grounds

Purpose of Study: The purpose of this study is to explore the ways in which you as a school pupil use and view the school’s outdoor spaces during the school day.

Activities: These will a series of pupil based practicals (brief questionnaire, role play, written work and drawing) which may include in-depth discussion groups with the researcher. The sessions will be mainly classroom based with some brief work in the school grounds. Sessions will be recorded using a digital sound recorder and notes will be made.

Access to digital recordings will be limited to the researcher and the project supervisors. The recordings will be listened to and transcribed by the researcher. All identifying information will be deleted from questionnaires and recordings. Furthermore, the recordings will be used solely for this piece of research in accordance with ethical standards of confidentiality that govern research activity. The digital sound recordings will be destroyed within two years of completion of the study.

Potential Risks and Ethical Considerations: The only possible risk is the minor discomfort felt answering a questionnaire or discussing work in a class situation.

Benefits: Participation in the study could result in the pupils thinking more carefully about and getting involved with the development of the school’s outside environment. The pupils will also have a ‘real’ design experience.

Confidentiality: The information which is gathered (and possibly published) will be anonymised. All results will be identified by an identification code, not by the participant’s name. Material produced will be securely stored.

(Any pupil based personal disclosures will be passed on to a staff member as confidentiality of this nature cannot be promised.)

Withdrawal/Premature Completion: Pupils’ participation in this research is voluntary and they may discontinue at any time without prejudice.

If you or your child has any questions about this research, please ask before you sign the consent form.

Consent: I give my informed consent to take part (NAME): ________________________

Signature ................................................................

I give my informed consent for my child (NAME): ________________________ to participate in this study of the school grounds. I have read and understand the consent form. Upon signing below, I will receive a copy of the consent form from the researcher.

Name ..................................................

Signature ............................................. Date .............................................

Thank you ........................................... Sarah Thomson (University of Exeter researcher)

Developing our School Grounds

Consultation Workshops 5th November 2007
Contents

Rationale & Methodology

School Grounds:

Photographic Overview

Student Workshops:

Identified CONSTRAINTS of School Grounds

Student Workshops:

Identified OPPORTUNITIES for School Grounds

Staff Workshops:

Identified CONSTRAINTS of School Grounds

Student Workshops:

Identified OPPORTUNITIES for School Grounds
Rationale & Methodology

Developing school grounds

There are many benefits to developing school grounds:

- to provide a stimulating environment;
- to create a rich teaching resource;
- to encourage biodiversity;
- to provide an opportunity for the whole school to work together;
- to encourage activities and play which stimulate movement and exercise;
- to reduce aggressive behaviour and bullying; and
- to improve the appearance of the school.

Secondary schools present quite distinct opportunities and challenges for school grounds development. In comparison with primary schools, for example, secondary schools are larger, more complex organisations, with more varied demands in terms of students’ needs and curricular demands.

The student voice & the learning environment

In general, the development of interest in listening and responding to the student voice has been well documented and it is clear that the growth of this movement has made an impact on educational practice both within the UK and internationally. Interest in the effect of the school environment on students’ learning has also come to the foreground in recent years and research has now established that the physical environment can play an important role. Studies have demonstrated that the school environment has an important bearing on the effectiveness of teaching and learning and on students' attitudes and responses to school. In the UK, policy-makers have become aware of the importance of school environment and the government has recently established a £2.2 billion initiative, Building Schools for the Future, with the objective of renewing or rebuilding every secondary school in England within the next 15 years.

In particular, there is a considerable body of recent research programmes which seek to develop and demonstrate the value of a new approach to the education and motivation of young people in secondary schools through their full and meaningful participation in the design and management of their own school grounds environment. More specifically, the programmes seek to generate innovative approaches and research-based evidence on improving secondary school grounds in ways that engage and empower young people. This is shaped by two key research questions:

- How can secondary schools engage their students in school grounds improvement?
What are the impacts of school grounds projects on students and schools?

These two strands of research - on student voice and on the learning environment - have recently converged, giving rise to a wide range of studies exploring students' perspectives on the learning environment and new initiatives for involving students in improving school buildings and facilities. In the UK, these developments have occurred against a backdrop of government policy promoting user (or client) engagement in public arenas such as health, planning and social services which has also served to promote student participation in the school environment.

This work has demonstrated the wide range of possible settings (break/lunchtime, lessons and assemblies) and methods (visual displays, video, walkabouts, questionnaires, school visits, ICT-based approaches) for student consultation. It has also identified a number of more general lessons relating to student engagement, including the importance of:

- using varied methods;
- using appropriate methods;
- ensuring pace in the process;
- clarity about the purpose and importance of consultation;
- treating students with respect;
- managing the role and influence of external parties; and
- building connections between consultation and implementation.

User (or client) engagement at ................. Community School

Based on this body of research, the initial approach to improving the school grounds taken at ................. Community School was as follows:

On 5th November 2007, as part of the development and delivery of the re-development masterplan, a consultation event consisting of four workshops was arranged with representatives of the school community:

- Workshop 1 – Student Council
- Workshop 2 – Year 8
- Workshop 3 – Teaching Staff
- Workshop 4 – Senior Leadership Team

The aim of the workshops was to:

- help develop understanding of how the overall masterplan is being developed and delivered;
- engage key users/clients - students, school staff, senior leadership team, governors and local residents with the re-development programme; and
- provide users/clients with an opportunity to discuss how they want their school grounds to look and priorities for investment.
As a good starting point, a baseline survey of the grounds was undertaken to identify issues such as:

- areas of sun/shade;
- areas which are exposed/sheltered;
- wet/dry areas;
- areas which are out of sight; and
- accident or conflict “hot spots”.

Each group were then asked to consider three simple questions:

My favourite place in the school grounds is…………….because……………………

1. My least favourite place in the school grounds is…………..because…………………..
2. The one thing I would change about the school grounds would be……………………

Each group was then given a short aspirational presentation about the general types of area which have been included in other school grounds projects and which are coming out in the DCSF ‘Schools for the Future’ exemplars and case studies. The groups were asked to consider how they might incorporate areas and themes such as:

- Outdoor classroom;
- Quiet area;
- Shaded area;
- Seating area;
- Active play;
- Sensory garden;
- Wildlife area (meadow, pond, woodland etc); and
- Growing area etc.

The aim was for each group to start to generate ideas that could be put into a concept plan showing the types of areas to be included in the grounds, without going into the detail of what is in each area. The concept plan will then help to prioritise and phase the work to be done.

At the end of their workshop each group was asked to summarise their thinking in two lists identifying what they thought were the key current CONSTRAINTS and priority OPPORTUNITIES for their school grounds.
School Grounds

Photographic Overview

West of Block 8
South of Block 6
South of Library

South of Block 2
South of Block 5
Block 5 & Sports Hall from road

Block 9 (with brewery behind)
Nursery and Block 15
View of buildings from Block 15

South of Block 11
West of Block 6
North of Block 8
Student Workshops

Identified CONSTRAINTS of School Grounds

The following comprises the list of issues identified as current constraints by student groups in workshops 1 and 2. Listed items have subsequently been grouped into general category headings for ease of reference:

**Site access, car and bus parking**
- too many cars
- dull entrance miles away from reception

**Site security**
- no gates – anyone can come in when they want to
- barrier unsupervised
- holes in bushes
- dangerous
- spikes on fences
- bottom of fences broken
- better fences

**Site Navigation**
- All looks the same so might not know where you are going

**Sheltered areas and walkways**
- no shelter outside
- no shade for summer
- no shelter for lesson moving time.

**Break-out areas, social spaces and seating**
- move the site office and school office for better space (and there is mould on the roofs)
- get rid of Guides area
- school office is in the way
- bike shed is in the way
old buildings are in the way
food has improved but still no room to eat in canteen; bigger space for eating and more tills
no outdoor benches to eat lunch
benches are wrecked
unused space is wasted

Activity areas

need more spaces for sport at break times – we are supposed to be a sports college!
there are no non-sport activities for break time – what about those who don’t like sport?!
year groups are separated at play times
boring break times – need things to do
goals are rusty
Year 7 cage could be improved
cage is rusty – dodgy.
no good outdoor classroom area
dodgy ground – grass. Flooding
Can’t play on Astroturf at break times.
Not allowed on Astroturf
Can’t use grass areas in winter conditions.

Atmosphere and school identity

it is dull and dated
colour is dull - buildings are all dull
dirty buildings
dull, all grey colours
no features – nothing there
boring – no colour
blank walls
needs more colour
needs more flowers
plants are rubbish
no flowers – no colour
dead plants and weeds should not be allowed
needs better plants – courtyards are grey and boring
plants are rubbish
plants need trimming
pick up dead leaves and plants
get rid of the bushes – there are holes in them anyway
get rid of the mini shed and the mess behind it
move all the wood and rubbish
needs new paint job
needs better windows and better fencing
replace the drain pipes
buildings are grotty
dirty roof
Seagulls!! Seagulls!! Seagulls!!
dull and covered in bird poo!
rust everywhere – drainpipes
junk sheds and old school waste
pond is dirty
junk
guttering
too much junk
skips and waste
rusty bits of old buildings
too much litter
too much litter and cigarette ends
broken bins
skips and rusty dustbins
bins are broken

too much graffiti, weeds and litter.

hate the smell (brewery)

smell from the brewery

dirty and smells

Students can’t see the achievement board – move it to reception – school identity!

Sustainability

no recycling bins
Student Workshops

Identified OPPORTUNITIES for School Grounds

The following comprises the list of issues identified as key opportunities by student groups in workshops 1 and 2. Listed items have subsequently been grouped into general category headings for ease of reference:

Site access, car and bus parking

- better car parking
- car park lines are not clear – make them clearer
- better bus access – stop blocking the road!
- Traffic lights outside school to make crossing safer

Site security

- better security
- make more safe
- new gates
- new lights
- mend holes in hedges
- lights when it is dark
- gates so people don’t come in
- more enclosed, unified

Exemplar design for feature entrance to school, US

(architect Antoine Predock)
Sheltered areas and walkways

- porch outside reception
- sheltered areas
- better benches with shelter over them
- shelters/canopies
- some shelters
- shelter outside
- sun shades for summer
- big umbrellas for when it rains
- shelter when outdoors
- canopies for shelter
- shelter when raining to eat out
- covered seats (interesting)
- bus shelters for when it rains
- shelters over bus queues
- domed corridors and bridges to and from blocks undercover walkways between blocks

Site Navigation

- what about coloured feet painted on the floor to direct you to where you are going?
- signposts to direct people to subjects
- coloured blocks and subject themes so you know where you are easily

Break-out areas, social spaces and seating

- no relaxing areas for talking to mates
- more quiet spaces
- nicer social space.
- outside heated areas
- more quiet time and lessons built outside
- naughty area
- quiet areas
- separate places to chill/talk
- more grass to use when weather is nice - outdoor lessons
- water fountains
- water fountain and water dispensers
- chill out area with trees
- decking area by year 7 cage
- sports shed roof gardens for break times
- better trees
- music which people at school have produced and we can listen to outside music block
- Comfortable seats for inside classes and outside
- more benches
- metal benches not wood
- more benches and more trees!
- more interesting features e.g. different coloured floors and benches and seating areas.
- soft, colourful benches on the field
- more benches
- benches around a pond
- new, better benches
- seats and benches on grass for summer time.

- a futuristic canteen would be good
liked the idea of the ‘pods’ for outside eating!
‘pod’ seats for dining – very cool!
more picnic benches by the canteen
enclosed area where you can eat outside with heating
have a hatch to serve food out of so you don’t have to go into the canteen to get food.
colourful and pretty canteen with outside eating area and heaters
a better food collecting area
outside the canteen a BIG tree with lots of benches
a bigger canteen with better food at the end
picnic areas
juice bar to socialise – serves non-alcoholic drinks etc.

Activity areas

- more sports equipment to show its a sports college
- sports area – bigger playground – more stuff to do at play time
- more areas to play
- have big areas to do sport in
- new gym hall
- more room to play and better variety at break times
- more outside activities
- more places to play
- new sports equipment – nets, hoops, goals.

- better basketball nets
- put more nets on goals
- sports area
- skate area
- SK8 board park
- skate park
better grass to play on
separate grass for separate years to play on
Astroturf we are actually allowed to play on at break times
outdoor classroom for sunny days

outdoor stage for rapping/singing
golf area!
golf area for golfers only!
climbing frame
climbing wall
zip wire
adventure park
swimming pool
obstacle courses
more apparatus and climbing frame
bigger playgrounds set back
Year 7 ‘cage’ needs to be redone
half year 7 cage to become tennis court
make a ‘cage’ for year 8 to play in at break
toilets near cages please!
own year group cages
change tennis courts
nets on goal – better goals
bigger areas to play during break
more equipment
- laptops everywhere
- park with monkey bars and a cage
- better drainage systems for field so we can use it in winter
- new basketball courts – one for each year group
- boxing facilities and pool table
- hoops fixed and floor repainted
- reposition basketball hoops and goals
- outdoor learning spaces
- outdoor stage for performances

**Atmosphere and school identity**

- paintings all around the school
- multi-coloured courtyards
- mosaic – graffiti artist to do up walls at front of school and basketball court
- good art on walls
- a graffiti wall
- more colour around school
- graffiti wall/art wall
- more colourful areas
- art deco outside
- a bit more colour all around the school

- more colour e.g. graffiti wall
- art stuff
- painted walls
- paint windows different colours
- paint all over
- students decorate the outside e.g. handprints
- mosaics
- mural/mosaic (of sport) – bright
- more colourful
- colour the walls
- 3D sculptures – themed by subject.
- flags at the entrance
- themed areas
- water feature in the middle would make school more relaxed.
- river going through school with bridges – please, please, please!!!
- clean the pond, get a filter and feed the fish – more fish
- clean the pool at the front – more fish
- flowers, pretty colours and blue signs
- more colour and flowers
- paint the walls and have different plants
- more plants
- flowers
- flowers by playgrounds
- everything looked after
- flowers, forest, fruit trees – colourful
- more attractive pathways
- new, funky bins which people use
- more bins – bins attached to floor so cannot knock over
- fixed bins
- more bins = less rubbish

- less litter and more bins
- something to stop seagulls.
- spikes on roofs to stop seagulls.
- no rubbish lying around
- even amount of old and new
- new buildings at front should be sophisticated – not out of place. Needs to be in uniform, not look alien - needs to look old.
- new wooden boards along basketball courts
- new wire mesh
- cut the grass regularly!
get rid of the smell!

Sustainability

- Get some recycling bins
- better bins – get rid of skips (or more colour to skips!)
- more bins – especially recycling bins
- vegetable greenhouses
- eco-environment garden
- livestock area with animals

animals!

Bins to encourage recycling
Staff Workshops

Identified CONSTRAINTS of School Grounds

The following comprises the list of issues identified as current constraints by staff groups in workshops 3 and 4. Listed items have subsequently been grouped into general category headings for ease of reference:

Site access, car and bus parking

- traffic – entrance/exit – dangerous
- front of school too congested at the end of the day
- current pedestrian exit for pupils onto road is unsafe
- resident parking on road causes congestion – there will be an accident soon!
- road outside is completely unsuitable for school buses
- current courtyard area is not good for bus queues.
- bus parking is huge issue – should be on site not on road
- buses!
- don’t like the parking at the front of school
- not enough parking
- vehicles in pedestrian areas
- lack of parking spaces
- disorganised parking areas – pedestrian pathways needed
- access issues
- ‘rat run’ structure
- poor access to nursery
- too many different levels

Site security

- insecure site – pupils and teachers at risk.
- Too many entrances
- too many exits and entrances
- too dark at night
Site Navigation
- reception not obvious, lack of signage
- not enough signage
- lack of sign posting (to reception and various blocks)
- site lacks continuity

Supervision
- pupils at break times – areas to ‘hide’ need to be minimised e.g. around current drama studio area.
- too many hiding spaces for children
- very noisy at front of school
- too many areas for ‘smoking’

Sheltered areas and walkways
- no covered outdoor areas
- no outside covered areas
- no outside shelter
- No shelter for playtime /lunch
- site windy and exposed – needs shelter
- insufficient covered areas
- no covered walkways between buildings so get wet
- everyone gets soaked walking from block to block
- no covered area to art and DT and PE
- No shelter in between breaks/between lessons – get wet
- rain pouring down the road into area between Smith and East blocks
- No covered areas or walkways

Break-out areas, social spaces and seating
- no quiet areas
- no nice garden area
- not enough gardens – with fences
- no staff quiet areas outside away from pupils
- no staff outside area
- not enough suitable, attractive seating
no outside seating for pupils and staff
- dining room too small
- not enough outdoor seating and tables
- lack of seating
- more benches needed

**Activity areas**
- not enough sports/games for break times
- ball games played where other students sit – no dedicated games area
- too 'cagey' feeling – get rid of caged areas!
- no room for year 11/10 – need youth group area?

**Atmosphere and school identity**
- no sports college recognition – when a visitor arrives what is their first impression?
- not enough colour
- courtyards are unpleasant and old fashioned
- too much concrete
- boring and drab – colour!
- no paved areas – too much concrete and tarmac
- no greenery in courtyard areas – poor planting
- lots of grass but not utilised effectively

**Sustainability**
- no showers for staff who walk/cycle
- no recycling bins
Staff Workshops

Identified OPPORTUNITIES for School Grounds

The following comprises the list of issues identified as key opportunities by staff groups in workshops 3 and 4. Listed items have subsequently been grouped into general category headings for ease of reference:

Site access, car and bus parking

- move year 7 play areas to the grassed area behind the container store to free area for bus parking
- nice disabled ramp that looks attractive

Site security

- secure site
- more exits?
- secure site so new things are not vandalised in the evenings

Supervision

- roof terraces – can monitor kids from good vantage points!

Sheltered areas and walkways

- extensive covered areas
- covered verandas
- interesting sheltered spaces
- more interesting smaller covered areas
- covered walkway
- covered walkway to sports hall, DT and art from Smith block
Break-out areas, social spaces and seating

- pupils able to sit quietly and close to student services
- area between Smith Block and Sports Hall could be utilised by covered area and seating (whilst still leaving room for access)
- soft lines in quiet areas
- twisted and curved “Gaudi” style seating.
- quiet seating, low walls for seating with mosaics

- covered seating areas for staff/students
- ‘Lemon Quay’ type seating – wavy benches
- vandal proof seating
- avoid metal (stone/cold) seating outside.
- seating and decking outside of sports hall
- trees with seating
- seating around trees for shelter and calm

- more small seated areas
- lots of different types of seated areas – different levels, textures etc
- area around the caretaker’s hut – school office is under-used and could be good seating area, avoiding the back of west block which is dark and north facing.
- seating ‘spilling’ from canteen
- tyres half sunk into ground as seats
- open area outside dining area

- seating outside canteen – nicely covered areas with seats
- dining ‘pods’ next to canteen area
- bright, colourful seating outside library to encourage reading

Corporate sponsorship for benches?
Activity areas

- basketball – four ‘hoops’ in current bus queue area and area near parents room
- courtyard converted to games area – giant jenga; chess; connect 4; crazy golf etc
- Astroturf to provide all year round facilities.
- activities, games for children on grounds e.g. hop scotch, chess, hoops, ‘stacks’ for jumping.
- staff sauna and spa!
- more marked play areas
- amphitheatre/outdoor performance areas with shelter
- amphitheatre built into bottom of banking
- amphitheatre
- amphitheatre would be great
- outdoor teaching space – theatre (banked areas)

Atmosphere and school identity

- lots of colour – murals, paths, themed sound garden around space of music block
- consideration to be given to different areas having themes e.g. geography symbols into the surface
- different areas of the school to be brightened by use of murals e.g. sports college theme
- more sports college recognition – outside area to reflect sports college status; murals; statues; flags
- discreetly themed areas
- more flags; statues; murals
- artwork e.g. mosaics
- Sports college theme

- space for student input – murals and displays
- Koi carp pond!
- fish tank in reception- water features
- hanging chimes

water feature
- planting – scented plants?
- lots of trees and plants – not conifers! Lots of colour to reflect seasons.
- plants, greenery, creative outdoor space – colour!
- terraced areas around the paths
- landscaped gardens
- trees on sight
- more trees/greenery
- ‘Showcase’ front of building
- front view of school to have same character with original stonework on new areas as on older buildings
- granite cladding on red brick buildings
- natural stonework
- want to keep the frontage of the buildings traditional so old and new blend

**Sustainability**

- wind turbine
- more recycling facilities – renewable energy (wind turbine?)
- recycling bins
- ‘interesting’ bins to make them more attractive to use and therefore reduce litter problem
- farming/garden area to be extended to provide canteen with home grown produce
- canteen – recycling and composting
- available spaces for growing veg for use within school – polytunnels
- use reclaimed and/or natural Cornish materials
**Appendix 8**: Lesson plans created between Jane and I, October 2010 for the Wellness Day where the pupils would be doing some gardening and working on the design for the Peace Garden, School 8.

**Lesson Plan**

**Year**: 8/9 Wellness Day - 3 x 1 hour 40

**Lesson objective**: To consider the therapeutic nature of gardening and garden space

**Lesson outcome**: Students will have hands-on experience of gardening and will have considered the design aspect of a successful garden space - focus on Peace Garden

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Approx. time</th>
<th>Lesson details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>By the end of this lesson, all students will have experienced some hands-on gardening and thought about the importance of garden design. Most students will have also considered what they would like in their garden space and those about the design. A few students will also get to grips with garden design and be prepared to use the project through past the Wellness Day aspect.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5/10 minutes</td>
<td>Starter: An overview of the benefits of gardening and the therapeutic nature of gardens. T.D through bringing in smelly plants – lavender/rosemary/lemon balm (?) ask students how they make them feel. Sarah’s IP: Briefly use for all audiances.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Resources**:
- Sarah’s garden classroom
- PowerPoint of design ideas
- A3 sheets – plan of garden
- Sissors/gloves/garden magazines
- Compost/bulbs/gloves/tools etc items from irma

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Approx. time</th>
<th>Lesson details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>45 minutes</td>
<td>Main. Session 1: 1. A3 sheets plan and of garden and students draw design on top (Sarah to provide) 2. Weeding of large house beds and collecting of seeds etc from existing plants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35/40 mins</td>
<td>Session 2: 1. Detailing of garden – materials, features - show previous designs etc. Use garden magazines as inspiration. 2. Weeding and cutting taking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45 minutes</td>
<td>Session 3: 1. Detailing of garden – look over previous work and come up with planting ideas. Use garden magazines as inspiration. 2. Weeding and bulb planting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35/40 mins</td>
<td>Plenary: Cleaning up/ collection of thoughts/ ideas – where would they like to take it next?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5/10 mins</td>
<td>End weather - use of garden classrooms and greenhouse will allow us to keep working!</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>