

A MULTI-DISCIPLINARY APPROACH TO THE MANAGEMENT
OF NON-SCHOOL ATTENDANCE
VOLUME 1

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Abstract

The main objective of this study is to evaluate the effects of school-based projects on the behaviour of secondary school persistent absentees. The research was divided between two school-based projects: (a) Project X, based at School X, consists of seven Subject pupils who are non-school attenders; (b) Project Y, based at School Y, consists of 16 Subject adolescents who are non-school attenders, they were matched with two control groups who attend the mainstream curriculum - 16 Control A adolescents who are non-school attenders and 16 Control B adolescents who are good school attenders. The behaviour of the School X Subject pupils were evaluated via a within-subject design in order to compare their progress during pre-intervention (i.e. mainstream curriculum), intervention (i.e. Project X programme) and follow-up (i.e. return to mainstream curriculum) phases. In the case of School Y, the progress of the three groups were evaluated via both within-subject and between-subject designs during three phases: a one-year pre-intervention period (i.e. when all three groups attended mainstream lessons); first year of intervention (i.e. Project Y programme for the Subject adolescents) and the second year of intervention (i.e. Project Y programme for the Subject adolescents). The analyses of the main results indicate that:

1. Persistent absenteeism is significantly associated with social deprivation (e.g. poor housing) and poor scholastic progress. The findings also show that both parents and teachers believe that there should be greater contact between the home and school.
2. The two school-based projects were successful in significantly increasing school attendance among persistent absentees, although they were unable to generalise this over time (e.g. during the follow-up phase at School X). Nevertheless, some of their curricular approaches which appear to contribute to combating disaffection include an emphasis on behaviour therapy, academic-orientated lessons, individual attention, pupil being the focus of adult attention, close proximity between teacher and pupil during interaction, teacher praise, 'indirect' teaching where pupils are allowed greater freedom of expression, 'direct' teaching where pupils receive regular lectures and directions in relation to task-work, small classes, extra adult helpers, high levels of teacher-pupil interaction, and regular contact with local community.

Therefore, despite the limitations, the importance of this thesis lies in the fact that not only does it show data on the actual classroom behaviour of persistent absentees and their teachers, but it also presents data on the type of classroom atmosphere which appear to be related to positive pupil outcomes among disaffected school children. Thus, the present study concludes that persistent absenteeism is effectively interpreted within a multi-disciplinary framework which reflects both home and school factors.

In dedication to my parents, Joshua and Codvis, and to my brothers and sisters who are endless sources of love and support.

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**Volume 1: The Literature Review, Conceptual
Framework, Early Observation Work,
and the Action Research Programme**

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Foreword

It is recognised that this is a long thesis and it is therefore appropriate to begin with an explanation of the length. In looking at the literature on non-school attendance it becomes clear that an explanation for this phenomenon is not going to be found by inspecting the writings of only one discipline. Therefore, what began as a standard literature review, evolved into an attempt to make sense of the historical antecedents to persistent absenteeism; current statistics; theoretical accounts from different schools of thought within sociology, education, and psychology; and legal issue. Thus, Volume 1 represents not simply a literature review, but also an attempt to offer a synthesis of a wide range of accounts and perspectives of non-school attendance. As a development to this background research the author ^{will} ~~with~~ present her early observation studies and her action research programme in which she attempts to reflect some of the multifaceted factors associated with persistent school absenteeism. Thus, as such, this work stands as a piece of theoretical, conceptual and empirical research.

In Volume 2 the focus is on the empirical data, both qualitative and quantitative, in order to evaluate the functioning and effectiveness of school-based projects aimed at reducing non-school attendance. The findings are discussed within the conceptual framework developed in Volume 1.

Non-school attendance is a big problem, demanding expansive solutions: the length of this work perhaps reflects the magnitude of the problem.

PREFACE

The issue on how to cater for the special needs of non-school attenders has aroused great concern among teachers, parents, educational administrators, police, politicians and pupils. Such concern arises from the fact that persistent absentees tend to experience learning difficulties (Fogelman & Richardson, 1974; Hersov, 1960a; Jardine, 1987; May, 1975; Reid, 1982a, 1982b, 1984a) and tend to have records of juvenile delinquency (Farrington, 1980; May, 1975; Robins & Ratcliffe, 1980; Tyerman, 1968; West, 1982). However, such absentees cannot be fully managed within the limited resources available, especially at behavioural units. As a complement to this concern for the social problems associated with non-school attendance, other authors (Hargreaves Report, 1984; Reynolds & Murgatroyd, 1977) have expressed concern for possible factors within the schools themselves which appear to be influencing school disaffection. The data suggest that the school variables most likely to generate school absenteeism include low teacher expectations, feelings of alienation among the pupils from school life, rigid school rules, lack of teacher-pupil communication, and poor parent-teacher relationships (Hargreaves Report, 1984; Mortimore, Sammons, Stoll, Lewis & Ecob, 1988; Reid, 1985; Reynolds & Murgatroyd, 1977; Rutter, Maughan, Mortimore, & Ouston, 1979).

This seemingly multifaceted problem of non-school attendance, especially 'truancy', became of interest to me when I worked as a Detached Youth-Worker for a local education authority (LEA) in West Yorkshire between 1981 and 1982. I worked mainly with school children aged between 12 and 16 years who were experiencing behaviour or family problems. Therefore, much of my responsibilities included counselling, assisting with practical problems, such as completing job application forms, and providing liaisons between the schools, social workers and youth clubs. I was usually introduced to my adolescent clients by either a

social worker or the school.

All my clients had an array of problems ranging from a breakdown of school-family communications to more severe problems of arson attacks and violent behaviour. Many of these problems were further compounded by the clients' non-school attendance which in some cases led to gambling and soliciting during school hours. Naturally, such activities tended to make both the parents and teachers rather frustrated and exasperated. Such confusion sometimes led to the parents blaming the schools for their child's truancy which, in turn, usually led to a serious breakdown in parent-teacher relationships. As an illustration of some of the problems faced by my clients, I will briefly discuss three cases of persistent absentees whom I worked closely with during the course of my youth work. Most of the information I collected was via direct observations or from casework reports. All the teachers, schools, social workers and pupils referred to in this thesis are protected by pseudonyms in order to ensure confidentiality. Starting with the first case:

Ian, age 15 years

Ian was a severe absentee with a record of violence towards teachers and pupils. His family consists of seven boys and his mother, Ian is the youngest of the children. His father had apparently left them when Ian was only a few months old. His mother worked part-time as an auxiliary nurse which sometimes included night shifts. At school he was considered by his teachers to be above average intelligence and they believed that he was very capable of 'O' and 'A' level examinations. However, after several incidences of violent attacks on teachers, Ian was passed through three secondary schools in order to give him a 'fresh start'. At all three schools he experienced suspensions for disruption, truancy and fighting, and in his fifth year of schooling (age 15 years) he was referred to a special behavioural unit. He resented having to attend the unit because its programme was mainly geared towards providing basic reading and writing skills for pupils with

learning difficulties. Ian felt that he was being stigmatised and wanted to be returned to mainstream school. The staff at the unit empathised with Ian's problems because although their resources allowed them to give him individual counselling, they indicated to me that they could not offer him much in terms of education because much of their materials were geared towards children with reading problems and Ian did not exhibit any scholastic difficulties.

During Ian's initial introduction to the unit its staff, Ian himself, his school teacher and I had a meeting to discuss his programme. It was generally agreed at the meeting that Ian should stay at the unit for three months to help him develop some strategies to cope with his tantrums, and then based on his increase in attendance at the unit and improved behaviour he may be returned to school. I informed Ian's mother about the conditions for him being returned to school. However, his mother tended to appear unconcerned about Ian's education, and never visited his schools or the unit. She often stated that her reason for this lack of interest was due to the fact that she had given up hope for Ian and his brothers - three of whom had spent at least six months in prison for burglary and all seven boys had a history of persistent absenteeism.

Because Ian was fast approaching school-leaving age I decided to contact a colleague who was a professional builder and was also responsible for the running of the Youth Opportunity Schemes (YOP) in painting and decorating in the local community. I arranged with my colleague to enlist Ian on his training scheme as Ian was showing great interest in the possibility of developing what he called 'relevant work skills'. I promised him a good reference for this YOP scheme which was contingent on him attending the unit regularly and learning to control his tantrums. Ian's attendance to the unit did increase to what the staff termed as a 'reasonable level' and he made some attempts to avoid confrontations with the teachers by sometimes voluntarily leaving the classroom. Consequently, after two months at the unit I assisted Ian in completing his application form for

the YOP scheme.

However, during the third month of Ian's attendance on the unit the Headteacher of the unit called my office to request an urgent meeting to discuss Ian's progress. On arrival to the unit I was greeted by Ian's subject teacher who was wearing a bandage on his head. Ian had apparently smashed a milk bottle over this teacher's head because, according to the teacher, he had ordered Ian to pick up some litter which he (Ian) had dropped on the classroom floor. Ian's case was reviewed by the unit and his school. It was felt that it was too late in Ian's school life to send him to a new school so he was returned to his former school, but was required to attend the unit once per week for counselling and advice. Ian did not attend either the school or the unit. His attendance for the last three months of schooling was zero. Both the school and the unit now seemed powerless in enforcing him to attend.

I was successful in helping Ian to attain a place on the YOP scheme and I also encouraged him to attend a youth club where my colleagues and I worked as helpers. He attended the club regularly and officially started his YOP scheme in July 1982. I monitored his behaviour and attendance on the scheme until September 1982. Apparently he had obtained an attendance of almost a 100 per cent and had exhibited only muted anger which my colleague believed was due to the fact that most of the male adolescents on the scheme were physically much bigger and more street-wise than him. Therefore, Ian probably felt that it was wiser to avoid confrontations with his peers on the scheme.

Tony, aged 12 years

Tony had a history of severe school absenteeism from the age of 10 years. His family consisted of one older brother, who is a music teacher, two sisters both of whom had records of non-school attendance, and his mother who had been recently divorced from Tony's father. Tony was described by his teachers as having difficulties in reading and writing, and he also experienced problems in

comprehending basic arithmetic skills. The teachers found him very disruptive in the classroom, especially when he was given instructions to work. The school further claimed that it had made several attempts to have him statemented by an educational psychologists and he was on the waiting list for a place at a special behavioural unit for disruptive pupils. I asked the school what measures of its own had it taken to attempt to meet some of Tony's problems. The school claimed that Tony had received extra pastoral care and the Education Welfare Officer (EWO) had visited his home on several occasions, but he had never received an answer at the door. Tony's form tutor felt that because of his very poor school attendance any extra tuition and counselling seemed fruitless. Both the school concerned and Tony's mother felt that he would be better catered for by attending a unit mainly because it has the resources for greater individual attention in teaching reading and writing. However, all the units in the area were working at their maximum capacity which meant that Tony had to wait for several months before receiving a placement. This made both his mother and the school rather frustrated because they were unsure of what other action to take for Tony. However, Tony claimed that he did not care whether or not he received a placement.

His problems were further compounded by the fact that he seemed to be what I can only describe as seriously addicted to the space invaders and the one-arm-bandit machines at a leisure centre. Tony would play on these machines every day and night, and when he ran out of money he would gamble with other truants in games of cards or marbles in order to obtain some money so that he could return to the machines. Needless to say, there were several occasions when Tony and other boys resorted to fighting each other in order to obtain money through intimidation. Consequently, Tony had sustained several black eyes and on one occasion he had pulled a knife at one boy, but the boy luckily avoided injury.

His mother felt that she had lost complete control of him. He would often stay out until 2:00 or 3:00 am during

weekdays, and sometimes at weekends his mother would not see him for 48 hours. His behaviour had caused concern at the Social Services, but his mother refused the help of a social worker because she did not trust them. However, I offered to help with counselling Tony and I also kept track of his school attendance. She reluctantly accepted my help. One of the problems was that she is a State Enrolled Nurse (SEN) which meant that she had to work nights in order to maintain the family. This made it very difficult for her to keep track of Tony's whereabouts during the night.

Because of Tony's poor school attendance the juvenile court summoned him and his mother in February 1982. The family was warned by the court that if Tony's attendance did not improve then his mother would receive a fine. In March Tony and his mother were again summoned to the juvenile court because his school attendance had remained at virtual zero and he was still gambling on the leisure machines. His mother was penalised with a fine and she was instructed to accept assistance from the Social Services. Tony was also instructed by the court to return to school.

By the end of March Tony had obtained a school attendance rate of about 40.00 per cent. However, during one afternoon in school Tony apparently disappeared from his classroom, went to the top floor of his school and set one of the classrooms on fire. The reason behind this arson attack has remained a mystery to both Tony's social worker and myself. Apparently, the school had become somewhat secretive about the whole affair may be because it was afraid that outsiders might perceive its staff as having lost control of the pupils. In April, 1982, Tony was charged with arson and he was placed into residential care for the minimum of four years. His mother was extremely distraught by the court decision. However, she was allowed to visit Tony once a month and he, in turn, was allowed to visit his home for one weekend every three-month period and during the Christmas under the condition that he obeyed a strict curfew which required him to return home before 10:00 pm. His home visits were always monitored by a social worker.

Tony's mother gradually accepted the fact her and Tony were to be separated for some years to come. She particularly liked the fact that he was receiving some discipline and at least she knew that he was not wandering the streets.

I visited the family several times over the following five years until July, 1987, when Tony was 17 years old. He had by then been released from residential care on a trial basis and was living with his mother. Tony was also required to attend an intermediate-treatment centre at least twice per week. He is presently unemployed, and has no academic qualifications nor any job skills.

Janet, aged 15.5 years

Janet has two brothers and two sisters, her mother and father. One brother and one sister was in care at the time I met Janet at school. However, she and the other two siblings lived at home. For some reason Janet believed that her parents disliked her and she would go missing for days before returning home. She spent most of her time with her boyfriend when absent from school. The school described Janet's behaviour as extremely aggressive and abusive towards the teachers. However, Janet felt that the teachers were always singling her out whenever things went missing mainly because she had a record of shoplifting. The Deputy Headmistress claimed that the school had tried counselling Janet with assistance from the EWO and the careers teacher, but she had refused to co-operate. The school had also invited her parents on several occasions to visit Janet's teachers, but the parents never responded.

I met Janet only once at school in October, 1981, and I also visited her about three times at her home, but her parents were usually hostile towards any idea of giving her some encouragement to attend school. They stated that they wanted her out of their home because she had been nothing but trouble. Some months later I saw Janet at a youth hostile for young homeless people where she was staying with

her boyfriend. We discussed her plans for the future - she basically wanted any job. I asked her about her family, but she was very reticent in discussing her relationship with them, especially with her mother.

By December Janet had stopped attending school and she was also three months pregnant. In January her parents refused to have her in the home and she was immediately placed in a home for young mothers by her social worker. She had refused to return home to collect her clothes because of resentment towards her parents for rejecting her. Therefore, her social worker and I made a visit to her parents' home to collect her belongings. By this stage her non-school attendance had become almost irrelevant with the main concern of her social worker and myself being to ensure that she was relatively comfortable and helping her to prepare for impending motherhood. I visited Janet regularly and she had a baby girl in June 1982. Janet did not keep in contact with her parents or the school. However, her boyfriend remained with her, and her and the baby are doing fine with assistance from the Social Service.

When comparing the experiences of Ian, Tony and Janet with persistent absentee cases in the literature we find that they are not atypical. Tyerman (1968), for example, found that non-school attenders tended to exhibit conduct disorders such as stealing and they also tended to come from unsupportive families. Farrington (1980) and West (1982) describe absentees as pupils who tended to be associated with disruptive behaviour and stealing. Blagg and Yule (1987), and Hersov (1960a) found that truants tended to come from homes that were disrupted by parent divorce or separation. This is particularly true for Ian and Tony who both lived within a single-parent family. Other authors have further illustrated the problems faced by non-school attenders. For example, Tibbenham (1977) found that truants tended to come from poor, overcrowded home conditions. Similarly, Galloway (1985a) found that persistent absentees tended to come from homes which lacked essential amenities, such as an inside toilet, and they also tended to receive

free school meals which Galloway believes is an indication of their social deprivation. Jardine (1987) found that persistent absentees were significantly more likely to experience poor academic performance than good school attenders. His findings are also supported by others in the literature who suggests that truants tended to have lower IQ scores and poorer reading skills than good school attenders (Fogelman & Richardson, 1974; Hersov, 1960a; May, 1975; Tyerman, 1968). Persistent absentees were also more likely to come from the working class communities (Fogelman & Richardson, 1974), they are likely to have fathers who are either unemployed or working in low paid jobs (May, 1975), their parents tend to neglect their education (Fogelman & Richardson, 1974), they have parents who exhibit violence and criminal behaviour (Farrington, 1980; West, 1982), they may experience depression due to their parents divorce or the loss of a parent through death (Herbert, 1978; Kennedy, 1965; Reid, 1982a, 1983c, 1985), and their families are likely to be involved with the social services (Fogelman & Richardson, 1974; Reid, 1982c).

Because of the severity of the problems associated with non-school attendance, especially in relation to delinquency, some authorities (e.g. Farrington, 1980; Herbert, 1978, 1987; ISTD, 1974; Reid, 1985; Stott, 1966; Tyerman, 1968; West, 1982) have come to regard it as a form of 'conduct disorder'. For example, Herbert (1978) argues that persistent absenteeism, like many other conduct cases, together with data in the literature, have raised several pertinent issues which concern me as a professional working with disaffected adolescents:

1. The truant pupils tend to experience poor relationships with both their parents and teachers. Their parents were also more likely to experience an inability to control their truant child.
2. Persistent absentees tend to have poor academic records, unstable and poor home backgrounds, and they tend to be associated with juvenile delinquency.

3. There appears to be very limited resources, such as special units, available for disruptive pupils.
4. There tends to be very poor contact between the parents of truant pupils and the schools concerned.
5. The punitive measures of the courts appear to have very limited influence on increasing school attendance.
6. The schools concerned with the above discussed cases all appear to be unable to deal with the problems of non-school attenders. They also tended not to have any special curricula to cater for the educational needs of the truant pupils and they (schools) appeared only too happy to pass their problem pupils onto other schools or place them on special behavioural units.

These issues raised my interests in the problems faced by the persistent absentees, their families and their schools. Consequently, I wanted to explore some of these issues in order to assess what kind of help is needed by these disaffected pupils and their families, and I also wanted to examine ways in which the schools themselves can become more responsive to the needs of their problem pupils.

I became particularly concerned with the fact that many of the schools connected to my truant cases tended not to have any alternative facilities to offer to their disaffected pupils. Such schools appeared all too ready to assign their disaffected pupils to special units or have them transferred to other schools. However, such actions tended to have rather disappointing outcomes with many of my cases being unable to reintegrate either into mainstream schools after attending a unit or finding it difficult to adapt to their new school. My observations of the deteriorating consequences of removing children from their 'normal' school environment are also further noted in the literature. For instance, Tharp and Wetzel (1969) argued that the removal of children from their 'natural' home and

school environments tended to impede their abilities to cope with life once they are returned to the community. Therefore, the authors assert that more emphasis should be placed on retaining children in their 'natural' environments while the therapist works with them via their parents and teachers.

Much of Tharp and Wetzel's arguments are based on their observations of children living either at home or in residential care. They found it particularly difficult to modify children's stealing behaviour in the institution mainly because of regular staff turnover which tended to cause disruption in the behaviour programme. This was further compounded by the fact that some staff would inaccurately record the number of stealing incidences because they felt that they were 'splitting' on the children, especially during the Christmas season. However, the authors noted that behaviour modification was much more effective in reducing undesired behaviours when children were monitored in the 'natural' environments by their teachers and parents. They believe that the greater success of the natural environment is partly due to the wider availability of reinforcers (e.g. day trips or toys) which parents can manipulate to encourage behaviour change. However, they do suggest that working within the 'natural' environment can make it difficult to isolate those variables that might be affecting behaviour because of the continuous changing conditions in the children's lives. Thus, the authors conclude that investigation should focus on discovering and controlling those events which appear to have functional relationships with the behaviour concerned. Once this is achieved then the 'natural' environment may provide a fruitful medium for successful behaviour therapy.

This concept of establishing behaviour therapy within the natural environment is also endorsed by Herbert (1978) who argues that maladaptive behaviour can be most effectively changed by applying the principles of learning to the 'natural' environment in which it was developed. He argues that therapy within a clinic-based approach raises

the problem of how to achieve a generalisation of behaviour change from the consulting room to the client's natural environment. Herbert also suggests that if the setting events and contingencies in the clinic are different to those in the home (or school) then it is likely that any behaviour change accomplished in the clinic setting will not be transferred to the home (or school) simply because the differences in the contingency rules may result in different behaviour patterns being shown in the home.

In contrast to the clinic setting, Herbert argues that the 'natural' environment utilises the powerful influences of the key persons in the child's life such as the parents and teachers. The 'natural' environment also has the advantage of the key persons being constantly present in the child's daily life which puts them in a good position to consolidate behaviour change. Herbert states further that these key persons are also likely to facilitate any positive outcomes of behaviour therapy because of their emotional significance to the child, and their commitment to meeting his or her needs. Thus, the use of behaviour therapy within the 'natural' environment negates the problem of generalising behaviour from the clinic setting to, say, the home and it also allows the opportunity for the key persons and the child concerned to work out their problems together.

In another investigation on the issue of the efficaciousness of working with children in their 'natural' environment, the Warnock Report (1978) conducted a study on pupils with special needs. The report concluded from its surveys that the provisions for special needs should be made within the framework of the normal school. This report led to the introduction of the 1981 Education Act which made provisions for the closure of special schools in order that the integration of special needs pupils (e.g. deaf pupils or truants) can be integrated into mainstream school. Other authorities including Reid (1982d) and the Hargreaves Report (1984) have suggested that disaffection appears to be more salient in schools which tend to rely on 'off-site' special behavioural units as a means of managing their problem

pupils. Therefore, this controversial issue on integrating special needs pupils into mainstream school, coupled with the enforcement of the Education Act (1981), has provoked many LEA's, schools and teachers to modify their provisions, behaviours and classroom structures in the hope of achieving greater educational gains for their problem pupils. This interests in the provisions offered by the schools in relation to the needs of persistent absentees has led some psychologists to write convincingly that problem pupils are more highly motivated to work within mainstream classes if their individual needs are catered for and if their efforts are rewarded (Brooks, 1974, 1975; Morgan, 1975). On the other hand, sociologists have argued that special needs pupils will be more responsive to schooling if the curriculum is reorganised to encourage greater awareness among teachers about their pupils' attitudes towards education, and if the school further attempts to create channels of communications with the parents and the community in order to offer wider educational experiences to its pupils (Burden, 1978, 1981). However, the data offered by these two schools of thought are very limited: the psychologists tend to ignore the role of the school system in generating persistent absenteeism, whereas the sociologists tend to ignore the individual needs of the children and their families.

Therefore, in order to negate some of these limitations on the concepts of non-school attendance, some authors, such as Reid (1982c, 1989a), have attempted to present cases of disaffected pupils within a multi-disciplinary model. For example, Reid (1982c) reports the case of a 14 year-old girl called Maria who started truanting from school at the age of nine years. Maria had a very unstable home background with her mother having served time in prison for prostitution and she (mother) had also cohabited with a series of common law husbands. Maria was described by her school as very disruptive and rude towards the staff. Her academic performance was poor and she had a criminal record for vandalism and burglary. Reid interviewed Maria to ascertain her reasons for missing school. Some of her reasons included boredom with her lessons, the

continuous arguments with the teachers and wanting to have fun with her friends outside the school. He concluded that persistent absentee cases like Maria's suggest that school absenteeism is related to both social and institutional problems which may require a multi-disciplinary approach.

Thus, the recent literature is now suggesting that effective management of persistent absenteeism may require practitioners to introduce special needs programmes within the children's 'natural' environment, particularly within the school itself. Authors further argue that such managerial programmes ought to reflect the individual needs of the pupils via behaviour therapy (Blagg & Yule, 1984; Brooks, 1974, 1975; Eysenck & Rachman, 1965; Morgan, 1975), and via the emphasis of structural changes within the curriculum, such as establishing alternative curricula which stresses the need for greater contact with other systems such as industry (Clare, 1986; Hargreaves Report, 1984).

Definition of the Term 'Management' as used in this Thesis in Relation to Combating Non-School Attendance

I have chosen to use the term 'management', rather than the term 'treatment', to refer to the special educational and behavioural programmes designed to meet the needs of non-school attenders. My preference for the term 'management' is based on the evidence in the literature which suggests that persistent absenteeism is a conduct disorder compounded with learning difficulties, and deficiencies within both the home and school (Farrington, 1980; Jardine, 1987; May, 1975; Mortimore et al., 1988; Robins & Ratcliffe, 1980; Rutter et al., 1979; Tibbenham, 1977; Tyerman, 1968; West, 1982). Therefore, I believe, as a practitioner, that the 'management' of truancy means to organise a meaningful and relevant curricular programme which disaffected pupils may perceive as relevant to their interests and aspirations for adult life. Such a 'management' programme should include a well organised course of behaviour therapy to combat conduct disorders; an educational programme which emphasises the practice of reading, writing and numeracy especially within practical

situations, such as working in an office or completing application forms; and regular counselling on academic and behaviour developments in order to provide some feedback on progress.

However, contrary to the term 'management', I believe that the term 'treatment' refers to a much narrower programme which may arouse connotations of illness, drugs, hospitalisation, clinics and serious psychoneurotic disorders (e.g. nervous breakdowns or manic depression) (see Blagg & Yule, 1984; Hersov, 1960a, 1960b; Kennedy, 1965). Such a 'treatment' programme in many instances might be seen as an anachronism because it implies the institutionalisation of non-school attenders which could be contrary to the Education Act (1981) and the educational practice of today (Warnock Report, 1978). Furthermore, this 'treatment' approach would also be contrary to the evident educational/social needs of many persistent absentees because the literature tends suggests that their deficiencies are the results of maladaptive learning, social deprivation and poor school organisation, rather than generated by some internal 'illness'. Therefore, I believe that a 'management' programme may provide a wider scope for special needs by helping practitioners to become more sensitive to the multifaceted components of a curricular approach to the educational, social and institutional needs of the persistent absentees. This approach may in turn generate interests among the absentees which may then help them to 'unlearn' their disaffected behaviour and, therefore, enable such pupils to capitalise on the educational provisions offered to them.

Rationale of this Action Research

The central contention of this thesis is that non-school attendance is influenced by deficiencies which occur both within the child's own background and within the school concerned. The empirical evidence suggests that a high proportion of truants tend to come from working-class backgrounds, poor housing, overcrowded homes, high prevalence of unemployment among their parents, poor

parental control, families who are indifferent to education and a high prevalence of criminality among the parents. When studying the schools themselves, the data reveal that school absenteeism is significantly high among schools where pupils feel alienated from their school life and distrust their teachers, where teachers tend to have low expectations of their pupils, where there is more emphasis on punitive actions rather than rewards, and with schools who have not established their own special needs projects to combat disaffection. Therefore, this multi-disciplinary theoretical framework suggests that any remedial actions may have to reflect the principles of behaviour modification to help absentees cope with their personality deficiencies, it may have to emphasise relevant educational approaches to remedy any learning difficulties, and also examine the processes of the school system in order to analyse any factors within the curriculum which may generate pupil disaffection. Thus, the main objective of this thesis is to investigate which type of managerial action(s) should be taken to combat the multifaceted problems of non-school attendance. I believe that in order to achieve this objective several criteria should be established:

1. In light of the enforcement of the 1981 Education Act which states that special needs pupils should be catered for within the framework of the normal school: this research project intends to investigate the various aspects of the structures of school-based projects which may generate empathy and understanding between teachers and special-needs pupils. This research would further investigate the relationships between curriculum content, teaching style and pupil outcomes (e.g. school attendance rates) in order to provide some heuristic implications for educational administrators, teachers and parents.
2. To provide some insight into the strengths and weaknesses of contriving a managerial technique which reflects a multi-disciplinary approach by attempting to combine the individual needs of the child with the organisational needs of the school ethos.

3. To provide a general understanding of both those children and schools who are most at risk of facing a high prevalence of school disaffection.
4. To examine the practicality of various observation schedules and inventories that may later serve as a framework technique for assessing the progressive developments of future special-needs programmes. This exercise may be invaluable in ensuring that both teachers and pupils gain the maximum from schooling by continuous assessment and feedback which can reinforce a sense of achievement, as well as help the school to detect any potential problems in the early stages.

I believe that the research data offered by this thesis will demonstrate that a multi-disciplinary approach to the curricular needs of persistent absentees, which attempts to incorporate the interests of the pupils and also attempts to address any school deficiencies, such as low teacher expectations, will generate more efficacious pupil outcomes. Therefore, throughout this thesis I will discuss persistent absenteeism in terms of its multifaceted problems, and attempt to present some heuristic approaches to the structure and organisation of school-based special needs projects. I further believe that such data may provide a wider conceptual framework on educational practice in relation to non-school attendance than is presently available in the literature.

Chapter 1

The Background Literature on Non-School Attendance

In this chapter the author will discuss some of the historical and epidemiological aspects of non-school attendance. In doing so this chapter will cover sixteen topics.

1. Historical Aspects

In this section the author discusses the development of the British education system and its relationship with non-school attendance.

a) School Attendance between 1700 and 1870

Elementary schooling was present in England long before the state introduced free schooling in the 19th century. Much of the elementary education of that time was maintained by philanthropies or charity organizations (Curtis, 1950). For example, at the turn of the 18th century many charitable societies, such as the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, was established with the main aim of imparting education and religion to the children of the poor communities (Curtis, 1950). Money was usually raised through 'charity' sermons or donations from the rich. Many of these charity schools believed that their humanitarian approach towards helping to educate deprived children would save many of them from deteriorating into a world of crime and violence.

However, by the 19th century with the growth of an industrialized-capitalist British society, many industrialists believed that compulsory schooling would be a powerful instrument with which to mitigate against truancy and thus, inculcate in the maximum number of working-class children an attitude of

obedience and discipline which was thought necessary for the reinvigoration of industry (Humphries, 1981). However, during this period there were many among the English educational circles who believed that compulsory schooling was unnecessary (Ball, 1973). Moreover, although it was conceded that the poorer classes presented special problems, such as parental indifference to education (Pallister, 1969; Withrington, 1975), most educators believed that the more 'industrious' poor would welcome any educational opportunities and, therefore, the problem of poor attendance would disappear.

However, this view was challenged in 1857 at a conference organised by Cannon Mosley, an influential member of Her Majesty's Inspectorate (Ball, 1973). He concluded from his study of English schools that the main defect of the then state of education was the poor attendance rate of the working-class children.

Other studies also substantiate Cannon Mosley's findings. Pallister (1969), for example, studied elementary schooling during the 1850's in several cities in England. His data were collected from reports by school inspectors and Council records on school attendance patterns. He found that among Bradford mill children the average stay at any one school was three months and in Newcastle over 40 per cent of the children stayed less than one year at the same school. Some of Pallister's findings are presented in Table 1.1 which indicates that in 1850 the percentage of pupils attending school diminished with age with 36.4 per cent of children under the age of seven years attending school, whereas only 2.7 per cent of children at the age of 14 years were attending school.

**Table 1.1: The Percentage of each Pupil-Age Group
Attending School in 1850 (Pallister, 1969)**

Age in years	7 or under	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
%	36.4	15.6	14.1	12.3	8.5	6.2	4.2	2.7

By 1858 the figures on the proportion of each age group attending school showed only a slight change with over half the pupils attending school being under the age of nine years, whereas very few of the pupils were 14 years of age. This diminution of the percentages of school attendance as age increases was due to the older children having to work in mines and factories to contribute to the family income, or in the case of working mothers the older children (particularly girls) remained at home to look after the younger siblings (Pallister, 1969; Withrington, 1975).

In 1851, the Horace Mann's report on the educational census of Great Britain suggested that only 72 per cent of children of school age were being educated (see Ball, 1973). Twenty years later an investigation of 1870 into education of four major provincial cities showed that only 60 per cent of the potential school population to be on roll in Birmingham, Liverpool and Manchester, with Leeds only slightly better at 65 per cent (Ball, 1973).

Although by the mid-19th century most children were receiving some form of education, nevertheless it was believed by teachers and churches that the value of this education was being diminished by irregular attendance (Pallister, 1969, Curtis, 1950). Poor attendance aroused great concern among many people in Britain particularly politicians, teachers

and voluntary bodies, such as the Church of England. This led to a wide spectrum of reasons being advanced in the 19th and 20th centuries to explain the aetiologies of non-school attendance among the working classes. The various reasons for persistent absenteeism in the 19th century have been commented upon by Withrington (1975) who summarised the factors influencing non-school attendance into four categories.

Parental Indifference

Withrington suggest that apathy among parents towards their children's education was prevalent in the 19th century. He argues that this parental indifference was rooted in the fact many of the poor lived in abject poverty so their children's labour was seen as a vital source of income. Most parents themselves were uneducated and, therefore, may have perceived schooling as trivial and ineffective. Withrington noted that even among those parents who considered education to be of some value often failed to appreciate the importance of regular school attendance. Consequently, children were kept from school for trivial reasons, such as it was raining. Furthermore, the schools had shown very little interest in parental views on their children's education and consequently little was done to excite parental interests in education. However, from the mid-19th century onwards some educators began to advocate the importance of periodical meetings with parents to discuss plans for their children's education and to also reinforce their (parents) responsibilities.

The Attractiveness of the School, Building, Curriculum, and Teaching Methods

Schools prior to the 1870's were frequently found to be dirty and overcrowded with an atmosphere of poverty and neglect (Selleck, 1968). There were very limited resources and the schools usually

consisted of a single large room with very poor lighting. Pallister (1969) described many of the schools of that time as being very dull and uninspiring. The curriculum was perceived by many parents as of trivial value (Withrington, 1975). However, by the 1870's when compulsory schooling was being introduced, some educators were arguing that it would take more than a mere adding to the number of school buildings in order to compel children to attend. These educators argue that it was necessary for schools to ensure that the curriculum was made suitable to the children's needs in life. Furthermore, it was argued that the methods of teaching should also receive careful consideration. For example, many commentators noted that good schools in 'bad' areas that were taught by sympathetic and well-prepared teachers had notably higher attendance figures than better placed schools that were taught by ill-trained and often brutal teachers (Withrington, 1975).

Children's Health

Withrington considers that ill-health was a far more important determinant of school absenteeism because this was the era when malnutrition and inadequate diets were very prevalent. The poor lived in a perpetual state of destitution, hunger and chronic want. Their unhygienic conditions gave way to the rapid spread of diseases, such as cholera, typhoid, measles, diphtheria and whooping-cough which were all large scale killers in the 19th century. There were some schools where up to 60 per cent of the pupil population would be absent because of infections, such as measles or scarlet fever (Pallister, 1969). The conditions in large towns were even more severe where epidemics would spread more quickly because of conditions of overcrowding and insufficient sanitation. School inspectors reports frequently mentioned the drop in attendance associated with the coming of some disease and in

some instances more virulent diseases would cause the closing of a whole school (Pallister, 1969). In one school an inspector pointed out the danger of disease because it adjoined to the burial ground and indeed some graves were actually dug against the school wall (Pallister, 1969).

Therefore, in aggregate, a substantial amount of school time was lost through illness. During this period communities also suffered from a very high mortality rates. In the West Riding, for example, over 51 per cent of the deaths were of children under the age of 15 years, while Bradford had a figure of 58 per cent of deaths occurring among the under 15-year-old population (Pallister, 1969). Faced with such impoverished prospects many parents saw their children's education as an unwise investment knowing full well that about half of their children would be dead before they reach the age of 15 years, and from these there would be no return of the investment.

The Separate Treatment of Truants

Withrington noted that the persistent absentees often came from the poorest communities for whom education often took a low priority. But there were truants who absent themselves without parental consent or wishes. Long-term truants often caused concern because not only did they withdraw themselves from school, they would also prompt others to leave with them. In the 1860's and afterwards in England it was sometimes suggested by commentators that the most efficacious treatment for truants was to place them in distinctive schools made more attractive to them by the availability of food and clothing. Such establishments were referred to as day industrial feeding schools (Withrington, 1975).

So although by the mid-19th century most children were receiving some form of education, nevertheless, the value of this education was being

diminished by irregular and inadequate attendance which appear to be related to a multitude of problems including poor home conditions, poor health, parental indifference, and inadequate school curricula and deficient teaching methods (Pallister, 1969; Withrington, 1975).

b) State Intervention

By the 1860's there were many in Britain who felt dissatisfied with the poor and unhygienic school conditions which were provided by voluntary bodies such as the Church of England National Society (Curtis, 1950). The General Election of 1868 returned the Liberal Party to power with a strong working majority and for the rest of the 19th century the liberal educational ideology dominated the moulding of schooling provision (Curtis, 1950; Humphries, 1981).

The liberal ideology sought three principal concerns: (i) to ameliorate major social problems among the poorer classes such as juvenile crime, street-gang violence, disease and alcoholism through an infusion of bourgeois values such as hard work, discipline and thrift (Dale & Esland, 1977); (ii) to use the school curriculum as the main instrument with which to transmit the middle class culture to encourage the moral development and elevation of the working class child's persona (Mathieson, 1975); and (iii) to extend elementary and secondary schooling for the more talented working class child (Humphries, 1981). This additional meritocratic dimension to the liberal ideology was governed by economic and political considerations rather than for the democratic rights of the working classes (Humphries, 1981). For in order to retain world domination as a powerful nation, Britain had to expand in industry and military. The liberal ideology saw mass compulsory schooling as a key factor in maintaining Britain's power overseas (Selleck, 1968).

However, the liberal ideology was challenged by the conservative ideology which believed that the state schooling should act as a social class control to enforce obedience to authority and to create an efficient labour force (Humphries, 1981). Humphries argues that although the philosophy of the then two opposing parties was to some extent similar, however, the Conservative Party viewed the working class as a group with limited intellectual potential. Therefore, the Conservative Party believed that authoritarian control of the masses was paramount to imparting knowledge. He further argues that the second feature of the conservative ideology was its reluctance to accept new ideas proposed for changes in the educational structure, such as raising the school leaving age, primarily because it feared that the masses may raise their expectations of education which may then threaten authoritative control. However, although the Conservatives were usually suspicious of the liberal proposals for educational reform, they gradually recognised that some expansion in educational opportunities for working-class children was both economically and politically advantageous (Humphries, 1981).

Returning to the liberal ideology, the Liberal government recognising the importance of compulsory schooling, appointed Mr. W. Forster, a wealthy manufacturer who was known for his interest in popular education, to the post of Vice President of the Education Department. Faced with the problem of poor school buildings, irregular attendance and an uneven distribution of schools, Forster introduced the Elementary Education Act in 1870 with the aim of ensuring that voluntary bodies provide suitable education. Where deficiencies were not amended, the state would step in and fill in the gaps by means of School Boards which consisted of members who were elected by town councils. School fees were to be

retained, but parents unable to pay fees because of poverty could apply for a free ticket. The School Boards had the power to either provide schools themselves from rate aid or to assist the existing schools.

The Boards also had the powers of framing by-laws for the compulsory attendance of children between the ages of five and thirteen years, and for fixing the school leaving age. However, the 1870 Act did not inaugurate universal compulsory schooling, it simply provided more school places (Curtis, 1950). It was the Education Act of 1876 which tightened up some of the laws of the 1870 Act. The 1876 Act made it compulsory for parents to send their children to school and the failure to do so was liable to certain penalties such as a fine.

Despite the introduction of compulsory schooling in the 1870's persistent absenteeism remained a problem (Rubenstein, 1969). Rubenstein conducted a survey on the school attendance rates within the borough of London. The data, which he collected from council registers, indicate that although school attendance had improved since state intervention, nevertheless, persistent absenteeism is still evident. Table 1.2 presents some of Rubenstein's findings which indicate that between 1872 and 1906 school attendance had improved somewhat with the introduction of compulsory schooling.

**Table 1.2: Average School Attendance Rates for London
between 1872 and 1906 (Rubenstein, 1969)**

Year	London School Attendance Rates in percentage
1872	76.70
1877	78.70
1882	79.50
1887	78.40
1892	77.70
1897	80.20
1902	83.70
1906	88.20

The data in Table 1.2 indicate that during the years immediately after the introduction of compulsory schooling pupils' attendance rate was relatively low with 76.70 per cent average attendance in 1872. However, by the turn of this century the school attendance rate had increased by 11.50 per cent to an attendance rate of 88.20 per cent in 1906. Therefore, the findings suggest that compulsory schooling has improved pupils' average school attendance rate, but it has not completely eliminated persistent absenteeism.

Over the past century efforts have been made by various governments to secure regular school attendance by making schools free and compulsory, and raising the school leaving age (Galloway, 1980, 1985a; Reid, 1985, 1986a, 1987). These policies were introduced via a series of Education Acts (Finn, 1987). Some of these Acts include: (a) the 1902 Education Act which abolished School Boards and made secondary schools free for all children; (b) the 1918 Education Act which raised the school leaving age from 13 years to 14 years; (c) legislation was passed in 1936 which provided for the school leaving age to

be raised to the age of 15 years in 1939; (d) the Education Act of 1944 abolished tuition fees at all state-maintained schools, and introduced a continuous system of education which is divided into three stages of primary, secondary and further education; and (e) the 1976 Education Act which introduced comprehensive schools for all pupils of all abilities aged between 11 and 18 years. However, the 1976 Act was repealed by the Conservative Government in 1979, but established comprehensive schools still exist (Finn, 1987).

However, despite all the efforts made to improve the social, health and educational conditions of the British population since 1870, nevertheless, it is interesting to note that some seventy years later the national average school attendance rate still hovers at around 90 per cent (Department of Education and Science (DES), 1974; Fogelman & Richardson, 1974; Inner London Education Authority (ILEA), 1981).

2. The Definitions and Typologies of Non-School Attendance

For decades psychologists and psychiatrists have devoted their time and energy to distinguishing between groups of poor attenders, and describing their personalities, and family and social characteristics. There are legitimate reasons for distinguishing between groups of poor attenders - mainly for diagnostic and prognostic reasons. For example, the literature suggests that poor attenders who are defined as school refusers (school phobics) respond well to clinic-based treatments offered by psychologists and psychiatrists (Blagg, 1987; Blagg & Yule, 1984; Kennedy, 1965). In contrast, poor attenders who are diagnosed as truants are less amenable to clinic-based treatments and tend to have a worse prognosis (Hersov, 1960a, 1960b). This disparity in prognosis may be due to the more unco-operative behaviour of truants and their families in clinic-based intervention than school refusers who are referred for

'treatment' or perhaps due to differences in social class attitudes to 'treatment' (Hersov, 1960a). Therefore, the literature suggest that for management techniques to be efficacious it may be necessary for non-school attenders and their families to be willing to co-operate.

Poor school attenders are divided into three broad categories (Hersov, 1977): i) truants, ii) school refusers or school phobics and iii) children whose parents withhold them from school.

(i) Truancy

Defining the word truancy can be very difficult as demonstrated by Reid (1985). He asked a group of undergraduate students to try to define the term, two of their better attempts included: 'persistent absence without adequate reason' and 'being away from school illegally with or without parental consent'. However, he avoids the term 'truancy' in preference for the term 'persistent absenteeism' which he describes as referring to: 'Any pupil, who for what ever reason, was absent for a minimum of 40 per cent of the two terms immediately prior to the commencement of the study and contrary to Section 39 of the Education Act of 1944' (Reid, 1985, page 6). Reid argues that this definition reflects the absenteeism behaviour of the overwhelming majority of the absentees in his study who were later found to have an absenteeism rate of 65 per cent in the previous secondary school year prior to his investigation. He further states that this term 'persistent absenteeism' avoids the danger of teachers casually using the term 'truancy' to designate anyone from the occasional absentee to the school refuser as having serious school attendance problems.

The difficulties in defining truancy are further complicated by the fact that different authors use it in different ways. Reynolds and

Murgatroyd (1977) assessed truancy via the official school register and used the term to describe all children who are absent from school without good reason. In contrast, Galloway (1976) reserves the term 'truancy' for those pupils who are absent from school without their parents knowledge or consent. This was achieved by investigating pupils who had been absent from school for over 50 per cent of possible attendances in any one term, and also by having discussions with their Headteachers and Education Welfare Officers (EWO) in order to assess the pupils' reasons for absenteeism.

Tyerman (1968) assessed the truancy rate of his population via the official school register and via information from EWO's or school attendance officers as they were then known. His investigation led him to describe a truant as: "the child [who] is absent on his own initiative without his parents' permission" (Tyerman, 1968, page 9). He argues that this form of absenteeism is usually associated with maladjustment, delinquency and other forms of conduct disorders.

The Pack Committee (Scottish Education Department (SED) 1977, page 18) which investigated truancy and disruptive behaviour in Scotland, formulated their own definition of truancy as an: "authorised absence from school, for any period, as a result of premeditated or spontaneous action on the part of pupil, parent or both". This definition is based on teachers comments of the pupils' absenteeism behaviour and via the official school register. Thus pupils who were absent six weeks prior to the study without authorization were defined by the SED as 'truants'.

Farrington (1980) conducted a longitudinal survey on the links between truancy and delinquency. He assessed truancy via the official school

register, teacher questionnaires and pupil self-reports. He made no distinction between truancy and school refusal because he believed that teachers tended to use the two terms as one entity with many staff just as likely to classify an absentee as either truant or school phobic. For example, he found that of the boys whose poor attendance was attributed to school refusal (presumably by educational psychologists), 53.8 per cent were rated by their teachers as frequent truants. This percentage is comparable with the 59.8 per cent of the general poor attendance population who were rated by their teachers as frequent truants. Therefore, Farrington suggests that schools may have some difficulties in clearly distinguishing the two types of non-school attenders. Thus, based on his study Farrington referred to all unjustified absentees as truants.

Fogelman and Richardson (1974) in their study which suggested that truancy is associated with low social class and learning difficulties, defined the term 'truancy' as an: "illegal absence for whatever reason" (page 36). Their definition is based on teachers' knowledge of each child's attendance behaviour. Thus, all children who exhibited school attendance rates below the 85.00 per cent level without authorization are regarded by the authors as poor attenders or 'truants'. However, some six years later in the cohort study Fogelman, Tibbenham, and Lambert (1980, page 31) define the term truancy as being: "absent without parents' knowledge or approval." Thus, the former definition suggest that children who were considered as truants included those persistent absences that were parentally condoned, whereas the latter definition appears to exclude parental-condoned pupil absenteeism.

Fogelman's et al. (1980) definition of truancy also contrast with the SED (1977) and

Tyerman's (1968) definitions. For example, SED include children who are absent with parental knowledge, whereas Fogelman et al. and Tyerman, similarly, tend to include only those absences without parental consent. Thus, such apparent differences in the use of the term 'truancy' in the literature highlights the limitations of categorising persistent absentees.

However, other authors have taken the task of defining school absentees a step further to include a more 'diagnostic' approach. For example, Reid (1982e) studied the social backgrounds of persistent absentees. The absentees, many of whom had achieved an attendance rate of no more than 35 per cent, were defined as such based on the statements of teachers and EWO's. Based on this study, Reid argues that future research may have to attempt to further subdivide groups of absentees in order to establish more effective remedial programmes to meet the needs of non-school attenders. Therefore, he proposed four categories of persistent absentees. The first type is the 'traditional' (or typical) absentee who is regarded as isolated, shy and tending to have a low self-concept. This traditional absentee tends to come from poor and unsupportive home backgrounds. The second type is the 'institutional' absentee who tends to miss school for educational reasons, such as the dislike of a subject. This type of absentee tends to be extroverted, 'mature', have a higher self-concept than the 'traditional' absentee, shows complete disregard for authority, and tends to have a large number of friends. Like the traditional absentee, the institutional absentee tends to come from deprived or unsupportive home backgrounds. The third type is the 'psychological' absentee could be regarded as the school phobic case who may tend to miss school because of psychological factors, such as illness or fear of school, or because of physical disadvantages, such as a handicap. The fourth type

is the 'generic' absentee refers to pupils who have school attendance problems which are related to two or three of the above reasons either at the same time or separately over a period of time.

Another example of 'diagnostic' definitions of persistent absentees is presented by Murgatroyd (1987) who based his data on interviews with teachers and pupils. He argues that many psychologists tend to regard persistent absenteeism as a single category of behaviour which is usually associated with socially disadvantaged backgrounds. However, he asserts that there are too many different and contrary explanations for school absenteeism to allow such simple profiling to be adequate. For example some authors believe that school disaffection is related to poor home conditions, low incomes and conduct disorders (Farrington, 1980; Jardine, 1987; May, 1975; Robins & Ratcliffe, 1980; Tibbenham, 1977; Tyerman, 1958, 1968), whereas others believe that persistent absenteeism is related to school factors, such as low teacher expectations, pupil boredom with lessons or lack of pupil participation in school activities (Hargreaves, 1967; Reid, 1985; Reynolds & Murgatroyd, 1977; White & Brockington, 1983). Therefore, Murgatroyd argues that persistent absentees should be categorised according to the motivational modes which are believed to be influencing absenteeism.

The first type of absenteeism is what Murgatroyd regards as the 'telic' truant who tends to suffer from high levels of anxiety because of hectic timetables, pressure of homework, academic deficiencies or because of competition with other pupils. Such an absentee is regarded as very serious-minded and tends to make careful plans on how to avoid high anxiety situations, such as the school, in preference for low anxiety situations

such as the home. However, their school avoidance behaviour usually leads to another problem: they are now anxious about the consequences of avoiding school, especially in terms of their examinations and careers. Murgatroyd argues that the telic truants may respond to counselling techniques that encourage them to learn to relax especially when in situations of high anxiety.

The second type of absentee is referred to as the 'paratelic' truant who tends to be absent from school because of the need for sensation-seeking and, therefore, is regarded as the opposite to the telic truant. The paratelic truants tend to find school lacking in excitement and, consequently, they will absent themselves from school in order to seek sources of arousal, such as the enjoyment of being in charge of their daily activities, or the enjoyment of the attention given to them by their parents and the school because of their truancy. Murgatroyd suggests that the best counselling approach to this type of absentee is to give him or her the minimum of attention.

The third type of absenteeism is regarded as the 'conformist' truant. Such truants tend to be motivated to miss school because of pressure from some group or gang to conform with the other members by becoming persistent absentees. These truants tend to find excitement when they are truantiing with their gang, but tend to be anxious about their behaviour when away from the gang. Murgatroyd suggests that such truants should be counselled on activities which are concerned with developing the individuals self-understanding.

The fourth type of absentee is referred to as the 'negativistic' truant who tends to overtly reject any pressure to conform to school rules. Such truants tend to be motivated by a high level of

monitoring of school attendance by teachers or parents, or motivated by some imagined fear of being punished by the school for truanting. Some negativistic truants are regarded as 'mastery negativistic absentees' because they tend to be motivated to control their families attention by refusing to attend school or to demonstrate power to a teacher. Others are referred to as 'sympathy negativistic absentees' because they tend to be motivated by the need to be liked or respected, but feel that they are not and, therefore, react by becoming absentees in order to gain sympathy from the people around them. Murgatroyd suggests that the most effective counselling for these two types of negativistic truants is one which focuses on strengthening the pupils' relationships with the key people in their lives, such as the parent or teacher.

Comparisons between Reid's (1982e) categories of absenteeism with those of Murgatroyd's (1987) categories suggest that they both agree that institutional factors may influence school absenteeism which is reflected in the 'institutional' absentee (Reid, 1982e), and the 'telic' and 'paratelic' absentees (Murgatroyd, 1987). They both also suggest that a 'phobic' type of school absenteeism may exist among non-school attenders. This is reflected in Reid's 'psychological' absentee who tends to fear school because of bullying or teasing from other pupils, and in Murgatroyd's 'telic' absentee who tends to suffer from high levels of anxiety when in school situations. However, whereas Reid's categories also tend to include possible home conditions, such as deprivation, as influential factors of school disaffection, conversely, Murgatroyd tends to ignore such social factors and instead emphasize the interpersonal dynamics that the absentee might be experiencing with teachers or groups which may

influence truancy.

Here the literature seems to indicate that as research increases our knowledge of school absenteeism, in turn, the definitions of 'truancy' and 'persistent absenteeism' appears to be gravitating away from the purely legal terminology (e.g. SED, 1977; Tyerman, 1958, 1968) to a more 'diagnostic' approach (Murgatroyd, 1987; Reid, 1982e).

(ii) School Refusal or School Phobia

School refusal is even more difficult to define than truancy. While truancy is seen as an indication of conduct disorders, poor home conditions and possible school deficiencies (Farrington, 1980; Hersov, 1960a; May, 1975; Tyerman, 1968; Withrington, 1975), school refusal is seen as a manifestation of a 'psychoneurotic' disorder characterised by a fear of leaving the home and a great dependency on the parents particularly the mother (Davidson, 1960; Hersov, 1960a, 1960b; Hsia, 1984; Johnson, Falstein, Szurek & Svendsen, 1941; Rubenstein & Hastings, 1980). While others, such as the behaviourists, regard school phobia as a learnt response in order to avoid high anxiety situations (e.g. the school building) (see Blagg, 1987; Blagg & Yule, 1984; Eysenck & Rachman, 1965; Kennedy, 1965).

The problem of defining this form of absenteeism arises from the fact that different authors prefer different terms. For example, some authorities prefer the term school phobia, since it reflects the classic psychoanalytical belief that phobias arise by projecting internal fears onto external neutral objects, such as a school, which is then consequently avoided (Davidson, 1960). While other authors (e.g. Clyne, 1966; Hersov & Berg, 1980) prefer the term school refusal because they

believe that not all patients show phobic disorders and they further argue that 'school phobia' is a misnomer because the syndrome is not really a fear of going to school, but rather a fear of leaving the security of maternal protection.

The key discoverer of the phenomenon of school refusal was Broadwin (1932, page 254) who reported that there was a "peculiar form of truancy characterized by an obsessional neurosis". He observed that the children were obsessed with ideas that their mothers might be injured or even killed if they were away from home. Seven years later, Partridge (1939) gave this disorder the label 'psychoneurotic truancy', and further characterised it as a form of the 'mother-following-syndrome' and a kind of 'stay at home neurosis'.

In a classic article, Johnson et al. (1941) called attention to the fear that school attendance sometimes aroused in some children and designated the problem as 'school phobia'. What was also interesting about their work was the discovery that the children's anxieties were significantly associated with their mothers' anxieties.

Estes, Haylett and Johnson (1956) tend not to use the term 'school phobia', but instead used the term 'separation anxiety' as both a clinical identifier and as the aetiological factor in the generation of school phobia. They defined separation anxiety as: 'a pathological emotional state in which child and parent, usually the mother, are involved in a mutually hostile dependent relationship characterized primarily by an intense need on the part of both the child and the mother to be close in proximity with each other' (Estes et al., 1956, page 682).

Shapiro and Jegede (1973, page 179) in their

study on school phobia and associated anxieties defined it as a 'reluctance to approach an object, place, or person not ordinarily met with anxiety'. After making several investigations on school phobia the authors concluded that too many children are being classified as school phobic; more appropriately they should be identified as agoraphobics because of their fear of leaving the home.

Kennedy (1965) differentiated two types of school phobias based on the study of fifty children showing phobic tendencies. Through the observations of these children while attending a clinic, Kennedy was able to formulate ten diagnostic items for the Type 1 School Phobic and ten diagnostic items for the Type 2 School Phobic. The Type 1 School Phobia is referred to as the neurotic crisis phobia which is associated with various characteristics, such as illness, death in the family and concern for mother's health. Such school phobics tend to show poor school progress, but are likely to come from families where there is good communication between the parents, and the fathers tend to compete with the mothers in household management. The Type 2 School Phobia is referred to as the way-of-life phobia which is associated with good school progress and family health is not an issue. The families of the Type 2 School Phobic tends to have communication problems, and mothers who tend to be neurotic or fathers who exhibit disorders, such as crime related problems. Kennedy found that the Type 1 School Phobic tended to respond more positively to clinical intervention than the Type 2 School Phobic. This might be partly due to the fact that the Type 1 School Phobic tends to have good family communications, whereas the Type 2 School Phobic tends to experience poor family communication and have parents who tend to exhibit personality deficiencies.

Hersov (1960b) studied 50 cases of school refusers aged between 10 and 16 years. He assessed each child on an IQ test, a standardised reading test, patterns of behaviour (e.g. timidity, sociability or aggressiveness) and family factors (e.g. parental experience of depression or alcoholism). When the children's behaviour patterns were correlated with their parents' behaviours, Hersov found that three main types of parent-child relationships emerged. (1) This type of school refuser tends to be very demanding and stubborn, and tends not to be timid when away from the home. The mother of this type of child tends to be over-indulgent, while the father tends to be inadequate and passive. (2) This type of school refuser tends to be timid, passive and obedient at home with a dominant mother, but fearful when away from home. (3) This type of school refuser tends to be stubborn and demanding at home, but alert and friendly away from home. The father is usually firm and tends to control the management of the home, while the mother is usually over-indulgent and closely bonded to the demanding child.

(iii) Withholding by Parents

Parents may withhold their children from school unlawfully for many reasons. In the late 19th century parents withheld their children from school mainly because their labour was needed to provide sustenance for the family (Pallister, 1969). Today children are withheld from school for more prosaic reasons including a lack of suitable clothing to wear to school (Institute for the Study and Treatment of Delinquency (ISTD), 1974), needed to look after younger siblings (St. John-Brooks, 1982) or to do the shopping (Galloway, 1979).

Children who are withheld are distinguished from school refusers by the fact that no apparent

quasi-medical conditions are ascribed to them or their families (Galloway, 1979; Hersov, 1960a, 1977; Withrington, 1975). A further distinction which is implied in the literature suggest that in the case of 'parent withholding' it is the parent who is preventing the child from attending school (Galloway, 1979, 1980, 1985a; Withrington, 1975), while in the case of the school refuser the child adamantly refuses to leave the home, inspite of parents' conscious efforts to persuade him/her to attend school (Ayllon, Smith & Rogers, 1970; Broadwin, 1932; Johnson, et al., 1941).

3. The Limitations of Definitions

Although there are definite reasons for attempting to define poor attenders, nevertheless, there are various inconsistencies in the literature, with different authors using the term in different ways (e.g. Galloway, 1979, 1980, 1985a; Reynolds & Murgatroyd, 1977). In the case of school refusal some authors use the term to describe absentees with 'psychoneurotic disorders' (e.g. Broadwin, 1932; Hersov, 1960a), while others use it to describe both truancy and school phobia (e.g. Cooper, 1966).

The problems of definition are further complicated by the fact that different authors use different methods to assess non-school attendance. For example Farrington (1980) relied on teachers' ratings of pupils' absenteeism and he also used pupil self-reports; Reid (1985) used the official school register and teacher reports; Fogelman and Richardson (1974) relied on teacher assessments; and Galloway (1985a) relied on the official school register, teacher assessments and EWO reports. Therefore, making consistent comparisons between the various studies might be difficult because the truant children of one population may not necessarily reflect the same degree of associated problems (e.g. poverty, delinquency, or poor curricular organization) as truant children in another population.

The use of the official school register may also reflect some limitations because of the problem of 'hidden truancy' (Galloway, 1980). Galloway used this term to refer to pupils who attend school during the registration period to receive their attendance mark and then depart from school after registration. Such figures on 'hidden truancy' are generally quite difficult to distinguish from school attendance behaviour and, therefore, may disguise the actual number of pupils who are absent from school without authorisation. However, one of the author's research schools (School X) attempted to overcome this problem by instructing the subject teachers to mark an attendance register for every lesson period. Other limitations in the use of the official school register can be reflected in the fact that when teachers are on industrial strike all their pupils receive an attendance mark on the register for each day of the industrial action. This may then further disguise the actual truancy rate of the pupils concerned.

4. The Distinction between Truancy and School Refusal

Various authorities within the fields of psychology and psychiatry have attempted to build up typologies of non-school attendance. Denny (1974, page 12), for example, draws a distinction between truancy and school phobia by arguing that 'truancy is a social rather than an emotional problem, associated with poor housing conditions and inadequate home care, while school phobia is associated with a higher class background and seems to be emotional rather than social'. However, one eminent authority in this field, Tyerman (1968), argues for caution when classifying non-attenders as either truants or school refusers. He believes that this dichotomy is an over simplification and except for a minority of cases, most non-school attenders do not fall clearly into either category: the two conditions simply represent extremes on the same continuum which shade into each other.

However, several studies do strongly suggest that there are clear distinctions between school refusers and

truants. In Hersov's (1960a) classic article, for example, he compared a group of fifty truants with a group of fifty school refusers and fifty school attenders at a children's clinic. He compared the three groups via case-record schedules, reading tests and family variables, such as histories of anxiety and depression. His comparative study suggests that truants tend to be of lower intelligence, perform poorly in school, come from poor family backgrounds and exhibit conduct disorders such as juvenile delinquency, lying and destructive behaviour. These findings are also confirmed by May (1975) who found that truants tended to be associated with conduct disorders; and is confirmed further by Fogelman and Richardson (1974) who found that 44.7 per cent of truant families were involved with welfare services in relation to behaviour problems or financial difficulties, whereas this was true for only 10.7 per cent of good attenders.

In comparison with truants, Hersov found that school refusers tend to have a significantly higher IQ, tend to behave better in school, produce a good standard of work, come from a higher social class background, and exhibit psychoneurotic disorders such as anxiety and hysteria. The typological models built to distinguish truants and school phobics can be seen in Table 1.3.

**Table 1.3: Charactological Model of the School Refuser
and the Truant Derived from Hersov (1960a)**

	Social class	Disposition	Academic Ability
School Refusal	Higher	Passive, dependent and over-protected by parents	Good standard of school work
Truant	Lower	Aggressive, has a history of delinquency, stealing and inconsistent parental discipline	Poor standard of school work

The model presented by Hersov in Table 1.3 suggest the truants and school refusers are diametrical opposite to each other with the truant tending to be an aggressive child with poor academic and home backgrounds, whereas the school refuser tends to be a passive child with good academic and home backgrounds.

Want's (1980) findings are very similar to Hersov's. He found the traits most associated with truanter's included: delinquent behaviour such as drug abuse or assault; absence from both home and school; poor academic achievement; bullying behaviour; and infrequent involvement in family activities.

Want also found that the traits associated with school refusers included: intolerance of separation from the parent-figure; insistence on remaining at home when absent from school; frequently complains of illness or will become ill by self-inducement by taking laxatives,

for example, in order to stay at home; suffers from melancholic moods; and has panic reactions to school with excessive crying and screaming.

Hersov's (1960a) comparative study was repeated by Blagg and Yule (1987: cited by Blagg, 1987) whose work appears to substantiate most of his findings. They studied 70 children classified as school phobics, 57 truants and 18 'occasional' non-school attenders. The children were classified via the criteria presented by Berg, Nichols, and Pritchard (1969) which suggest that there are three main types of persistent absentees: (i) the absentee who has no marked emotional upset (truant); (ii) the absentee who suffers from severe emotional upset when having to face school (school phobic); (iii) the absentee who misses school with parental knowledge. Blagg and Yule compared the truant and school phobic samples on several variables. For example, they found that on the Behaviour Rating Scales (Rutter & Yule, 1968), completed by parents and teachers, indicate that the majority of school phobics exhibit neurotic disorders such as worrying and the fear of new situations, whereas most truants tended to exhibit conduct disorders, such as stealing and destructive behaviour. They also found that unemployment was significantly higher among the truant group parents (26.7 per cent) than among phobic parents (1.8 per cent). The data indicate that 67.2 per cent of mothers of the school phobic group had full- or part-time jobs, as against 47.3 per cent of the truant group mothers. They also found that truants tended to come from broken homes and showed less anxiety when separated from their parents, whereas school phobics tended to come from small, united, cohesive families, and exhibit significantly more anxiety when separated from both parents. Therefore, their data further substantiate the work of Hersov (1960a) who found that truants were more likely to come from poorer home backgrounds than school refusers, and that the former were also more likely to show conduct disorders, while the latter group were more likely to exhibit neurotic disorders.

However, their comparative study indicate that school phobics and truants do not differ significantly with respect to reading age on the Wechsler Intelligence Scale for Children-Reading (WISC-R) Verbal Scale. This is contrary to Hersov's (1960a) work which suggests that school phobics are significantly brighter than truant children. However, this disagreement between Hersov (1960a), and Blagg and Yule (1987: cited by Blagg, 1987) might be due to differences in the selection process, with Hersov using a clinical sample and the latter authors using a non-clinical sample. For example, some authors have argued that clinics are probably more likely to select middle-class families who are willing to co-operate with the intervention (Galloway, 1980, 1985a). Such families may also tend to be motivated by the fact that their children have relatively good school careers. Whereas Blagg and Yule studied a non-clinical population who are less likely to reflect the bias selective processes of a clinic and, therefore, they attained results which appear to be contrary to those of Hersov's on the issue of the academic abilities of the two groups of absentees.

5. The Operational Definition for this Study

The author studied twenty three non-school attenders (this term refers to unjustified absentees) who were selected and placed on special projects because of their severe absenteeism, learning difficulties and behaviour problems. The author has chosen to refer to her subjects as non-school attenders for five main reasons:

- (i) Although all the subjects exhibit predominantly truant tendencies, there was at least one subject (female) who showed some traits normally associated with school refusers, for example, she always stayed at home when non-school attending and is very attached to her parents. However, she has no history of any form of anxiety when entering school.

- (ii) Most of the members of a professional panel (see Chapter 9b) who selected the subjects showed a preference for the term non-school attendance. Therefore, in order to ensure consistency in this study, the author will use the term non-school attendance.
- (iii) Several authors have cautioned against the temptation to classify persistent absentees as either 'truants' or 'school phobics' (Farrington, 1980; Tyerman, 1968). Tyerman argues that this dichotomy is an over simplification with only a few extreme cases showing a predominance of either school phobic or truancy characteristics. He states that for the majority of cases children who are persistent absentees tend to show characteristics relating to both categories. Farrington also cautions against categorising absentees primarily because he found that teachers tended to be unaware of the nature of school refusal. Therefore, he warns against such rigid categorisation because teachers' uncertainty in assessing the absentees may adversely affect the consistency of the data. Thus, the author believes that it would be more conducive to study 'persistent absentees' without using this rigid classification system since the literature suggests that most absentees tend to exhibit many facets relating both to truancy and school phobia and, therefore, may render classification as inappropriate.
- (iv) The epidemiological studies suggest that school phobic characteristics are relatively rare among persistent absentees (Galloway, 1985a; Kahn & Nursten, 1968; Reynolds & Murgatroyd, 1977). This low incidence of school phobia may partly explain why teachers tend to be unfamiliar with its symptoms (Farrington, 1980). Thus, the author will assume that children who are 'illegally' absent from school will tend to exhibit predominantly truant

characteristics.

- (v) Recent research tends to study persistent absenteeism as one entity rather than using the strict dichotomous classification methods (i.e. school phobia or truancy) mainly because such empirical work is beginning to highlight the multifaceted nature of persistent absenteeism which tends to include both social and institutional factors (e.g. Galloway, 1983a, 1983b, 1985a; Reid, 1981; 1983a, 1983b, 1984a, 1984b). Therefore, in the light of this recent research, the author will use the more general terms 'non-school attendance' or 'persistent absenteeism' in order to ensure that her criteria of selection is somewhat similar to those used in the recent research methods. This may then enable her to make more consistent comparisons with the current work on school disaffection.

Therefore, this thesis will focus on non-school attenders who are defined as mainly truants in order to present an overview of the literature relating to the author's Subject Groups and their backgrounds.

6. The Epidemiology of Non-School Attendance

Most researchers now agree that valid and reliable measures of school attendance are very difficult to obtain and interpret (Galloway, 1985a; ILEA, 1981; Reid, 1985, 1987). However, both national and local surveys have attempted to give some indication of the incidence of absenteeism.

A study carried out by the National Children's Bureau (Fogelman & Richardson, 1974) on eleven year old pupils born in England and Wales indicate that 10.4 per cent of pupils had a school attendance rate of less than 85 per cent of all possible attendances.

Other surveys seem to agree with Fogelman's and Richardson's conclusion that attendance rates have

remained constant at around 90 per cent. Rankin's (1961) study on all local authorities in England and Wales indicated that the average attendance during the autumn term was 93.1 per cent in the counties, and 92.6 per cent in the county boroughs.

The one-day survey of all the schools in England and Wales (DES, 1974) reported that 9.9 per cent of all pupils were absent on that day and of these, 2.2 per cent had no legitimate reason for absence.

The ILEA (1981) also conducted a one-day survey in London on school attendance rates for primary and secondary schools. The study collected its data from the official school registers, and did not differentiate between justified and unjustified absences. The data indicated that the overall attendance rate for primary schools was 93.2 per cent and for secondary schools it was 86.0 per cent. Therefore, this suggest that the primary schools attained a higher attendance rate for that particular day.

Grimshaw and Pratt (1986) carried out a survey on school attendance which involved 35 secondary schools in Sheffield. The schools were requested to rate the attendance figures for their pupils during the Autumn term of 1982 and the Spring term of 1983. When examining the general persistent absenteeism rates the data indicated that the pupils attained an average school attendance of 97.11 per cent for the two terms. Further analysis of the data indicate that the schools attained an average attendance of 97.81 per cent for the Autumn term and an average attendance of 96.41 per cent for the Spring term. Thus, the data suggest that school attendance rates are higher in the Autumn term than in the Spring term which is in agreement with the data in the literature on school attendance patterns (Baum, 1978; Sandon, 1961; Trigg, 1973).

The National Association of Chief Education

Welfare Officers (NACEWO, 1975) carried out a survey on all secondary schools in sixteen local education authorities. Their findings showed that 24 per cent of secondary pupils were absent. Of these, between 3.5 and 7 per cent were absent without justifiable reasons. In another survey undertaken by the Pack Committee (Scottish Education Department, 1977) on secondary pupils in Scotland indicate that 15 per cent were found to be unaccountably absent on at least one occasion.

Local surveys seem to substantiate the national surveys. For example, the Leicestershire Education Welfare Service conducted a one-week survey on all the middle and secondary schools in Leicestershire during February 1988 (see Chapter 10a for more details). The survey indicated that the overall attendance rate for Leicestershire pupils aged between 11 and 16 years is 90.00 per cent which is similar to the national average attendance rate (Fogelman & Richardson, 1974; Fogelman et al., 1980). The author gathered further information from the Service on five secondary schools (including her own research schools - School X and School Y) which the officials believe reflects the 'typical' attendance patterns of the various areas in Leicestershire (e.g. rural and urban). Table 1.4 presents the school attendance figures for each of the five schools.

Table 1.4: The School Attendance Rates in Percentages for the Five Secondary Schools in Leicestershire

Form	School A (Rural)	School B (Urban)	School C (Rural)	School X (Urban)	School Y (Urban)
1-5	93.90	86.10	94.70	87.70	74.80

The data in Table 1.4 indicate that School C has the highest attendance rate, followed by School A, School X, School B, and School Y has the poorest attendance

rate. When comparing the data on the average attendance rate for the rural schools (i.e. School A and School C) and urban schools (i.e. School B, School X and School Y), the figures indicate that the rural schools attained a higher average attendance rate (94.30 per cent) than the urban schools (82.87 per cent). Other local surveys also appear to agree with the Leicestershire study, such as Tyerman's (1968) study on a Welsh town which show an average attendance of 86.3 per cent. The Plowden Report (1967) conducted a study on two local educational authorities. The report found the overall attendance rate in primary schools was about 93 per cent. Furthermore, according to the report primary school teachers believed that at least 4 per cent of children who are absent at any one time ought to have been in school.

7. School Attendance Patterns

Several authors have studied school attendance patterns for the week, the term and the school year. The findings suggest that absence is greater in the afternoon than in the morning (Baum, 1978; ILEA, 1981; Sandon, 1937) and that there is an accumulative tendency for attendance to deteriorate during the week with Fridays having the worst attendance rate (Baum, 1978; Trigg, 1973; Sandon, 1961; Tyerman, 1968). For example, in a pre-war study, Sandon (1937) investigated the general trend with regard to absence within each day and over the whole week. His findings, based on 300 secondary school pupils, suggest that school absence in the afternoon was 6 per cent greater than morning absenteeism. He also noted that there was a consistent diminution in attendance during the week. Saturday morning schooling seem to be the most unpopular for pupils with an absenteeism rate that is 13 per cent greater than the weekly average. The ILEA conducted a one-day survey involving over 100,000 secondary school pupils. The survey suggests that the average school attendance for the morning session is 86.5 per cent which is slightly higher than the average attendance rate for the afternoon session with 85.5 per cent attendance.

In a further study Sandon (1961) investigated school attendance patterns throughout the school year. His investigation indicated that the highest absenteeism rate occurred during the Spring term, whereas the highest attendance rate occurred during the start of the academic year. The month with the poorest attendance was February, closely followed by January. Sandon suggests that this is probably due to medical reasons, such as attacks of influenza which tend to be most prevalent during the inclement weather.

Trigg (1973) investigated the problem of non-school attendance at a special needs school. His study included ninety special needs pupils whose attendance patterns were investigated for a three-year period. Trigg found that the average attendance figure for the school, for the period between September 1967 and July 1970, was 82 per cent. When he compared this figure with the average attendance in ordinary schools (about 90.00 per cent) in the same local authority area, the data indicate that pupils in special needs schools tended to have a higher absenteeism rate than mainstream schools.

Trigg further analysed the special needs pupils' termly attendance for the academic year 1968-1969. He found that the average rate of attendance for the autumn term was 83.5 per cent, for the Spring term 82.7 per cent and for the Summer term the rate of attendance was 82.4 per cent. The figures suggest that school attendance in the Autumn term was slightly better than in the other two terms which is in agreement with Sandon's (1961) study. Trigg also examined the weekly school attendance patterns which indicated that the absence rate is 19.5 per cent greater at the end of the week than at the beginning. This compares with Tyerman's (1968) findings which suggest that absenteeism is 25 per cent greater at the end of the week than at the beginning.

Baum (1978) carried out an in-depth study of school attendance patterns at three comprehensive schools. The investigation included one school year, 1974-1975. Of the three schools involved in the study, two were situated in Mid-Wales and one in South England. Baum found that the overall pattern of absenteeism during the week increased by 4.5 per cent as the week progressed in Welsh School 1, 2.1 per cent in Welsh School 2 and by 2.7 per cent in the case of the English School. Baum argues that this weekly pattern of diminution in school attendance is especially prevalent among groups of underachievers who may become increasingly disenchanted with the curriculum as the week progresses and are only willing to return to school after a weekend break. Baum also analysed the school attendance patterns for each term which are presented in Table 1.5.

Table 1.5: The Termly Attendance Patterns in Percentages for Welsh School 1, Welsh School 2 and the English School (Baum, 1978).

School	Forms	Autumn	Spring	Summer	Overall
Welsh 1	1-4	90.9	86.4	87.9	88.7
Welsh 2	1-4	95.5	91.5	93.0	93.5
English	1-4	93.8	92.6	92.9	93.2

The figures in Table 1.5 indicate that the three schools experience their poorest school attendance rates during the Spring term and experience their most favourable attendance during the Autumn term. Thus, Baum's findings are consistent with other studies on school attendance patterns (Sandon, 1961; Trigg, 1973).

8. Regional Variations

The figures on school attendance in Great Britain suggest that school absenteeism varies from region to region. Fogelman and Richardson (1974) found that almost twice as many pupils in Wales (14.6 per cent) than in the

south-west of England (7.5 per cent) had an attendance rate below 85 per cent of possible attendances. They also found the truancy rate in Wales to be higher than in England: with 4.1 per cent compared with 2.1 per cent respectively. Fogelman's et al. (1980) demographic study suggest that the reported incidence of truancy was highest in Wales, Scotland and Northern England, with southern England having the lowest incidence of truancy.

The DES (1974) conducted a one-day survey in January on all secondary and middle schools in England and Wales. The national survey revealed that 9.9 per cent of all pupils were absent on that day. Of these, 22.7 per cent (2.2 per cent of all pupils) had no legitimate reason for absence. When comparing England and Wales, the survey indicates that the average absenteeism rate is higher in Wales, with 13.9 per cent of pupils absent, than in England with 9.6 per cent of pupils absent from school. In relation to the truancy rate the survey also shows that Wales has a higher truancy rate with 4.1 per cent of pupils absent without authorisation, whereas this is only true for 2.1 per cent of the pupils in England. Carroll (1977a) has suggested that these figures may reflect the national truancy rates. However, owing to the limitations of the methodology used in the survey which only consisted of a one-day investigation, it is possible that these figures may have underestimated the problem.

The NACEWO (1975) carried out a survey in October, 1973, which consisted of sixteen local education authorities (LEA's). The survey based on EWO responses to a questionnaire indicated that 24.00 per cent of secondary school pupils were absent, of which was estimated that between 3.5 and 7.00 per cent of the pupils were absent without good reason. In the SED (1977) survey which involved a six-week study of secondary schools in Scotland in 1976, the figures show that 15 per cent of the pupils were found to be unaccountably absent from school on at least one occasion.

9. Reasons for Missing School

Although it is generally agreed that overall school attendance rates have consistently remained at around 90 per cent (DES, 1974; Fogelman & Richardson, 1974; Galloway, 1979; Plowden Report, 1967; Rankin, 1961; Rubenstein, 1969; SED, 1977), there is little agreement on how much of the remaining 10 per cent is due to unjustified reasons. Some authors argue that the vast majority of absences are due to legitimate medical reasons (Galloway, 1979; NACEWO, 1975; Plowden Report, 1967; Sardon, 1961; Tyerman, 1968). Tyerman (1968), for example, suggests that approximately 80 to 90 per cent of all absences are due to illness. The NACEWO (1975) estimated that illness accounted for 69 per cent of the total number of children absent from school. Surveys also showed that the proportion of children absent because of illness was greatest in the infant stage, followed by the junior stage and least at the secondary stage (Fogelman & Richardson, 1974; NACEWO, 1975); possibly because most children build up a resistance to germs and infections as they progress through school.

The Plowden Report (1967) attributed 4.4 per cent of all absences to non-medical reasons. In contrast, Reynolds and Murgatroyd (1974) considered 75 per cent of all absences to be unjustified.

The NACEWO (1975) survey suggests that 69 per cent of all school absences were due to illness. Of the rest, the main reasons given for school absences include: holidays which accounted for 7.3 per cent of absences, accidents for 4 per cent, family neglect for 6.4 per cent, school refusal for 1.2 per cent, truancy for 3.3 per cent and 'other causes' accounted for 7 per cent. However, for reasons which are not clearly explained the NACEWO felt unable to accept such a high figure for illness because they believed that an unaccountable proportion of the 'sick notes' were probably written by parents which only reflected part or none of the truth, or probably written by over-protective parents.

Therefore, on this basis the NACEWO estimated that only 40 per cent of absences are due to genuine medical reasons.

Galloway (1985a) presents data on a survey of primary and secondary schools for a catchment area in Sheffield. The various categories of persistent absences were assessed via comments from the EWO's. The data indicate that for primary schools 35 per cent of all absences were believed to be due to illness, 15 per cent were attributed to parental consent, about 4 per cent were believed to be related to truancy and about 5 per cent of all the absences were believed to be due to school phobia. Examination of the secondary school absenteeism patterns indicate that over 20 per cent of all absences were believed to be due to illness, about 14 per cent were attributed to parental consent, 15 per cent were believed to be related to truancy and about 7 per cent of all absences were believed to be due to school phobia. The survey suggests that for both primary and secondary schools the unjustified absences (e.g. truancy and parental withholding) account for a relatively small proportion of the total absence rate. However, the truancy rate appears to sharply increase among the secondary school pupils as compared with the primary school pupils.

Mawdy (1977) conducted a survey on the school attendance rates for three Sheffield Council Estates. The study involved 233 pupils aged between 11 and 15 years, and the assessment of their unjustified absences was based on self-report questionnaires. When the pupils were asked if they had truanted in the 12 months prior to the study the data indicate that 47.6 per cent of the pupils had admitted to playing truant, whereas 52.4 per cent of the pupils denied ever truanting. Therefore, Mawdy argues that truancy is probably greater than suggested by most studies (e.g. Fogelman & Richardson, 1974; Fogelman et al., 1980; Grimshaw & Pratt, 1986; ILEA, 1981). He further argues that more self-report questionnaires might

be needed in order to avoid the selectivity processes of the schools, LEA's and EWO's. He believes that such reports may provide further insight into the ways in which truants perceive themselves and their lives. However, Mawdy does note that the self-report method has some disadvantages including: (a) by definition truants will tend to be absent from school during the administration of the questionnaires and, therefore, may make data collection a difficult task; (b) many pupils may deny any deviant behaviours despite the reassurance of confidentiality; and (c) some pupils may experience reading difficulties which may lead to incomplete responses. However, despite the disadvantages Mawdy (1977), and Reynolds and Murgatroyd (1974) do suggest that pupil self-reports are more likely to show a higher rate of truancy than the use of official assessments via the schools and the EWO's.

From the assessment of the literature there appears to be very little agreement on how much of non-school attendance is due to non-medical reasons and, therefore, are unjustified. Table 1.6 suggests that the variations in the figures on unjustified absences might be related to the various sources of information.

Table 1.6: Percentage of Absences Attributed to Non-Medical Reasons

Author and date of publication	Absences attributed to non-medical or unjustified reasons (%)	Informants
Plowden Report (1967)	4.00	Teachers
Mawdy (1977)	47.60	Pupils
NACEWO (1975)	60.00	EWO's
Reynolds & Murgatroyd (1974)	75.00	Pupils

The figures in Table 1.6 suggest that the percentages of unjustified absences ranges from 4.00 per cent to 75.00 per cent. Galloway (1985a) has suggested that these wide variations might be partly attributed to the possibility that teachers are probably more charitable towards pupils' reasons for absence than the EWO's. However, this does not explain why on average pupils as informants tend to attribute an even greater part of their absences to unjustified reasons than the EWO's.

Although illness rates are greatest in very young children (Fogelman & Richardson, 1974; NACEWO, 1975), other work suggest that some of the older pupils may experience psychological problems without teachers being fully aware of the damage that can be inflicted on such pupils. Truants, for example, tend to deviate from the norm with low intelligence (Fogelman & Richardson, 1974; Hersov, 1960a; May, 1975) which may make them more vulnerable to teasing and, therefore, absent themselves from school. All teachers should be alerted to this possibility.

School refusal has long been considered an illness and is, therefore, included within the medical category (Clyne, 1966; Hersov, 1960a; Kahn & Nursten, 1968). In contrast, truancy is generally regarded by most researchers as depicting socio-educational problems (Farrington, 1980; Fogelman & Richardson, 1974; Hersov, 1960a; May, 1975; Plowden Report, 1967; Tyerman, 1968). However, it is also possible that some truants are more at risks than other groups of school children from a health point of view due to their unfavourable home and social conditions (DES, 1974; Farrington, 1980; Plowden Report, 1967; SED, 1977; Tibbenham, 1977; Tyerman, 1968).

10. The Incidence of Truancy and School Refusal

The literature suggests that truancy is much more prevalent than school refusal. It is estimated that

between 2 and 15 per cent of absentees are truants (Galloway, 1985a; NACEWO, 1975; Tyerman, 1968), and between 1 and 7 per cent are school refusers (Galloway, 1985a; Kahn & Nursten, 1968; Waldfogel, Coolidge & Hahn, 1957). Others have suggested that school refusal probably occurs in less than 1 per cent of school absentees (Miller, Barrett & Hampe, 1974).

11. Truants and Other Absentees

Galloway (1983a) studied persistent absentees aged between 5 and 15 years who attended schools in one part of Sheffield. He studied truants who are defined as "pupils who are absent without their parents' knowledge" (Galloway, 1983a, page 607). The other absentee group included pupils who are absent with parental knowledge and those who suffer severe relationship problems with their parents (school phobics). The truant pupils and the other absentees were compared on several variables including housing conditions, parents health, pupil's delinquency rates and academic ability (via the WISC-R). Galloway found that truants do not differ significantly from other absentees in the type of quality of housing and over 40 per cent of families of both groups were involved with social work agencies. Both groups also experienced similar rates of parental separation or divorce. He did find that truants generally tended to experience lower family incomes than other absentees. However, at least 80 per cent of other absentees' parents had received some form of social benefit in the 12 months prior to the study, compared with 57 per cent of the truants' parents. Moreover, he found that other absentees were significantly more likely to have lost a parent through death or have mothers who suffer from some form of illness (e.g. nervous problems) than truant absentees.

The data on the behaviour patterns of the population indicate that the other absentees were significantly more likely to be rated by their parents as suffering from anxiety, while the truants were significantly more likely to be rated by their parents as

having conduct disorders such as stealing and lying.

When assessing family relationships, Galloway found that other absentees were significantly more likely than truants to have over-protective parents and were also significantly more likely to be over-dependent on their parents than the truant absentees. On the other hand, truants were significantly more likely to be rated by their parents as being too independent. The other absentees were also significantly more likely to have experienced satisfactory relationships with their parents than truants (as rated via the parent responses). The truants and the other absentees do not differ significantly on their IQ scores, but the truants were significantly more likely than the other absentees to have a reading age at least two years below their chronological age. However, the two groups do not differ significantly in the number of committed offences and nor do they differ significantly on their school attendance patterns, with both groups attaining an average attendance of 37 per cent. Galloway concluded that the results show few differences in the social and financial circumstances of the two groups, but there are considerable differences in terms of their behaviour and family relationships.

When Galloway's work is compared with other studies it is interesting to note that to some extent he does support the works of Hersov (1960a), Want (1980), and Blagg and Yule (1987: cited by Blagg, 1987) who all found that school refusers do tend to experience closer family relationships than truant absentees. However, Galloway's work does not confirm Hersov's findings that school refusers tend to have a significantly higher IQ than truants, although Galloway's study did find that truants tended to experience more reading problems than other absentees. But Galloway's work does support Blagg's and Yule's findings which also found no significant differences between truants and school refusers on their IQ scores. Contrastingly, Hersov (1960a), and Blagg and

Yule (1987: cited by Blagg, 1987) found that truants were significantly more likely to experience poorer material conditions than school refusers, whereas Galloway found not significant differences between truants and other absentees in terms of their material circumstances. However, it must be noted that Galloway compared truants with a wider range of absentees (including parent withholding and school refusers) than the other authors who compared truants only with school phobics. Therefore, any differences in the studies might be partly due to the differences in methodology. However, Galloway's study does suggest that the usefulness of categorising persistent absentees into distinguish groups might be more complex than the simple dichotomy of truancy and school refusal. He further argues that persistent absenteeism may also have to be analysed within the context of school policies and practices in order to widen our appreciation of the various types of absentees (see Galloway, 1985a). Such a challenging step is beginning to surface in the literature with Reid (1982e) and Murgatroyd (1987) who both suggest typologies of persistent absentees whose behaviours are considered to be related to institutional factors, such as poor teacher-pupil relationships.

12. Non-School Attendance in Other Countries

Studies on schools in Northern Ireland suggest that absenteeism among pupils is relatively low (Moore & Jardine, 1983) when compared with England and Wales (DES, 1974; Fogelman & Richardson, 1974; Fogelman et al., 1980; NACEWO, 1975), despite the long history of trouble in the province.

School absenteeism is very much a problem in the United States of America (USA). Some schools in New York and Chicago, for example, report average daily attendance rates of between 40 and 50 per cent (Bayh, 1977). Some studies have suggested that the high incidence of violence, robberies and vandalism may be contributing factors to the high absenteeism rates (Children's Defense

Fund, 1977; United States Office of Education, 1960).

13. The Limitations of Epidemiological Research

One of the main limitations of data collected from epidemiological research is the use of the school register because it cannot account for pupils who absent themselves after registration, this is normally referred to as 'hidden truancy' (Galloway, 1980). Furthermore, the register cannot differentiate between the various reasons for absences such as illness and truancy.

Another disadvantage of the epidemiological research is that the official figures on school attendance rates may not necessarily show the actual number of pupils who have been absent. For example, an anonymous writer presented some data on the attendance rates of two schools in his local authority (Anon, 1973). He showed that according to the conventional method of assessing school attendance rates (i.e. via the number of actual attendances as a percentage of all possible attendances) both School A and School B have an average school attendance of 92.00 per cent. However, if the figures were to quote the actual percentage of children who had missed at least one school session then the data would look quite different to the conventional method. Thus School A had two out of ten pupils (i.e. 20 per cent) who had missed some school sessions and School B had six out of the ten pupils (i.e. 60 per cent) who had missed at least one session of schooling. Therefore, although both schools have an attendance rate of 92.00 per cent, nevertheless, School A had experience 20 per cent of its pupils being absent and School B had experience 60 per cent of its pupils missing at least one school session. Therefore, Anon argues that official school attendance figures may be concealing a high level of school absence which may lead to truancy levels being ignored by local authorities. It must also be noted that studies which assessed truancy via self-reports appear to reflect Anon's data (e.g. Mawdy, 1977; Reynolds & Murgatroyd, 1974).

14. Age, Sex and Social Class

Several epidemiological studies have clearly demonstrated that age, sex and social class are important determinants in the prevalence of non-school attendance. Fogelman and Richardson (1974) collated data on 16,000 children age eleven years. Their data suggest that poor attendance is much more prevalent among the poorer social classes than among the professional classes, with an average of 6 per cent of pupils from Social Class I and II (professional) having poor school attendance, more than 10.5 per cent of pupils from Social Class III and IV (semi-skilled and skilled manual) and over 19 per cent of pupils from Social Class V (unskilled manual) with a record of poor attendance. This relationship between social class and poor attendance has also been substantiated by other studies (DES, 1974; Hersov, 1960a; May, 1975; Mitchell & Shepherd, 1967; 1980; Tyerman, 1968).

When analysing poor attendance in relation to sex, Fogelman and Richardson (1974) found that among eleven year olds, the boys were better attenders than the girls, but more boys than girls were defined as truants. Several studies have attempted to explain these sex differences. One such study, for example, suggest that illness is much more prevalent among girls (ISTD, 1974) and there is also the possibility that girls are kept at home more often than boys to help with domestic chores (Galloway, 1979). Conversely, truancy is considered to be more prevalent among boys than girls, probably because teachers are more suspicious of boys' absences than they are of girls' (Fogelman & Richardson, 1974; Mitchell & Shepherd, 1980). Other studies also suggest that truancy is much more prevalent among boys than among girls (Tyerman, 1968). However, the DES (1974) one-day survey found no sex difference in the proportions of unjustified absences. The ILEA (1981) also found no significant sex differences in the school attendance rates.

When comparing age groups, it was found that truancy increases with age and reaches a peak between fourteen and sixteen years of age (DES, 1974; Fogelman et al., 1980; Galloway, 1979, 1980, 1985a; Grimshaw & Pratt, 1986). The NACEWO (1975) found that truancy was most prevalent among the secondary age range (5.05 per cent), followed by the juniors (0.73 per cent) and none among the infants. The ILEA survey found that among secondary school pupils the rate of school attendance declined with age. For example, the 11-year-old pupils attained an average attendance rate of over 90 per cent which gradually dropped to 75.5 per cent among the 15-year-old pupils and increased to 87.00 per cent among the 16-year-old pupils. Grimshaw and Pratt (1986) assessed the attendance rates for several schools in Sheffield. They found that the persistent absenteeism rate increased with age. For example, during the Autumn term the 1st year pupils had an absenteeism rate of 0.15 per cent which gradually increased with age to 5.38 per cent absence rate among the 5th year school pupils.

Generally, the epidemiological studies on age, sex, and social class reveal evidence which suggests that the incidence of truancy and absenteeism increases with age and is highest among the working-class groups. When comparing the sexes, most studies agree that more boys than girls are perceived by their teachers as truants.

15. School Attendance and Ethnic Origin

There is very limited data on the relationship between school attendance rates and ethnic groups. However, one study in London collected information on 12 secondary schools in relation to, among other things, school attendance rates and ethnic origins (Gray, Smith & Rutter, 1980). Gray et al. assessed the population's absenteeism rates via pupil self-reports which required them to indicate how often they had missed school during their 5th school year without any justifiable reasons. The authors then subdivided the population's school attendance patterns into three main groups: (a) 'good'

attendance with less than ten days of unjustified absence; (b) 'intermediate' attendance with 10 to 49 days of unjustified absence; and (c) 'poor' attendance with at least 50 days unjustified absence. The three ethnic groups studied included the indigenous British population, the Asian/European groups and the Afro-Caribbean group. The authors found that the Afro-Caribbean pupils had the highest percentage of 'good' attenders with 75.4 per cent of pupils rated as such, followed by the Asian/European pupils with 63.3 per cent and the indigenous population had the lowest percentage of 'good' attenders with 59.7 per cent of pupils rated as such. When assessing the 'intermediate' attendance rate, the Asian/European groups had the highest percentage of 'intermediate' attenders with 14.3 per cent of pupils rated as such, followed by the indigenous group with 13.0 per cent and the Afro-Caribbean group with 9.8 per cent 'intermediate' attenders. Examination of the 'poor' attendance rates indicate that the indigenous population had the highest percentage of 'poor' attenders with 27.4 per cent of pupils rated as such, followed by the Asian/European group with 22.4 per cent of pupils and the Afro-Caribbean group had the lowest percentage of 'poor' attenders with 14.8 per cent of pupils rated as such. Although further work is needed in this area, nevertheless, the present study appears to suggest that Afro-Caribbean children tend to be among the better school attenders.

16. Institutional Factors Associated with School Disaffection

Until fairly recently a greater part of the research into the aetiology of school absenteeism focused primarily on possible deficiencies within the children and their home backgrounds to explain school failings (Blagg & Yule, 1987; Fogelman & Richardson, 1974; Fogelman et al., 1980; Hersov, 1960a, 1960b; Tyerman, 1968). Several authors, such as Reynolds (1985), argue that this emphasis on the psychological models for explaining persistent absenteeism were influenced by

several 'political' forces including: (a) many of the educational researchers were ex-teachers (e.g. Tyerman) who prefer to present the problems of inadequate homes as possible influences of truancy; and (b) many LEA's might be reluctant to allow researchers to evaluate underachievement in relation to their schools' ethos and, therefore, this may have presented practical problems for such investigators. However, the turning point came in the 1960's when most LEA's had to face the prospects of reorganisation for the development of comprehensive education. This aroused interests in the social processes within the schools and, in turn, led to the development of more pedagogical studies in relation to school effectiveness on academic achievement (Hargreaves, 1967; Rutter et al., 1979).

Hargreaves, for example, studied the attitudes of fourth form secondary school boys towards their schools. He found that the lower stream boys tended to dislike school, and also tended to exhibit a high prevalence of truancy and delinquency. Contrastingly, the upper stream boys tended to like school, to enjoy their subjects and attained a higher school attendance rate. Hargreaves argued that one of the possible factors which influenced the boys attitudes towards their schools is that teachers tended to show greater preference towards the brighter pupils than towards the lower streams. For example, teachers would praise the upper stream boys, and were more likely to describe them as clean and tidy; whereas they tended to regard the lower stream boys as trouble makers with untidy habits. Hargreaves concluded that the streaming system was not conducive to building an effective education for all pupils mainly because it caused resentment and alienation among lower stream pupils who tended to receive more negative attitudes from their school.

Rutter et al. (1979) studied school effectiveness in order to assess those school factors that might be associated with successful achievers. Their work suggests

that school variables, such as good parent-teacher relationships and high teacher expectations, may generate more positive pupil outcomes. However, Rutter's et al. work has been criticised for being atheoretical and for possessing no process data on teacher-pupil interactions in the classroom (Hargreaves, 1980). However, in a later study on school effectiveness Mortimore et al. (1988) attempted to fill in this gap by examining some of the classroom processes via a Pupil Record Sheet (Galton, Simon & Croll, 1980), as well as the effects of school policies on educational outcomes. The study involved 2,000 junior school pupils (divided into 50 schools) whose school activities were documented over a four-year period. Their data are divided into three main categories: (a) measures of pupil intake to schools (e.g. social class, age, sex, race and initial attainment); (b) measures of educational outcomes in terms of school attendance and examination performance on standardised tests, such as the London Reading Test (LRT); and (c) measures of the classroom and school environment which includes the collection of information about school policies via interviews with headteachers and via monitoring classroom activities using observation schedules (Galton et al., 1980). The authors then analysed the data in order to identify those school factors which appear to be associated with the most positive pupil outcomes. They found that the school variables which tended to be related to good pupil progress include:

- (a) Those junior schools that tended to cater for pupils between the ages five and 11 years were more effective than those junior schools that tended to cater for pupils aged between seven and 11 years.
- (b) Headteachers time in their present post tended to influence pupils' progress with more experienced headteachers tending to be more associated with positive outcomes than new headteachers.

- (c) Positive outcomes tended to be associated with those teachers who spent greater amounts of time communicating with pupils in the classroom about their work content.
- (d) Positive outcomes tended to be associated with those teachers who tended to spend a greater amount of time interacting with the whole class.
- (e) Where a large proportion of the class session is spent on single activities (e.g. working on language) was more closely associated with pupil progress than mixed activity sessions (e.g. working on three or more topics).
- (f) Teachers who tended to spend more time asking questions and who tend to be consistent in their behaviour were associated with effective progress.
- (g) Teachers who spent more time giving praise or neutral feedback about behaviour tended to be associated with good progress.

The authors found that other school factors were also associated with pupil success, such as schools which kept regular records of their pupils' progress, where teachers are involved in decision-making activities, where there are relatively small classes (i.e. less than 24 pupils) and where there is good teacher-parent contract. Therefore, the authors asserted that schools do influence pupil outcomes and concluded that the school curriculum might become more efficacious through promoting higher teacher expectations, encouraging a positive atmosphere (e.g. through praise and the display of pupils' work), through emphasising work-orientated lessons with challenging questions to assist pupil learning, and maximising communication between teachers and pupils.

The importance of the school factors on influencing pupil outcome has been pushed further to the forefront of

the literature by the recent establishment of the School Effectiveness Movement which has established as its main objective the formidable task of providing guidance on school effectiveness for Headteachers, school staff, LEAs, other policy makers, parents and pupils. The main researchers who are involved in this Movement include Mortimore et al. (1988), Reid, Hopkins and Holly (1987), Reynolds and Murgatroyd (1977), and Rutter et al. (1979). The main theme of their argument strongly implies that schools must reappraise their curricular activities in order to ensure that all pupils receive the best possible education. They propose that such a task may require schools to study closely their policies that should aim at giving more pupils pastoral care which emphasise academic work; encourage more pupils to sit public examinations so that they can appreciate the importance of school in relation to their adult lives; aim towards teachers developing a sense of higher expectations for all their pupils in order to increase pupil self-confidence and negate pupil alienation; and encourage staff to build closer relationships with parents. The foundation of the Movement's policies are based primarily on major school research projects which usually involve the monitoring of hundreds of teachers and pupils over periods of several years (e.g. Mortimore et al., 1988; Rutter et al., 1979). Thus, Reid et al. (1987) stress the need for teachers to constantly evaluate their behaviours and those of their pupils by active research methods which may include the Pupil Record Sheet, assessing closely pupils' opinions about their curriculum, and collecting qualitative data such as the teachers regularly commenting on their approaches and on their use of materials. These authors argue that it is only through schools attempting to collect data on their own activities will it then be possible to make their curricula more effective. Needless to say, Reid et al. provide for schools some of the most extensive details and advice (to date) on how to develop practical and efficient research activities. It is only hoped that the Movement may in future enable schools to better

understand their influences on pupils, especially disaffected pupils, which could help to improve student outcomes.

The Influence of the Literature on the Present Action Research Project

The review of this background literature has suggested several interesting issues for possible investigation:

- (a) To assess school absenteeism in terms of age, sex, and parent job occupations in order to examine any possible 'biographical' influences on school disaffection.
- (b) To evaluate possible school factors that might influence pupil behaviour. Such data may include observation of classroom activities, examination of teaching styles, assess school policies on truancy and other pupil behaviour, assess the school's use of reward and punishment, and examine the contacts between the homes and schools.
- (c) To study the official school register with some caution because the information provided may not necessarily impart enough information about pupils' attendance activity (e.g. 'hidden truancy'). Therefore, careful examination of data presented by teachers and school medical staff may provide further appreciation of attendance figures in the school register.

Summary of Chapter 1

Historically the British educational institution has come a long way from the depraved conditions of both pupils and school buildings in the 19th century to the present day where the welfare of both has greatly improved. Various Education Acts were passed to improve the standard of education and pupil attendance. However, despite the introduction of free and compulsory schooling poor attendance is still prevalent in our society today.

Non-school attenders are divided into three main categories: (i) truants, (ii) school refusers and (iii) children whose parents withhold them from school. The literature suggests that truancy is an indication of a conduct disorder which often involves delinquency, while school refusal is a manifestation of psychoneurosis and parental withholding refers to children who are withheld by their parents usually for domestic reasons such as caring for younger siblings. However, recent literature suggests that the categorising of persistent absentees may also have to include school factors as possible influences on pupil underachievement.

Epidemiological research suggest that school attendance rates have consistently remained at about 90 per cent for the past seventy years despite economical and health improvements - a phenomenon which is still an enigma in the literature. Of the 10 per cent absent rate, the literature suggests that most absences are due to legitimate medical reasons, while unjustified absences such as truancy account for only 15 per cent and school refusal account for about 7 per cent (Galloway, 1985a).

When analysing absenteeism in terms of age, sex and social class, the epidemiological evidence indicate that poor attendance increases with age, is more prevalent among girls than boys, but more boys are believed to be truants, and is much more prevalent among the working classes than among the professional classes. Further analysis of school absenteeism in terms of institutional factors indicate that deficiencies within the school environment may also contribute to pupils underachievement. Such school deficiencies may include low teacher expectations, pupil dislike of the school curriculum, and poor parent-teacher contact.

The empirical evidence suggests that persistent school absenteeism is still a problem in Britain today and more recently the evidence has highlighted the fact that

educational problems tend to be associated with deficiencies within both the child's home and school environments. Therefore, in the following chapters the author shall endeavour to discuss persistent absentees in terms of their apparent multifaceted problems, such as their personalities, their home conditions, and their curricular experiences. Thus, it is hoped that this a multi-disciplinary approach to the analysis of the literature may widen the present evaluation and understanding of both the children and schools who are probably at greater risk of experiencing underachievement. This wider analysis may, in turn, allow for the examination of possible strategies for effectively combating school disaffection.

Chapter 2

The Charactology of the Non-School Attender

The purpose of this chapter is to attempt to give some insights into the behavioural, attitudinal and inter-personal aspects of the truant persona. In doing so this chapter will cover several topics including self-perception, delinquency and life styles.

Delinquency

One of the disturbing facts of truancy is its association with delinquency. There is tangible evidence to suggest that a relatively significant number of truants are involved with crimes ranging from shoplifting to drug offences (Farrington, 1980; Hersov, 1960a; ISTD, 1970; May, 1975; Pritchard, Diamond, Fielding & Choudry, 1987; Robins & Ratcliffe, 1980; Tyerman, 1968).

In an early study on persistent absenteeism, Hersov (1960a) investigated the characteristics of school refusers and truants. He found one characteristic peculiar to the truant group which was the high incidence of conduct disorders including persistent lying, juvenile court appearances, stealing and destructiveness. Sixty four per cent of the truants studied had been diagnosed as having conduct disorders whereas the school refusers and good attenders exhibited relatively few of the behaviours associated with conduct disorders.

As a consequence of articles like Hersov's paper, later empirical work was carried out to investigate further associations between persistent absenteeism, conduct disorders and delinquency. The studies of today can be divided into two main areas: (i) studies which have examined the truancy characteristics of delinquents; and (ii) studies which have examined the delinquency characteristics of

truants.

Starting with the first point, (i) the truancy characteristics of delinquents: the ISTD working party (1970) carried out a study on offenders charged by the police with the carrying of offensive weapons in 1965, which was at the time, a peak year for this offence in Glasgow.

When studying the various aspects of the offenders, the working party found that the peak age group for violent offences was between 14 and 17 years, and then dropped between 17 and 18 years by almost 50 per cent. The party found that truancy was a very common factor in the type of boy picked up for this offence. A further study by the working party of several approved schools in Glasgow revealed that whatever the reason for committal, such as arson, robbery or stealing, there was a long history of truancy among 78 per cent of the male intakes. The party concluded that based on the evidence of their study:

"....truancy and delinquency were so closely linked together that more efforts should be made to study and control truancy in the very early stages" (ISTD, 1970, page 267).

The City of Glasgow Police carried out an interesting exercise between April 1973 and June 1974 (SED, 1977). All children found wandering the streets during school hours were questioned as to their non-school attendance; those who could not account satisfactory for this were returned either to their home or school. There was a decrease in local crime of 19.7 per cent over the period of this exercise, with a marked drop in crimes such as housebreaking during school hours.

In another study on the effects of the police patrol system on truancy, Ekblom (1980) monitored a police patrol exercise during the Spring term of 1978 in Bristol. The aim of the study was to monitor the effectiveness of the exercise in reducing the level of daytime crime by truants.

During the patrol period those children who were wandering the streets without any valid reasons were either returned home or school by the police and an EWO. From the data collected by shop detectives, Ekblom concluded that the crime rate (e.g. shoplifting) did fall during the study period, although this reduction is not as significant as in the case of earlier studies (SED, 1977). He suggests that this disagreement with earlier work might be due to the fact that this earlier work had received much greater publicity which may have led both parents and teachers to make greater efforts to keep the children in school.

However, considering the fact that these police truancy patrol exercises appear to reduce daytime crime, coupled with other reports (e.g. Farrington, 1980; ISTD, 1970; West, 1982), have created a great concern among many professional bodies which is epitomized by the conclusion of the Association of Scottish Police Superintendents which states:

"Truancy in the past, has been in normal circumstances considered to be a minor misdemeanour Today it must however be considered a serious educational, social and legal problem....." (SED, 1977, page 2).

West and Farrington (1973, 1977), Farrington (1980), and West (1982) carried out a longitudinal survey over a seventeen-year period to investigate the possibility that truancy patterns may be the precursors of delinquency behaviour. They studied a population of 411 males from the age of 8 years in 1961 through to the age of 25 years. All the information in this study was collected from parents and teachers reports, pupils self-reports, and criminal records. West and Farrington (1973) found that by the age of 20 years, 58.3 per cent of those males who were primary school truants also had delinquency records as juveniles, in comparison with 17.9 per cent of the remainder of the survey sample. Secondary school truancy (47.9 per cent) was also related to juvenile delinquency, in comparison with the remainder of the sample (14.5 per cent). This was also true

of self-reported truants (44.4 per cent) as opposed to the rest of the population (15.3 per cent).

West and Farrington (1977) examined the anti-social characteristics of the male sample at the age of 18 years. They found that only 28 per cent of the whole sample were identified as the most anti-social; when the truant population was separately analysed, this type of anti-social behaviour was found to be true of 63.2 per cent of self-reported truants and 60.0 per cent of the secondary school truants. West and Farrington also suggest that, after leaving school, many truants develop a markedly anti-social or deviant life-styles.

In the cohort Farrington (1980) found that both secondary school and self-reported truancy significantly predicted first convictions as young adults (i.e. between their seventeenth and twenty-first birthdays). For example, 26.3 per cent of secondary school truants were first convicted as adults, in comparison with 11.5 per cent of the remainder of the population. In addition, both measures of truancy were significantly related to self-reported violence at ages 14, 16 and 18 years, and to anti-police attitudes at ages 14 and 16 years, and aggressive attitudes at age 18 years (Farrington, 1980; West & Farrington, 1977). West (1982) undertook a detailed study of the populations' educational and home backgrounds. His work indicates that, like truants, the delinquent males often came from low income families, they tended to show poor academic progress and their parents tended to have criminal records. West also found that the delinquency rates of schools appear to be related to truancy rates, with high delinquency-rate schools usually having accordingly high absenteeism rates.

However, although truancy and poor home backgrounds appear to be predictors of delinquency one must also note the limitations of such indicators. For example, West (1982) found that of the 63 boys with adverse backgrounds, 31 (49.2 per cent) became juvenile delinquents and 32 (50.8 per cent) have no criminal records. In other words, although adverse

conditions may be possible identifiers of delinquency, nevertheless, such predictors cannot make confident assertions about the outcome of any given individual - they can only highlight the groups who are most at risk.

In the second type of study the concern was with the delinquency characteristics of truants. May (1975) examined the link between truancy and delinquency over a four-year period. His sample consisted of over 5,000 males, age 9 years plus through to 14 years plus, who attended schools in Aberdeen. The population's school attendance rates were assessed via the official school attendance records and teacher-identified truancy. Socio-demographic details were also collated in order to assess the links between truancy and other social problems.

May compared the scores of the truants with the population as a whole on a 26-item Behaviour Questionnaire (Rutter, 1967). May found that the truants displayed significantly more anti-social traits in comparison with the population. Boys identified as truants were more likely than other pupils to be regarded as thieves, liars, bullies, vandals and disobedient. May found that truants were also more likely to have speech difficulties, complain of pains, appear unhappy and to be frequently worried. The evidence suggests further that truants were unpopular with their peers, they were twice as likely to be regarded as solitary, and four times more likely to be seen as not liked by other pupils.

May's data also revealed a significant correlation between truancy and delinquency. In the truant group 48 per cent had made at least one court appearance, which was four times the city average. Furthermore, those truants who did appear at court showed a marked tendency to the early onset of delinquency and recidivism.

When comparing delinquent absentees with other absentees, May found that the former had a very much more marked socially disadvantaged background than the latter.

Half (50 per cent) of the delinquent absentees were from a semi-skilled/ unskilled/ unemployed background compared with only 30 per cent of all absentees. Half of the delinquent absentees came from families of five or more children compared with 26 per cent of the absentee group as a whole. The delinquent absentees were also more likely to have lower IQs compared with absentees as a whole.

Other authors have presented tangible evidence to suggest that persistent absenteeism is associated with delinquency. Reid (1984a) studied 128 persistent absentees and two matched control groups. Control Group 1 consisted of good attenders with similar academic abilities to the persistent absentees and Control Group 2 consisted of good attenders who were brighter than the persistent absentees. Using a six-item scale, Reid compared the pupils on indictable offences and found that a larger number of absentees (38 per cent) than Control Group 1 (13 per cent) and Control Group 2 (1 per cent) had been prosecuted and found guilty of committing indictable offences. When studying the offences in more detail, Reid found that a total of 139 offences were recorded on the files of the 48 delinquent absentees. Of these 139 offences, twenty two were for truancy.

In a further study on this population Reid (1984b) presents some data on their disruptive behaviour as measured by the Children's Behaviour Questionnaire Scale B (Rutter, 1967) which was completed by their teachers. The results indicate that the mean score on the main scale for the persistent absentees (7.26 points) was significantly greater than the mean scores for the good school attenders, with Control Group 1 having a mean score of 2.10 points and Control Group 2 having a mean score of 1.74 points. His data appear to add some support to May's (1975) study, who using a similar questionnaire, found that male school absentees are regarded by their teachers as having significantly higher conduct disorders than male good school attenders. Reid also compared the three groups on the two sub-scales of the Rutter Scale - the anti-social and neurotic sub-scales.

Although the data show that the persistent absentees attained significantly higher scores than the good school attenders on the two sub-scales, he nevertheless notes that the vast majority of both the absentees and good school attenders do not show signs of anti-social or neurotic behaviours.

One of the limitations of the literature on the relationship between delinquency and truancy is the fact that it is restricted mainly to studies on male populations: although Reid (1984a, 1984b) did include females in his sample, he did not, however, make a separate analysis to assess the relationship between female truancy and female delinquency. The author, therefore, believes that any further empirical work on the truancy-delinquency relationship may have to include more detailed female case-studies which may enable us to assess how far any relationship between truancy and delinquency can be generalized. Another limitation in this social model has been demonstrated by Hargreaves, Hester and Mellow (1975) when they found that a high emphasis on 'petty' school rules (e.g. not allowed to chew gum in school) tended to lead to children being labelled as deviants by their teachers. They argue that this concept of school rules may lead some teachers to unjustifiably generalising such pupils' as 'misfits' when in some cases the children may not understand or may not even be aware of the rules. Their point is supported further by Reynolds and Murgatroyd (1977) who found that schools with less rigorous enforcement of rules also tended to have less truancy problems. Therefore, when using teachers' ratings of pupils' conduct disorders (e.g. May, 1975; Reid, 1984b) one needs to be also aware of the possibilities of school influences in generating deviant behaviour.

When comparing the two types of studies on the relationship between truancy and delinquency it becomes quite evident that the truancy rates among delinquents are extremely high, while comparatively, the delinquency rates among truants are relatively low. Thus, suggesting that the

delinquent truants may only be a small group within the truant population. This point is further confirmed by May (1975) who draws attention to the fact that only a minority of irregular school attenders make a juvenile court appearance. He states that for every absentee who was referred to court during the research period, five others had made no such appearance. May (1975), therefore, concludes that although the relationship between truancy and delinquency arouses legitimate concern, nevertheless, truancy is not sine qua non for delinquency and in fact is only peripheral to that larger social problem.

Intelligence and Educational Attainment

Several researchers have noted that truants tend to have learning difficulties (Fogelman et al., 1980; Fogelman & Richardson, 1974; Hersov, 1960a; Jardine, 1987; May, 1975; Reid, 1982b, 1984a). May (1975) found that irregular attenders had statistically significant lower IQs than good attenders. His truant group had a mean IQ which was 15 points lower than good attenders. May also found that delinquent absentees were more likely to have lower IQ scores compared with absentees as a whole, with the former scoring 12.6 points below the latter. May also found that truants from small families and with higher IQ scores, had relatively low delinquency rates when compared with those of the 'average' intelligent truant. Boys from a 'skilled' background were also more likely to have higher IQ scores, live in smaller families, reside in low delinquency areas and have a better attendance rate.

Fogelman and Richardson (1974) studied the scholastic abilities of truants and good attenders at secondary school. Their data revealed that a large proportion of truants (70.4 per cent) had a below average general knowledge, whereas this was true for only 29.3 per cent of good attenders. In addition, only 5.3 per cent of the truants were above average in general knowledge, while this was true for 25.9 per cent of the good attenders. When assessing the numeracy of the two groups, Fogelman and Richardson found that 77.4 per cent of truants were below average, while this was true

for only 37.1 per cent of the good attenders, and only 3.6 per cent of truants and 25.0 per cent of good attenders had attained above average numeracy skills. When assessing school progress, their data revealed that relatively few truants showed progress, and more truants than good attenders had deteriorated during the course of the year.

Fogelman and Richardson also compared children's attendance rates with their scores on the National Foundation for Educational Research (NFER) attainments tests which include reading comprehension, mathematics and general ability tests. Their analysis revealed a significant inverse relationship between school attendance and tests scores, with children with school attendance of less than 85 per cent having particularly low reading scores. This was especially true for children from working-class backgrounds.

Jardine (1987) carried out a comparative study on good and poor attenders in their two final years of compulsory schooling. The population sample consisted of 3,000 young people in Northern Ireland. The pupils' composite scores were assessed on their performance in the main public examinations (General Certificate of Education (G.C.E.) and Certificate in Secondary Education (C.S.E.)) at the end of the fifth year. Jardine's study revealed that poor attenders had a mean composite score of 9.9 points while good attenders attained a mean score of 25.3 points. This difference is further emphasised when considering that 15 points on the scale is equivalent to three G.C.E. O-level passes at grade C. Those whose attendance was considered to be fair compared more closely with the poor attenders in their overall performance scores (12.8 points) than with the good attenders. Jardine also found that 44 per cent of poor attenders had achieved no G.C.E. or C.S.E. passes at the end of the fifth year, while this was true of only 12 per cent of the good attenders.

Reid (1982b) presents data from several case-studies which he collected via ^{anthropological methods} ~~an~~ ^{ethnographic} ~~method~~. In one of the case-studies, a young girl called Liza, he demonstrates the

relationship between non-school attendance and poor academic performance. Liza, who comes from a large family of six children, was born with a congenital hip condition which required periodic treatment. She is described as 'below' average intelligence and is regarded by her teachers as very unruly. In 1975 Liza's average grade for school work was only C which the teachers believe was due to her poor school attendance. However, throughout 1976, 1977 and 1978, Liza's behaviour, school attendance and school report continued to decline to a level where she was receiving grade E for her school work. She frequently swore at the teachers and had even threatened them. Even when Liza was presented before the juvenile court because of truancy, she frequently swore at the magistrate and showed no regard for authority. Reid concluded that the psychological effects of Liza's hip condition may have played a significant part in her poor school progress.

Whereas most authors report that truants have relatively low intelligence, the literature suggests that the antithesis is true for school refusers. According to Davidson (1960), and Hersov (1960a, 1960b), many school refusers have average to superior intelligence, though not all authors concur with these findings. Blagg and Yule (1987), for example, repeated Hersov's (1960a) study comparing 70 school phobics with 57 truants and 18 other poor attenders. Blagg and Yule found that school phobics show a normal distribution of intelligence on the WISC-R Verbal scale IQ. Furthermore, the study found no difference between phobics and truants with respect to reading age, but there were significant numbers of children in each of these groups with serious learning difficulties.

Such inconsistencies in the literature has prompted some authors (e.g. Reynolds & Murgatroyd, 1977) to suggest that the qualitatively different modes of absence (i.e. truancy and school refusal) are not justified in the literature. Reynolds and Murgatroyd (1977) argue further that the middle-class school phobics may well be what educational psychologists have come to call middle-class

truants, which they feel is analogous to the way the term 'dyslexia' is freely used with certain pupils from affluent backgrounds who are slow readers. Conversely, Reynolds and Murgatroyd suggest that it may well be possible that some truancy among the less intelligent working-class children is, in fact, school refusal.

However, Reid (1985) has pointed out the fact that while low intelligence may be a contributing factor in truancy, it is by no means the sole cause as most less intelligent pupils attend school willingly and regularly. Furthermore, it could be argued that persistent absentees may not necessarily be innately less intelligent than their peers; they may simply perform worse in standardized examinations and school tests because of poor attendance - a premise which is borne out in one of Reid's (1983c) case studies of an absentee called Diane who, despite having a 'reasonable' IQ, performed poorly at school partly because of her non-school attendance behaviour (see below). However, for whatever reason the fact remains that much of the literature suggests that persistent absenteeism, particularly truancy, is significantly associated with underachievement.

Peer Group Relationships

Mitchell (1972) reported that poor attenders were more often inclined to associate with friends from their own localities who did not go to the same institutions as themselves, unlike good attenders who were more frequently found in the company of pupils from their own schools.

Reid (1984a) ascertained that persistent absentees tend to have significantly few friends in school and in the same forms. Reid's data also suggest that some pupils from deprived home backgrounds and with similar intellectual abilities tend to integrate better with each other.

May's (1975) study suggests that truants tend to be unpopular with their peer groups; they were twice as likely to be regarded as 'solitary', and four times more likely to

be seen as 'not liked by other pupils'. This is also supported by Cooper (1986) whose study suggests that truants tended to have poor inter-personal relationships with their parents, teachers and peers.

Although some authors (e.g. Reid, 1985) caution against making any firm conclusions based on limited empirical work on absentees' friendship patterns, nevertheless, it is of fundamental importance that peer group popularity should not be underestimated as an explanation of at least some persistent absenteeism from school.

Relationship with Teachers

It is generally agreed that good teacher-pupil relationships are fundamental if pupils are to enjoy and respond positively to their schooling (Galloway, 1985a; Reid, 1986a; Schostak, 1982). However, there is a great deal of evidence which suggests that many absentees believe they are victimized, handled inconsistently, dealt with too harshly and not treated with respect (Buist, 1980; Jardine, 1987; Seabrook, 1974; SED, 1977; Reid, 1985).

Seabrook (1974) interviewed several truants to ascertain their reasons for missing school. Many of their reasons included dislike of the teachers pushing them around, some were scared of the class laughing at their reading difficulties and others felt that the teachers treated them in a condescending manner.

As control in the classroom is paramount to teaching, it is quite possible that some teachers who are unable to cope with difficult classes may over-react to any challenge to their authority which, in turn, may cause long-term resentment among some truants (Reid, 1985, 1986a; Schostak, 1982). Schostak (1982), for example, found that 75 per cent of the truants interviewed said they 'down right' hated school because of the teachers and the lessons. Many of the truants complaint that the teachers would refer to them as 'stupid' or 'divy', and this made them feel, quite

naturally, uncomfortable and as a consequence they truanted from school.

Reid (1983b) found that 14 per cent of his sample of persistent absentees claimed that they began or continued to miss school because of the staff in their schools. Moreover, Reid found that sarcastic and unfavourable comments from teachers and peers, as well as fear of punishment on return to school, seem to be contributory factors to why some pupils graduate to persistent absenteeism. Other authors (e.g. Cooper, 1984; Jardine, 1987) concur with Reid (1983b) and Schostak (1982) in, when comparing poor and good attenders, also founding that poor attenders were more likely to perceive their teachers as having less favourable regards towards them.

However, looking from the teachers point of view, many regarded persistent absentees as disruptive, anti-social and disobedient (Buist, 1980; Farrington, 1980; May, 1975; Reid, 1984b). This may result in some teachers over-reacting to keep control (Jones, 1980) and as a consequence this may cause resentment towards teachers by the persistent absentees (Jardine, 1987; Schostak, 1982). Because the literature suggests that both the persistent absentees and the teachers tend to perceive each other in unfavourable terms, the author believes that it is imperative that practitioners evaluate the teacher-pupil relationship more closely if we hope to effectively combat disaffection from school.

Out of School Activities of Non-School Attenders

Reid (1985) found that missing school was an unsatisfactory experience for the vast majority of absentees. A small proportion of the absentees admitted that they wished circumstances could be found whereby they could start again in school with a clean sheet. When asked about their activities, many absentees spent their daily lives doing domestic chores, watching television, going to 'Bingo', staying in bed, looking after other siblings, wandering the streets, walking around the city centre,

playing football, listening to records, visiting girlfriends, and attending drama lessons.

St. John-Brooks (1982) interviewed non-school attenders, many of whom roamed the streets of London, about their out of school activities. One absentee, Wayne, aged 12 years, stayed at home most of the time to look after his mother who suffered from a back injury. Wayne's day consisted of him making breakfast for his younger siblings and his mother, cleaning the house and doing the shopping. Another absentee, who St. John-Brooks refers to as a 'skinhead', spent much of his time either in the park, shops, museums, or he would go stealing in the West End of London.

St. John-Brooks also found Phil, age 14 years, who played snooker with great zeal. Phil used to truant to play snooker, but now that the school releases him from physical education (P.E.) lessons to practice, he has not missed school for four months. He claims not to like school, but attends maths lessons because he finds it improves his understanding of the snooker game.

Webb (1983) argues that there are some 'truants' who should not be defined as truants. She gives an example of a case of a 15 year old boy, Leroy, who knowing that his job prospects after leaving school are remote, found himself a job in the Brixton market. Webb argues that educators must learn to understand the realities of many absentees' lives. She suggests that educators should work with one foot in the community and the other in the institution. She also argues that schools should be more flexible and try to organise around the absentees' lives, as it happened in Leroy's case. The school legitimized his position as a work experience shift, with the consequence that the job was held for him when he left school.

Absentees' out of school activities can generally be divided into four main categories (Reid, 1985): domestic chores, wandering the streets, social activities and work.

Reid points out the irony that in this age of technology the kinds of activities taken up by persistent absentees have not changed much in over a hundred years.

The Personality of the Non-School Attender

Farrington (1980) found the most significant predictor of secondary school and self-reported truancy was the rating of troublesomeness by teachers and peers in the primary school. Both groups of truants were also perceived as daring by parents and peers, but only the self-reported truants were perceived as dishonest. Farrington found that there was no significant tendency for the group of truants to be rated as unpopular by their peers at ages between eight and 10 years. This is in contrast with May's (1975) findings which suggest that truants were less liked by their peers. At the age of 8 years Farrington found that neither group was rated as nervous by their parents, but at the age of 14 years parents did perceive only secondary truants as being nervous.

Farrington found that all truants in his study had low vocabularies at ages 10 and 14 years. They also had poor junior leaving school results based on their grades for arithmetic, English and verbal reasoning. Truants also tended to leave school at the minimum age (15 years at the time, 1968).

Farrington's empirical work also revealed a significant tendency for the truants to have been relatively small in terms of weight and height between ages eight and 10 years. However, this was not the case by the time the truant population was 14 years old. He did find that self-reported truants at ages 14 and 16 years tended to be neurotic extroverts as assessed by the Eysenck Personality Inventory (EPI: Eysenck, 1977). Others in the literature have also reported truants as having significantly higher neurotism scores than good attenders (e.g. Kavanagh & Carroll, 1977) which may indicate that truants suffer from the same kind of insecurity reported by Tyerman (1958). Farrington's findings which suggest that truants tend to be

extroverted might be supported by Cooper's (1984) study which suggests that disruptive truants tended to regard themselves as popular among their peers of the opposite sex. However, Kavanagh and Carroll (1977) found poor attenders to be average on the extroversion scale as assessed via the EPI.

Cooper (1986) studied 76 adolescents attending special teaching units which included school refusers and truants. In this detailed case-study report Cooper describes the truant as the 'rejected child'. He suggested that truants are more likely to be rejected by their parents which causes them to develop a sense of insecurity and inadequacy. The model also suggests that truants tended to have low self-esteem, and, when not allowed their own way, may react with bitter and violent outbursts. Truants also tended to have poor inter-personal relationships with teachers, parents and peers.

Billington (1979) analysed the personality characteristics of truants and good attenders in a comparative study involving four comprehensive schools. His methodology included the Junior EPI, the Piers-Harris Scale of Self-Concept and an intelligence test. He found truants tended to be more anxious than good attenders, they also had lower self-esteem scores and were more neurotic and introverted. His findings to some degree confirms the findings of Cooper (1984), Tyerman (1968), Galloway, (1980), Reid (1983c), Fogelman et al. (1980) and Jardine (1987), but do not agree with Farrington (1980) who found that self-reported truants tended to be neurotic extroverts. However, Billington found that none of these findings were statistically significant. He suggested that this is probably due to the inventories not being sensitive enough to detect the subtle personality differences which may exist between truants and good attenders. However, it is also likely that these inconsistencies in the literature may reflect the diverse personalities of the school absentee population or reflect the differences in the selection criteria of the research group. Furthermore, the

interpretation of such data requires considerable caution because of its limitations, for example Reid (1984b) found that only a minority of persistent absentees show relatively high neurotic disorders. Therefore, much more extensive research is required before conclusions can be drawn about the relationships between non-school attendance and personality types such as 'neurotics' and 'introverts'.

When analysing inter-personal relationships, Billington found that truants were significantly less popular than good attenders, perhaps adding some empirical evidence to Seabrook's (1974) and May's (1975) assertions that truants may experience difficulty in forming relationships. However, his findings contradict Cooper's (1984) study which suggest that truants tended to perceive themselves as relatively popular among their peers of the opposite sex. In Billington's study, the truants were also found to exhibit more unfavourable attitudes towards school than good attenders, this concurs with Mitchell and Shepherd (1980).

Anxiety

The relationship between school refusal and anxiety has been well established (Bauer, 1980; Blagg & Yule, 1984, 1987; Cooper, 1986; Davidson, 1960; Gittelman-Klein & Klein 1980; Hersov, 1960a, 1960b, 1980; Waller & Eisenberg, 1980). A related problem, general fear of going to school without necessarily reaching a stage of phobia, has been a problem for many children of school age (Bauer, 1980). Bauer's interviews with school children aged between 7 and 12 years revealed that the level of school anxiety increased with age, with older pupils indicating that the prospect of attending a new school, or failing a test and getting a poor report were their main causes of anxiety. Bauer concludes that the experience of school-related stress may motivate some pupils to runaway or drop out of school. He believes that only constructive counselling and sympathetic support from parents and teachers will help counteract possible school refusal and truancy. His work is supported further by Reid (1981, 1982e), Hargreaves (1967), and Murgatroyd (1987)

whose studies suggests that disaffected pupils tend to feel alienated from their schools, they tend to believe that their academic needs are neglected, and they also tend to find the pressure of school work over-bearing which usually led to anxieties about school attendance. Such authors also emphasise the importance of counselling and pastoral activities in order to increase pupils' confidence in their schools. However, it must be stated that anxiety is also associated with teaching (Kyriacou & Pratt, 1985) which demonstrates further the presence of institutional stress.

The literature suggests that anxiety may play a part in the occurrence of absenteeism, and, therefore, as an issue should be more recognised in schools especially at secondary level where absenteeism is known to be particularly prevalent (Fogelman & Richardson, 1974; Fogelman et al., 1980; Galloway, 1980, 1985a; Mitchell & Shepherd, 1980; Reid, 1985).

Maladjustment

Maladjustment refers to a combination of several behaviours, including aggressiveness, jealousy, stealing, lying, truancy, and educational and vocational difficulties, which are excessive or abnormal to the extent of preventing the child from living a normal life (Underwood Report, 1955). The literature suggests that truants do tend to exhibit maladjusted behaviour. Tyerman (1968), for example, in his study on truancy, stated that: "many instances of truancy, especially persistent cases, can only be properly understood as a result of, or as a form of, emotional disturbance or maladjustment" (Tyerman, 1968, page 75). Tyerman suggested that the aetiology of truants' maladjusted behaviour stems from the type of standards, rules, values, and ideas perpetuated in the home. He argues that the aspects which most determine a child's reaction to any given situation are the affection and training he or she has received at home. Tyerman believes that very few truants receive either affection or training, and even goes on to say, that those who do come from families where there is love and discipline rarely play truant for long. Tyerman's

(1968) work concurs with May's (1975) empirical study on truants. May found that truants were more likely than other pupils to be regarded as thieves, bullies, vandals, liars, disobedient and disliked by other pupils.

Stott (1966) studied 305 children between the ages of 11 and 12 years, and 15 years to assess those most at risk of becoming maladjusted. His methodology included case-work studies and teachers' responses on the Bristol School Adjustment Guides and Delinquency Prediction Instrument, and E.W.O. reports. His findings show that truants (25 per cent) were over three times more likely to be maladjusted than good attenders (7 per cent). The types of maladjusted behaviours exhibited by the truants included vandalism, bullying and hostility. However, the work was undertaken with a sample of 'clinical' truants - children who had been processed through various authorities (e.g. Social Services, educational psychologists and the courts). So Stott's highly significant findings may be due to the type of sample chosen for his study. Carroll (1977a) used a broader sample of persistent absentees, whose behaviour he assessed via the Social Adjustment Guides (Stott, 1966), and found that while poor attenders were more maladjusted than good attenders, the difference between the two groups were not statistically significant. This is further supported by Galloway's (1980) study of persistent absentees, based on information reported from parents' interviews, which indicated that 'clinical' truants (i.e. truants who are receiving treatment from psychologists and psychiatrists) were more likely to display an inability to form friendships in school (a symptom of maladjustment) than teacher-assessed truants.

Pritchard et al. (1987) carried out a study on over 600 comprehensive school 4th and 5th year pupils. They administered questionnaires to the pupils which focused on their social and family characteristics, their problematic behaviour and their opinions of the relative seriousness of such behaviours.

The findings of Pritchard et al. suggest that when

truants are compared with good school attenders, they were more likely to have an absent parent, have a father not in full-time employment, to come from large families, and to receive free school meals.

When comparing truants and good attenders on drug misuse, Pritchard et al. found that truants (8 per cent) were four times more likely to have been involved with drugs such as glue-sniffing and more than twenty times more likely (i.e. 8 per cent of truants and 0.3 per cent of good attenders) to be involved with serious drugs such as hallucinogens.

They also compared truants and good attenders on a number of problematic activities. The findings indicate that there was a significantly higher incidence of problematic behaviours among truants than among good attenders. Over 50 per cent of truants reported drinking in pubs compared with 30 per cent of good attenders; 36 per cent of truants had been involved in fights compared with 17 per cent of good attenders; and 53 per cent of truants were regularly involved in vandalism compared with 23 per cent of good attenders.

When the pupils were asked to rate the seriousness of various problematic behaviours, Pritchard et al. found that the two groups did not differ in their opinions. Over 85 per cent of truants and good attenders rated drug and solvent use as the most serious; whereas both groups perceived truancy, vandalism and fighting as among the least serious problem behaviours.

However, Pritchard et al. emphasised the fact that although there is a clear association between drug misuse and truancy, nevertheless, 60 per cent of truants had not been involved in any substance misuse.

Although the sample type should be taken into consideration when interpreting data related to truancy and maladjustment, there is, nevertheless, a general consensus

among the empirical studies which indicates that non-school attenders do tend to exhibit more maladjusted behaviours than good attenders.

Attitudes

Mitchell and Shepherd (1980) carried out an extensive survey in Southern England on 6300 school pupils aged between five and 15 years. Their data were collected from questionnaires completed by the pupils parents. The aim of the study was to evaluate the children's attitudes toward school via their parents responses. The children's attitudes were divided into three main areas: (i) 'likes school very much'; (ii) 'likes school about as much as most children' or (iii) 'dislikes going to school'. The results showed that slightly more than one third of the whole population were said to like school very much, over 50 per cent fell into the intermediate category and only 5 per cent disliked going to school.

When the results were further analysed, comparing attitudes with school attendance rates, Mitchell and Shepherd found that only 12 per cent of the boys (aged between 11 and 15 years) who disliked going to school had achieved full school attendance. This compares with 35 per cent of those boys, of similar age, who liked school very much and had also achieved full school attendance. The data also indicate that 41 per cent of the disaffected boys had been absent for more than ten school sessions, while this was true for only 21 per cent of the enthusiastic boys. Among the disaffected girls, aged between 11 and 15 years, only 6 per cent had achieved full attendance, while 32 per cent of the enthusiastic girls, in the same age group, had achieved a similar attendance rate. Over half (i.e. 52 per cent) of the disaffected girls had missed more than ten school sessions, while this was true for only 24 per cent of the enthusiastic girls.

With regard to behaviour, Mitchell and Shepherd's findings suggest that unco-operative behaviour was much more prevalent among disaffected pupils than among the

enthusiastic pupils. Mitchell and Shepherd's (1980) study, therefore, suggests that school attendance might be related to children's attitudes toward school: with pupils who were rated as having more disaffected attitudes toward school also tending to have a higher absenteeism rate than the enthusiastic pupils. Mitchell and Shepherd's findings also concur with Seabrook (1974) and Schostak (1982) whose interviews with persistent truants indicated that the majority intensely disliked school and found the curriculum boring.

Reid (1983a) carried out a comparative study on good and poor attenders to assess their attitudes toward school curricula. The sample were selected from two inner-city comprehensive schools and the data collected via exploratory interviews and personal biographies. He found that absentees showed less preference for arts, sciences and non-academic subjects than the good attenders. Absentees appeared to prefer a curriculum based on maths, English and relevant vocational subjects. When comparing the absentees and good attenders on their reasons for both enjoying and disliking school, the results showed that over twice as many good attenders enjoyed school for social and academic reasons when compared with the absentees. Furthermore, at least ten times more absentees liked 'nothing' about school when compared with good attenders. Also at least twice as many absentees, compared with good attenders, disliked school because of the teachers, school rules, and curricula and discipline factors. Reid also found that the absentees repeatedly complaint about the lack of school work and the quality of teaching.

Jardine (1987) asked good and poor attenders a series of questions relating to their attitudes to the social and curriculum context of their school experiences. His study indicated that most of the poor and good attenders found school enjoyable, and virtually all of the population stated that they had plenty of friends and felt that the teachers were helpful.

However, when asked whether 'the last two years of compulsory schooling had been worthwhile', Jardine found that while 84 per cent of good attenders strongly agreed with this statement, only 61 per cent of poor attenders expressed a similar agreement. When evaluating negative feelings toward the teachers, Jardine found that over twice as many poor attenders (16 per cent) felt that their teachers did not care about them when compared with the good attenders (6 per cent).

On the basis of the existing evidence it seems reasonable to suggest that dislike of school may be an aetiological factor which may perpetuate school disaffection and absenteeism. Therefore, the pupils' attitudes towards school, and in particular their relationship with absenteeism, suggest that schools may have to reappraise the contents of their curricula, and monitor teacher-pupil relationships more closely if they are to achieve more efficacious methods of combating school disaffection.

Self-Concept

Cooper (1984) studied the self-identity dimensions of 22 adolescent school refusers, 45 adolescent disruptive truants and 84 adolescent normal school attenders (control group). He found that the truants, the school refusers and the controls did not significantly differ with respect to global self-esteem. All the groups gave mostly moderate self-ratings for cleverness, appearance and helpfulness. However, when the groups were compared on specific items, a large proportion of refusers regarded themselves to be well behaved and harder working when compared with the other two groups. When compared with school refusers significantly more truants felt that they were dishonest, poorly behaved and did not work hard. Compared with the refusers and the controls, a higher proportion of truants considered themselves to be poorer at sport activities.

When assessed by a Self-Conscious Scale (Simmons, Rosenberg & Rosenberg, 1973), the school refusers appear to be far more self-conscious compared with the normal

attenders, whereas the truants were the least self-conscious when compared with the rest of the population.

When the groups were compared on other dimensions, Cooper found that the school refusers considered their mothers to have a relatively high opinion of them. He also found that a significant proportion of the school refusers felt that their parents and teachers would describe them in favourable terms. Conversely, a relatively large proportion of truants felt that their parents and teachers viewed them in unfavourable terms. School refusers tended to perceive their peers as having less favourable regards for them. The truants also perceived their peers of the same sex as regarding them less favourably, whereas they (truants) were more likely to see their peers of the opposite sex as having high regards for them.

Reid (1982a, 1984a) carried out a similar study to Cooper (1984) using non-school attenders and two control groups; with one control consisting of good attenders of similar academic ability to the poor attenders and the other control consisting of bright good attenders. When the groups were compared on a self-concept scale (Coopersmith, 1967), Reid found, contrary to Cooper's (1984) findings, that the persistent absentees had significantly lower global self-concept scores than the two control groups. However, the differences between Cooper's (1984) and Reid's (1982a, 1984a) findings might be due to their different selective criteria. Reid, however, found no significant gender differences between the sexes. A closer inspection of both Cooper's (1984) and Reid's (1982a, 1984a) data seems to suggest that they agree that poor attenders do tend to exude more negative self-identity ratings on specific items such as 'being dishonest', 'feeling more self-conscious' and 'thought that they had less of a chance of entering a professional occupation when leaving school', and truants in particular made lower ratings of their own school work than other pupils.

Reid (1982a) argues that the negative

self-perceptions of the persistent absentees may be the result of their consistent patterns of failure in school which leads to them withdrawing from school altogether. He further argues that teachers need to give more thought to the way in which they mark pupils' school work. This could be particularly important for potentially at-risk pupils who are known to come from poor and unsupportive home backgrounds (Fogelman & Richardson, 1974; Fogelman, Tibbenham & Lambert, 1980; Galloway, 1980, 1985; Hersov, 1960a; Pritchard et al., 1987; Tibbenham, 1977; Tyerman, 1968).

As a complement to this research on the relationship between persistent absenteeism and low self-esteem the literature suggests that teachers also need to be aware of the disaffected pupils perceptions of schooling if they hope to improve pupil morale. For example, the literature on institutional factors suggests that underachievers tend to receive low priority from their teachers, they are less likely to receive homework and rewards from school, and they are more likely to be taught by inexperienced teachers than their brighter peers (Hargreaves, 1967; Hargreaves Report, 1984; Reid, 1981, 1985, 1989a). Therefore, if school practices are to have efficacious effects on combating low self-esteem and disaffection among their pupils they may have to consider the influences of both the home and school environments as possible sources of understanding pupils' attitudes towards their educational progress.

Life-Styles of Non-School Attenders

Reid (1983c) collected data on pupils at two comprehensive schools in South Wales using a repertory grid technique (Kelly, 1955) to assess the inter-relationships between the social, psychological and institutional factors involved in persistent school absenteeism. Reid discusses in some detail three persistent absentee cases. Here the author shall briefly discuss two of the cases to demonstrate the life-styles and problems faced by persistent absentees.

Alan

Alan's parents were divorced when he was 11 years old. Since that time his home circumstances have deteriorated. Following the divorce his mother was forced to sell their home, and go and live on a council estate. Alan's mother is unemployed so her only means of support are provided by way of maintenance order, and supplementary and child benefits.

Reid found that Alan was unable to accept the finality of his parents' divorce and his school records show that since the divorce his behaviour had drastically deteriorated.

The E.W.O. working on Alan's case believed that although Alan's mother wants him to attend school regularly, he (EWO) also privately believed that she was grateful for his company as she led a very quiet existence.

Alan's appearance is described as pale and badly dressed with masses of pimples and uncombed hair. Reid believes that the poor circumstances of Alan's home have had an adverse affect upon his school progress which, in turn, led to non-school attendance.

Diane

Diane is one of seven children and by the age of 15 years, she had had two stepfathers, both of whom had subsequently divorced her mother. Diane had experienced a number of unfortunate traumas during her childhood. On one occasion in her early teens she was placed with her grandmother for safety on the advice of a social worker.

Diane gave a succession of reasons for her non-school attendance. These included: (i) she felt that her parents did not care about her schooling; (ii) her sister did not go to school; and (iii) she was frightened of the teachers. Diane's history of absenteeism began in primary school, and despite having a 'reasonable' IQ her non-school attendance had an adverse affect on her behaviour and academic

performance. Diane claimed that she started to miss school because of detrimental remarks made by her peers about her poor home circumstances and, naturally, she found such remarks offensive.

The above two cases cited by Reid suggest that there are social, educational and psychological factors which may operate to perpetuate absenteeism. For example, some of the psychological and educational factors are suggested by the fact that both cases had poor academic attainment, experienced poor peer relationships and suffered from emotionally traumatic experiences. The social problems faced included broken homes, poor home conditions and inadequate parental supervision. Reid's article illustrates the fact persistent absenteeism may be a multifaceted problem, and, therefore, any 'solutions' may have to encompass a fairly broad paradigm involving the co-operation of various professionals, such as, teachers, EWO's and social workers.

Adult Life

In Jardine's (1987) cohort study on school leavers, he interviewed good and poor school attenders to ascertain what curriculum-related items they believed were 'likely to be important' after leaving school. His findings indicate that similarly high numbers of both good and poor attenders felt that the following curriculum-items were likely to be important in their adult lives, these included: (i) 'being able to find out about important places like the unemployment office'; (ii) 'being able to manage your money'; (iii) 'having self-confidence'; (iv) 'being able to get on with people'; and (v) 'being able to cope with questioning by job-interviewers'. However, Jardine found that significantly more good attenders than poor attenders found the following curriculum-related items to be important in their adult lives: (i) 'having qualifications'; (ii) 'being able to make up your own mind about media events'; and (iii) 'to know something about health education....'

Jardine concluded from the collated data that the two groups attached a top priority to being 'marketable' in

employment situations and were keenly aware of the importance of managing money. But they diverged significantly in the importance ascribed to having academic qualifications for a successful adult life, with poor attenders having a significantly low opinion of this variable.

Jardine studied the career activities of the cohort in Autumn, 1984, when over half the sample had left school. The study indicate that a similar proportion of good and poor attenders had joined the Youth Training Programme (YTP). However, in the remainder of the career categories, more good attenders (38 per cent) than poor attenders (30 per cent) had found work by October, 1984. By contrast, there were more unemployed poor attenders (22 per cent) than unemployed good attenders (12 per cent); and with respect to continuing full-time education, there was a marked difference between the two groups with 60 per cent of good attenders on full-time study courses, while this was true for only 27 per cent of poor attenders.

In an American study by Robins and Ratcliffe (1980) studied the adult lives of 223 black males, aged between 30 and 36 years, who had attended school in the 1940's and 1950's. They compared those males who had truanted while at high school with those who had not. Their methodology included interviews, and collecting information from school and criminal records. Robins and Ratcliffe found that earnings highly correlated with truancy. Almost all (85 per cent) of good attenders earned more than a \$100 per week, while this was true for only 38 per cent of those who had truanted.

Robins and Ratcliffe compared the truants and good attenders on several adult deviant behaviours including alcohol abuse, marital problems, criminality, parental irresponsibility (e.g. failing to support their children), violence such as wife and child beatings, and job problems such as long-term unemployment. Robins and Ratcliffe found that truancy was indeed a good predictor of these adult

deviant behaviours, with more than 50 per cent of the truants succumbing to several of these problem behaviours, while this was true for about a third of the good attenders. When studying various psychological problems such as anxiety, hallucinations, and drug abuse, the authors also found that high school truancy was significantly related to these problems.

Robins and Ratcliffe stated that these findings are similar to their findings among white males and, therefore, concluded that the disastrous outcomes of truancy probably have a considerable generalizability for males.

Implications from the Literature for the Present Action Research Project

The author has noted some issues raised by the literature which she feels should be investigated in relation to her sample population (i.e. 23 non-school attenders and 32 controls). Such an investigation will include: (i) assessing the population's self-perceptions; (ii) gathering repertory reports on delinquency, criminality and other conduct disorders; (iii) assessing the population's academic attainment; and (iv) collating information on their attitudes towards the home and school.

The author believes it is imperative that she carries out such investigations if she is to understand the population's personalities, their strengths and deficiencies. She believes such information may help her to design appropriate and relevant programmes to meet the needs of the population, and in particular the needs of the non-school attenders. This investigation may also give the author some insight into the type of characteristics which might serve as predictors for pupils who are most at risk of becoming persistent absentees and poor academic performers.

The Importance of Non-School Attendance:A Summary of Chapter 2

Various empirical studies have shown that non-school attendance, particularly truancy, is associated with delinquent and anti-social disorders. Non-school attenders also tend to have learning difficulties which tend to frustrate and alienate them from school.

In inter-personal relationships the literature suggests that truants tend to be unpopular with teachers and other pupils. They (the truants) also tend to be perceived as bullies, liars and thieves.

When collating data on persistent absentees and good attenders, the empirical evidence suggests that absentees tend to lead unsatisfactory out-of-school activities with many either roaming the streets, involved in indictable activities such as stealing, watching the television, or looking after younger siblings. Only a few non-school attenders invested their time in a hobby or a job.

Many authors found that non-school attenders were perceived as daring, nervous, unpopular, neurotic and tended to show a high degree of anxiety. The literature also argues that the truant persona is also highly associated with maladjustment, drug abuse, low self-esteem and poor living conditions.

Further studies of the adult lives of non-school attenders suggest they are more likely to lead relatively unfavourable lives with a tendency towards unemployment, violent behaviour, low salaries, drug abuse, alcohol abuse and marital problems.

Considering the problems of non-school attendance and its association with delinquency, poor living conditions and poor inter-personal relationships, it is no wonder that many feel that it is imperative that some sort of appropriate action is taken to negate the adverse consequences of

disaffection and school absenteeism. One such action shall be discussed in Chapter 3, where some authorities have used the complex legal system as a strategic approach to combating and managing persistent school absenteeism.

Chapter 3

Non-School Attendance and the Law

Considering the problems associated with persistent absenteeism, it is vital that professionals, especially teachers, Education Welfare Officers (EWOs) and social workers, understand the main legal procedures used by local authorities to deal with non-school attendance. Therefore, the purpose of this chapter is fourfold:

- (i) to provide some insight into the legal complexities used to combat persistent absenteeism,
- (ii) to assess the efficacy of the law as an interventive strategy for managing truancy;
- (iii) to discuss some of the limitations of the legal system; and
- (iv) to discuss some of the contemporary ideas, proposed by various authorities, which may become part of pragmatic models for use in future practices within the legal framework (e.g. Blyth & Milner, 1987; Grimshaw & Pratt, 1987; Reid, 1987a, 1987b).

The Law

The Legal System used by the Local Education Authorities (LEAs) to Deal with Non-School Attendance

The main legal systems used by LEAs to deal with truancy are two-fold:

1. The 1944 Education Act made school compulsory for children aged between five and 16 years (as amended by the 1972 Raising of the School-Leaving Age Order). Therefore, it is illegal for such children to truant.

Thus, parents can be prosecuted as it is their duty by law to ensure that their children attend school regularly (Education Act, 1944, Section 39).

2. The Children and Young Persons Act (CYPA), 1969, under Section 1(2)(e) allows local authorities to bring care proceedings against families where the children are considered to be receiving inadequate education and are in need of care or control associated with this inadequacy.

The author will discuss these two Acts in more detail, starting with the 1944 Education Act.

The Social Background to the 1944 Education Act

Towards the end of the second World War debates about the conditions of the British people intensified particularly in terms of social equality and freedom from mass unemployment. Some commentators believe that this debate was inspired by a sense of unity and patriotism in the United Kingdom created by the war efforts on the part of the general masses (Connell, 1980; Curtis, 1952; Finn, 1987). Against this background, Butler, the then Minister of Education proposed the 1944 Education Act which made education, especially secondary education, available for all. It is this 1944 Act which the present education system is based on.

The 1944 Education Act

The main philosophies of the 1944 Act were to replace the Board of Education by a ministry, raise the school leaving age to 14 years from 1947, and to ensure that every local authority in England and Wales provide sufficient schools for full-time secondary education to suit the requirements of senior pupils (Connell, 1980; Curtis, 1952; Dent, 1947; Reid, 1985; Taylor & Saunders, 1976).

With regards to non-school attendance, under Section 39 of the 1944 Act, the Local Education Authority (LEA) can prosecute parents for failing to ensure their child's

attendance at school (Dent, 1947; Reid, 1985). Parents can also be prosecuted under Section 37 for failing to comply with a school attendance order (see below) (Connell, 1980; Dent, 1947; Taylor & Saunders, 1976). On conviction, Section 40 of the Act permits magistrates to fine (or on third conviction imprison) the parent (Dent, 1947; Reid, 1985).

Interpretation of the 1944 Education Act

In this section the author shall consider what the Act means by parental responsibilities, compulsory school age, school attendance orders, acceptable excuses for non-attendance, teachers' duties and the role of the school.

a) Parental responsibilities

Under Section 36 and 39(2) the Act states that it is the parents' duty to ensure that a child of compulsory school age receives appropriate full-time education in accordance to his or her age, ability and aptitude, either by attendance at school or otherwise. If a child, of compulsory school age, is a registered pupil of a school but fails to attend regularly, then the parent is guilty of an offence (Section 39) and can be convicted.

b) Compulsory School Age

The Education Act, 1944, (Section 35), as amended by the 1972 Raising of the School-Leaving Age Order (see Reid, 1985), states that a child aged between five and 16 years is deemed to be of compulsory school age.

c) School Attendance Orders

If the parent is failing to ensure that a child of compulsory school age is not attending regularly, then the LEA may serve a notice instructing the parent to register the child at a named school. The parent is legally obliged to reply to the order (Education Act, 1944, Section 37). Failure to comply to the requirements of a school attendance order is an offence and can lead to similar penalties as for non-school attendance.

d) Acceptable Excuses for Non-School Attendance

The 1944 Act has made a provision of four acceptable excuses for a child's absence from school.

- (i) An unavoidable cause, such as sickness, but the word 'unavoidable' must refer to the child and not the parent. For example, to keep a child at home to care for younger siblings or an ill parent, does not constitute an unavoidable cause (Reid, 1985).
- (ii) Absence on a day exclusively set apart for religious observance.
- (iii) A child may be granted permission by the school governors for leave of absence to take his or her holidays with his or her parents.
- (iv) When the school at which the child is registered is not within 'walking distance' of the child's home and no suitable transport has been made available by the LEA. 'Walking distance' refers to three miles or under by the shortest route for children over the age of 8 years, and two mile or under for children under the age of 8 years.

e) Role of the School

Persistent non-school attendance over a thirty-day period empowers schools to move the offenders from their official registers. However, most schools fail to implement this option, probably in order to avoid administrative chaos (Reid, 1985).

f) Form Register

All teachers are legally obligated to mark classroom registers properly. There must be an attendance register for each class, form or group, and containing every name in that class, form or group.

Periodic returns, giving the cause of absence, if known, must be made on all day-pupils who fail to attend

regularly.

The Children and Young Persons Act 1969

The Children and Young Persons Act (CYPA, 1969) made provision whereby LEAs now have the authority to bring children before the juvenile court for non-school attendance (Dent, 1947; Galloway, 1985a; Reid, 1985; Taylor & Saunders, 1976). The 1969 Act has also made provisions whereby the court may make a care order if the children are not being educated and if they are in need of care and control (Section 1(2)).

Section 1(2)(e) of the CYPA 1969

Under this section care orders can be instituted against a child, and have him or her removed from parental control and into the hands of the applicant (i.e. the local authority) because either:

1. The child is in danger of being physically or emotionally abused or neglected,
2. the child is likely to be in danger of conditions mentioned in (1) because it has been proved that another child in the household has suffered the same way in the past,
3. the child is likely to suffer from conditions mentioned in (1) because someone in the household has been convicted of an offence (i.e. violence and sexual abuse against children),
4. the child is in moral danger, that is, incest,
5. the child is beyond control, such as, he or she does not return home at night,
6. the child, of compulsory school age, is not receiving efficient full-time education as laid down by the 1944 Education Act and amended by the 1981 Education Act, or

7. the child is guilty of an indictable offence such as robbery or arson.

The Course of Actions Available to the Magistrates' and Juvenile Courts Under Section 1 (2)(e) of the CYPA (1969) for Non-School Attenders

If the LEA suspect that a child is regularly absent from school for unjustifiable reasons, the parents concerned may be issued with a School Attendance Order instructing them to register their child at a named school. If the instructions are not heeded, then the LEA can bring court proceedings against the family concerned. If the LEA proves that the child has been truanting then the magistrates' court can institute one or more of the following actions (Berg, 1980; Central Independent Television, 1984; Galloway, 1985a; Reid, 1985):

1. They can decide to take no action if the child has gone back to regular school attendance by the time of the court hearing.
2. They can adjourn the case to test attendance. The magistrates can either set dates for future hearings (repeated adjournments) in the hope that during the intervening periods the child will start attending school regularly; or the magistrates can adjourn sine die which means that they will adjourn the case for an indefinite period with the hope that this may encourage the child to return to school.
3. The parent can be prosecuted and fined a sum of up to #200 (and/or one month's imprisonment for a third or subsequent conviction) if the child's attendance is unsatisfactory.

The magistrates' court can also direct the child to the juvenile court for non-school attendance. The juvenile court can then institute one or more of the following actions against the child (Berg, 1980; Central Independent Television, 1984; Galloway, 1985a; Reid, 1985):

1. They can make a supervision order whereby the child is supervised by a social worker or a probation officer whose duty it is to befriend and advise the child. The hope is that the individual attention of the supervisor may encourage the child to return to school.
2. The magistrates can make a 'condition of residence' whereby the parents are directed to place the child with a named individual such as a relative.
3. The child might be placed on an 'intermediate treatment' programme which mainly involves the child being directed to some form of supervised activity at the discretion of the child's supervisor (e.g. the social worker).
4. The magistrates may decide to make an 'interim care order' whereby the child can be placed into a residential home where his/her behaviour and educational performance can be assessed by the social services. Any reports made based on these assessments can then be used by the courts to help them decide what action should be taken in relation to the child.
5. The magistrates may decide to make a care order which means that the local authority assumes full parental rights over the child until he/she is 18 years of age, or when the order is revoked or varied.

Comments about the 1944 and 1969 Acts

The 1944 Education Act embodies a key principle - that no parent(s) has the right to deprive their children of the benefits of full-time education provided by the State.

The CYPA has been a progressive step forward in the sense that it embodies a number of concepts which are different from those in previous Acts (Reid, 1985). These concepts include:

1. that there is no single cause of delinquency: delinquency

is determined by circumstances and social background, such as in the case of lack of parental control or exposure to a criminal adult;

2. the attempt to achieve early recognition and full assessment of the child's needs, for example, through an interim care order, before administering 'treatment';
3. the implementation of a variety of 'treatments' for dealing with children in trouble. Such 'treatments' range from supervision at home to short-term intermediate treatment and long-term residential care.

Reid (1985) has pointed out some of the limitations of the 1969 Act:

1. the Act has led to a substantial increase in the amount of work undertaken by the local social service departments at a time when their resources are scarce and inadequate, and
2. the Act has led to professional conflicts of interest between EWOs and social workers - a point that will be discussed later.

During the late 1960's and 70's investigative work by several authorities suggested that children fared better if they were allowed to remain in their 'natural' environment rather than being placed into residential care or special schools (e.g. Cornish & Clarke, 1975; Tharp & Wetzel, 1969; Warnock Report, 1978). Partly as a consequence of the work done by these authorities, the 1981 Education Act was passed as an amendment to the 1944 Education Act with the concept of ensuring that LEAs extend their provision for children with special needs, and, wherever possible, to cater for such children within the 'normal' school or main community. In the following section the implications of the 1981 Act will be discussed in relation to persistent absenteeism.

The 1981 Education Act

The Act was introduced as an amendment to the 1944 Education Act with the concept of ensuring that LEAs further extent their provisions of efficient full-time education to children with special educational needs. The term 'special educational needs' refers to a child who has learning difficulties that are either:

- (i) significantly greater than the majority of children of his or her age; or
- (ii) he or she has a disability (e.g. a child who suffers from paraplegia and may have difficulty in gaining access to facilities in ordinary schools because of his or her wheelchair) which prevents him/her from making use of the educational facilities provided in ordinary schools.

The philosophy of this Act is pertinent to the needs of non-school attenders who tend to have significant learning and behavioural difficulties (Blagg & Yule, 1987; Farrington, 1980; Fogelman & Richardson, 1974; Fogelman et al., 1980; May, 1975; Pritchard et al., 1987; Reid, 1984a; Robins & Ratcliffe, 1980). Therefore, the provision of special educational needs as stipulated by the 1981 Act is very relevant to any managerial strategies for school absenteeism.

Under the 1981 Act, it is the duty of the LEA to make special educational provision, that is, provision different from or in addition to what is already available in ordinary schools.

The 1981 Act also stipulates that the LEAs are under an obligation to ensure that children who are assessed as special educational need cases should, wherever possible, be educated in ordinary schools providing that this is compatible with:

- a. the child's needs for special educational provision,

- b. there is provision of efficient education for the child with whom he or she will be educated,
- c. the resources are used efficiently.

The theme of the 1981 Education Act is based on the Warnock Report (1978) which estimated that up to 20 per cent of school children in Britain may have special educational needs. The Report suggests that, wherever possible, children with 'special needs' should be educated and integrated within the community, particularly at the ordinary schools, and the Report further suggests a range of provisions:

- 1. full-time education in ordinary class with any necessary help,
- 2. education in an ordinary class, with periods of withdrawal,
- 3. education in a special class or unit with periods of attendance in ordinary class, and full involvement in education life and extra-curricular activities of the ordinary school.

Enforcement of the Law

In this section the author will discuss the strategies used by schools, EWOs and social workers in the controlling of unjustified school absenteeism.

The School

Schools are normally the first to identify children who fail to attend school regularly without an acceptable reason. Berg (1980) stated that the process by which schools assess what are adequate excuses and the methods they employ to check whether children are in fact at school varies a great deal depending on the circumstances. Berg discussed some examples of schools which at one extreme are determined to cut down truancy rates to as low a level as possible and schools at the other extreme who tend to ignore pupils'

absenteeism, particularly disruptive pupils. Berg cited one Headteacher at a large comprehensive school who tackled the problem of truancy in a relatively efficient way. The school kept in regular contact with parents and was in touch with the family the moment there was an unexpected absence. The school also carried out random checks so that pupils could not slip away after registration, and rewards were given to individual and groups of children whose attendance records were exceptionally good. At the other extreme, Berg cited one school who for various reasons do not appear to take the same amount of trouble. The school may, for example, consist of several buildings which are somewhat spread out geographically, thus giving pupils more of an opportunity to leave unobtrusively whilst transferring from one class in one building to one class in another. Berg also suggests that inadequate facilities and insufficient staff to cope with exceptionally disruptive pupils may tempt schools to turn a blind eye when such pupils are persistently absent. Another factor is that high absenteeism rates reflect badly on schools and Berg argues that this may discourage teachers from checking pupils absences with any great thoroughness.

The Police

Although from time to time the police do make special efforts to round up children who roam the streets during school hours (SED, 1977), they are not normally directly involved with the problem of truancy. However, considering the fact that truancy is associated with indictable offences (Farrington, 1980; Hersov, 1960a; I.S.T.D., 1970; May, 1975; Pritchard et al., 1987; Robins & Ratcliffe, 1980; Tyerman, 1968), the police do help with this problem insofar as they deal with juvenile delinquency generally.

The Education Welfare Officer

The Department of Education and Science ([DES] 1986) produced a circular which specified what they consider to be the role of the EWO. The circular indicated that EWOs are employed by Education Authorities and their primary function is to investigate children's unjustified absences from school. The EWOs are expected to have a wide range of skills

to enable them on occasions to deal with any domestic problems or negative parental attitudes which may affect children's regular school attendance. The EWO is also expected to keep in close contact with school staff, and to be familiar with the organization of the school, such as, its curricular approaches, pastoral care system, career guides and disciplinary policies. The DES believes that equipped with this background information, the EWOs are better able to take a constructive stance with those who offer excuses to justify absences and they can also effectively communicate with parents about the schools' approaches. Therefore, with an insight into both the child's home and school backgrounds, the EWO is expected to contribute to the school's thinking about curricular issues in relation to pupils with attendance and behavioural problems.

However, if a child's school attendance does not improve despite the EWO's intervention, then the EWO is empowered to initiate legal proceedings against the parents and/or the child which may lead to the parent being prosecuted or the child being placed into care.

The circular has been criticized by some authorities (e.g. Blyth & Milner, 1987; Reid, 1987a) for its lack of regard for welfare issues and the importance of social work methods in resolving non-school attendance. For example, Blyth and Milner (1987) stated that the circular also ignored the EWOs' role with a range of disadvantaged children such as pregnant schoolgirls, school phobics, glue-sniffers and children with handicaps. They also argue that the circular failed to understand the interaction of individual, family, cultural and institutional factors that might be perpetuating non-school attendance. While the circular offered little to enhance the status of the EWO in the sense that its recommendations were to be implemented without any additional expenditure; it, nevertheless, suggests that the EWO should become involved in curricular issues and work as an advisor to school staff. Despite these suggestions, it failed to give any indications as to how

they might be implemented.

The Limitations of the Education Welfare Service

One of the recommendations of the Ralph Report (1973) was that EWOs should have social work qualifications. This would enhance the status of the EWO and improve their salaries (Reid, 1987a).

However, despite the recommendations of the Ralph Report (1973) and the DES circular (1986), the education welfare service is a divided profession (Reid, 1987a). Reid (1987a) suggests that some EWOs tend to use the preventive social work approach which involves the officers picking out poor school attenders at an early stage so that they can provide counselling for the pupils and parents concerned, and some officers even organise behaviour therapy sessions for their clients. Reid also found that the converse was true, where some EWOs are still seen as attendance 'policemen' whose routines usually consist of browsing through attendance registers, making home visits and writing court referrals.

Reid argues that this professional dichotomy between whether EWOs are policemen or social workers is further complicated by their training background which ranges from some EWOs having no qualifications to others who are partly trained, while still others who are fully trained holding professional and/or academic qualifications.

Reid believes that these professional variations provide a massive handicap to the status of the EWOs in the eyes of employers, social workers and teachers. Furthermore, such variations may lead to absentees being treated differently depending on the EWO dealing with their case. Thus, some EWOs may be socially orientated with the tendency to provide counselling and sympathy to their clients. While conversely, some absentees may find that the EWO has taken a punitive role only wishing to return them to school irrespective of the cause of the absence.

Reid (1987a) stipulates several proposals to help overcome some of the professional limitations which exist among many EWOs. His proposals include:

1. There should be more research to help politicians and policy-makers, the Departments for Health and Social Security and DES develop more efficacious guidelines on the management of non-school attenders.
2. The strategies of the EWOs should be based on casework approaches because of the many social problems associated with truancy.
3. There should be national agreements on the content and structure of training for all EWOs. These courses should be compulsory, and have inter-disciplinary and multidisciplinary orientations.
4. The education welfare service could raise the status of the EWO through improved salaries or payment bonuses based on how well EWOs improve the school attendance rates in their schools. This may attract better qualified, trained and keen people, and, therefore, further help to combat school absenteeism.
5. Britain could implement the French approach where parents whose children truant from school suffer the loss of family allowances. Reid believes that if this method is implemented to the extent that British parents would receive a reduction in child benefit if their children truanted, then the effects on improving school attendance might be quite startling. He also suggests that any money saved this way could be used to advance the profession of the EWOs by providing financial aid for training courses and increased bonuses.

Social Workers

Since the CYPA (1969) has empowered LEAs and juvenile courts to place unjustified school absentees into care, social workers are now responsible for absentees' welfare

(Berg, Consterdine, Hullin, McGuire & Tyrer, 1978a; Berg Butler, Hullin, Smith and Tyrer 1978b; Reid, 1982d, 1985, 1987b). Cartwright (1984) stated that the role of the social worker is to view non-school attendance as a reflection of other problems which might prioritise welfare considerations, such as lack of clothing and poor home conditions.

Galloway, Ball and Seyd (1981a, 1981b) list some of the interventive approaches of the social worker in school absenteeism cases. These interventive approaches include:

- 1) social workers act as intermediaries between home and school while negotiating children's return to school;
- 2) offer the children and their families casework support with the objective of returning the child to school; and
- 3) offer the family practical assistance, for example, help them to fill out application forms for welfare entitlement.

Reid (1987b) cites some of the casework approaches by two social workers towards non-school attendance. One of the social workers felt that his problem in dealing with absentees was compounded by the fact that he was not trained to handle the situation correctly. The interventive methods he adopted were to simply force his cases to attend school every morning. When that did not work, the social worker would try and find his cases and return them to school.

Another social worker stated that his first step was to advice truants on the benefits of attending school, but if the children continued to truant despite the advice given, then the social worker would pick up the truants in the morning from their homes and take them to school. If the children persisted in truanting then the cases would eventually lead to placements in care, a consequence which the social worker felt was an inevitability in a large number of cases.

Reid (1987b) argues that these limited approaches by social workers is accentuated by the fact that most of them are not sufficiently trained to deal with the problems of truants. He states that the social workers' backgrounds are usually middle-class with a university degree which may not equip them with the necessary attributes for dealing with 'problem' children. Furthermore, Reid suggests that their clients might mistrust their (social workers) middle-class values and subsequently this may have an adverse affect on the social worker-client relationship.

Reid postulates a number of positive steps that could be taken to improve social workers interventive approaches in truancy cases. Some the suggestions include:

1. Social work courses should cover the topic of school absenteeism from a multidisciplinary perspective including a study of the psychological and institutional factors. Reid also argues that social workers and teachers should have training programmes which would enable them to spend time in one another's establishments in order to improve knowledge and understanding of the two professions. This could be achieved by allowing social workers to do some teaching and vice versa.
2. More descriptive case-studies of good practice should be written up in journals to provide leads which others could follow.
3. There should be more research exploring the interventions of social workers and the involvement of the social services with families of school absentees.

The Relationship Between EWOs and Social Workers

EWOs are mainly concerned with enforcing school attendance (Cartwright, 1984; DES, 1986; Galloway et al., 1981b, 1981c; Reid, 1985, 1987a), but despite their social base (Ralphs Report, 1973), they tend to have a different function to the social workers who are mainly concerned with

the welfare problems of their clients (Blyth & Milner, 1987; Cartwright, 1984). Some authors have argued that these different roles have led to rivalry and confrontation between the two professions (Blyth & Milner, 1987; Reid, 1982d). Reid (1982d) suggests that this situation has been further compounded by the CYPA (1969) which transferred much of the responsibility for school attendance work from the EWOs to the social workers because of the juvenile court proceedings. Thus, for example, any non-school attenders who are placed under supervision or care orders by the juvenile court are immediately the responsibility of the social services, and are, therefore, out of the hands of the EWOs (Berg, 1980; Berg et al., 1978a).

As a consequence of their different backgrounds, Reid (1982d) argues that the EWOs and the social workers tend to differ on their analyses of truancy cases and they will often be at odds with each other. Subsequently, this may have an adverse affect on the management of persistent absenteeism as it may cause truants and their families to become confused and dissatisfied (Blyth & Milner, 1987). Reid (1987a, 1987b) has stipulated that in order to surmount some of these inter-professional problems it might be prudent to compel all EWOs to have social work qualifications, and to train all agencies to operate within a multidisciplinary paradigm when working with truancy cases.

The Use and Prevalence of Legal Procedures in Cases of Non-School Attendance

Galloway, Ball and Seyd (1981a) studied the legal procedures of an LEA in Sheffield over a course of two years. The study monitored over 200 persistent absentees. Galloway et al. investigated three formal procedures which EWOs may undertake if they feel that the family concerned is not co-operating. The three formal actions include:

1. The EWOs may present their cases to the Education Committee School Attendance Section (SAS). This body consists of counsellors and co-opted representatives of

the teachers' associations. The EWOs may state their views about the reasons for the child's absence from school. Members of SAS then interview the parents and the child to discuss the seriousness of the child's truancy and also to advise the family to return the child to regular school attendance. Subsequently the SAS committee make their recommendations, and the families and EWOs are informed.

2. Parents may be prosecuted in the magistrates court for offences under Section 37 (failing to obey a school attendance order) or Section 39 (failing to secure their child's school attendance) of the 1944 Education Act.
3. Under Section 1(2)(e) of the 1969 CYPA, the LEA can initiate care proceedings in the juvenile court for unjustified school absenteeism.

When comparing the three procedures, Galloway et al. found that the SAS method was the most frequently used procedure, followed by prosecution of parents in court. The least used procedure was care proceedings in juvenile court.

They also studied the recommendations of the SAS in more detail. They found that the most common recommendation made by SAS was keeping truant cases (i.e. 64.6 per cent) under review, followed by the prosecution of parents (14.0 per cent). Some of the least frequently recommended courses followed by the SAS included the child being referred to a psychologist/psychiatrists (2.8 per cent), the child being referred for medical reports/illness (1.5 per cent) and the child being taken before juvenile court (1.3 per cent).

When studying the final outcome of parents' appearances in magistrates' court, Galloway et al. found that the most frequent outcomes were fines of sums which ranged from #2 to #50 (41.4 per cent), followed by a fine and a direction that the child be referred to juvenile court (36.9 per cent), conditional discharge and direction that the child will be referred to juvenile court (6.4 per cent),

case adjourned sine die, withdrawn or dismissed (5.7 per cent), and among the least frequent magistrates' court outcome was an absolute discharge (0.6 per cent).

Galloway et al. also studied the outcome for those children taken to juvenile court. They found that the most frequent outcome was a supervision order (45.7 per cent), followed by a care order (20.5 per cent), case adjourned sine die (14.2 per cent), case dismissed (11.0 per cent). Among the least frequent outcomes of the juvenile court was a supervision order with intermediate treatment (2.4 per cent).

They stated that some of the limits of the Sheffield LEA system included the fact that the process leading up to intervention was inevitably protracted. They found that there was at least a six-week delay between the decision to take action in the juvenile court and the child's actual court appearance. This, they argue, may lead to families becoming frustrated. Furthermore, when parents are fined and their children are also directed to the juvenile court, the families can become resentful because they perceive it as being punished twice. This may lead to parents doubting the magistrates' intentions of having the child's welfare at heart. Galloway et al. conclude that the subsequent school attendance usually remains poor for those pupils who have been the subject of any or all three of the procedures mentioned above. This population's school attendance rates will be discussed in more detail below.

Galloway et al. (1981b) reviewed the school attendance rates of the population, mentioned above, following legal or administrative action. Their sample of non-school attenders were divided into four groups:

- (i) truants whose parents were invited to attend a meeting of the SAS,
- (ii) truants whose parents were prosecuted under Section 40 of the 1944 Education Act,

- (iii) truants who the LEA brought before the juvenile court, and
- (iv) truants who received no formal intervention which the authors referred to as NFI group.

When comparing the characteristics of the pupils, their families and neighbourhood, the authors found:

1. There were no significant differences in the sex distribution in the three formal intervention samples (i.e. SAS, magistrates' court and juvenile court). However, in the sample of truants who received no formal intervention (NFI group), there was more girls than boys.
2. The truants came from large families where the mean number of children per family lay between four and six per sample.
3. There was a high prevalence of poverty in the sampled families, as indicated by the numbers receiving free school meals. This was particularly prevalent in the juvenile court sample. However, the authors found that fewer of the NFI truants were receiving free school meals than those in the three intervention samples.
4. When analysing the characteristics of the absentees' neighbourhoods, the authors found that most truants lived in areas characterised by few owner-occupied homes and few skilled workers. There was the tendency for the NFI children to live in areas with a slightly higher proportion of both skilled workers and house holders with exclusive use of three standard amenities (bathroom, toilet and kitchen).
5. The authors looked at the percentage of each sample who had been in care before and after legal intervention during their non-school attendance behaviour. They found that a small number of children in the SAS, magistrates'

court and NFI were later placed into care as a result of juvenile court proceedings over their truancy behaviour. However, relatively more children (20 per cent) in the juvenile court sample were placed in care as a result of LEA's actions. The delinquency rates were particularly high among the juvenile court and magistrates' court samples.

6. The authors studied the school attendance rates of the population before and after intervention. Their results indicated a moderate improvement in the attendance of the pupils in the SAS group and the magistrates court sample, and a comparatively marked improvement in the NFI sample (see Table 3.1). However, the school attendance rates for the juvenile court sample rapidly deteriorated to below that of the pre-intervention rate.

Table 3.1: Average School Attendance Before and After Formal Intervention (Galloway et al., 1981b)

School attendance	SAS (%)	Magistrates' court(%)	Juvenile court(%)	NFI (%)
Attendance one term before intervention	46	34	37	34
Attendance for remainder of term following intervention	58	44	40	N/A
Complete term following intervention	56	50	34	40
Summer term	58	41	37	55
Autumn term	54	38	35	60

The authors concluded that school attendance following legal action frequently remains extremely poor. However, the authors caution against judging the lack of efficacy of legal action on school attendance, because without such action, they argue, attendance might have deteriorated even further: on the other hand, it might have improved (if, for example, legal action had created additional stress in the family).

Although the NFI pupils showed some encouraging improvements in their attendance rates, the authors again caution against interpreting this as a reflection of the efficacy of the EWOs' or teachers' casework with the families concerned. They argue that it is possible that attendance might have improved still further if caseworker had been combined with legal action; on the other hand legal action might have destroyed the value of the other work the EWO was doing with the family.

The data on delinquency suggest that persistent absentees were more likely to be invited to the SAS or face legal action if their had committed indictable offences.

During the course of their investigation, the authors evaluated the school attendance rates of persistent absentees who changed schools (see Table 3.2). They found that those absentees who had made an ordinary age-related change from primary to secondary school showed no improvement in average attendance. In contrast, they found absentees who were transferred from an ordinary school to a special school showed a dramatic improvement in attendance which was maintained in the first two complete terms following the transfer. Transfer of absentees to another ordinary school also showed marked improvement in school attendance, though this was somewhat less dramatic than absentees transferred to special schools.

**Table 3.2: School Attendance of Pupils who Changed Schools
(Galloway et al., 1981b)**

	Normal transfer, e.g. primary to secondary(%)	Transfer to special school(%)	Transfer to ordinary school(%)
Period of attendance			
(1) Final term at old school	60.9	15.3	37.1
(2) First complete term at new school	59.3	70.4	63.5
(3) Second term at new school	50.5	68.3	62.2

The authors further conclude that the data clearly show that the majority of very poor attenders, whether or not the LEA takes formal action against them, are living in disadvantaged areas of the city, with a high proportion of families with low incomes (as indicated by free school meals) and a relatively large number of siblings. Their study also suggests that the approach with the most efficacious effect on school attendance was a planned change of school with consideration for the child's educational needs.

Unlike Galloway et al. (1981b) who found legal action to be ineffective, Berg et al. (1978a), in a detailed study of the juvenile court procedures, found that the adjournment system was more effective in improving school attendance than supervision orders. Further details of the effects of the juvenile court proceedings on non-school attendance will be discussed in the following section.

The Efficacy of Juvenile Court Procedures on Non-School Attendance

The juvenile courts have several measures open to them for dealing with persistent absentees. These measures include: supervision order; residential care order; interim care order; intermediate treatment; case adjourned sine die; repeated adjournments; and case withdrawn or dismissed. The prevalence of these procedures are discussed below.

Tennent (1970) studied the use of the various procedures under the 1944 Education Act in Inner London juvenile courts. His study included a total of 757 truants who were brought to court directly under an Educational Act summons or brought back to court after a period of supervision.

Tennent's figures show that the commonest age of both male and female truants for court appearances was 14 years. When analysing the outcome of the truancy cases, Tennent's findings suggest that in 38 per cent of the cases no form of order was made, while supervision orders were made in 52 per cent of the cases, and residential placements were made for 10 per cent of the truancy cases. For the truancy cases brought back to court after supervision, 37 per cent were placed into residential care, 10 per cent were placed under new supervision orders and no orders were made in the remaining 53 per cent of the truancy cases. Tennent's study also indicate that boys and girls were treated similarly.

In a Leeds study, Berg, Hullin, McGuire, and Tyrer (1977) found that over 60 per cent of those truants taken into care eventually went into residential institutions of one kind or another. They also found that approximately 40 per cent of truants not placed under a care or supervision order immediately, were later sent to assessment centres on an interim care order.

Unfortunately, being placed into care of the local authority can be a shattering experience for the young person (Reid, 1985). Reid (1985) argues that often too

little thought is given to the fact that truants have few of the home, social and intellectual advantages of life (Fogelman et al., 1980; Galloway et al., 1981a, 1981b; Jardine, 1987; May, 1975; Tibbenham, 1977), and as a result, to be placed in the same institutes as some of their more disruptive peers is hardly conducive to encouraging them to reform. In fact being in care can be a breeding ground for resentment and crime (Cornish & Clarke, 1975; Tharp & Wetzel, 1969).

The evaluation of court procedures in truancy has been the subject of two revealing studies. Berg et al. (1978a), and Berg et al. (1978b) carried out two studies in the city of Leeds which involved 96 truants. The purpose of the study was to evaluate the use of two judicial procedures on truants brought to court. The two procedures were adjournment and supervision. When adjournment was employed, the cases were repeatedly adjourned and the children had to come back to court at varying intervals, after a week a fortnight or several weeks depending on the progress of school attendance. When attendance was good the interval between court appearances were made longer and when it was poor the children had to go back to court more often. If, however, there was no sign of improvement the children may be placed into residential assessment centres or even on full care orders. When supervision was used, social workers or probation officers then became responsible for the supervision of the children. No further court appearances were arranged unless the supervising social worker felt that the supervision had failed and wanted the juvenile court to take further action, such as making a care order.

In the first paper, Berg et al. (1978a) studied for one year 96 children who were taken to court for non-school attendance. The children were randomly allocated to either adjournment or supervision procedures. Subsequently 45 children were put on adjournment and 51 were subject to a supervision order entirely at random.

Before coming to court both groups of children had

only attended about 25 per cent of the school curriculum over a three-month period. In the first six months after their court appearances the adjourned groups' school attendance had increased to 65 per cent and the supervised groups' school attendance increased to 50 per cent. In the subsequent six-month period school attendance was 75 per cent for the adjourned group and 50 per cent for the supervision group. Berg's et al. findings suggest that adjournment was superior to supervision in the management of truancy by court orders.

Berg et al. stipulated three reasons why the adjournment procedures produced better school attendance results than the supervision orders. The first reason is the inconvenience on the family of repeated court appearances. Secondly, the continued interest and involvement of the EWOs in the adjournment cases. Thirdly, the effect upon the truants of having to sustain repeated court appearances rather than having the occasional conversation with a sympathetic social worker.

In a related enquiry, Berg et al. (1978b) evaluated the relationship between truancy and court appearances, using 84 of the 96 children who participated in the two court procedures already mentioned above. When Berg et al. assessed the background features of the truants, three independent characteristics appeared to be involved in most of the truancy cases. The first referred to truants with anti-social and educational problems, which Berg et al. referred to as 'Clinical truancy'; the second characteristic was concerned with adverse social aspects and parental complicity, referred to as 'school withdrawal'; and the third characteristic includes a tendency towards social isolation, which Berg et al. referred to as 'school refusal'. They argued that these findings exemplify the need to distinguish between these three aspects when assessing the reasons why some pupils become non-school attenders.

The Advisory Centre for Education (ACE), in 1984, carried out a survey in England and Wales to find out how

LEAs managed non-school attendance cases. The ACE found that several LEAs had used the 'Adjournment' strategy with varying degrees of success. Cumbria, for example, claimed some success with this strategy and Lancashire claimed that between 70 and 80 per cent of truancy cases improved in school attendance under this strategy. Other LEAs, however, were less enthusiastic about the adjournment procedure, Salford, for example, found it effective over a short time, but it was not effective in the long-term with very poor attenders.

Pratt (1983) has strongly criticized the Berg et al. (1978a, 1978b) studies. He stated that originally the studies had 165 truancy cases, of which 69 were excluded prior to the experiment. Pratt, argues that since the studies excluded some of the truants then their (Berg, et al.) claim of success on 'all' the truants in the adjournment procedures needs qualifying. Pratt also noted that both the adjournment and supervision procedures were likely to increase school attendance among the younger children in any case. Pratt, therefore, concluded that it is a myth to claim that the method of repeated adjournment procedures for managing truancy is more effective than supervision orders.

In their reply to Pratt's (1983) criticism, Berg, Goodwin, Hullin and McGuire (1983) argue that the great majority of exclusions from the study were in fact made entirely on scientific grounds. For example, youngsters close to school-leaving age were excluded, since a follow-up could not have been carried out for a very long period to know how the procedure had affected school attendance.

Galloway et al. (1981b) also commented on the data revealed by Berg et al. (1978a, 1978b). They suggested that Berg's et al. data are limited because of at least two factors:

1. The technique used is expensive in the demands it makes on both the social services department and magistrates'

time. Furthermore, in the second study the adjourned children's attendance were significantly lower than in the first study. Berg et al. in defence suggest that this was probably due to greater difficulties in getting placements for the children in assessment centres. Galloway et al. (1981b) argue that this suggestion simple defeats the value of the adjournment procedure.

2. Galloway et al. finally argue that their data indicate that those persistent absentees who underwent a planned change of school (as opposed to an ordinary age-related transfer), subsequently achieved an average school attendance rate which was similar to that of Berg et al.'s. adjourned group. Therefore, Galloway et al. suggest that an arranged transfer, based on the recognition of the child's educational needs, may be at least as effective as any form of legal action.

Hence, the empirical work on the law and absenteeism seems to suggest that existing legal arrangements in cases of non-school attendance are at best too expensive or simply too ineffective in increasing school attendance (Galloway et al., 1981b). Other authors, however, have closely studied the legal system and its limits in the sense that it may inhibit candid discussions by truants and their families, and the system also provides very limited options for children. Grimshaw and Pratt (1987), for example, examined the problematic effects of the legal system upon the communication between agencies of the law (e.g. teachers, EWOs and social workers) and truancy cases.

Grimshaw and Pratt conducted their research in Sheffield between 1981 and 1984. Their work included a study of all the stages of dealing with truancy, in particular the work of pastoral care teachers, EWOs, a pre-court tribunal and the local courts. In addition they interviewed 52 absentees who were involved in courts, tribunals and/or were part of EWOs' casework. They also interviewed parents, teachers and the EWOs concerned.

Starting with the perspectives of the truants themselves, Grimshaw and Pratt found that most absentees were fairly 'positive' about school in the limited sense that they found the school-working relationship tolerable - a result which is also confirmed by Jardine (1987). Out of about fifty absentees interviewed, they found that at least four cases did not 'get on alright' with either their teachers or lessons, while most cases (27 absentees) felt that they 'got on alright with' most teachers and lessons. Nor did the absentees experience any acute personal or social problems at school. The authors found that only four cases felt a lack of friendship in school, and only 11 cases had indicated any anxieties associated with school which attributed to their truant behaviour, such as, fear of getting into trouble.

The authors studied absentees' perspectives of their pastoral care teachers who are responsible for the social, personal and educational well-being of pupils; and for truants in particular when considering their educational problems (Fogelman & Richardson, 1974; Fogelman et al., 1980; Hersov, 1960a; Jardine, 1987). Grimshaw and Pratt's data suggest that there is a communicative failure between pastoral care teachers and truants. When the absentees were asked to comment on their experiences of support and counselling from pastoral tutors: the authors found that 28 pupils said that no one outside their families had spoken to them about their work in lessons, five had been spoken to once by their pastoral tutors and 17 more that once.

The authors also studied the communication between EWOs and their clients in order to establish how adequately the clients needs and views were understood. The authors' interviews with truants and their families, and EWOs revealed that the relationship between the EWOs and the families concerned was very limited, with many EWOs being directly concerned with improving school attendance and finding it difficult to apply formal counselling which may have shed some light on the problems faced by truants and their families. Consequently, the authors found that EWOs'

conversations with the families succumbed to a narrow code of relevance in which reasons for truancy were likely to be left substantially untouched.

Grimshaw and Pratt observed the pre-court decision-making of tribunals in Sheffield. They found that a variety of local practices were adopted in the management of absentees. Usually families were invited to the tribunals, which consisted of councillors and teacher representatives, to discuss the absentees' problems and to issue warnings. The authors found that the hearings were largely taken on a 'cut-and-dried' basis, with the assumption that something in the family was at fault. They felt that in many cases the tribunal took the approach of trying to 'salvage' the family by appeals, warnings and rhetorical persuasion. They also noted that families were excluded from preliminary hearings of their cases in which teachers and EWOs gave their own opinions to the panel as to why the children concerned truanted. Thus, a teacher could say that the child 'disliked school', 'dislikes working', or is deliberately unco-operative. That way, the authors argue, the panel is already primed in such a way as to place fault primarily with the family. The authors also found that any criticisms of schools deliberated by the families would be disposed of quickly by the tribunal.

Grimshaw and Pratt argue that the tribunal system needs more explicit guidelines for procedures to be used by LEAs in deciding future actions and to give families a fair hearing. Pratt and Grimshaw (1985a) stipulated some ideas which may improve the pre-court tribunal proceedings. They suggested that tribunals should take a more 'welfare' approach when dealing with school attendance problems. This 'welfare' approach could include:

- (i) at the tribunal stage the child should be invited to bring a relative or a friend,
- (ii) the panel when making decisions about the absentees' future should also recognise that family poverty,

ill-health and unemployment can seriously affect school attendance,

- (iii) more educational resources should be made available to the school pastoral care system if staff are to produce significant improvement in school attendance.

Pratt and Grimshaw (1985b) examined how families fared in court. Their observations suggest that legal proceedings at juvenile court seem to be very much based around procedural fairness. The authors cited one example where the court took considerable pains to ensure that families had legal representation. Their observations further suggest that the Sheffield juvenile court rarely used the Section 1(2)(e) care orders under the CYPA (1969) in dealing with truancy. The authors commented that although the court seem to operate fairly with absentees, there should, nevertheless, be more family participation in the courtroom discourse.

Grimshaw and Pratt (1987) concluded that if the legal system is to deal with truancy in an efficacious manner then children and their parents should be permitted to communicate their case and relevant problems. They further suggest that this communication should start with the teachers who are in the position to talk with and listen to truants in a relatively informal environment. The authors argue that by offering counselling which acknowledges the problems of children's experiences which might be at odds with the norms (e.g. pupils' dislike of teachers or curricular activities) may provide a more authentic approach to the problem of truancy.

The Role of the Social Services and the Education Departments in the Management of Non-School Attendance

Various attempts have been made to overcome the difficulties of non-school attendance ranging from adjourned care proceedings (Berg et al., 1978a, 1978b) to projects involving a variety of workers from the educational and social services departments and voluntary agencies (e.g.

Grunsell, 1980; Pickles, 1987; White, 1980 [see also Chapters 8a and 8b]). However, none of these have had a major beneficial impact on the way in which persistent absentees are treated within the legal system (Blyth & Milner, 1987; Galloway et al., 1981b; Grimshaw & Pratt, 1987).

To demonstrate the lack of improvements in the legal system's treatment of persistent absentees, Blyth and Milner (1987) cited some of the conclusions made by the House of Commons Social Services Committee Report on Children in Care (HMSO, 1984). The Committee studied children in care under Section 1 (2)(e) of the CYPA (1969) and concluded that:

- a. too many children were made subject of care orders for non-school attendance,
- b. many children remained in care beyond the upper age limit of compulsory schooling, and
- c. the quality of educational provision for children in care was frequently dubious.

The Committee regarded the Leeds system of adjournment care proceedings as an 'essentially artificial way of using the court' and concluded that children should be removed from home for non-school attendance only in exceptional events.

In the wake of the Committee's report, the Department for Health and Social Security (DHSS, 1985) set up a working party to consider possible changes in the juvenile legislation. The working party concluded that it is inappropriate to place a child in care solely on the grounds of non-school attendance, except where harm to the child can be proven. The party proposed that:

- a. magistrates should no longer have the power, under Section 40 of the 1944 Education Act, to make a child a subject of care proceedings in juvenile court, and

- b. LEAs should no longer have the power to initiate care proceedings for non-school attendance.

The DHSS (1985) working party also recommended that LEAs should instead be empowered to apply to juvenile court for a supervision order to monitor and ensure that the child attends school. The party regarded the EWO as the most appropriate agent to supervise the child.

Blyth and Milner (1987) argue that the responses to the DHSS (1985) report within the educational circles have been mixed. They state on one hand, the magistrates' powers to direct a child into care has been unpopular with EWOs usually because the EWOs tend to perceive such action as undermining their competence in dealing with truancy cases. Thus, the DHSS (1985) proposal that magistrates should no longer have this power might be welcomed among many in the education welfare service. But on the other hand, to strip the LEAs of the power to initiate care proceedings may be resented as it would lessen the managerial powers of the LEAs on truancy, and may also make the LEAs more dependent on the social services department. Such a situation might not be professionally conducive because, unfortunately, the two departments are not noted for good co-operation (Reid, 1982d).

Blyth and Milner further argue that the improvements proposed by the DHSS (1985) will not make any significant difference because it is merely transferring duties of supervision from social workers to the EWOs. It has not attempted to publish any evidence to suggest that any form of statutory intervention actually works in improving school attendance behaviour.

Blyth and Milner concluded that both the DHSS and DES have failed to make use of exiting knowledge about non-school attendance and disaffection (e.g. Carroll, 1977; Galloway, 1985a; Grunsell, 1980; Hersov & Berg, 1980; Reid, 1985, 1986a, 1987; White, 1980), and they have failed to

undertake any research themselves to establish the validity of their proposals. As a consequence Blyth and Milner believe that there is little hope of a future professional practice inco-operating any safeguards to ensure that disaffected children receive an 'efficient' and 'suitable' education: except if these respective professions are prudent enough to capitalise on the existing knowledge available on school absenteeism.

Implications from the Literature for the Present Action Research Project

1. Since the 1944 Education Act legally requires teachers to mark an attendance register for all pupils enrolled at their schools: the author, therefore, believes that it might be useful to use the school register as one of the methods of assessing school attendance behaviour.
2. The literature on the legal aspects of truancy suggests that a multidisciplinary approach might provide some useful models for the author's present study on the problems of non-school attendance.

Summary and Comments

Over the past forty years various Acts of Parliament have been passed to ensure that children's interests are protected and that they also receive an efficient education. Such Acts include the 1944 Education Act which was passed to ensure that parents and LEAs fulfil their duties in seeing that the children concerned are appropriately educated. The CYPA (1969) empowered local authorities to remove children from their homes and into residential care if such children were in any potential psychological or physical danger. The 1981 Education Act was passed to ensure that children with special needs were, wherever possible, educated and integrated into the main community. This 1981 Act was influenced by the beliefs of some authorities (e.g. Tharp & Wetzell, 1969; Warnock Report, 1978) that the benefits of integration in the community are very desirable, especially for children with special needs.

However, the legal system's interventive approach to absenteeism has been very limited. Berg et al. (1978a, 1978b), for example, evaluated the success of legal intervention mainly through one parameter, that is, the increase in the school attendance rates of their cases. The study did not assess whether the quality of the children's education had been adequately improved to meet their academic needs, nor did Berg et al. consider any other related issues, such as possible family welfare difficulties, the quality of the family-school relationship, parental difficulties in controlling their children and possible parental needs for assertive training. Thus, if these related issues are not dealt with by court procedures then one could predict that the subsequent school attendance might be extremely poor, and empirical work has shown this to be the case (Galloway et al., 1981a, 1981b).

When examining the roles of the teachers, social workers and EWOs, the literature suggests that there is a considerable amount of misunderstanding and confusion experienced by these professions when managing persistent absentees (Blyth & Milner, 1987; Grimshaw & Pratt, 1987; Reid, 1987a, 1987b). On one hand, these agencies do not permit the absentees and their families to communicate their needs and opinions, while on the other hand, many working in these agencies lack training and good empirical management guidelines to help them develop conducive techniques for combating absenteeism (Blyth & Milner, 1987; Reid, 1987a, 1987b).

The limitations of the legal system are further complicated by the fact that social workers and EWOs have different approaches in dealing with school absenteeism which could lead to confrontation between the two professions (Reid, 1982d).

The literature suggests that if legislative intervention is to have a more positive outcome, then school absenteeism will have to be evaluated through various

procedures including legal, casework, medical, educational, psychological, social and institutional factors (Blyth & Milner, 1987; Galloway, 1985a; Grimshaw & Pratt, 1987; Reid, 1987a, 1987b). Thus, in the following two chapters the author will discuss some of these psychological, educational and institutional factors which are associated with school absenteeism, and how such factors have led to the development of various interventive paradigms to combat school disaffection.

Chapter 4

The Psychological Model of Non-School Attendance

In this chapter the author will discuss some of the aetiological factors associated with non-school attendance as proposed by the psychological model. This school of thought emphasizes the importance of maladaptive behaviours in persistent absentees and social problems within their families as contributory factors in the generation of school disaffection. In discussing non-school attendance, Chapter 4 is divided into three parts: (i) in Part I there will be a discussion of the aetiological factors associated with persistent absentees, such as poor housing and low incomes; (ii) in Part II there will be a focus on the management techniques developed within the framework of traditional psychotherapy with the aim of providing a historical perspective on the developmental stages of school management for persistent absentees; (iii) in Part III the author will present the management techniques based on the model of behaviour therapy.

Part I: The Aetiology of Non-School Attendance

As we have already seen in Chapter 2, the evidence suggests that there are characterological deficiencies which tend to be associated with non-school attenders including: (i) delinquent behaviour, such as stealing and drug abuse (Farrington, 1980; Hersov, 1960a; May, 1975; Pritchard et al., 1987; West, 1982); (ii) difficulties in reading and poor academic attainment (Fogelman et al., 1980; Reid, 1982b, 1984a); (iii) poor peer group relationships (May, 1975; Mitchell, 1972; Reid, 1984a); (iv) anti-social behaviour, such as the tendency to fight others or destroy things (Pritchard et al., 1987; Reid, 1984b; Stott, 1966; Tyerman, 1968); (v) low self-esteem with a tendency to fear new situations, and believe that parents and teachers hold

low opinions of them (Cooper, 1984; Reid, 1982a, 1984a). This social model also stresses the importance of family problems, such as poor parenting and alcoholism, as contributory factors in the generation of persistent absenteeism (Hersov, 1960a; Reid, 1982b; Tyerman, 1958, 1968).

Early Psychological Models of Non-School Attendance

The early psychologists attempted to produce some basic theories to explain the reasons behind truancy. For instance, one school of thought viewed truancy as an expression of an innate urge. Kline (1898), for example, associated truancy with man's wandering instincts. He argues that this wandering instinct had its origins in the food seeking habits of primitive man, where hunting for food forced him to roam the land. Healy (1915) also supported Kline's theory on instinct by arguing that truancy could in some cases be taken as a sign of health development in children who may want to adventure and explore their environments, especially during adolescence. Following these theories, later psychologists, such as Burt (1925) argued that children who truant were attempting either to: (a) escape from intolerable psychological tensions, such as feeling trapped in a school building; (b) avoid the pressures and responsibilities of adulthood; or (c) avoid normal intellectual development which may destabilise the child's ego, possibly caused by the psychological trauma of cognitive growth.

Burt (1925) conducted an important piece of work in the field of truancy, though doubts are cast upon its validity because some have suggested that he may have fabricated his data (Gillie, 1980; Hearnshaw, 1979). However, his work suggests that truants tend to be passive and that their behaviour was probably due to their limited intellectual capacity. Although his study needs to be treated with caution, nevertheless, some of his views have been later confirmed by data collected during more recent times (e.g. Stott, 1966).

The Psychological and Social Factors of Non-School Attendance

Stott (1966) found that truancy and maladjustment were highly associated and that the higher level of maladjusted behaviour among individual truants tended to be associated with a number of other factors including: ill health, lack of parental interest in their children's education, and large families. Stott is therefore considered to be one of the forerunners of the modern researchers who now also tended to prefer social and psychological approaches when investigating the causes of truancy. Some of the modern researchers on truancy include Fogelman and Richardson (1974), May (1975), Reid (1985, 1986a, 1987), and Galloway (1980, 1985a).

Early findings by Tyerman (1958) also provide some confirmation of the Stott study. Tyerman surveyed 40 truants from which from which he selected 23 because they were the most severe school absence cases. These truants were compared with matched non-truants who attended two child guidance clinics. The demographic information on the population's educational and home backgrounds were collected through various sources including the school registers, the Burton-Vernon Reading Test, EWOs, and pupils' medical and school record cards. When the truants were compared with the control pupils, Tyerman found that the truants did not differ significantly from the control pupils in terms of their home conditions, such as the number of broken homes, or frequency in separation from mother. However, truants were significantly more likely to suffer corporal punishment, unclean homes, overcrowding conditions, come from larger families, show poor educational progress and have parents who show little interests in their children's welfare. From interviews with parents, teachers and the truants themselves, Tyerman found that the truants tended to be lonely, unhappy and insecure. However, when comparing physical conditions, he found that truants and control pupils did not differ from each other in their experiences of difficulties, such as defects in hearing, speech or vision, nor did they differ in height and weight. He also

found that the median age for the truants was 11 years, and 50 per cent started truanting in secondary school. Tyerman found no discernible sex differences in pupils' rates of truancy.

Tyerman's study has received severe criticisms because he emphasizes the child and family variables at the expense of precipitating factors within the school. Furthermore, he compares a clinic population (i.e. the control pupils) with a non-clinic population (i.e. the truants) and, as pointed out by Galloway (1985a), we know very little about how far such referrals are influenced by social, family and attitudinal characteristics. It is quite possible that the clinics consciously avoid children who have similar characteristics to those of Tyerman's persistent absentees on the grounds that they are unlikely to keep appointments. Thus, any noted differences in the population may be partly due to the referral selection rather than to any psychological factors.

Hersov (1960a) to some extent overcomes this problem by comparing various clinical groups including truants, school refusers and child psychiatric out-patients, since all the groups were referred to the same hospital department. His study suggests that school refusers were more likely to exhibit neurotic disorders, such as fear of new situations, and truants were more likely to exhibit anti-social disorders, such as fighting and lying. Hersov confirms Tyerman's work with regards to truants experiencing poor home discipline, but he also noted a high incidence of parental absence in the first five years of the child's life. Hersov also agrees with Tyerman in that he found that truants tended to have poor social behaviour, poor academic attainment and exhibit below average intelligence.

May (1975) compared truant boys with boys who are relatively good school attenders. The information for the study was collected from school registers, school records, teachers' assessments, and EWO reports. He found that persistent absentees were more likely to come from

working-class home backgrounds where the father is an unskilled worker or is unemployed. Twice as many truants (i.e. 38 per cent) as compared with good attenders (i.e. 18 per cent) lived in families of five or more children, and also twice as many truants (i.e. 13 per cent) as compared with the good attenders (i.e. 6.4 per cent) were likely to have fathers working in low-status jobs. However, he does note that although the truants are more likely than good attenders to come from 'socially disadvantaged' home backgrounds, it is nevertheless only a minority of absentees who appear to suffer from marked 'social disadvantage'. For example, only one in eight truants were sons of fish workers and only one in ten truants had unemployed fathers. Truants were also twice as likely to live outside of high delinquent areas (i.e. 64.8 per cent compared with 35.2 per cent of absentees who live in delinquent areas). They were also twice as likely to come from families with less than five children (i.e. 62 per cent compared with 38 per cent of truants who live in large families). Therefore May conclude that although truants were more likely socio-psychological problems, nevertheless, such adversities can only partly explain the possible influences in the generation of school disaffection. Thus, May's work provides the opportunity to assess other factors, such as school variables, which may establish wider analytical models for furthering our understanding of school absenteeism.

The NACEWO (1975) attempted to assess the possible aetiological factors in the prevalence of school absenteeism. Here again like much of the literature of the time, the working party seek to analyse school disaffection predominantly within the socio-psychological model. They conducted a survey on over 900,000 school children from various LEAs in England. The LEAs were required to complete a survey form indicating each child's attendance rate, family size, history of illnesses (e.g. infection) or involved in accidents, and whether the child received any free school meals. The LEAs were also required to give details of whether the child had experienced family neglect (e.g. had no shoes), or was identified as a school refuser

or truant.

The survey came to several conclusions: (i) there is no association between family size and school absenteeism - which is contrary to May's study which suggests that truants were more likely than good attenders to come from large families; (ii) absentees were no more likely to receive school meals than the rest of the school population, although further analysis of the data suggest that when such a grant was withdrawn then school absenteeism tended to increase among the persistent absentees; (iii) the working party found that lateness to school and family neglect were associated with truancy.

The NACEWO concluded that the campaign to improve school attendance should start in the pre-school and primary school age groups. They argue that the lack of resources have meant that much EWO work is concentrated on teenagers rather than on preventative work with primary school children or counselling parents with regards to their children's school absenteeism. Thus, the working party suggests that this under establishment of the welfare services must be remedied if effective action is to achieve more positive pupil-school relationships.

In the National Child Development Study (NCDS), Fogelman and Richardson (1974) conducted a survey which included 16,000 children. The data were collected from school registers, teacher assessments of the child's home backgrounds and school attendance records, and medical reports. They studied the children, then aged 11 years plus, in order to assess the educational and home backgrounds of truants compared with good school attenders. Fogelman and Richardson found that truancy was three times higher among children (i.e. 19.8 per cent) whose fathers had unskilled manual jobs compared with children from professional families (i.e. 6.3 per cent). When comparing good attendance rates (i.e. school attendance greater than 95 per cent), the survey suggests that on average 62.8 per cent of children from professional backgrounds achieved this high school

attendance rate, whereas this was true for only on average 49.9 per cent of children whose fathers are manual workers. When examining the social class distribution of pupils described by their teachers as truants, the data suggest that the incidence of truancy was ten times more likely to occur among the families of unskilled workers (i.e. 3.2 per cent) than among professional families (i.e. 0.3 per cent).

The authors also examined the incidence of truancy among the educational streaming system in schools. They found that there was a relatively low incidence of truancy among the higher and middle streams (i.e. 4.90 per cent), whereas truancy rates among the lower streamed pupils were five times greater (i.e. 22.8 per cent). This disproportionately high incidence of truancy among the underachievers is in agreement with Hargreaves's (1967) study which also suggests that school absenteeism may be influenced by the streaming system with lower band pupils feeling less motivated to attend school than higher bands. However, it must also be noted that teachers are more likely to label less academic working class children as deviant (e.g. truants) than the brighter children from home backgrounds with better resources (Bowles & Gintis, 1976; Hargreaves, 1967; Willis, 1977). Authorities, such as Bowles and Gintis, argue that this relatively lack of suspicion of the teachers when dealing with the brighter children might be due to such children tending to reflect the middle class backgrounds of their teachers and, therefore, are more likely to conform to their teachers' commands, such as being obedient or hard working. Therefore, a slow learner who is absent from school may be more likely to be suspected of truancy than a child in the higher band who exhibits a similar pattern of school absenteeism.

Fogelman's and Richardson's data also suggest that truancy was much higher among children whose parents wanted them to leave school as soon as possible than among those who wanted their children to stay on. A similar pattern emerged regarding parents' interest in their children's education. Accordingly, when teachers were asked to comment

on parents' concerns in their children's education, the data suggest that the parents of truant children were perceived by the teachers as less likely to be interested in their children's education than those parents of the good attenders. The authors concluded that the data suggest that a substantial proportion of the population, particularly from among the 'disadvantaged' groups, are not responding to education and they, therefore, argue that social scientists and educators take a closer analysis of the problems faced by this group.

However, it must be drawn to attention that Fogelman and Richardson found school attendance problems among only a minority of families with 'social disadvantages'. For instance, only 19.8 per cent of manual families had truancy problems, whereas over twice as many children from similar backgrounds (i.e. 45.6 per cent) had achieved a very high school attendance rate of over 95 per cent. Furthermore, May (1975) cautions against the use of teachers' statements in assessing problems. He argues that such assessments are open to subjective measures where teachers may have negative 'halo' attitudes towards truants and, therefore, assume that such children who may present problems in one respect are also likely to be problems in all respects. Thus, in order to negate some of the problems associated with teacher assessments May suggests the use of other records, such as juvenile court records and standard inventories, in order to complement the information divulged by school teachers.

In order to gain further insight into the type of homes that truants tend to come from, Tibbenham (1977) explored the relationship between truancy and living conditions. He studied the children who were part of the longitudinal study of the NCDS (see Fogelman and Richardson, 1974). This follow-up occurred when the children were 16 years of age. The information on truancy and attendance was collected from questionnaires completed by the school staff, and information on housing and social class was collected from questionnaires completed by parents.

When examining housing characteristics, such as overcrowding (as defined by the 1971 census of more than 1.5 persons per room), the data revealed that recorded truancy increased with the 'lowering' of the socio-economic group and significantly increased within each social class where the children live in overcrowded conditions. For instance, among the families of unskilled manual workers, 25 per cent of the children living in 'reasonable' conditions were classified as truants, whereas over 40 per cent of the children from similar social class, but living in overcrowded conditions were classified as truants. This pattern was also similar for the professional classes where the incidence of truancy occurred among 10 per cent of the children living in reasonable home conditions, whereas over 20 per cent of the children from similar professional backgrounds, but living in overcrowded conditions were classified as truants.

When examining the families' access to amenities (e.g. bathroom and kitchen) the findings suggest that truancy is associated with the sharing of amenities among the working classes. Conversely, the sharing of amenities appears not to be associated with truancy among the higher socio-economic groups. Tibbenham suggests that this may indicate the limitations to which the general conditions of the home is associated with truancy. However, in explaining the link between truancy and overcrowding, Tibbenham argues that overcrowding may precipitate poor attendance because it can make sleeping conditions very uncomfortable for the school pupils, or the stress of having to cope with overcrowding conditions may subject the families of any social class to such pressures which relegate their children's schooling to a low priority. He concludes that the examination of pupils home conditions should be considered as a complementary investigation to social class and school factors which may then widen our understanding of the problems associated with truancy.

Farrington (1980) carried out a longitudinal study on a sample of males to investigate how far home background

information on 8 year old primary school boys can predict future secondary school truancy. The significance of this approach is that it may have avoided teachers and EWOs making bias statements on family backgrounds of the 8-year-old pupils simply because they had no knowledge of would or would not become secondary school truants. Through a series of interviews with the population (i.e. when aged between 16 and 21) and their parents, the data revealed that when truants are compared with the whole sample they are more likely to come from lower income families which contains five or more children. Truants were also more likely to live in dilapidated or slum housing, have fathers who tended to have erratic employment with periods of unemployment. Their families were more likely to reflect social adversities, such as criminal parents, delinquent siblings, parents exhibit poor child-management which reflects cruelty, neglect, erratic discipline or marital conflict. When comparing Farrington's study with retrospective research (i.e. research based on the ready knowledge of the child's truancy or non-truancy patterns), his work seems further to confirm some of the findings of such research. For instance, similar to Farrington, May (1975) found that truants tend to come from low socio-economic backgrounds and larger families, Tibbenham (1977) found that truancy was strongly associated with overcrowded housing conditions, and Hersov (1960a) and Tyerman (1958, 1968) found that truants tend to have parents who show very limited interest in their children's welfare.

In summary, these psychological studies suggest that when compared with good school attenders, truants are more likely to come from poorer material backgrounds which reflect unskilled fathers, higher rates of unemployment among fathers, poor child-rearing approaches, lack of parental interest in their children's education, overcrowded and dilapidated housing, and criminality among the parents and siblings. However, there are disagreements among the authorities in the relationship between family size and persistent absenteeism. The NACEWO (1975) suggest that larger families are not associated with school absenteeism.

Conversely, the weight of evidence (e.g. Farrington, 1980; Hersov, 1960a; May, 1975; Tyerman, 1958) suggest that there is an association between school absenteeism and large families.

However, despite the fact that the psychological model suggests that persistent absentees tend to have behavioural and learning difficulties, and also tend to come from family backgrounds which reflect social pathologies, such as crime: nevertheless, such a model can only partly account for the possible causes of school disaffection. For instance, May (1975) has drawn attention to the fact that although truants are more likely to reflect social pathologies, such problems usually occur among a minority of persistent absentees. Thus, partly due to the limitations of the psychological approach, other authorities (e.g. Galloway, 1985a; Reid, 1984a, 1985, 1986a, 1987) have argued for a multi-disciplinary approach to the problems of school absenteeism. They suggest that such an approach should reflect both psychological and institutional (i.e. schooling) experiences of truants in order to further our understanding on how to combat school disaffection. Therefore, in the following section the author will discuss some of these multi-disciplinary studies and how such work has attempted to incorporate schools as possible aetiological factors in the generation of disaffection.

Institutional and Social Factors in Non-School Attendance

In the 1980's we have increasingly seen empirical studies taking a more multi-disciplinary approach to non-school attendance. Unlike earlier research which tended solely to blame the precipitating problems of absenteeism on the pupils' home backgrounds (e.g. Tyerman, 1958), today we are seeing a shift towards data which suggest that the prevalence of truancy may influenced by both home and school variables. This shift is partly due to work by authors, such as Hargreaves (1967), and Reynolds and Murgatroyd (1977), who suggest that the school environment may adversely affect some pupils' behaviours through their systems of streaming, or use of punishment and authority. Therefore, many of

today's authorities are increasingly widening the analytical concepts of absenteeism in order to deepen our understanding of the problem.

Reid (1984a), for example, used a multi-disciplinary approach when he studied persistent absentees in South Wales. He compared 128 poor attenders with two matched control groups. The Control Group 1 consists of good attenders who are of similar academic ability to the persistent absentees and Control Group 2 which consists of good attenders who are considered by the school staff as scholastically brighter than the other two groups. Reid collected data from the school register, and investigated the population's social background and educational opinions using a social anthropological approach (Stubbs & Delamont, 1976) where information on the pupils' experiences of life, such as delinquency and perceptions of schooling, were collected via interviews and questionnaires completed by the pupils, parents and teachers.

The data on the population's social background suggest that: (i) significantly more persistent absentees (i.e. 44 per cent) experienced disruption in their home lives, such as parental separation or divorce, whereas this applied to only 19 per cent of Control Group 1 and 23 per cent of Control Group 2; (ii) significantly more fathers of the absentees (i.e. 55 per cent) were employed in unskilled manual occupations compared with 38 per cent of Control Group 1 and 13 per cent of Control Group 2 pupils. Reid also found that absentees were significantly more likely to come from larger families and to have criminal records. He also found that housing conditions differed significantly between the absentees and the control groups. For example, with respect to living in private accommodation, most of the pupils in Control Group 2 (i.e. 77 per cent), followed by Control Group 1 (i.e. 48 per cent) and a relatively small number of the absentee pupils (i.e. 43 per cent) live in owner occupied houses. Much of Reid's findings are in agreement with the psychological model which also suggest that school absentees are more likely to come from poorer

home backgrounds which reflect larger families and higher a incidence of crime (Fogelman & Richardson, 1974; Hersov, 1960a; May, 1975). In further agreement with the psychological data, Reid found that persistent absentees were more likely than the two control groups to have less confidence in their academic performance, have low levels of self-esteem, and were more likely to feel alienated from school. He also found that teachers were more likely to perceive absentees as having behavioural problems, such as disruption and fighting.

When comparing the absentees' experiences of their educational environment with those of the two control groups, the data revealed that the persistent absentees were more likely to enjoy a lower ratio of academic subjects and also tended to show greater enthusiasm for help in basic subjects, such as reading, writing and arithmetic. The Control Group 2 pupils were more likely to receive home work than both the absentees and Control Group 1 pupils, and according to the interviews of the population, many absentees and Control Group 1 pupils resented this preference of home work for the brighter pupils because they perceived such policies as reflecting the school's greater interest in the brighter pupils. Furthermore, the evidence suggest that significantly more absentees (i.e. 78 per cent) and Control Group 1 pupils (i.e. 91 per cent) held unfavourable attitudes towards their teachers whereas this was true for only 52 per cent of the Control Group 2 pupils. Reid argues that these responses support Hargreaves's (1967) work which suggest that many hostilities between lower band pupils (especially persistent absentees) and their schools may be attributed to the less favourable treatment which they experience in relation to bright pupils both in and out of the classroom. Reid also found that the absentees and Control Group 1 pupils had lower career aspirations, with many considering unskilled jobs, whereas the Control Group 2 pupils tended to aim for careers in technical or skilled occupations. The data revealed further that significantly fewer absentees claimed to have parents who were really interested in their school progress.

Reid, therefore, concluded that the problem of persistent absenteeism is multi-faceted with a combination of social, psychological and institutional factors which all appear to influence school disaffection.

Galloway (1982) studied the family backgrounds and institutional experiences of persistent school absentees and good school attenders. The sample was divided into four groups with 39 absentees from a secondary school, 20 absentees from its feeder primary schools, 20 absentees who were referred to the psychological service for advice on coping with school attendance and 23 good attenders who attended either primary or secondary school. The data were collected via questionnaires (Rutter, Tizard & Whitmore, 1970) completed by parents on their health and on their child's behaviour. The population was also interviewed and required to complete the Wechsler's (1974) Intelligence Scale for Children. In addition the population's school attendance patterns were collected from the official school registers.

The data suggest that the four groups did not differ significantly in terms of family unity, family size, or overcrowding. This is contrary to other findings which suggest that persistent absentees are more likely to live in poor housing conditions (Farrington, 1980; Tibbenham, 1977; Tyerman, 1958), to come from larger families (Farrington, 1980; Hersov, 1960a; Tyerman, 1958) and to suffer greater family disruption, such as parental separation (Hersov, 1960a; Tyerman, 1958). However, Galloway found that all three absentee groups were significantly more likely than the good attenders to have been seen by social workers or to live in families where both parents are unemployed. Those absentees referred to the psychological service were significantly more likely than the good attenders to have experienced separation from both parents and the primary school absentees in particular were more likely to have 'socio-medical' problems, such as infestation or scabies.

The data from the children's behaviour questionnaire indicate that more parents of poor attenders than those of good attenders tended to report more incidences of difficult behaviour, such as stealing. The questions on the population's health suggest that the groups did not differ in their medical histories. However, the mothers in each of the three absentee groups were more likely than the mothers of good attenders to obtain higher mean scores on health problems, such as depression and headaches. This is further supported by the fact that when the absentees were interviewed about their reasons for non-school attendance, 73 per cent of the secondary school absentees expressed concern about their parents' health as a contributory factor for their poor school attendance. This is also consistent with the psychiatric literature on persistent absentees (i.e. school refusers) which suggest that such pupils tend to suffer anxiety of separation from parent, especially the mother, because of their concern for their parents' health (Davidson, 1960; Estes et al., 1956; Hersov, 1960a, 1960b).

Parents' assessments of the contributory factors within the school in the prevalence of their children's persistent absenteeism suggest that a significant number of poor attenders experienced stress in school caused by fear of a particular teacher or extreme dislike for a particular subject. The referred school absentees in particular experienced significantly greater difficulties in social relationships with other pupils when compared with good attenders. Interviews with the absentee sample suggest that the referred absentees in particular expressed a sense of failure as a partial reason for poor school attendance. This tendency for poor school attenders to reflect low academic self-esteem was also found by Reid (1984a) with a significant proportion of school absentees holding low opinions of their scholastic skills and career prospects.

Galloway found that tests on the population's reading ability and IQ scores suggest that all the groups are below average attainment. Further analysis of the data revealed that the good attenders experienced more reading

difficulties than the school absentees. This is inconsistent with most studies which suggest that good attenders tend to be academically more competent than truants (Fogelman et al., 1980; May, 1975; Pritchard et al., 1987; Tyerman, 1958, 1968). Galloway suggests that the good and poor attenders tend to reflect similar levels of intelligence because all the members of the sample were selected from similar academic bands and in addition some absentees were receiving remedial education because of their school absence while some good attenders were placed in remedial education solely because of their lack of ability. However, Galloway concludes that the evidence suggest that persistent absentees and their families are more likely than good attenders and their families to suffer multi-faceted disadvantages, such as conduct disorders or have mothers who tend to experience health problems. He further states that the problems of poor attenders need to be appreciated with the complex interactions of their institutional, psychological and social characteristics if we are to contrive more effective methods of managing school absenteeism.

Galloway, Martin, and Wilcox (1985) examined the effects of home and school variables on persistent absenteeism. They studied 33 Sheffield secondary school absentees and their catchment areas. Information about the schools and catchment areas were collected from LEA records, questionnaires completed by the schools and the 1971 census. Measured factors about the schools included information on the streaming system, the organization of the remedial classes, the pastoral care system and the availability of careers guidance. The measured variables on the catchment areas included the numbers of owner-occupied dwellings, council dwellings, householders with one or more persons per room, children authorised to receive school meals, and the type of parent job occupations. When examining the correlations between catchment area variables and rates of persistent absenteeism in those areas, the data revealed that the variables most related to poor attendance included fathers who are manual workers and pupils who are receiving

free school meals. However, there were low correlations between persistent absenteeism and the school variables. Thus, Galloway et al. concluded school absenteeism is associated with socio-economic disadvantage, but, conversely, absenteeism is not associated with the structure and organization of the schools. This work is therefore contradictory to the School Effectiveness Movement which argues that schools do vary in their effectiveness on pupil outcome especially in terms of academic performance and school attendance (Mortimore et al., 1988; Reynolds, 1985; Rutter et al., 1979). They found that the most effective schools included those which emphasised rewards, academic-orientated lessons and close parent-teacher relationships. Thus, such disparities in the literature may reflect the limitations to which schools can affect pupil outcomes and may point further to the need for the School Effectiveness Movement to also recognise the influences of out-of-school factors, such as overcrowded homes and parental indifference, in the generation of pupil disaffection.

Therefore, the evidence suggest that persistent absentees tend to suffer social disadvantages, personality deficiencies and unfavourable educational experiences. However, work on other types of absentees, such as school refusers, suggest that there are groups of non-school attenders who tend not to experience social deprivation. Hersov (1960a), for example, found that when compared with truants, school refusers were significantly more likely to: (a) come from professional family backgrounds; (b) come from smaller families; (c) have less experience of parental separation; (d) be overprotected by their mothers; (e) have a family history of neurotic illness, such as obsessions or phobias. The school refusers also tended to have higher IQs and show better school progress than the truants. They were also less likely than truants to exhibit conduct disorders and delinquent behaviours.

Later work by Blagg and Yule (1987; cited by Blagg, 1987) has confirmed much of Hersov's (1960a) study. They

found that: (i) truants tend to exhibit conduct disorders, such as stealing, whereas school phobics tend to exhibit neurotic disorders, such as anxieties; (ii) truants tend to come from broken homes, whereas school phobics tend to come from more cohesive united homes. However, they found no significant differences the two groups in relation to social class, with both groups tending to come from working-class backgrounds. However, they did find that unemployment was significantly higher in the truants' families than in the families of the school phobics. Blagg and Yule suggest that this inconsistency in the literature on the social class backgrounds of the school phobics might be due to sample bias in Hersov's study with middle-class cases tending to be referred to clinics for treatment probably because clinicians believe that such families are more likely to co-operate with the hospitals.

In a further investigation on school absentees, Hersov (1960b) found that school refusal was related to three types of parent-child relationships: (a) socially inadequate parents who are dominated by a socially inadequate child; (b) a mother who has total control over her child who tends to be fearful away from home; (c) a father who controls the home with an over-indulgent mother who is dominated by a stubborn, but friendly child.

Hersov also studied the behavioural patterns of the school refusers when they were sent to school. He found that such children tend to exhibit irritability, weepiness, restless sleep, and complaints of nausea and abdominal pain in the morning before school. They were also often described as pale, tremulous and fearful when pressured to go school. The children gave various explanations for their refusal of school including the fear of a strict, sarcastic teacher, fear of illness befalling their mothers while at school, fear of academic failure, or fear of ridicule or bullying from other children.

In another investigation on school refusal, Davidson (1960) studied 30 school phobic children, aged between seven

and ten years, at a London clinic. She collected her data from social histories reported by the clinic which were supplemented and revised by notes taken during interviews with the cases and their families. She found that school refusal often followed a death in the family, a move to a new house or physical illness which interrupted school attendance. School attendance in such cases was often accompanied with extreme anxiety, much clinging to the mother and fears of separation from her. School refusers also tended to complain of abdominal pains, sickness, nightmares, and fears.

When evaluating the aetiology of school phobia, Davidson suggests that at least six factors are related: (a) 23 (i.e. 76.67 per cent) of her cases showed marked depression with many refusing to participate in social activities, such as playing with other children; (b) the mothers tended to have experienced anxieties during pregnancies or post-natal depression; (c) the sample tended to experience a low incidence of separation from their parents in early life; (d) the school refusal boys appeared to be emotionally immature and were every attached to their mothers, in contrast the school refusal girls were more mature and more outgoing than the school refusal boys; (e) the mothers tended to be very dependent on their own mothers and also tended to be extreme perfectionists in housekeeping; (f) the mothers tended to subconsciously prevent their children from returning to school, for example, a mother would become agitated when her child refused to attend school, but once the child announces that he/she would attend then the mother would discourage the child by stating how lonely school was going to be.

Davidson also found that the school refusers tended to be above average intelligence with 23 (i.e. 76.67 per cent) cases considered to be above average intelligence, six (i.e. 20.00 per cent) cases considered to be average and one (i.e. 3.33 per cent) case was considered to be below average intelligence.

Davidson's findings are in accordance with Hersov (1960a, 1960b) as they both suggest that school refusers tend to come from overprotected home backgrounds and also tend to be above average intelligence. However, these conclusions have been questioned by others (e.g. Galloway, 1985a) on the grounds that such clinical populations may be biasly selected by EWOs and teachers because they are considered more likely to respond to 'treatment'. Furthermore, other studies have yielded conflicting data on the educational ability of school refusers. Blagg and Yule (1987; cited by Blagg, 1987), for example, studied a 'non-clinical' sample of persistent absentees who had not been referred to court or hospital intervention procedures. They reported that those absentees who had been classified as either school phobics or truants did not differ significantly from each other in their reading abilities as measured by the WISC-R Verbal Scale. In fact, they found that the majority of children in both groups experienced reading difficulties. Thus, Blagg's and Yule's work may suggest that clinical selection may be bias and, therefore, adversely affect the data.

Generally, the literature suggest that the demographic features of the truant tends to be that of social deprivation with poor housing conditions, unskilled father, relatively large families, have parents who are uninterested in their children's educational progress, and have families who tend to experience social pathologies, such as alcoholism or criminal records. Truants also tend to suffer from personality deficiencies, such as conduct disorders, delinquency, low self-esteem, and poor academic performance. By contrast, the literature suggest that school refusers tend to have demographic features which reflect a relatively good material home background, an over-indulgent and very protective mother, relatively small families, and the family tends to have a history of neurotic behaviour, such as obsessions. The school refusers tend to exhibit anxiety when separated from their parents, especially the mother, show signs of withdrawal, depression, stubbornness and wilfulness. However, there is conflict in the literature

on the academic ability of school refusals with some authors (e.g. Davidson, 1960; Hersov, 1960a, 1960b) suggesting that school refusals tend to be above average intelligence, whereas others (e.g. Blagg & Yule 1987; cited by Blagg, 1987) argue that school refusers tend to experience similar academic difficulties to truants. This conflict in the literature might be partly due to the difference in the selection of the various study samples.

In Britain non-school attendance is illegal (Dent, 1947) and is also generally regarded as a social problem which tends to be associated with crime, conduct disorders, or neurotic disorders (Davidson, 1960; Farrington, 1980; Hersov, 1960a, 1960b; Pritchard et al., 1987; West, 1982). Therefore, non-school attendance has raised the concerns of parents, teachers, psychologists, psychiatrists and social workers which in turn has led them to attempting to contrive numerous intervention programmes in order to ameliorate and correct the difficulties associated with persistent school absenteeism. Thus, in the following parts of this chapter the author will discuss some of these intervention strategies which tend to be based on psychological principles.

Part II: The Traditional Psychotherapeutic Approach to the Management of Non-School Attendance

The literature in psychiatry tends to make distinctions between various types of school absentees which include school refusers, truants and school pupils withheld by their parents for various reasons, such as to care for younger siblings (Hersov, 1977). However, the intervention paradigms are usually administered by psychiatrists and psychologists to those persistent absentees who are 'diagnosed' either as truants or school refusals. Thus, in this chapter the author will discuss a variety of approaches which are sometimes referred to as 'clinical treatments'. This term is used in the broad sense to include interventions carried out in child-guidance clinics by psychiatrists or psychologists, and behaviour therapy

programme carried out by a teacher in the classroom (Galloway, 1985a). The term 'clinical treatment' has its theoretical origins within the conceptual framework of psychiatry and applied psychology (Galloway, 1985a). The author will discuss the various intervention techniques developed within this framework and applications in the clinics, hospitals and in the broader applied settings of schools and the community.

The author will begin by reviewing three main types of psychological interventions including psychoanalysis, psychodynamism and behaviour therapy. This review will give the author the opportunity to discuss the effectiveness of the various approaches on combating persistent absenteeism and, therefore, may provide some wider insights into the management of non-school attendance.

Among the earliest approaches in the management of persistent absenteeism, the psychoanalytic approach which is based on the premise that the psychotherapist needs to analyse the clients' unconscious motives and past conflicts in order to help them understand or gain 'insight' into the roots of their problems (e.g. Davidson, 1960). Such an approach is believed necessary in order to help the client reorientate their thinking and learning so that they can face their conflicts without undue anxiety (Estes et al., 1956; Hersov, 1960b; Rubenstein & Hastings, 1980). Most of this early literature is devoted to the management of school refusals while ignoring the needs of truants. This preference for 'treating' school refusals is probably due to the fact that school phobia is usually considered as a 'neurotic illness' requiring medical attention, whereas truancy is seen as a conduct disorder probably requiring the intervention of other agencies, such as the juvenile courts (Berg et al., 1978a, 1978b).

Similarly, psychodynamic therapists tend to work predominantly with school refusal cases rather than truant cases. However, they rely less on the traditional therapeutic practices of the psychoanalysts. Instead they

recognise the need actively to involve the school, the whole family and other agencies (e.g. social workers) in the management of non-school attenders, particularly school refusers (Hsia, 1984; Valles & Oddy, 1984; Lewis, 1980).

One of the most recent approaches in therapy is the behaviour therapy or behaviour modification which does not focus on helping the clients to gain some 'insight' into their problem behaviours, but instead focus on the problem behaviour itself. The aim of behaviour therapy is to change the behaviour by using premises based on learning theories, rather than assessing the dynamics of the unconscious mind in psychodynamic therapy (e.g. Blagg & Yule, 1984; Brooks, 1974, Herbert, 1978, 1987; 1975; Morgan, 1975). The assumption is that maladaptive behaviour is learnt and, thus, by manipulating the learning environment the clients may learn to substitute new and more appropriate responses for the maladaptive ones.

The Psychoanalytic Intervention Strategy

Much of the early work was carried out with school refusal cases and was largely based on psychoanalysis which focused on the underlying problems of the anxiety and fears experienced by such children (Davidson, 1960; Estes et al., 1956; Hersov, 1960b; Rubenstein & Hastings, 1980). Estes et al. (1956) studied the mother-child relationship of several school phobic cases in order to evaluate intervention. They argue that school phobic children tend to exhibit a separation anxiety from the parent which is 'a pathologic emotional state in which the child and parent, usually the mother, are involved in a mutually hostile dependent relationship characterised primarily by an intense need on the part of both the child and the mother to be in close physical proximity to each other' (Estes et al., 1956, page 682). They suggest that such separation anxiety may manifest itself in several ways including the child's stubborn refusal to attend school, or that the child may display excessive home sickness when away from home, or become anxious in situations which threaten to separate him or her from the mother. Therefore, such school refusers tend to

stay at home and very rarely go to the park, the cinema or other such places when they are absent from school.

Estes et al. suggest that the dynamics of the mother-child behaviour may include: (a) a dependency relationship where the mother may perpetuate an infantile dependency relationship which is inappropriate to the child's state of physiological maturity. For example, a mother may encourage her six-year-old child to sleep in a cot next to her bed, and they may habitually hold hands while they sleep; (b) the mother may be experiencing inadequate emotional relationships with her husband or experiencing poor relationships with her child which she then tries to compensate for by encouraging the child to be emotionally dependent on her; (c) because of her own emotional needs, the mother may be unconsciously hostile towards her child's demands for attention, but nevertheless, exploits the circumstances of the child's dependency on her in order to gratify her own unsatisfied dependency needs, while the child in turn complies; (d) the dependency relationship might be rooted in the mother's experience with her own mother to the extent where she was also treated in a similar fashion; (e) the child sensing the mother's hostility may then exploit the mother's inability to set limits in the relationship and may exercise considerable control over the mother; (f) because of the frustration of the dependency relationship between the mother and the child, the child may displace his or her anger against the school teacher who then becomes the phobic object.

Davidson (1960) divided her treatment approach into two parts: (i) she took practical measures in dealing with the environment, such as notifying the school of the reasons for her clients' school absenteeism; (ii) she administered psychotherapeutic intervention with the mother and child. Firstly, Davidson offers to help the school phobic children by making concessions, but in return some demands must be met. For example, she would recommend that the children be excused from school, but in return they are expected to attend the clinic for therapy, tuition and residential

schooling with the view to gradually return to school. The next task of the therapist is to help the mother and child examine and analyse their dependency relationship, and recognise its irrationality. That way, they may learn to come to terms with their feelings and accept eventual separation. The therapist also found that the mothers tended to feel that they are failures as parents, so they were given support which attempted to point out the good aspects of their parenting skills and therefore build up their confidence in themselves as good mothers. Davidson states that out of the thirty children studied, 25 were successfully returned to school. However, she does not state whether residential placement in hospital was necessary in any of the successful cases, nor is the outcome of the study broken down by age. Furthermore, she does not present any systematic data which indicate any measured increase in school attendance.

The Hersov (1960a, 1960b) studies are significant in that they are one of the largest intervention series in the literature (involving some 150 children) and also because the majority of the children studied fall into the adolescent age group which is notable for poor response to intervention (Blagg, 1987). Hersov studies include 50 school refusers with eight aged between 7 and 9 years, and 42 children aged between 10 and 16 years. There were 31 boys and 19 girls. The mean age of the group was 11.8 years, and 36 (i.e. 72 per cent) of the school refusal children came from middle-class families. All the cases attended a children's clinic to receive therapy for school refusal. Twenty-one (i.e. 42 per cent) of the children received out-patient therapy and the remaining 29 (i.e. 58 per cent) children received in-patient therapy. The aim of the psychotherapy was to help the children deal with anxieties related to their families and schools. The therapy included play techniques for the younger children and face-to-face discussion with the older children. The children also attended the hospital school which provided reality situations where they could be observed and helped in regards to fears about academic failure or unrealistic

levels of aspirations. The parents also received therapy in order to help them correct the pathological aspects of their relationship with their child. Intervention lasted between six and 12 months. Thirty-four (i.e. 68 per cent) were returned to school and later follow-ups showed that 29 (i.e. 58 per cent) of those cases had successfully remained regular school attenders. However, Hersov does not compare outcome attendance figures for the in-patient and out-patient groups. Blagg (1987) has suggested that this absence of data may tempt one to suspect that the success rate for the in-patient group was considerably worse than the 58 per cent success rate of the general school refusal population because this group included the more severe school refusal cases with some of the children experiencing particularly acute family tensions and depressions. Hersov found no significant association between age, sex, IQ and quality of family relationships and intervention outcomes.

Rubenstein and Hastings (1980) draw attention to the limitations of the psychoanalytic model by arguing that school phobic children are not a homogenous population and, therefore, different intervention frameworks should be applied accordingly. For example, they strongly assert that the psychoanalytic model in childhood is inadequate in explaining the complex problems faced by adolescent school refusers. They believe that the developmental stage of adolescence is far more complex than suggested by the model of separation anxiety of the young child from his or her mother. They suggest that a psychoanalytic model should emphasize the adolescents' needs to achieve individualism through perceiving him or herself as having rights, responsibilities, personal goals and the ability to survive. Adolescents who experience difficulties in negotiating their individualism may sometimes resort to school refusal with the result that many may manifest behaviours similar to the truants. Such behaviours may include the children not remaining at home and often engaging in minor anti-social activities including withdrawing from social interactions. However, Rubenstein and Hastings argue that this superficial behaviour of the adolescents is not truancy, but rather it

reflects the neurotic conflict normally associated with the genesis of school phobia in young children.

They suggest that the psychoanalytic model should be more sensitive to adolescent school refusers by recognising that such young people need the opportunity for ego development. If ego development is suppressed then the adolescent may develop personality disorders, such as hysteria or manic depression. As evidence for their theory, Rubenstein and Hastings cite several cases to illustrate their premise. For example, Mary, aged 14 years, suffered from abdominal pain and refused to attend school. Her mother was an alcoholic and was also totally uninvolved with the family. Her father too was only marginally involved. Around the onset of Mary's abdominal pain, her mother became a 'reformed alcoholic' and started demanding closer relationships with her daughter. Unfortunately, this demand coincided with Mary's attempt to establish herself as a member of a peer group. Her mother's return to the family precipitated arguments with family members, especially the father, and this led to separation. Mary not having developed any strong bonds with her parents, opted out of all social activities including school attendance. Thus, Rubenstein and Hastings argue that Mary was not allowed to develop her friendship and self-esteem because of her mother's demands and consequently she resorted to school refusal. Her non-school attendance was not accompanied with the normal separation anxiety normally experienced by younger school refusers (Davidson, 1960; Estes et al., 1956; Hersov, 1960a, 1960b), but, nevertheless, she exhibited other behaviours normally associated with school phobia, such as pains and anxieties (Davidson, 1960; Estes et al., 1956; Hersov, 1960a, 1960b).

Generally, the psychoanalytic model attempts to appreciate the underlying problems associated with the clients' problem behaviours, such as phobias and depression, through the use of individual discussions between therapist and client. However, the psychotherapists tend to ignore the role of the father and they also tend to neglect the

clients' schools and communities. Furthermore, the psychoanalysts rarely present school attendance data which may then allow for a closer analysis of the outcomes of intervention. The psychoanalysts may need to also reconsider their methods of clinical referrals and sample selection if their data analyses are to avoid the compounding problems of bias information. In addition, the greater use of control groups should be encouraged so that comparisons can be made.

Further assessment of the psychoanalytic model suggest that a wider conceptual tool needs to be incorporated in order to enhance the appreciation of the complexities of school refusal cases. Thus, such a conceptual tool may need to include an emphasis on the needs of school phobic adolescents to develop their individualism and independence, rather than simply operate within the relatively restrictive concept of the separation-anxiety syndrome manifested by young children.

In the following section the author will discuss the role of the psychodynamic theorists and their interventions which tend to include the whole family system as well as the schools concerned.

Psychodynamic Intervention Strategies

The psychodynamic theorists tend to rely less on traditional psychotherapeutic practices and instead incorporate other systems within the child's environment, such as the school, the father and siblings. For example, Lewis (1980) cites a school refusal case of a young boy called Kenneth, aged six years old. He was referred to the paediatric clinic by his mother because he had refused to attend school, and had developed severe tantrums and nightmares in the previous six months to referral. During therapy it was realised that the family was suffering from several misfortunes such as overwhelming debts for hospital treatment and furniture, and the constant threat of eviction. This led to the father developing a drink problem and he constantly threatened to leave the family. Consequently, Kenneth developed a fear of losing his family

and refused to leave the home to attend school.

Therapy was organised so that the family (i.e. mother, father and Kenneth) would receive counselling sometimes together and sometime as a group. During therapy Kenneth was allowed to play out any fantasies. In his fantasies he would repeatedly move house and act as if the house had been broken into or his mother had been kidnapped. The therapist believe that the interviews with the father suggest that he was rather immature and tended to react to stress by flight. The therapist helped him to cope more effectively with his family problems through directing him to the Legal Aid Society and the welfare department where he received temporary financial assistance for the family. The mother experienced depression because of fear of losing her husband and children. Eventually, the therapists explained to the parents that Kenneth's behaviour was related to his fear of the family being separated. In turn the father was encouraged to accompany Kenneth to school and initially to stay with him in the school. Subsequently, Kenneth was returned to school and the family worked through their crises. A follow-up report after the initial therapy indicated that the family had resolved their crises and Kenneth appeared to be happier and more active.

The interesting aspect of Lewis's case study is that it shows the therapist actively involving the father and other agencies, such as the welfare department. Thus, the intervention programme now introduced a pragmatic approach in order to alleviate the family's crises and disorganization.

Another example of the psychodynamic approach is discussed by Hsia (1984). Her approach emphasizes both the individual (dyadic) and the family system models. The individual model emphasizes the need to tackle the symptoms associated with the separation anxiety of the child from the mother. This model provides counselling and support for both child and mother while they learn to live 'normal' lives. Hsia argues that this model, although valuable, is

nevertheless limited because it ignores the possible effects of other social systems of the child's environment. Therefore, in order to address this limitation Hsia introduced the family system model which stresses the possibility that the child's fears and insecurity may be associated with other traumatic events either in the family, school or other areas in the community. She asserts that the therapist must recognise the family's implicit role in the child's phobic behaviour. For example, a child may develop increasing resistance to school by frequent complaints of pain. The family then has to focus on the child's school phobic problem which is further reinforced and maintained by this family attention and protection. The family, in turn, may also be reinforced to protect the child because the school refusal behaviour serves to prevent any underlying problems within the family from coming to the surface. Consequently, the child is permitted to stay at home, to watch television or play in the garden instead of attending school.

Thus, in order to achieve good case management with school refusals, Hsia suggests that several steps should be considered including: (i) The therapist should react with expediency to a referred case in order to avoid perpetuating the chronic helplessness of the family; (ii) the therapist should always be available to the family to help them deal with the child's stubborn refusal of schooling; (iii) there must be regular contact with the school and, whenever possible, incorporate the school in the therapeutic plans so that the teachers can help the child to readjust to school; (iv) rewards should be built into the therapeutic programme to reinforce school attendance; (v) organise therapy sessions early in the morning to avoid too much disruption of schooling; (vi) strive for a rapid and complete return to school to enable the child to quickly overcome any fears or anxieties. Here Hsia has introduced the school system into the therapeutic programme and she also recognises the importance of rewards in complementing intervention. She also argues for a rapid return to school as a means of aiding the child's ability to readjust.

However, the premise which suggest that a return to school helps the child to adjust has been the subject of investigation in the literature. For example, Valles and Oddy (1984) studied the influence of a return to school on the long-term adjustment of school refusers. They studied 34 young people who had been referred to an in-patient clinic for their school phobia. The aim was to assess whether a return to school had influenced the patients' social adjustment in adult life.

The population was selected from among patients aged 14.5 years or less who were admitted to an adolescent unit because of school refusal. After receiving therapy the children were returned to school and their school attendance rates were monitored. The school records indicated that 16 cases had successfully retained school attendance and 18 cases had failed to do so.

A subsequent follow-up was made on the 34 cases when they were aged between 18 and 26 years to assess whether the two groups (i.e. those who achieved school attendance and those who did not) differed in demographics or personalities which may influence successful school attendance. During the follow-up interviews the young people were assessed on a number of measures including a social adjustment questionnaire (Weissman & Paykel, 1974), the Leeds Anxiety and Depression Scale (Snaithe, Bridge & Hamilton, 1976), and the Rosenberg (1965) Self-Esteem Scale. Further data on the population's present life-style, such as marital status, were collected during the interviews. The data revealed that the two groups prior to intervention significantly differed with those children who had successfully returned to school tending to: (a) come from more stable families who tended to have less arguments than the families of those who had failed to return to school; (b) were younger than those who failed to return to school, this is in conflict with Hersov (1960b) who found no relation between age and successful return to school; and (c) required shorter intervention programmes than those children who had failed to return to

school.

However, the two groups did not differ in their experiences of separation from their parents in the first decade of life; nor in their history of psychiatric problems prior to intervention, the severity of school refusal, social class, family size and peer relationships.

The adult lives of the two groups were assessed on several variables including: (i) work, there were no significant differences between the two groups in the number of jobs held, nor in the number of dismissals; (ii) social activities, those who had failed to return to school appeared to suffer from boredom more frequently than those who had returned to school, this may suggest that the school failure group had more difficulties in their social relationships; (iii) family relationships, those who failed to return to school experienced significantly more friction with their parents, they were less willingly to maintain contact with family members and were also more likely to feel resentful towards their parents. The follow-up data also indicated that when compared with the successful school attenders, those who had failed to return to school showed significantly more anxiety, had higher conviction rates, visited their General Practitioner more frequently during the year prior to the follow-up and were less likely to be married at the time of the follow-up. However, the two groups did not differ significantly in the proportion who had received psychiatric treatment, nor in their self-esteem scores with both groups having rather low self-esteem.

Because the data suggest that successful return to school may be related to both family harmony and socially successful adult life, the authors asserted that a return to school per se appears to have little affect on later adult social and emotional adjustment. They instead argue that it is the family dynamics which appear to influence social adaptability. Therefore, the authors conclude that for intervention to be effective in achieving socially adjusted clients, it must first strive to bring about positive

changes in the family system in order to secure a lasting solution. However, valuable suggestions, the study has some limitations including: (a) the school refusers were not randomly assigned to their groups because assignment was based on school attendance behaviour, thus, it is quite possible that differences existed between the two groups prior to admission; (b) the authors do not appear to consider the possibility that besides the family dimensions, other factors, such as differences in schools' ethos, may have also influenced the population's school attendance patterns and their ability to socialise.

When comparing the psychoanalysts with the psychodynamic theorists several differences between the two types of psychotherapy emerge and they include: (i) they tend to disagree on who to treat with the psychoanalysts emphasizing the mother-child relationship and the psychodynamic theorists attempting to include both the family and school systems; (ii) the psychoanalysts suggest that a return to school should be gradual, whereas the psychodynamic theorists argue for a rapid return to school; (iii) the psychoanalysts emphasize 'insight' as the main aim of their intervention programmes, whereas the psychodynamic theorists stress other factors, such as helping families to cope with their crises. However, both psychotherapeutic approaches have some common elements including: (i) they agree that school phobia is a 'neurotic' condition; (ii) they very rarely use matched control groups to assess the efficacy of intervention; (iii) they tend not to include truants in their selection of clients, probably because truant families tend to suffer greater social disadvantage than school refusers (Hersov, 1960a) and, therefore, are less likely to keep appointments as their priorities may not include school attendance.

When analysing the success of the psychoanalysts and the psychodynamic theorists, Blagg (1987) suggests that several shortcomings cast doubt on many of their findings, such as:

1. While the dynamics of the clients are reported, they very rarely present systematic data about the number of 'treatment' sessions, the duration of 'treatment', school attendance figures and the duration of the follow-up period.
2. The studies rarely give explicit behavioural criteria for school refusal so that comparisons can be made. Nor do the authors clearly state whether their reported cases reflect a general procedure or a selected approach.
3. The success of the intervention outcome is usually loosely termed as 'satisfactory attendance' or 'successful return' which does not adequately specify the school attendance rates.
4. Most of the studies include a wide age range, yet the authors tend to fail to break down outcome figures into age groups so that comparisons can be made.
5. Different authors tend to use different measures to evaluate therapy. For example, Estes et al. (1956) based the success of their intervention on the abilities of the school refusers to cope in social activities without the constant need for close proximity to their mothers, even though such cases may not have been 'successfully returned' to school. Whereas other authors tend to refer to a 'return to school' as a basis for evaluating the success of intervention with school refusers (e.g. Davidson, 1960; Hersov, 1960b; Lewis, 1980). Thus, it is difficult to compare the outcome of one intervention with another.

Despite the limitations of psychoanalysis and psychodynamism, nevertheless, these approaches have presented some detailed insights into the dysfunctions of the parent-child relationships and they have also reported intervention models which appear to assist the family in readjust to normal social interactions through discussions, role play and encouragement. They also suggest that the

cohesiveness of the family dimensions are paramount in helping young people to adjust to adult life.

In the following part of this chapter the author will discuss a third technique called behaviour therapy which aims at changing behaviour rather than focusing on the underlying dynamics of the problem. Furthermore, such therapy tends to use more systematic measures to assess outcomes (e.g. school attendance rates or frequency of target behaviours) which may, in turn, assist the author in her own evaluation of behavioural intervention.

Part III: The Management of Non-School Attendance using Behaviour Therapy (Behaviour Modification)

The behaviourists argue that although 'insight' may provide some appreciation of the problem of persistent absenteeism, nevertheless, it does not ensure behaviour change (Bandura, 1969). Bandura argues that social-learning approaches tend to view behaviour as internal covert events. These covert events are controlled by external stimulus events and, in turn, may regulate overt behaviour. By contrast, the more traditional psychotherapists perceive behaviour as relatively more autonomous from external stimuli. For instance, behaviourists would argue that persistent absentees may understand that their intense dislike of school may be traced to a fear of losing a parent or caused by a fear of a teacher's criticism, but understanding the reasons behind their fears probably will not make it easier for such children to return to school. Therefore, behaviourists suggest that 'insight' is not sufficient for behaviour change. Thus, to achieve such change in the clients' overt behaviour, the therapist must attempt to change the environmental events by using the principles of reinforcement procedures.

Here the author will review the literature which indicates that a wide variety of behaviour techniques are used to combat school absenteeism. Such techniques include:

(a) management techniques based on the classical

conditioning paradigm; (b) management based on the operant conditioning paradigm; (c) mixed management techniques which include principles from both the classical and operant conditioning paradigms.

Management Based on Classical Conditioning

The basic principle of classical conditioning is that a stimulus (e.g. school building) causes an associated response (e.g. anxiety) to occur. Thus, the classical technique is used to establish a new response (e.g. relaxation) to the stimulus (e.g. school building). This technique includes several variations, such as systematic desensitisation, flooding and implosion.

a) Systematic Desensitisation

This technique involves a carefully graded fear hierarchy, starting with the least feared situations and building up to the most feared situations. At each stage the client is helped to overcome any anxiety by concentrating on a response, such as relaxation, which is antagonistic (i.e. reciprocally inhibiting) to the feeling of anxiety (Blagg, 1987; Yule, Hersov & Treseder, 1980). Thus, the therapist operates within the principle of counter-conditioning whereby a maladaptive response to school (e.g. fear) can be weakened or eliminated by strengthening an incompatible response (e.g. relaxation). This approach is highly dependent on the skilful analysis and clarification of the circumstances involved in the underlying anxiety of school phobic cases (Blagg, 1987). However, many children may find it difficult to articulate their anxieties and fears, so the therapists tend to rely on a combination of parent and teacher reports together with the child's reactions when questioned in order to assess the areas of potential anxiety-provocation (Lazarus, 1960; Eysenck & Rachman, 1965; Yule et al., 1980).

Lazarus (1960) provides the earliest reported case of behaviour intervention with a school phobic child. He presents a case of a 9.5-year-old girl who was considered

by her parents to be well-adjusted and healthy. However, in quick succession she experienced three traumatic events which involved losing two friends, one by drowning and the other died of meningitis, and in the third event she witnessed a motor accident in which a man was killed. Subsequent to these traumatic experiences the child developed school phobia which was accompanied with complaints of stomach pains, fear of the dark and enuresis. After discussions with both mother and child, the therapist concluded that the child was most afraid of the possibility of her mother dying. This was based on the evidence that she refused to let her mother out of her sight. The therapist then established a seven-item hierarchy related to imagined separation experiences from the mother. The therapy lasted for ten days and involved the child initially imagining separation from her mother while at the same time attempting to relax her muscles. After the ten-day therapy the child willingly returned to school, and the nightmares and enuresis disappeared. A 15-month follow-up period suggest that the child had maintained regular school attendance and all the other gains apart from the occasional bedwetting. However, Lazarus presents no details of the child's attendance figures, academic progress, and frequencies of the target behaviours (e.g. bedwetting). Nor did he indicate whether the school personnel were involved.

A number of studies have used a combined approach involving real life (in vivo) situations and imagined scenes in the systematic desensitisation procedure. Eysenck and Rachman (1965), for example, used this combined technique as part of intervention for a 13-year-old school refuser called Leslie. Leslie had developed a serious anxiety problem about school attendance after sustaining an injury during a rugby game at school. During the initial stage of therapy he was introduced to a imaginal desensitisation programme which consisted of a hierarchical series of anxiety provoking situations. At first Leslie simply had to imagine himself putting on his clothes for school, then leaving the

house, going to the school gate and so on. These imagined scenes were paired with relaxation training. Simultaneously, the therapists also used in vivo desensitisation programmes which involved gradual reintegration into school, such as Leslie visiting the school accompanied by his therapists and then staying in his class for periods of time which were increased gradually. After two weeks of therapy Leslie was returned to school, but was later given further therapy as a 'booster' programme to help him cope with school. However, during the follow-up period Leslie relapsed to non-school attendance which required counselling and relaxation sessions. Subsequently, Leslie was successfully returned to full-time school.

Yule et al. (1980) also used combined imagined and in vivo desensitisation programmes to help a 12-year-old boy called Richard to return to school. Richard had spent a period of time in hospital after developing pyrexia (fever). After being discharged from hospital he became very tense and nervous when he returned to school. He found it difficult to concentrate on his lessons which resulted in him walking out of school and refusing to return. Analysis of Richard's background indicated that he was extremely bright with an IQ of 139 (WISC Scale) and he was the only child of a middle-class couple (the father was a scientist). Consequently, his parents became very anxious about Richard's non-school attendance because they feared that he was jeopardising a very promising academic career.

The therapists decided to give counselling sessions to both Richard and his parents in order to help them cope with their anxieties. Initially, Richard was required to imagine himself getting up for school, putting on his uniform, walking to the car and so on. During the in vivo desensitisation programme the therapists would drive Richard to school, they would sit in the car and simply observe the building and watch the pupils entering school. Richard was reintegrated

gradually into his class. Over the following two years Richard maintained a school attendance rate of close to 100 per cent and he also showed good academic progress.

Here we see the authors approaching school refusal from a predominantly behavioural view point where they regard Richard's school attendance as an avoidance behaviour rather than a 'psychoneurotic' obsession associated with separation anxiety from parents. The authors also paid attention to the needs of the parents.

When the work of Yule et al. (1980) is compared with Eysenck and Rachman (1965) who both used very similar techniques, then differences in outcomes appear to emerge. For instance, Eysenck and Rachman found that they had to administer a 'booster' programme to their client because he had retrograded to non-school attendance after initial intervention, whereas Yule et al. found their case fairly straight forward. Secondly, Eysenck and Rachman worked mainly with the client himself, whereas Yule et al. worked closely with their client's family. And thirdly, Yule et al. used some operant principles to reinforce their client's school attendance, such as trips, whereas Eysenck and Rachman tended to rely primarily on relaxation techniques to increase school attendance. However, one could argue that one of the reasons for Yule's et al. greater success in returning their client to school is that his pre-intervention school refusal was less severe (i.e. school absence lasting for five months) than in the case of Eysenck's and Rachman's client who had missed school for at least one year prior to intervention. Other possible reasons for Yule's et al. greater success could include the possibilities that their client is more intelligent, more competitive, and probably more motivated than Eysenck's and Rachman's client. Although it must be stated that Eysenck and Rachman do not present any systematic data on their client's academic abilities, nor any data on his school attendance figures. Furthermore, it is quite possible that the parents of Yule's et al. client were highly

motivated and keen to see their child returned to school and their co-operation on the programme may have assisted their child's return to school.

However, not all of Yule's et al. cases were resounding successes. They illustrate an example of a 'failure' case which involved a 12-year-old boy called Ronald who had learning difficulties and was regularly bullied at school by other pupils. Ronald developed a severe anxiety about school attendance and refused to attend. Consequently, he was introduced to a combined intervention approach using both imaginal and in vivo desensitisation. He was also placed in a special education centre so that he could receive extra help with his work. Ronald and his parents co-operated with the therapy sessions, but things went wrong when Richard was required to return to full-time school and therefore leave the educational centre. His parents immediately withdrew from school and from his therapy programme. The therapists suggest that the failure to return Ronald to school might be due to the fact that his sister is also a persistent absentee which may have influenced his attitudes towards school. They also believe that the parents did not co-operate enough in assisting Ronald's return to full-time school. However, the therapists did not explore other possible reasons for this failure which may have included the parents lacking confidence in the school, or they believe that the school provided an inadequate education to meet Ronald's needs.

When assessing the desensitisation approach the general outcomes suggest that: (i) most therapists tend to agree that the child should be returned to school 'as soon as possible' to avoid too much delay which may further compound the problem; (ii) that any experience of anxiety should involve relaxation exercises and gradual confrontation with the school situation either in imagination or in vivo situations. One advantage that the in vivo approach has over the 'imaginary' technique is that it makes it easier to engineer the school's

involvement with assisting the school refuser during the reintegration period. On the other hand, the main disadvantage of the in vivo technique is that the school seeing a nervous school phobic attending school accompanied by a therapist may encourage other pupils to become inquisitive and they may start to ask questions. This may become embarrassing for the school refuser.

When compared with the traditional psychotherapeutic models (e.g. psychoanalysis), the desensitisation programme appears to offer more explicit accounts of the dynamics of its intervention in the sense that there is an indication of the length of the programme and the number of sessions required. The desensitisers also tend to consider school phobia as a maladaptive learning behaviour and, therefore, they tend to include the parents and also tend to study aspects of the school, such as placing the client into new classes, in order to encourage their clients during intervention. Unlike the traditional psychotherapists we also see the desensitisers beginning to present systematic data on school attendance figures.

Generally, the evidence appear to suggest that desensitisation programmes may increase school attendance, although more systematic data need to be presented. Furthermore, some authorities believe that such a programme may provide a useful framework for a variety of school refusal problems, such as anxiety separation from parents or avoidance of other school children (Blagg, 1987; Yule et al., 1980).

b) Flooding and Implosion

Unlike desensitisation which involves a gradual exposure to the feared object, flooding and implosion involves immediate confrontation with the most feared situation without the use of careful preparation via less threatening circumstances (Blagg, 1987; Herbert, 1978, 1987). Flooding involves confrontation with the maximal anxiety-provoking situation using a direct in vivo

approach (Kennedy, 1965), whereas the implosion technique requires the client to face imagined confrontation with the maximal anxiety-provoking situation (Smith & Sharpe, 1970).

Kennedy (1965) provides a series of school phobic cases who were 'treated' via the flooding technique. He differentiated between two types of school refusers: the Type I or 'neurotic crisis' phobias who tend to be anxious about death and their mothers' health; and the Type II or 'way of life' phobias who tend to have a life style which reflects poor communication with those around, such as the parents. Kennedy's intervention programme involved 50 Type I school phobic cases who were immediately forced to attend school in order to block any avoidance behaviour of the children, such attempting to delay full reintegration into school by complaints of anxiety or pain. At the same time Kennedy used operant approaches where the children were reinforced for school attendance by their parents presenting them with gifts or day-trips. Any somatic complaints were treated as unimportant and consequently such complaints gradually diminished. All 50 cases returned to full-time school within three days of intervention.

Kennedy conducted several follow-up studies by telephone calls to the schools at various intervals including a two-week and an eight-week periods, and then annually for up to eight years after intervention. He states that his follow-up data reveal that all his cases had retained school attendance. Kennedy believes that several factors contributed to the 'success' of his intervention including: (a) establishing good relations between the various professions, such as teachers and therapists; (b) build up parents' confidence in their child-rearing techniques; (c) avoid paying attention to somatic complaints; (d) immediate forced school attendance which may negate any possible problems due to delay; (e) interview both the parents and children. He concluded that this approach is very effective with the

Type I school phobias, but the prognosis for the Type II cases was very poor. He suggests that long-term therapy and counselling is probably more appropriate for the Type II cases.

However, Kennedy's success needs to be evaluated within several aspects: (i) he gives very little demographic details of the original population of the school phobic cases; (ii) 37 (i.e. 74 per cent) were aged 11 years or younger this may have made them easier to manage; (iii) 45 (i.e. 90 per cent) of the cases had been out of school for only two or three days, and only 5 (i.e. 10 per cent) cases had shown any form of relatively serious school attendance problems. Unfortunately, Kennedy does not give any systematic data on the population's school attendance patterns. Furthermore, he admits that the majority of the school phobic cases would probably have returned to school no matter what type of intervention given, probably because most of the children involved are young and tended to exhibit relatively mild school attendance problems.

Smith and Sharpe (1970) present a school phobic case to demonstrate the implosion technique. They worked with a 13-year-old boy called Billy who had refused to attend school for some 60 days. During an interview the therapist asked him to visualise and describe a typical school day. By making detailed observations during the interviews, the therapist was able to deduce that Billy was most afraid of failure in literature and mathematics lessons. He was particularly afraid of being unable to correctly answer the teacher's questions, and then being ridiculed by the teacher and classmates. The therapy consisted of Billy imagining himself in highly threatening situations, such as being in a dark classroom with the pupils encircled around him, pressing closer towards him and calling him 'stupid'. The therapist also involved his parents and teachers by explaining to them the therapeutic procedures and contacting them regularly to inform them of Billy's progress. The parents

especially were required to encourage Billy to co-operate with his therapist through the use of incentives, such as praise or being allowed to watch television until late. After the first session of implosion therapy Billy was able to attend his maths lessons the following day and by the fourth session he was in school full time. He received six consecutive daily therapy sessions altogether before his intervention programme was terminated because of his 'successful' return to school. A 13-week follow-up study indicate that Billy had maintained regular school attendance and his academic grades had improved.

This implosion technique appear to emphasize some principles including: (i) Smith and Sharpe stress the importance of involving the parents and school; (ii) they encourage the use of contingency management (e.g. watching the TV). The authors further stress that the main advantage of implosion over the flooding technique is that it avoids the possibility of the child being teased by his peers for demonstrating anxiety in the class and it also gives the child relatively more time to come to terms with the prospect of school attendance. However, although the implosion technique appears to be successful in increasing school attendance, nevertheless, the authors did include other techniques in their study which may have had more bearing the outcomes than suggested by their report. For example, Billy was gradually reintroduced to school over a period of four days - this is very similar to the desensitisation techniques, and in addition, the authors borrowed from the operant principles by encouraging the parents to reward Billy for his co-operation.

Few studies have compared the outcomes of behaviour therapy with the traditional therapy using psychodynamic techniques. However, Blagg and Yule (1984) attempted such a comparison in their study which involved 66 school refusers most of whom were aged between 11 and 16 years. All the school phobic cases were selected using the Berg

et al. (1969) criteria which suggest that a children are 'diagnosed' as school phobics if they show excessive anxiety when taken to school (see Chapter 1 for details). In order to assess the efficacy of the two intervention paradigms the population was divided into three groups: (a) the BTA group which consisted of 30 school refusers who received in vivo flooding therapy which required them to immediately return to full-time school; (b) the HU group which consisted of 16 in-patient school refusers who received psychiatric treatment (e.g. tranquillizers) in order to help them cope with their anxieties; and (c) the HT group which consisted of 20 school refusers who remained absent from school, and instead received home tuition and psychodynamic therapy.

The success of the intervention programmes were assessed on several criteria including school attendance figures, the WISC intelligence test (Wechsler, 1974), the Rutter Behavioural Ratings Scale (Rutter & Yule, 1968), Self-Esteem Inventory (Lawrence, 1979; cited by Blagg & Yule, 1984) and the Junior Eysenck Personality Questionnaire (Eysenck & Eysenck, 1975). Data were collected from these inventories both before and after intervention. The authors conducted a one-year follow-up study on the children after intervention had been terminated. The results suggest that the BTA group was the most successful in achieving regular school attendance with 83.30 per cent of the cases attaining a school attendance rate of over 80 per cent. However, only 31.3 per cent of the HU group and none of the HT group achieved school attendance rates of over 80 per cent. The authors examined the population's behaviour to assess whether school attendance was accompanied by changes in other areas of behaviour, such as social adjustment and levels of separation anxiety. In the case of experiences of separation anxiety, as assessed by the children and their parents, the data suggest that during the follow-up those who experienced very little anxiety included 30 (i.e. 100 per cent) BTA children, about 5 (i.e. 33.33 per cent) HU children and about 18.5 (i.e. 92.9 per cent) HT

children.

The data collected on personality, self-esteem and behaviour also indicate that the BTA group showed more superior outcomes than the other two groups. Both the parents and teachers of the BTA group were significantly more likely to perceive the group as being more relaxed and showing good school progress. The intervention with the worst prognosis appears to be the home tuition programme (i.e. HT group) where the children made very poor progress in school attendance and social adjustment. Therefore, the authors concluded that behaviour therapy appears to be the most effective technique in successfully returning persistent absentees to full-time school.

Generally, the empirical studies seem to suggest that the behaviour therapeutic techniques of flooding and implosion tend to increase school attendance among children who exhibit school phobias. Such children also tend to display other behavioural gains in terms of improved social adjustment and the reduction of level of anxiety. However, only Blagg and Yule (1984) attempt to present any systematic data on school attendance patterns and these data suggest that behaviour therapy has more effective outcomes than traditional psychotherapy.

Nevertheless, despite the evidence which suggest that flooding may be an effective approach to the management of school refusal, one has to consider the ethical and humane implications of such an approach. For instance, children may not always understand what is involved, even when it is explained to them, and they may resent this rapid form of intervention. Furthermore, we must also consider whether it is ethical to deliberately expose a child to such intensely stressful situations which may be further compounded by the presence of other pupils witnessing the child's overt fear and anxiety. Thus, because of the intense approach of the flooding technique it is rarely used with children (Herbert, 1978).

Intervention Based on the Operant Conditioning Paradigm

The operant paradigm is concerned with the consequences of behaviour and how such consequences might be systematically varied to change (modify) subsequent responses. Thus, in the management of school refusal this procedure may essentially involve: (i) maximising the use of positive reinforcers to increase school attendance; (ii) minimising the incentives to remain at home during school hours by removing positive reinforcers. Therefore, in order to encourage and maintain school attendance, the reinforcement is organised so as to follow each stage of increased school attendance rate.

In view of the nature of operant conditioning, it is important to involve parents and teachers because they are in frequent contact with the children and, therefore, are in a better position to 'shape' the children's behaviour towards improved school attendance. The operant approach does not assume that anxiety is the cause of school phobia, but instead argues that such behaviour is a maladaptively learnt response which may have been positively reinforced by adult attention and concern, or it could possibly be the result of negative reinforcement caused by fear of being punished by the school (Herbert, 1978). Although this approach is reminiscent of in vivo systematic desensitisation, nevertheless, the operant paradigm differs in the sense that the therapists do not establish a hierarchy of fear-provoking situations and nor is the child trained in relaxation procedures (Blagg, 1987).

An illustration of the operant technique is presented in an American study by Ayllon, Smith and Rogers (1974). They studied an 8-year-old girl called Valerie who comes from a low income area. Valerie gradually developed school phobia and by the end of the school year she had missed 41 per cent of schooling. Any attempts by her mother to return her to school was usually accompanied by Valerie showing violent tantrums, kicking and screaming. During several observations the therapists noticed that Valerie was very

close to her mother and would attempt to follow her wherever she went even to work. Following these observations the therapists decided to develop an intervention plan which attempted to make school attendance more rewarding. Thus, the plan included gradually reintroducing Valerie to school where the teacher made her feel welcomed, and her increased school attendance was rewarded by her mother with gifts of sweets, stars and day-trips.

During the course of this intervention, which lasted for 45 days, Valerie's school attendance increased from 10 to 100 per cent. A nine-month follow-up study indicated that Valerie had maintained a 100 per cent school attendance rate. The therapists also evaluated her educational progress. Before intervention she achieved on average a grade C in school, after intervention her school grades improved to include A's and B's. Her teacher remarked that Valerie was more co-operative and well behaved. The therapists concluded that behaviour change may have effectively maintained school attendance.

This study highlights several elements including the fact that although the intervention is based on operant techniques, it can also be interpreted within the framework of the classical conditioning paradigm. Blagg (1987) argues that the therapists effectively introduced to Valerie by 'flooding' in the sense that she was immediately returned to school on the onset of the intervention without any earlier preparations, such as counselling. The report also highlights the mother's determination to resolve the problem by punishing Valerie for her reluctance to attend school and rewarding her for school attendance. The importance of the parents' co-operation as behavioural change agents has also been emphasized by Atkeson and Forehand (1978) who argue that one of the main advantages of parent agents is that they often have access to a wider variety of incentives than the teachers or therapists. Therefore, they are in a better position to reinforce positively desired behaviours.

While there is extensive theoretical literature on

the intervention approaches on the management of school refusal, unfortunately, the same is not true of truancy. Galloway (1980, 1985a) has proposed several reasons for this lack of literature on truancy including: (i) truancy tends to be regarded as a conduct disorder with underlying social problems, while school refusal is seen as a neurotic disorder requiring 'clinic-based' approaches; (ii) conduct disorders tend to have a worse prognosis than neurotic disorders which may make studies on truancy seem less attractive to researchers; (iii) truants and their families tend to come from poor home backgrounds, and, therefore, they may be less willing to co-operate in clinic-based interventions than the middle-class school refusers, partly because the stress of poverty may place school attendance on a list of low priorities for the truants' families. However, the few studies that have attempted to investigate the effects of behavioural programmes on truancy tend to analyse persistent truants within the applied settings of the home, the school or the community.

However, Lawrence, Litynsky, and D'Lugoff (1982) have attempted to fill some of the gaps in the literature in an American study which assessed the effectiveness of behaviour intervention in meeting the needs of 45 adolescent school truants. The main aim of intervention was to increase school attendance, and help the truants with any learning difficulties. These truants were studied alongside control adolescent truants who experienced similar problems. The intervention was structured at a day school which the truants attended in lieu of their normal school. The intervention period lasted for up to two years. The main components of the programme consisted of education and counselling. During counselling various contingency management approaches were used access to television and the removal of social restrictions (e.g. curfews imposed by the truants probation officers). The truants were expected to increase their school attendance and academic activities in order to receive their contingency rewards.

The results show that, compared with the control

groups, the truants achieved significant increases in school attendance and basic reading skills. The authors concluded that behavioural intervention can significantly reduce school disaffection, but they also advise that explorations of new methods to improve the effectiveness of such programmes should be continued. The present author believes that such explorations should include closer analysis of the curriculum content and frequency of contact between project and mainstream school which may help further the educational progress of truants when they are returned to normal school.

In another study, Brooks (1974) demonstrates the use of contingency contracts with school truants. He describes two truant cases in which the child, parent and school agreed to abide by a written contract drawn up by the school counsellor. The essence of the contract was that if school attendance increases (with the assistance of parents and school) then the child would receive agreed rewards to reinforce the desired behaviour.

The first case is that of a 15-year-old girl called Mary who missed as much as 80 per cent of schooling during one term. The initial reaction was to give Mary counselling at school. She also received corporal punishment from her mother and she was also restricted from going out with friends. However, after several conferences with Mary and her mother, the school counsellor introduced a contingency contract which instructed that: (i) Mary must increase and record her attendance on a chart in the counsellor's office; (ii) the mother will reward Mary for improved attendance and such rewards will include greater freedom to go out with friends especially at weekends; (iii) the counsellor will monitor Mary's progress, and report to Mary and her mother at the end of each week. All participants signed the agreed contract.

Mary followed the provisions of the contract and received the designated rewards. After six weeks the written contracts were no longer used because Mary had achieved regular school attendance which she maintained after the

intervention programme was terminated. The author reported several attitude changes which appear to occur after the discontinuation of the contract. Such changes included; (i) Mary reported that she felt more positive about schooling and hoped to continue her education in college; (ii) her mother appeared to be more positive about Mary and was very pleased about her attendance. The author argues that a combination of the contracts and the emerged changes in attitudes may have contributed to Mary's increased school attendance.

Brooks presents another truancy case of a boy called Bill, aged 16 years. Bill had a good attendance record until his parents separated, and he had to live with his mother and older sister. Subsequently, he started to truant from school and his absenteeism worsened over time. His mother was informed and she immediately imposed a restriction on him which forbade him from going out of the house. However, this restriction was very limiting because the mother worked long hours and, therefore, was unable effectively to impose the sanction.

The school counsellor arranged a conference with Bill and his mother to discuss a contingency contract. The contract stated that: (i) Bill will attend school and chart his attendance on a graph in the counsellor's office; (ii) Bill's mother agreed to give him \$0.10 for each lesson attended and the money will be saved for a trip to Disneyland; (iii) the counsellor will monitor Bill's school progress, and report to Bill and his mother at the end of each week.

Bill fulfilled the provisions stated by the contract and he did not miss one lesson for three weeks, that is he attained a 100 per cent school attendance. In turn, his mother fulfilled her part of the contract. After the three-week period Bill decided that the monetary reward was no longer necessary, he felt that just presenting his card to his mother was rewarding enough. After a further three-week period Bill still maintained full-time school

attendance, so his behaviour modification programme was discontinued.

Brooks argues that the contingency contract appears to be a promising method for the management of truancy. He further argues that the contracting technique has several advantages including: (a) the monitoring of the contract is relatively easy, it eliminates time-consuming conferences and is, therefore, economical for the counsellor; (b) the contract places specified responsibilities on the pupils who have to work for rewards which he argues is not bribery because the pupils are paid to 'improve' their future rather than being paid for illegal or immoral acts which constitute bribery; (c) it directly involves the parents by giving them specific responsibilities which may help to improve the parent-child relationship; (d) the contract demonstrates the counsellor's willingness to help pupils as well as it provides the pupils with systematic agreements which the adults promise to fulfil.

Nonetheless, Brooks warns that this type of intervention may not work for every truant case and any failures may require further analysis of the contingencies which might be too weak, too powerful or irrelevant.

Although the paper does suggest that contingency contracts may increase school attendance, nevertheless, Brooks does not provide any long-term follow-up studies, nor does his cases appear to reflect other serious behavioural problems which are usually associated with truancy, such as delinquency, learning difficulties and anti-social behaviour (Farrington, 1980; Fogelman & Richardson, 1974; May, 1975; Pritchard et al., 1987; Tyerman, 1958; West, 1982). Therefore, it is quite possible that the straightforward success of these cases might be partly due to the fact that the pupils in the study appear to have relatively mild problems which are not complicated by the presence of other personality deficiencies.

In another study on contingency management with

truants, Brooks (1975) studied non-school attenders who received interventions which combined token economy and group guidance meetings in order to increase school attendance.

The author studied 40 high school absentees who had been absent for nine days or more during the first eight weeks of school. The truants were randomly assigned to one of two groups. The one group was an experimental group which consisted of 20 truants who received intervention and the other was a control group which consisted of 20 truants who received no intervention. The two groups were matched for age, sex and race.

The baseline period consisted of an eight-week period during which the regular school procedures were conducted to reduce truancy, such as contacting the parents of the truantiing pupils. However, despite these regular procedures the experimental truants and the control truants continued to absent themselves from school.

The intervention strategies were then introduced to the experimental truants only. The intervention procedure included a contract which stated that: (i) the truants will agree to attend school regularly, ensure that their attendance cards are marked by each lesson teacher, and in the case of illness to bring a doctor's note; (ii) the truants will attend scheduled group meetings; (iii) the school counsellor agreed to provide the agreed rewards, such as tickets to the movies. The contracts were signed by truants and the counsellor. During the first three weeks of intervention the reward provisions included bonus tickets with written positive comments from the teachers which could be used in a lottery to win prizes of up to \$10. It was pointed out to the experimental truants that the more they attended school, the more bonus tickets they would receive and, therefore, better their chances of winning a prize. Between weeks 4 and 7 of the intervention programme the prizes were increased to include tickets to a movie, record albums and two-dollar gift vouchers. During the eighth week

no prizes were given instead the experimental truants were required to attend group meetings to discuss school attendance.

After the intervention procedure, school attendance data for the two groups were compared. The results suggest that the experimental group had significantly improved in their school attendance. For instance during the baseline phase the control truants had an average attendance rate of 78.1 per cent and the experimental truants had an average attendance rate of 77.7 per cent. However, during intervention the control truants' average school attendance rate decreased to 70.7 per cent, whereas the experimental truants' average school attendance rate significantly increased to 92.9 per cent.

Brooks argues that the use of written contracts demonstrates that school attendance can be increased if environmental contingencies are manipulated to make school attendance more rewarding. He also draws attention to the fact that the truants had to achieve positive comments from their teachers may have helped to improve school attendance as it encouraged the pupils to co-operate with the teachers. This may have also encouraged the teachers to take a more positive attitude towards their truant students in the experimental group. Thus, this reciprocal positive attitude in the teacher-pupil relationship may have established a mutually rewarding situation for both the teachers and the experimental truants. Brooks also draws attention to the cost of the project (\$35.00) which he believes is inexpensive compared to the thousands of dollars it would have cost the school district in terms of welfare officers to check on and increase school attendance.

However, Brooks does not provide a follow-up study, nor does his intervention programme consider the relevance of the school curriculum to the pupils, and he does not attempt to discuss the long-term effects of written contracts.

Morgan (1975) focused on poor attenders without distinguishing between school refusers and truants. He compared three behaviour modification procedures with elementary school children. The population consisted of 92 persistent absentees from two schools who were randomly assigned to one of four groups each with a particular type of reward system. The four groups included: (i) poor attenders who received both material and peer approval rewards, they are referred to as the M+PSR group; (ii) poor attenders who received material reinforcement only, they are referred to as the MR group; (iii) poor attenders who received teacher social approval only, they are referred to as the TSR group; and (iv) poor attenders who acted as the control group which received only formal rewards. All the members of the samples came from poor socio-economic backgrounds.

M+PSR received toys and sweets as part of their material rewards for improved school attendance. Each M+PSR pupil was also grouped with about three of his or her friends, and they were told that they would receive rewards via tokens (these were exchanged for toys, etc.) if they all attended school. But if one of them missed school then none of them would receive any tokens. The aim was to motivate the friends to encourage their absentee friend to attend school. The MR group received tokens for school attendance which they could exchange for toys and sweets. The TSR group were given an individual attendance chart which was placed in their classroom. Their teachers were required to make daily checks on the charts, and to praise and encourage the child for increased school attendance. The control group received no systematic rewards.

Morgan compared all the school attendance figures for all the groups during the baseline, the intervention programmes and at follow-up. The results indicate that the three experimental groups showed significantly greater increases in school attendance than the control pupils during both the intervention and follow-up phases. When comparing the three experimental groups with each other, the

school attendance figures indicate that the M+PSR group showed the greatest increase on school attendance during intervention, followed by the MR group, with the TSR group showing the least increase (among the experimental groups) in school attendance rates during intervention. An examination of the follow-up data indicated that 'good' attendance was maintained among the M+PSR and the MR groups for a significantly longer period than among the pupils in the TSR group.

Morgan argues that his data suggest that a combination of material rewards and social reinforcement appears to be the most effective procedure in reducing school absenteeism. However, Morgan's follow-up is relatively short (20 days) compared with 40 day for the baseline study and 40 days for the intervention programme. Thus, the significant differences in attendance patterns for the three phases might be partly due to the unequal duration given at each stage. An examination the three experimental groups suggests that other factors may have contributed to the differences in their school attendance rates. For instance, Morgan does not investigate the teacher-pupil relationship which might have revealed that teacher approval is not necessarily less effective than the combined approach, but rather that its poor outcome reflects the poor state of the relationships. Furthermore, recent studies suggest that the teacher may not necessarily use praise as a contingency reward (Brophy, 1981). Brophy argues that teachers tend to use praise for a variety of reasons, such as an ice breaker to establish communication with alienated pupils by, say, complimenting them on their dressing. He suggests that teachers rarely use praise as a reinforcer, for example, praise as a consequence of a pupil presenting a good piece of work. Furthermore, he argues that frequency of teacher-praise varies with the teacher's personality and the student's general behaviour. Thus, for example students who tend to smile and beam when praised are more likely to receive teacher-praise than other pupils (i.e. the pupils are probably reinforcing the reinforcer - the teacher).

Similarly to Brooks (1974) and Lawrence et al. (1982), Morgan does not evaluate the contents of the pupils' curriculum where there might be possible aetiological factors in the generation of their populations' school attendance problems. Neither does he attempt to incorporate parent participation, although he does go further than Brooks in involving the school staff. However, Herbert's (1978) work has attempted to fill in some of these gaps by assessing school attendance within the concept of 'push-pull' factors in school attendance. Herbert argues that during the initial stages of investigation into persistent absentee cases the therapists should list the 'push' factors, that is those crisis aspects which are associated with school, such as the child has difficulties in waking up in the morning, the child is experiencing bullying in school or the child finds the school curriculum rather boring. Such crisis factors usually result in the parents having to 'push' the child to attend school hence the term 'push' factors. He also argues that the therapists should also list the 'pull' factors, that is those aspects of schooling which attract the child to attend school, such as the presence of friends or an interesting curriculum. Herbert asserts that such a background analysis is helpful because it provides a list of potential crisis points in getting the child to school.

Herbert presents a persistent absentee case, Barry aged 15-years-old, who experienced difficulties in waking up in the morning for school. This problem was compounded by the fact that his father worked shifts and therefore was unable to supervise Barry's morning routine. Investigation into Barry's background showed him to be very lonely, and he was also very grieved about the death of his mother. Therefore, the initial stages of intervention involved the therapist visiting the school to mobilise the personal interests of a teacher and an education psychologist in Barry's school life. The therapist also enlisted a kind neighbour to wake up Barry in the mornings for school. Counselling sessions were organised so that Barry could discuss his social life (he was introduced to a youth club)

and the loss of his mother. There were also joint meetings with Barry and his father to discuss their misunderstandings and arrange a contract which involved the father giving Barry a loan for a moped on the condition that he attend school regularly. Barry was eventually returned successfully to school.

However, one interesting aspect of Herbert's 'push-pull' concept is that it recognises the fact that school factors, such as a boring curriculum, may also influence disaffection. Consequently, his intervention approach attempts to introduce contingency contracts by using rewards, as well as, investigate the school in order to ensure that the persistent absentee receives the necessary curricular attention. Therefore, even though Herbert's work falls mainly within the framework of behaviour therapy, nevertheless, he shows some multi-disciplinary considerations by suggesting that factors within both the home and school should be investigated in non-school attendance cases.

In summary, the operant conditioning paradigm emphasizes the change in reinforcement contingencies in order to maintain and generalise desired behaviours, such as school attendance. Much of the evidence suggest that once incentives are used to increase school attendance, while at the same time minimising the incentives to remain at home (e.g. extra adult attention), then there is a tendency for school attendance to improve among persistent absentees, such as truants and school refusers.

Mixed Intervention Approaches which Encompasses Techniques from both Classical and Operant Conditioning Paradigms

Previously the author discussed several studies that implicitly involved a mixture of intervention techniques while explicitly referring to only one approach (e.g. Ayllon et al., 1974). However, in this section the author will discuss several studies that have acknowledged the combined involvement of classical and operant principles in the management of school phobia.

Patterson (1965) is considered to be the first behaviour therapist to acknowledge the importance of combining different theoretical principles from a variety of learning models in order to respond adequately to the needs of the client. Operant and classical conditioning principles were employed in the management of a six-year-old boy called Karl who refused to attend school because of anxiety of separation from his parents. During Karl's primary school attendance his separation anxiety had become so severe that he could not attend school unless one of his parents remained in the classroom with him. Apparently, all attempts to keep him in school, such as punishment, had failed. Eventually Karl was referred to clinic where the therapist observed his behaviour. Using a test procedure of reinforcement stimuli (Patterson, Littman & Hinsley, 1963), the therapist noted that Karl was not responsive to social reinforcement, so sweets were used in conjunction with social approval in order to increase his co-operation with the therapist. This is consistent with the findings of Morgan (1975) who suggests that combined reinforcers (e.g. social approval and gifts) are much more effective in increasing school attendance than just social approval alone. Karl was required to attend therapy for four days per week and each session lasted for 15 minutes.

During the first intervention session Karl refused to separate from his mother and he clung tightly to her coat. However, he was encouraged to accept increasing distances between him and his mother by being rewarded with sweets. By the end of the first session his mother had moved from the clinic room to just outside the door without too much disturbance to Karl. During following sessions Karl was encouraged to discuss his activities and was rewarded for reported attempts to play some distance from home and not checking on his mother. This systematic desensitisation from the mother was also complemented with play during therapy where Karl and the therapist would discuss a doll's relationship with its mother. During the discussion Karl was rewarded for 'creating' scenes where the doll coped without

its mother, for example, entering the dentist's room without being accompanied by Mother.

After the 11th session, Karl made his first trip to school with a special teacher who had been tutoring him during intervention. This teacher stayed with him all the time. Over the following days the tutor gradually reduced the time spent with Karl in class in order to increase his independence in the school environment. By the end of his therapy (i.e. 23rd session), Karl had achieved full-time school attendance. A three-month follow-up study indicated that Karl had maintained regular school attendance and the school teacher reported a dramatic improvement in his behaviour.

Here we see Patterson's attempt to combine the operant and classical models. During the initial stages of intervention Karl was systematically desensitised (classical paradigm) to reduce his fear of separation from his mother. As Karl's behaviour was increasingly 'shaped' towards greater independence away from his mother and towards increasing his school attendance, he was repeatedly rewarded with praise and sweets (operant paradigm). Thus, Patterson concludes that this combined procedure had effectively achieved improved social adjustment in this case.

Lazarus, Davidson and Polefka (1965) demonstrated the value of using the combined procedures at different stages of intervention with a nine-year-old boy called Paul who had developed a fear of his classroom and refused to attend school. During the early stages of therapy the therapists employed the in vivo desensitisation procedure. The first step consisted of Paul and his therapist walking to the school gates. While at the school gates the therapist humoured and distracted Paul to allay any anxieties that he might be experiencing. If the exposure caused too much anxiety he was returned home. He was also given tranquillizers to reduce his anxiety. Over the following weeks, with the assistance of the therapists, Paul was able to progress to entering the school yard and eventually

entering the classroom. Once in the classroom, the therapist left Paul alone for increasingly longer periods. At each stage of Paul's increased school attendance he was rewarded by his parents with gifts, such as baseball gloves and comics. After 4.5 months of intervention Paul achieved full-time school attendance.

However, the therapists did experience some setbacks with Paul. On a few occasions Paul would return home during school hours, so his mother was instructed not to allow him into the house on such occasions. In addition, the teacher was asked to provide special jobs for him to increase his active participation in the class. However, the authors do not state what these activities entailed.

When assessing the theoretical implications, Blagg (1987) argues that in operant terms, in vivo systematic desensitisation sessions may actively reinforce the child's dependency behaviour and strengthen avoidance responses by allowing him to return home after experiencing anxiety at school. Furthermore, the special attention given to the child by the therapist may highlight the child's difficulties in the eyes of his friends. On the other hand, Lazarus et al. argue that premature exposure to the maximally feared situation may lead to increased anxiety and this negative experience may reinforce avoidance behaviour. However, the authors do not point out the fact that if the escape route is blocked (i.e. the home) and the child is held in the fear-provoking situation, then desensitisation may occur through the process of extinction of the avoidance behaviour (Blagg & Yule, 1984; Kennedy, 1965). Instead, the authors propose that the level of anxiety as judged by the therapist should determine which paradigm to employ. They suggest that high levels of anxiety may need the desensitisation model, whereas low levels of anxiety may require the operant model. However, apart from the fact that this line of argument does not necessarily resolve the inherent conflicts of the two models, it further compounds the problem of the mixed procedures by raising the issue of how the therapists should judge the level of anxiety. As

research has demonstrated (e.g. Lang, 1970) it is not always possible to correlate the levels of observed anxiety with subjective self-reports and physiological measures (e.g. rate of heartbeat). Thus, children who may scream and shout when faced with school may be genuinely afraid or may be simply angry because their wishes to stay at home have been ignored. Therefore, this may make it difficult for the therapist to make distinctions between the fear and the tantrum behaviours.

In another study on the combined procedure, Phillips and Wolpe (1981) describe a case of a 12-year-old only child called Rob. Both his parents suffered from serious social problems with his father being an alcoholic and his mother an agoraphobic. Rob suffered from severe separation anxiety and irregularly attended school for over two years. After psychoanalytic intervention failed to reduce his anxiety he was referred for behaviour analysis. The therapist observed that he would not let his parents out of his sight and even when playing football in the backyard at least one parent had to be visible at all times.

To deal with Rob's problems a long and tedious intervention programme was introduced. The procedure involved 88 sessions spread over a two-year period. During the early stages of intervention the in vivo desensitisation paradigm was introduced. Here Rob was required to follow instructions on relaxation and he received reinforcement (e.g. time spent on his mini-bike) for practising relaxation at home. The next stage involved Rob taking rides in a car with the therapist while his parents drove ahead so that they were always within sight. Gradually the parents took timed-rides out of Rob's sight, first starting with half a minute, then one minute and so on. A fear hierarchy was established which required Rob first to adventure a few blocks away from home and to increase gradually the distance between himself and his home. Whenever he increased the distance between himself and his home, his father would reward him with money or day-trips. After two months of desensitisation, Rob was gradually returned to school and

each increase in school attendance was accompanied with contingency rewards and relaxation sessions. Over an 18-month period Rob spent more and more time in school, and less time with his parents. At the end of intervention he achieved full-time schooling and a two-year follow-up suggest that he had maintained school attendance, and he even went on holiday in Europe with his friends.

The authors state that the intervention required such a long programme because of the father's alcoholism and the mother's agoraphobia, but, unfortunately, they do not specify precisely how such family problems affected the behavioural programme. Further, the problems of the programme were compounded by the parents breaking a promise to Rob. They had dragged him to school and promised to stay with him but promptly left the school premises once he was in the classroom. The authors believe that this breakdown of trust had resulted in making the return to school even more difficult for Rob. However, the authors demonstrated how the child successfully overcame his problems by gradually minimising his anxiety through relaxation sessions which were paired with rewards to reinforce both separation from his parents and school attendance.

In summary, the mixed approach technique suggests that school attendance can be successfully achieved among pupils who find schooling a very anxious experience, especially school phobics, if systematic desensitisation is employed to help children to relax while at the same time rewards are administered to make schooling a more pleasant experience.

Behaviour Therapy with Other Forms of Conduct Disorders

Behaviour therapy has been successfully employed in other problem areas, such as tantrums and delinquency. Here the author will discuss two studies to demonstrate the use of behaviour contracting on conduct disorders. This discussion is particularly relevant to the present action research project because the literature suggests that persistent absenteeism is associated with conduct disorders,

such as drug abuse and anti-social behaviour (Farrington, 1980; Hersov, 1960a; May, 1975; Pritchard et al., 1987; Reid, 1984b; Tyerman, 1958).

Stuart (1974) discusses a case of a delinquent girl called Candy, aged 16 years old. She had been hospitalised for promiscuity, drug abuse and home truancy. She frequently argued and antagonised her parents who as a result did not want her returned home. However, through behaviour contracting the parents allowed Candy to return home under the conditions that she adhered to curfews. The contract allowed Candy the privilege of visiting the local commune where other young people stayed, but she had to return home within three hours. However, after several violations of the contract where Candy would spend whole nights at the commune, the therapist introduced a new contract which gave Candy more freedom, but it also explained that her friends at the commune would be prosecuted if she was found there after curfew. With this new contract the therapist was able to increase Candy's rate of compliance behaviour and gradually decrease her delinquent behaviours.

Herbert (1987) also used behavioural contracting to increase compliance behaviour in the case of a five-year-old boy called Ted. Ted displayed severe behaviour problems including temper-tantrums where he would resort to kicking and biting. The evenings were particularly problematic for his parents because he would refuse to go to bed without them. The therapist introduced a contract which instructed the parents to keep records of the child's behaviour and to also keep appointments with the therapist, while the therapist agreed to provide the parents with charts to record Ted's behaviour and to also explain the principles of behaviour approach to the family.

Observations of Ted's family life indicated that his mother was unwittingly reinforcing his tantrums. His disruptive demands for food and sweets were usually acceded to by the mother. Therefore, the mother was instructed to change her behaviour so that Ted's tantrums were ignored and

he would only be given a request (e.g. his bottle) after his temper had ceased. Gradually, Ted's parents learnt to reward him only for his compliant behaviour and any disruptive behaviour was ignored. Eventually Ted's tantrums decreased, and he became more relaxed and co-operative with his parents.

Discussion of the Behaviour Approaches

Although behaviour therapy appears to increase school attendance, it is, nevertheless, there are several limitations in the literature including: (i) the vast majority of the studies investigate the problems of school phobia, while at the same time ignoring the problems of other types of persistent absentees (e.g. truants); (ii) the outcome of intervention is often loosely defined, such as 'satisfactory school attendance'; (iii) there have been no research studies to compare the relative efficacy of the different learning models on school attendance, such as desensitisation versus operant conditioning; (iv) combined behaviour techniques may make the administration of therapy more complex because of having to deal with more than one learning paradigm and, therefore, this may make it more difficult to assess which particular facets of the programme are essential and which are superfluous; (v) the quality of the child's education is largely ignored with the therapist tending to aim towards returning the child to school where the curricular activities, and probably any associated problems, such as the lack of pastoral care, have remained fairly unchanged from the pre-intervention schooling period.

Nevertheless, despite these difficulties some conclusions have been tentatively achieved by these behaviour studies: (i) some children's anxiety behaviours may be reinforced by their parents or teachers who may pay attention to the undesired behaviour which the children may find rewarding; (ii) both operant and classical conditioning paradigms have been helpful in improving school attendance; (iii) authors stress the importance of incorporating parents and teachers into the programmes; (iv) the programmes include reward incentives to make the desired behaviour more

attractive, and usually aim towards increasing the children's confidence in their ability to cope with the demands of life.

The Similarities and Differences between Behavioural and Traditional Approaches

The behaviour therapist and the traditional psychotherapist are thought to have similar approaches (Blagg, 1987). For example, the use of discussion sessions by the traditional psychotherapist could be considered as analogous to the desensitisation technique because such sessions usually involve the traditional therapist 'gradually exposing' the children to their fears by first starting with discussions and then progressing to a gradual increase in school attendance. While the behaviour therapists in their use of support of the family and their attempts to understand the causes of the problems can be interpreted as a form of 'insight' for their clients and families which is very similar to the aims of the traditional therapist (e.g. Brooks, 1974; Herbert, 1987; Patterson, 1965).

A further overlap between the two schools of thought is evident when comparing their problems associated with the timing of their clients' confrontation of school. We see that some traditional and behaviour therapists tend to prefer a gradual return to school (Davidson, 1960; Eysenck & Rachman, 1965; Lazarus, 1960; Yule et al., 1980), whereas others from both schools of thought tend to favour a rapid return to school (Kennedy, 1965; Valles & Oddy, 1984).

Nevertheless, in spite of some similarities in their intervention approaches, there are great theoretical differences. For instance, we see many traditionalists focusing primarily on the unconscious emotional processes by relating present problems to the past history (Davidson, 1960; Estes et al., 1956; Lewis, 1980; Valles & Oddy, 1984). In contrast, there are many behaviourists who tend to focus on observable behaviour and also attempt to establish those factors within the environment which might be contributing

to the generation of the problem behaviours (Ayllon et al., 1974; Herbert, 1978, 1987; Lazarus, 1960; Yule et al., 1980), while tending to pay less attention to the underlying cognitive processes of their clients, although this is less true of those working within a cognitive-behavioural theoretical framework (Mischel, 1973). Also in contrast to the traditional psychotherapists, the behaviourists have been more rigorous in assessing and evaluating intervention programmes with greater emphasis towards clearly measurable indices of behaviour and longer time spent on follow-up periods. Furthermore, the behaviourists tend to offer help to a wider range of persistent absentees (e.g. school refusers and truants) than the traditional therapists who, in contrast, tend to focus their attentions primarily on the needs of school phobics.

Ethical Issues Related to the Techniques of Behaviour Therapy

Particularly over the past two decades we have seen a growing interest among teachers, educationalists and social workers in the use of behaviour therapy particularly with children who are considered to be difficult in school (ACE/NAME, 1981; Harrop, 1983; Merrett, 1986). However, despite the benefits of behaviour therapy in helping to alleviate behaviour problems, the behaviourists face ethical issues with respect to the right to change the behaviour of others. Innis (1981), for example, argues that there appears to be two main ethical issues. The first is considered with establishing and defining the rules of conduct within which the practitioner must operate, and the second is concerned with the use of scientific principles to change human behaviour.

When considering the first issue, Innis asserts that one must be aware of the aims of therapy. If a programme is imposed on a client by the courts or school then a conflict of interest may result in behaviour management being directed towards benefiting the convenience of the institute or its personnel rather than towards the needs or rehabilitation of the person whose behaviour is being

modified. Thus, in order to ensure that the client's interests are in the forefront, Innis suggests that the clients should be (i) informed about the nature of their treatment; (ii) given a choice of alternative approaches to allow them the chance to select the techniques which they believe are best suited to their needs (e.g. counselling or contracts); (iii) given the right to terminate the programme if they desire.

The main problem that one must consider in seeking the clients' consent is the issue of coercion. In some cases the individual may consent to therapy in order to avoid harsher punishments by the courts (e.g. fines or care orders). While others might be pressured by their families to accept therapy. However, Innis argues that more important is the problems which often arise in institutions where the patients' or prisoners' rights to opt out of therapy might be ignored, or individuals who wish to opt out may feel that their behaviour might be interpreted as unco-operative and as a result they may face harsh punishments, such as a delay in parole.

This brings us to the second issue of civil rights when using the principles of behaviour modification. Innis argues that the concern for all people's civil liberties has increased interest among the general public in the rights of institutionalised individuals. For one, as already mentioned, the clients should be allowed to give informed consent or the right to refuse therapy. However, other issues such as those related to the use of aversive stimuli (e.g. electric shock) or the deprivation of primary reinforcers (e.g. food) have raised understandable morale questions. The issue here is that if aversive stimuli is used then it must be used for the benefit of the client and not just as a means of punishment. For example, Herbert (1987) discusses a case where a disruptive child's request for food and toys were ignored by his parents until he calmed down. Once the child attempted to control his tantrums his requests were immediately fulfilled by his parents. Therefore, in the long term the child had learnt to

control his temper and also benefited from the fact that his changed behaviour created a more positive parent-child relationship. However, the literature does suggest that punishment per se tends to be ineffective in changing a person's behaviour. Merrett (1986), for example, cites several cases where children did not engage in desired behaviours, such as reading or writing, when the teacher berated them in order to increase such behaviours. However, when the teachers were instructed to engage in encouragement and praise, the children concerned did increase their attempt to co-operate with the teacher's wishes for them to engage in reading.

Some procedures which involve limiting the clients' access to reinforcing stimuli (e.g. food) are used to motivate their performance on a task activity (e.g. increase in writing) and, in turn, the clients' co-operation may lead to increased access to the reinforcer. This procedure of gaining access to the reinforcer being made dependent on task performance is considered as deprivation (Innis, 1981). However, in some instances the use of deprivation may violate the clients' civil rights. For example, limiting access to food for mentally retarded patients may be an infringement on their rights. Thus, alternatives should be sought, such as limiting access to the television, in order to prevent the clients' basic needs from being violated.

Another concern is defining the goals of a behaviour programme. To define such goals is easy enough, for instance in the case of behaviour contracts (Brooks, 1974, 1975), but the problems arise when the purpose of the therapy is in conflict with those of the clients. This issue becomes particularly important when the client is a ward of the state and, thus, raises questions on whether society has the right to impose its values on an individual and, if so, who defines those values? For example, several years ago homosexuality was an illegal activity and homosexuals were compelled to undergo treatment (Innis, 1981). However, such behaviour is no longer regarded in the same way and homosexuals are no longer required to attend psychiatric

clinics.

Another question is who should be allowed to use behaviour modification techniques to change human behaviours? Innis argues that the design of the programmes requires a great deal of training and experience. Therefore, professionals, such as psychologists, teachers and social workers, who may use behaviour therapy should become aware of the professional guidelines within their professions and establish their programmes based on such frameworks. Thus, psychologists, for example, may need to modify disruptive behaviour of children in order to increase time spent on academic work which may benefit the clients and other pupils. However, before the psychologists can implement the therapy they are usually expected to follow the guidelines of discussing the intervention with both the parents and pupils concerned (American Psychological Association, 1982). Innis further asserts that professionals will be better able to become more effective therapists if moves are made by university departments to offer applied programmes which allow students to obtain a strong theoretical background, along with exposure to the ethical and practical issues facing behaviour therapists.

However, Innis suggests that the fact that behaviour modification techniques are derived from scientific research can be seen as both an asset and a liability. For instance, since such procedures have their basis in science, they are carefully designed, and empirically tested in order to ensure that any benefits for clients are properly evaluated. On the other hand, behaviour therapy can be criticised because its scientific basis originates from studies on the use of other species, such as rats (Skinner, 1938). Therefore, one may argue that this limits the relevance of the learning principles in relation to cognate subjects, such as human beings. However, authors (e.g. Brown, 1979) have pointed out the fact that although the professional tool of behaviour modification is linked with studies of animals, nevertheless, the methods used with humans bear little resemblance to the original experiments. Also, now

there is a vast body of evidence on human learning which has both extended and refined behavioural theory (e.g. Bandura, 1977; Mischel, 1973).

Another criticism against therapy is the public's concern that behaviour modification may reduce human dignity and result in mass control of people's behaviour. Innis argues that in order to overcome this problem better public relations need to be established so that knowledge can be exchanged between the public and therapists. Such communications may serve to alleviate public anxieties and also help to keep the ethical issue in the forefront of institutions, such as hospitals, courts and schools. That way, society may be able to increase the benefits of behaviour therapy for the clients and it would also be able to keep the public informed about the success rates of such techniques.

The Relevance of the Psychological Model to the Present Action Research Project

The social model suggests that the author should attempt to study several aspects which may influence the prevalence of persistent absenteeism among her population (e.g. Brooks, 1974; Farrington, 1980; Fogelman & Richardson, 1974; Galloway, 1982; Hersov, 1960a; Tibbenham, 1977; Tyerman, 1958, 1968; West, 1982). Such aspects include:

1. Examine the home backgrounds of the population in terms family size, standard of hygiene and material conditions.
2. Study the degree of parental concern and interest in the children's educational progress, for example, whether parents are concerned about their children's truancy.
3. Assess the job occupation of the parents which may indicate the degree of material resources of the homes of the children in this study.
4. To assess the influence of behaviour therapy on the school attendance patterns of persistent absentees and to

also examine how such pupils perceive their special programmes.

Thus, in general the literature suggests that behaviour therapy may improve the behaviours of non-school attenders and may also lead to other gains for the pupils, such as improved self-confidence and extra help with any learning difficulties. Therefore, once ethical issues are kept in the forefront, the author believes that behavioural theory provides a promising means by which to understand persistent absenteeism.

Chapter 5

An Analysis of Secondary Schooling and the Effectiveness of School Factors in Combating Non-School Attendance

Introduction

In the previous chapter the author discussed psychological studies which suggest that school absenteeism and poor academic performance is associated with several factors, including poverty, working-class backgrounds, poor home conditions, and irresponsible parenting (Fogelman et al., 1980; Galloway, 1979, 1980, 1985a; Hersov, 1966a; Tibbenham, 1977; Tyerman, 1958, 1968). In contrast, however, sociological studies suggest that the problem of school disaffection may require a wider analysis than simply seeing persistent absentees as the victims of deprived social backgrounds. They present the antithesis to the psychological approach by drawing attention to the possibility that factors within the schools themselves may generate disaffection and may also adversely affect children's cognitive and social development. They also argue that the structural factors of inequality may need to be centrally understood and addressed rather than focusing on deprivation as a given, underlying factor. However, although the present author accepts that factors of unequal distribution of resources in Britain may be associated with truancy (there is a strong tendency for her truant sample to come from 'poor' homes), nevertheless, the author will mainly focus on the schools as the wider issues relating to society are beyond the scope of this thesis. Thus, during the course of this chapter the author will present arguments from various educationalists, philosophers and politicians who have vociferously debated the efficacy of institutionalised education and its adequacy in meeting the needs of pupils. The first point of discussion will be to consider pertinent ideas from various educational

philosophers, such as Jean-Jacques Rousseau and John Dewey, who have long challenged the ideology that children's needs are best catered for by professionals within an institutionalised educational setting. This discussion will then progress to the present day commentators - such as Reid (1986a), White (1980), Reynolds (1985), Rutter et al. (1979), and Hargreaves (1967) - who present their own premises on what, in their opinion, is the optimum educational environment for the positive development of pupils, especially for those from socially deprived backgrounds.

Therefore, this chapter is divided into four parts: (i) in Part I the author will discuss the position of the 'radical' perspective which argues for a fundamental change in the education system; (ii) Part II will present mainstream critiques which emphasize the importance of modifying the existing system in order to create a more conducive learning environment for disaffected pupils; (iii) in Part III attention will be drawn to various management approaches, such as special units and truancy centres which attempt to combat school absenteeism; (iv) and in Part IV there will be an analysis of the development of educational policies within the political forum, particularly in 1988, where we have seen the Government's most recent attempts to respond to the concerns of teachers and parents with the academic standards of the present day educational institutes.

Part I: The Radical Commentators of Schooling

Here the author will examine the pedagogical ideologies of various authorities whose approaches are regarded as 'radical' in outlook. Here the author will adopt term 'radicalism' as defined by the Concise Oxford Dictionary (Sykes, 1982) as '[an educational concept] affecting the foundation, going to the root'. The author will discuss two main groups of radical commentators, the early radicals and the contemporary radicals.

Early Radical Critiques

The early radical philosophers, such as Jean-Jacques Rousseau, believed that institutionalised education may not necessarily be the most conducive environment for pupil learning. Thus, this premise may also be particularly pertinent to disaffected pupils who appear not to be responding to educational establishments. Therefore, the author will discuss some of these early radical philosophers who have studied pupil progress using a child-centred approach with the intention of further appreciating this pedagogy because of its possible heuristic values for the management of school disaffection.

As early as the 18th century eminent philosophers such as Rousseau (1974, reprint) have challenged the premise that children's education is best catered for within institutionalised settings. Rousseau argues that children should be taught within the 'natural' environment where the world is their classroom. During a series of treatises he describes the teaching programme of a boy called Emile. In the treatises he advocates that Emile should be removed from the community in order that he may become a 'natural' man free of materialism, unhappiness and corruption. The teaching of Emile was conducted by a tutor and included learning from the natural consequences of behaviour, such as avoiding harmful elements. He also learnt his moral education through his own labour, for example, he learns that if he cultivates beans then they become his property and he will duly receive the benefits of his labour. Rousseau also asserts that Emile was not forced to learn, but instead the tutor was instructed to teach him about his environment (e.g. plants) whenever he (Emile) began to show interests. Rousseau argues that because Emile was taught various skills without force, consequently, he (Emile) developed an avid interests in learning and developed into adulthood free of conventional tastes.

Looking at the political implications of the "Emile" and its reception during Rousseau's time, that is mainly the 1760's, the indications suggest that his work was condemned

by his contemporaries, particularly the Church. Many of the critics saw the *Emile* as morally offensive principally because they believe that his ideas assert an anti-social bias and hold little regard for religious indoctrinations. However, today Rousseau's work with *Emile* has been credited for introducing the theory of child-centred education (Barrow, 1978; Sutherland, 1988). It is further argued that his approach to education asserts that childhood should be respected and allowed to develop naturally. Rousseau's concept of child-centred education constitutes several elements which asserts that: (i) the teacher must develop a curriculum which is governed by the child's needs and capabilities rather than by any preconceived plan; (ii) that the child should be taught new concepts only when he or she shows interest in the phenomenon; (iii) that knowledge should be acquired through direct experience; (iv) that the child's 'innocence' should be respected; (v) that there should be a one-to-one relationship between tutor and pupil, with the tutor's primary task of being a guardian while allowing the pupil to discover things for him or herself.

Another radical philosopher include an eminent 20th century educators, such as John Dewey. Dewey's (1915) educational research enabled him to propose a pedagogical formula which stresses the importance of discipline, moral education, and an active involvement with the community. His theory stresses that the school must interrelate with society as a whole, because he sees the school and the wider community as arenas for the development of the pupils through communication with other people. Dewey asserts that the teacher's main task is to convey those skills which are akin to the pupils predecessors whose efforts through the centuries have sustained and protected the groups. The children should be seen as beings whose youth gives them the adaptability and plasticity to potentially develop beyond the reach of their predecessors.

The fundamental purpose of the curriculum was to allow pupils to develop at their own rate as well as challenge them to think and experiment. Through group

interactions the pupils acquired the basic skills of reading, writing and arithmetic. Dewey believed that these skills would enable the child to investigate various concepts in his or her environment, such as textiles or the telephone. In this school older pupils, especially, were free to choose their own methods and materials for contriving their investigative techniques, but under the close guidance of the teacher. The pupils were expected to work together to solve problems, with the teacher ensuring that the group moved in harmony to ensure positive growth, such as 'good discipline'. The teacher was also seen as the one who plans and encourages the educational development of the group. The Deweyan approach asserts a 'child-centred' curriculum where the teacher is given heavier responsibility and a greater opportunity to guide the pupils not only on the art of democratic co-operation, but to also provide guidance towards intellectual and aesthetic experiences through the discovery of concepts which may involve the understanding of economics, astronomy or engineering to enable the children to search for solutions to the investigative problems. Dewey also hoped that his research would lead to the development of schools that would bring together children of many nationalities, languages and creeds in order to enrich the schooling experience and to also develop social unity.

Dewey's work is of particular relevance to this present study because he emphasises the importance of using the community as part of the classroom. This issue of community involvement has also been emphasised by mainstream commentators (e.g. Clare, 1986; Hargreaves Report, 1984; White, 1980) which argue that schools may become more effective if they capitalise on the local resources, such as industry, in order to provide a wider variety of experiences for pupils. They believe that such experiences may help to better prepare pupils for the world of work. Thus, the degree of community involvement within the present research population's curricula will be assessed in order to understand further the effects of such involvement on the research population's attitudes towards school.

One of the most famous 20th century radical commentator in education is Alexander Neill who advocated a progressive approach to schooling. Here the term 'progressive' is used as defined by the Concise Oxford Dictionary (Sykes, 1982) as '[an educational establishment which is] informal and without strict discipline, stressing individualism'. Neill (1968) established a 'progressive' boarding school called Summerhill which catered for pupils between five and 15 years of age who both lived and studied at the school. The pupils came mainly from middle to upper class backgrounds presumably because the fees would be too expensive for parents who are on much lower incomes. Neill's aim was to make the school fit the child rather than making the child fit the school. To achieve this ideology he stressed the importance of pupils being encouraged 'freely' to develop their personalities and self confidence rather than simply focus on learning per se. The school had no formal examinations as such, but the staff would examine their pupils from time to time just for fun. For example, they would be asked to make up a creative story about Shakespeare. Neill claims that the school has no truants, and pupils very rarely fight or quarrel. Punishment of the children was discouraged, instead he claims that pupils were accepted by means of 'love'. The main ethos of Summerhill was to: (i) encourage children to be free of fears and free from character-moulding by parents, teachers and society so that they can develop their natural personalities; (ii) all the children and adults have equal rights; (iii) show acceptance, approval and love to the pupils; (iv) children are encouraged to fantasize in order to develop their confidence in dealing with taboo subjects, such as the male and female sexual organs; (v) children's destructiveness is accepted as part of their natural tendency for holding little value for owning things, thus, the school was furnished mainly with old car seats and old bus seats to accommodate for their destructive behaviour; (vi) the pupils were given greater responsibility, for example, training seven-year-olds to use tools (e.g. an axe); (vii) the children were completely free to do what they want as long as they do not trespass on the freedom of others; (viii)

rewards were discouraged because they are seen as pressuring children into interest, so instead children were allowed to participate in activities of their own interests; (ix) children were encouraged to talk about sex, abortion and promiscuity, and they were also encouraged to practice nudity in order to help them develop free of inhibitions.

Neill emphasises the role of progressive teaching (i.e. giving pupils a greater degree of freedom) that he believes provides a learning environment which is free of cultural constraints. The effects of progressive teaching on pupil outcomes (e.g. reading skills) has been compared with traditional teaching (i.e. more autocratic form of teaching which involves regular testing) by recent commentators, such as Bennett (1976). Bennett found that traditional teaching produced more effective pupil outcomes than progressive teaching, especially in terms of reading and mathematical skills. This issue of teaching style is particularly relevant to this present study because the data will include comparisons between different teaching styles (e.g. 'democratic' and 'autocratic' teaching approaches) and how they may affect the research population's behaviour, especially school attendance rates.

Neill's pedagogy is comparable with Rousseau's theory on education because both of them express educational ideologies within the radical/progressive approach. For example, both philosophers disliked the inhibitions of the 'civilised' world, they believe that children should be allowed to learn from direct experience and that children are born innately good. However, they differ on several points, for example, Neill encourages pupils to interact with other people, whereas Rousseau prohibited Emile from any contact with other people during his early stages of development. Neill practised his pedagogy within the relative confinements of a school building, whereas Rousseau brought up Emile within the natural surroundings of woodland. However, the ideologies of Rousseau and Neill are just one perspective in the radical/progressive end of educational thinking. Other such thinkers include the more

mainstream commentators such as the 'Marxist' critiques which focus on the effects of society on schooling (e.g. Bowles & Gintis, 1976) and the liberal educational thinkers who believe that institutionalised schooling has a detrimental effect on pupil learning.

Contemporary Critiques

Here two types of contemporary commentators will be discussed: they include the Marxist commentators Bowles and Gintis (1976) who argue that the education system generates inequality among the social classes; and the liberals, such as Illich (1973), Holt (1973) and Freire (1972), who believe that institutionalised schooling has a detrimental effect on pupil development and are, therefore, referred to as the deschoolers.

1. Marxist Sociologists

The work by these commentators seem to suggest that the education system may operate against certain groups in society, namely the working classes, while working in favour of others, such as the middle class (Willis, 1977). Thus, this school of thought is particularly relevant to persistent absentees who coming from relatively poor working class backgrounds (Farrington, 1980; Fogelman & Richardson, 1974; Fogelman et al., 1980; Galloway, 1979, 1980, 1985a; Reid, 1986a; Tibbenham, 1977; Tyerman, 1958, 1968) may be, according to the Marxists commentators, more vulnerable to receiving inadequate recourses in terms of education. Very often such children are forced to attend educational establishments which reject their culture and values (Willis, 1977). Therefore, the author will attempt to explore some of the processes by which the school system may generate conflicts of interests between working class pupils (especially non-school attenders) and their teachers through differences in cultural values.

By using the Marxian perspective, that is 'conflict theory', as an analytical tool, sociologists argue that the structure and order in society is founded on the

domination of some groups and the suppression of others. Thus, the conflict analysts hold that the dominant groups will attempt to retain their interests by exercising power and control. These analysts further argue that for a group to preserve its interests and power it must be able to manage any conflict and competition from other groups via two levels (Meighan, 1981). First, the individuals within the group must shape, direct and clearly define the objectives and behaviours of those of those who constitute the group, that is the management of intra-group conflict. Second, the group must be able to control successfully opposition from other groups and individuals, that is the management of inter-group conflict. This premise allows us to generate theories of social interactions at both the micro- and macro-analytical levels. For example, noting the cultural differences between, say, a group of pupils from a working class background and that of a 'middle class' schooling system, one can then proceed to formulate ways in which these differences are resolved or controlled, how order is achieved and how the groups interpret or react to them. Meighan argues that the schooling system may resolve this situation by exercising power over their pupils. That way teachers may be able to promote their own interests and values, while inhibiting those of their pupils by attempting to shape pupil behaviour through force (e.g. sanctions, such as detentions and legal prosecutions) or rewards (e.g. praise).

Bowles and Gintis (1976) advocate that production is partly a social process whereby employers seek to promote a social climate which is conducive to their needs. This social climate is engineered through the establishment of organizations (e.g. schools) that will channel these aims into production. To analyse their argument that the school system is organised to perpetuate the economic needs of society, Bowles and Gintis studied several American schools. Their methodology included the evaluation of pupil personality traits, the school criteria for grading, and the teachers' attitudes towards

various personality characteristics. From this data they isolated several features of schooling in modern capitalist societies which, they claim, functions as a control mechanism to prepare pupils for their roles in the world of work. Such school features include:

- (i) They found a relationship between certain personality traits and school success, as measured by the ability to achieve high marks, which the school used as reinforcement device. When comparing pupils of similar intelligence, Bowles and Gintis found a high correlation between the pupils' ability to achieve high marks and their possession of personality traits, such as submission to authority, passivity, conformity and perseverance. By contrast, they found a negative correlation between success and traits of creativity, aggression and independence. This evidence may be further supported by British work, for example, the Swann Report (1985) which suggests that one of the factors which may contribute to the failure of Afro-Caribbean children in school is the fact that they tend to oppose 'aggressively' school situations that may attempt to alienate them, for example, racist remarks from teachers. Similarly, Wright (1987) found that Afro-Caribbean pupils would use their Creole language in school which some teachers found offensive, probably because such a language may create a sense of independence and identity among the black pupils which the teachers, in turn, may view as threatening to their authority. Thus, Bowles and Gintis argued that the way in which schools reward certain personality traits, such as passivity and obedience, may be a crucial element for capitalists to perpetuate control over the labour forces.
- (ii) The hierarchical structure of the school is seen by Bowles and Gintis as a main dimension where pupils' personalities are nurtured through learnt

subordination to teachers so as to make them compatible with the social structure of the workplace. This premise is supported further by Meighan (1981) who suggests that in British primary schools the power of the teachers may be used to shape pupils' identities and create a stratification system within the classroom. Thus, the teacher through interactive processes may facilitate the careers of some pupils by rewarding obedience; or hold back others, who may for example, exude boisterous personalities, by the use of sanctions. Bowles and Gintis claim that schools uses this hierarchical structure as a controlling agent whereby capitalist society can diffuse and depoliticize workers who may otherwise question their lower occupational status which, in turn, may lead to a cataclysmic explosion between the various classes.

- (iii) Bowles and Gintis suggest that social backgrounds may have a greater effect on occupational status than educational ability. They assert that educational success is less likely to be determined by superior cognitive ability and more likely to be determined and more likely to be determined by personality traits, such as conformity to school norms, which they believe are acquired from their home backgrounds. Therefore, the education system, through streaming and grading, may be rewarding behavioural characteristics already possessed by pupils from middle class backgrounds. This argument is further supported by Wright (1987) who found that Afro-Caribbean children are more likely to be placed in lower educational bands than their white peers even though both groups are studying the same subjects at the same level of comprehension. This may also suggest that the school streaming system is probably more favourable to those pupils whose behaviours reflect the white middle-class values of the teachers.

Finally, Bowles and Gintis compared their on pupils personality traits with those traits which appear to be valued by managers in industry. Their analysis suggested that traits rated negatively by schools, such as creativity, aggression and independence, were also very unpopular among the managers; while the converse was true for traits preferred by the schools, such as conformity and perseverance. Bowles and Gintis concluded that their work suggests that the personality traits reinforced in schools seem to be similar to those considered to be indicative of good job performance in a capitalist society. However, despite the value of this work by Bowles and Gintis, one must bear in mind that the teacher-pupil and manager-worker relationships may be more complicated than suggested by their analytical tools. For example: (i) they studied a relatively limited lists of personality traits without making a detailed analysis of teacher personality variables and how they may influence teacher ratings; (ii) they did not assess the rewarding of pupils who may possess both 'negative' and 'positive' behaviours; (iii) they analysed isolated traits without considering how such traits may influence and interact with each other; (iv) it is quite possible that teachers' and managers' preference for certain types of behaviours, such as obedience and conformity, may be partly influenced by the fact that such professionals tend to work under very stressful conditions (Kyriacou & Pratt, 1985; Kyriacou & Sutcliffe, 1978) which may limit their ability to cope with more 'demanding' behaviours, such as boisterousness and aggression.

Willis's (1977) work on the relationship between social values and educational attainment, has in some ways filled several gaps in the work of Bowles and Gintis by conducting a detailed analysis on how the criteria of school hierarchical systems (or meritocratic stratifications) operate. Willis studied several groups of 14 year old non-academic (failures) working-class boys who attended secondary schools. He collected his material through classroom observation, and cassette-taped recorded

interviews with the boys, their parents, teachers and careers officers. He observed the population for their two final years at school, and then followed them into work where he made observations while actually working alongside them and also interviewed their foremen and managers.

Willis argues that his observations suggest that these 'failed' working-class boys do not just passively succumb to manual labour by simply allowing institutional factors to shape their behaviour. He asserts that not only do schools reject the boys through oppressive forces (e.g. teacher sarcasm), sanctions and low streaming status, but that the boys themselves also make a voluntary choice to reject the schools and accept manual labour as their occupational destiny, and that the origins of this decision-making are to be found outside the school system in the cultural experiences of their working-class origins.

Willis refers to this rejection of school by the working-class boys as a counter-school culture. This counter-school culture consists of several dimensions including: (i) the rejection of conformist behaviour by an entrenched opposition to behaviour; (ii) the establishment of informal groups which is the basic unit of their counter-culture and forms the essential elements where the boys form a resistance to authority; (iii) the boys will frequently 'doss' in order to resist what they perceive to be the school system's main aim, that is to make them work; (iv) 'having a laugh' which Willis argues serves to allow the boys to overcome fear, boredom and hardship; (v) seeking excitement through anti-social behaviour, such as violent fights; (vi) sexism, the boys tend to see women as inferior to themselves, and perceive women's main role as that of sex objects; (vii) racism, the boys tend to exhibit violent and aggressive attitudes towards Asian and Afro-Caribbean pupils. However, one could argue that at least some of these dimensions are not necessarily peculiar to the working-classes or the counter-school culture. For example, sexist and racist attitudes are also found among the middle classes (Swann Report, 1985; Wright, 1987). Therefore, at

least some of the dimensions of this counter-school culture may not necessarily reflect working-class pupils' rejection, but rather the wider influences of British society as a whole.

Nevertheless, Willis argues that this counter-school culture may reflect the life experiences of the working-class community. He asserts that this premise is supported by the profound similarities between the counter-school culture and the 'shopfloor' culture of the manual workers. Such similarities include (i) male chauvinism as exhibited by pin-up pictures of naked women pasted all over workers' oily machines; (ii) a massive attempt by the workers to gain some semblance of control over their bosses through the limitation of work output which is similar to the boys' school activity of 'dossing'; (iii) the establishment of the informal group on the shopfloor where strategies of 'resistance' to authority are generated through various actions, such as fiddling; (iv) the shopfloor workers frequently make jokes about authoritative figures, such as the foreman, to help them cope with their monotonous and harsh working conditions, again Willis interpret this behaviour as a reflection of the counter-school culture. Willis further argues that it is this wider 'shopfloor' culture which gives the working-class counter-school culture its style and force of opposition in order to prepare the boys for their careers in working-class jobs. Willis suggest that this penetration of the working-class culture into the school lives of the boys creates a medium whereby working-class pupils can reject an educational life which they know will not enable them to aspire above the harsh, exploitative work of their fathers. Therefore, the counter-school culture may simply reflect the boys realistic assessment of the limited benefits of schooling.

Willis concludes that the working-class children receive working-class jobs as a consequence of the complex interplay between: (i) the dominant ideologies of the capitalist movement which attempt to inculcate into the

pupils behaviours, such as conformity, that are conducive for keeping control over the labour forces; (ii) the pupils' attempt to gain some autonomy through their rejection of education and active engagement in a school counter-culture which they create from their working-class conditions.

Bowles and Gintis (1976), and Willis (1977) argue that working-class children receive inadequate resources which puts them at an educational disadvantage. Therefore, such children are more likely to embark on poor job opportunities such as manual labour. Thus, the argument of these commentators may be of particular relevance to this present study because the literature suggests that persistent school absenteeism is most prevalent among the working-class communities (Fogelman & Richardson, 1974; Fogelman et al., 1980; May, 1975). Therefore, the work of these commentators (e.g. Willis, 1977) highlight further the need for this present study to assess the resources available in the homes of truant pupils, such as books, in order to understand the possible consequences of poverty on pupil school attendance rates.

However, Murphy (1981) suggests other interpretations to the Marxist thesis. He argues that the disparity in the educational resources allocated to the social classes may not be an indicator of class inequality, but rather that such class differences may suggest that the social classes differ in their educational aspirations. He asserts that the Marxist authorities frequently equate educational disparity with educational inequality without considering the class differences in motivation, cognitive development and adaptability. Murphy argues that the literature must first present evidence to suggest that the working classes actually want what they are supposedly denied before educational reforms can be developed. He concludes that if future empirical work suggests that the working classes have less interest in educational achievement than the middle classes, then the 'class inequality' thesis may well be dented. However, Murphy ignores the fact that any despondent attitudes among the working classes may not be due to some

'innate' negative reaction to education, but rather to what they see as an irrelevant curriculum. Other authorities such as White (1980) and Clare (1986) have suggested that when the curriculum attempts to reflect the needs and interests of working class pupils then such pupils tend to respond more positively. Therefore, this suggests that we may need to make a closer inspection of the nature of the curriculum in order to gain a wider understanding of the working class peoples' aspiration for education.

Generally, the empirical studies suggest that working-class pupils experience schooling environments that attempt to shape their behaviour for the needs and interests of the economic sector. It is further suggested that as a result of the pupils' conscious realization that school may be of little benefit to them, they then voluntarily create their own counter-school culture to resist the influences of the educational authorities. However, such empirical work must be interpreted within its limitations, especially because these studies tend to use relatively simple analytical tools to assess what might be very complicated interactions. For example, some of the teachers' negative attitudes towards certain types of behaviours, such as pupil independence or aggression, can also be interpreted as a reflection of teacher-stress or lack of pupil aspiration which suggest that the school-pupil relationship may involve other dimensions besides the 'social-class conflict' thesis.

2. Libertarian Commentators

Many libertarian commentators argue that the meritocratic stratification of schools adversely affect pupils' academic development, with many pupils recognising that they have been 'written off' as non-examination students they then become frustrated and consequently reject the school system. Thus, these liberal commentators developed the idea of deschooling as an alternative to the established school system.

The deschooling theory analysed several aspects of the secondary schools and found what they believe are flaws

within the educational structure. They suggest that some of these educational inadequacies include:

(i) The Content and Structure of the Curriculum

The deschooling theorists believe that schools should not be preparing children for today's society but should be instead preparing them with the necessary knowledge to help them make and live in a better society (Holt, 1973). The deschoolers further argue that to help pupils prepare for the future, schools should not prepare a syllabus before the students are met, but should instead conduct learning without a pre-written syllabus.

Reimer (1971) and Illich (1973) object to the school curriculum because they believe that its function as a custodial carer allows it to shape and restrict pupils' behaviour. Furthermore, they claim that this function is expensive and wasteful in the sense that resources are often disastrously used to 'indoctrinate' and educate pupils to become unskilled workers. Reimer and Illich claim that the 'hidden' curriculum (to be discussed in detail later) is a type of propaganda technique whereby pupils learn, through streaming and rewards, their social and educational status. They claim that this 'hidden' curriculum functions as a sorter: whereby some pupils are merited on behaviours, such as competitiveness, which are usually aided by the advantageous home backgrounds of having books and literate parents: whereas others with poor home conditions may find competition more difficult because of lack of resources and, thus, find themselves at the bottom of the merit system. Reimer and Illich claim that this merit system is simply a 'smoke screen' for the perpetuation of inequality.

Reimer and Illich, therefore, propose an alternative strategy to schooling which they

believe is cheaper and non-competitive. They suggest that education should be replaced by an individual approach, so that a pupil may be free to go practically anywhere, from a seminar on nuclear physics to the local fish market. They also suggest that these alternatives should avoid dominating the pupils and that learning should be an integral part of other activities, such as car mechanics.

Goodman (1971) argues that the school system's claim of preparing opportunities for the underprivileged is a misconception. He argues that schools have instead simply achieved teaching pupils behaviours which concur with the national norm, rather than fostering a curriculum which teaches about the qualities of life, such as the love of aesthetics (through conversation schemes) and the love of truth (through student political movements) for their own sakes. He further argues that the educational system does not teach pupils how to be initiative, with the consequence that they lose the enthusiasm for academic work. Furthermore, when something does interest them or provoke their thoughts, the physical circumstances of the restricted school buildings will usually stand in their way of developing these points of interests. Goodman suggests that the constraints of institutions take pupils away from the 'real world' and effectively dehumanise them. He postulates that to overcome these problems pupils should be allowed to learn from everyday activities within their natural environment - an argument which closely concurs with early philosophers like Rousseau. Goodman also follows Dewey and Rousseau in proposing that pupils should be allowed to develop their investigations based on their interests in the subject. He advocates that pupils will perpetuate learning skills and further develop activities for the future through their freedom to explore and appreciate their environment without

any institutional constraints.

Although Reimer, Illich and Goodman emphasize the importance of preparing pupils for the future through individual freedom to explore the wider environment which may have some important implications for investigative learning, their theses, nevertheless, presents some limitations. Firstly, their deschooling ideology argues for a free non-competitive environment. However, they do not clearly define the parameters of non-competitiveness, for example, does it mean a ban on all races, games of tennis and attempts to produce the best homework? Secondly, they suggest that the subject content of the curriculum seriously restricts pupil learning, and therefore, learning can only occur outside the school. However, this can be a dangerous over generalisation because their thesis is tantamount to saying English literature cannot be learnt in school, that would constitute an argument against schooling, but it would not necessarily be true.

However, Barrow (1978) suggest that Reimer's and Illich's claims that it would be cheaper to fund their equitable alternatives than maintaining expensive hierarchical institutions, may have some foundation. He suggest that their proposal is feasible as suggested by the voucher system which allows parents to choose schools for their children with a voucher which covers the cost of the courses. Consequently, this system caused schools to become eager to establish courses that would attract parents, particularly those from poor backgrounds as they were given special compensatory vouchers (i.e. vouchers that were more valuable than those given to the more privileged families).

(ii) Pedagogical Principles and the Learner's Role

The deschoolers argue that the pupils should be explorers rather than trainees. Reimer and Illich state that the curriculum should provide opportunities to investigate the local community. Through widening the parameters of the classroom pupils will be able investigate more creative activities, such as urban renewal and develop self-educational techniques. Goodman argues that this type of approach would create initiative and motivation in the pupils to learn. He further states that pupils lack motivation in schools precisely because the system preconceives what it believes the pupil ought to know and then try to motivate them without first taking their (pupils) interest into consideration.

Holt (1973) suggests that instead of being concerned about basic learning, the educator should consider the pre-emptive needs of the pupils. That way learning can be arranged in accordance with the pupils' needs at that particular time and once that need is satisfied, then another will take its place. The deschoolers argue that pupils' needs are analogous to those of a man who, for example, may need food and water, but once this need is satisfied then the need for shelter may become dominant and so on. They argue that if this kind of logic is applied to pedagogical settings then there will be no need to manufacture motivation through marks, grades and censures because the pupils own needs and interests will provide the necessary reinforcements. Holt and Goodman also argue that the learners' role is not simply to reproduce what is taught by the teacher, but instead to produce their own theses from resources available within their own communities which may sometimes generate new insights into their chosen topics.

(iii) The Teacher's Role

The deschoolers argue that the teacher's role should be that of a consultant and facilitator, since they are seen as providing the apparatus and necessary instructions to aid pupils in their investigations (Illich, 1973).

Holt (1973) suggests that teachers should be allowed to exercise some authority because of the fact that they tend to have more experience than their pupils. However, he opposes the use of any power to punish or threaten pupils so that forced learning can take place. Such authority is seen as counter-productive because it may alienate many pupils and will not provide adequate feedback.

Lister (1974) further suggests that the professional training of teachers can be improved if we legally prevent people from going straight from school to teaching college and straight back into school. He argues that this process creates a body of 'school monks and nuns' who attempt to educate students while they themselves have very little experience of working life outside the educational establishment. To compensate for this lack of teacher experience, Lister suggest that other adults with a variety of experiences should be used as resources of information and ideas.

(iv) Appropriate Apparatus for Learning

For an investigative based approach to learning, the deschoolers stress the importance of first-hand experience, and access to televisions, farms, community projects, computers and books (Illich, 1973; Holt, 1973). These resources should not be controlled by the teachers, but should instead operate as centres similar to public libraries, rather than reserved in the teacher's cupboard.

(v) The Sites for Investigative Learning

The deschoolers argue that investigative instructions should take place everywhere including museums, farms, streets, concert halls, factories, homes and resource centres. Holt comments that schools should also be included as learning centres because some people may learn well in such institutionalised environments. Reimer and Illich suggest that networks consisting of records and filing systems should be established. Pupils could then have access to information on activities and courses via computers.

Illich further argues that by diversifying the learning media, pupils are less likely to become despondent because they will be allowed to develop creative interests. He sees institutionalised schooling as creating disillusionment among pupils because they are prevented from developing and, instead, are coerced into an pedagogical environment which attempts to prepare them for harsh manual labour. Illich believes that such a limited system simply turns pupils away from learning.

(vi) Assessment Procedure

Deschoolers believe that the learners are the most appropriate persons to assess themselves, or somebody who is familiar with the learners, rather than an external examiner. Thus, deschoolers believe that such an assessment procedure would be a fairer reflection of the pupils' capabilities than the traditional system which is seen as alien to education because it sustains a structure which serves the minority at the expense of the majority (Freire, 1972).

Freire (1972) likens education to a banking system where students are the depositories and the teacher

the depositor. The teacher is seen as 'making deposits' which the students receive, memorize and repeat. With this concept Freire argues that the teacher is presented as the opposite to his or her students, with the students being considered as ignorant and the teacher considered the medium of knowledge. He asserts that this oppressive projection of education can alienate students and suppress their investigative development.

The deschoolers assessment procedures can be contrasted with the traditional examination system: (a) the deschoolers stress self-assessment rather than tests by examination; (b) they stress diagnostic assessment, on which the educational needs of the learner can be met, rather than a selective procedure which assesses some pupils as failures; (c) the deschoolers stress a criterion-referencing which involves the learner testing themselves against standard criteria, for example, the first-aid proficiency test, rather than a norm-reference which compares the performance of one candidate against the performance of others from which only a few are assessed as successful; (d) they also stress that a wide range of skills should be included in assessment, such as conversational skills and an ability to organise, and not just an end product based on written-exams.

(vii) The Aims, Objectives and Outcomes of Education

The deschoolers stress the importance of learners being able to explore, investigate and develop their own initiatives. Illich (1973) argues that education should have three main aims: (a) to provide the necessary resources for all those who want to learn at any stage of their lives; (b) to allow a free exchange of knowledge between all those who want to share their knowledge and those who want to learn; (c) to allow the freedom of

speech so that everybody has the opportunity to challenge publicly any issues on education.

Postman and Weingartner (1971) believe that education should aim to develop a person who will possess several skills including an investigative mind from which the individual can deduce, discover and hypothesize, and to have a flexible, creative and tolerant personality which may help the individual to generate a bolder and more potent type of intelligence. They argue that this type of individual would be better able to face the uncertainties of life and formulate more heuristic concepts to meet the challenges of the environment.

(viii) The Use of Language

The deschoolers believe that the style of language used in education can affect the cognitive development of the learners. Postman and Weingartner, for example, distinguish between two main types of languages, one which they call noun-metaphor dominated language and the other is called process-metaphor dominated. The former refers to ideas of restricted definitions where the subjects are taught as collections of information and assertive thinking. Whereas the latter tolerates change which involves the learner asking questions, defining, observing, classifying, evaluating and theorising, in order to facilitate explorative thinking. Postman and Weingartner believe that the learning approach which uses the process metaphors would remove the learners from the peripheral of their universe (which they believe is a consequence of restricted oppressive learning) and return them to the centre where through exploration they become the meaning-makers.

Generally, the early radical philosophers (e.g. Rousseau, 1974, reprint) and the contemporaries (e.g. Bowles & Gintis, 1976; Holt, 1973; Illich, 1973; Willis, 1977),

advocate an innovative educational system which attempts to create equal opportunities for all citizens and to also make the learners and their needs the centre of their pedagogical principles as opposed to the institutionalised system which they believe simply aims to educate for the convenience of wealthy society. The radicals suggest that the learner can only enjoy education if they are placed in an environment which allows them the freedom to explore and investigate subjects of interest, allows them to develop at their own individual pace, and encourages the use of diagnostic procedures to assess pupils needs. It should also extend the classroom to include the whole community and integrate subjects so that the learners can develop a more complete understanding of their projects and, therefore, become meaning-makers within their environment.

The Summary of some of the Relevant issues from the Literature to the Present Action Research Project

1. The author will assess the willingness of the schools to accommodate for their pupils needs, interests and personalities (i.e. the child-centred approach).
2. Evaluate pupils opinion on discipline and also examine the extent to which pupils perceive their school rules as an inhibitor of their adjustment to school life.
3. Examine the availability of resources to meet the needs of pupils with learning difficulties.
4. Assess the method of discovery learning and examine the extent to which schools allow pupils to develop investigative techniques to analyse phenomena within the 'natural' environment.
5. Assess the degree to which teachers act either as guiders to encourage pupils to discover things for themselves or as didactic tutors where pupils may play a more passive role as learners.
6. How are pupils' work assessed and to what extent is this

assessment used for diagnostic reasons?

So far this chapter has focused mainly on the radical commentators who have long challenged the edifice of institutionalised schooling. They strongly argue for greater freedom for pupils, closer contacts with the child's environment, and a greater redistribution of material resources. Interestingly, many of the proposals by these radical commentators are comparable with those of mainstream critiques which similarly argue for closer community relationships and the need to use a greater amount of resources to cater for the educational needs of working-class pupils. However, unlike the radical commentators, the mainstream critiques challenge the education system from within rather than outside of the institution. Thus, we shall now consider the arguments of the mainstream critiques and their consequences on school policies.

Part II: Mainstream Critiques

The mainstream critiques (e.g. Hargreaves, 1967; Reynolds, Jones, St. Leger, & Murgatroyd, 1980; Reynolds & Murgatroyd, 1977; Rutter et al., 1979) are referred to as such because they accept that the existing school model is too solid an institution and, therefore, argue that it would be unrealistic to attempt to demolish the present system. Instead, such authors argue for a pedagogical approach which attempts to modify the system for the purpose of ensuring that disaffected pupils and underachievers receive an education that attempts to respond to their needs and aspirations (Hargreaves Report, 1984; Mortimore et al., 1988; Reid, 1985, 1986a, 1986b, 1987; Reynolds, 1985; Reynolds et al., 1980; Rutter et al., 1979).

Historically, the research on the association between school variables and pupil disaffection is fairly recent. Earlier research in the 1950's and 1960's, for instance, was mainly contrived by psychologists who focused on demographic paradigms that correlated truancy with outside-school

factors, such as poverty, inadequate parental management and delinquency (Farrington, 1980; Galloway, 1979, 1982, 1985a; Plowden Report, 1967; Reid, 1982a, 1982b, 1985; Tibbenham, 1977; Tyerman, 1958, 1968). This early neglect of the possible relationship between school factors and truancy came about for a variety of reasons. For one, the educational training of many psychologists, such as Tyerman, meant that they tended to seek explanations of individual problems in terms of personal and family pathologies. Tyerman (1968), for example, stressed that a poor home condition was an important factor in the aetiology of school absenteeism, but when his truancy cases gave school-based reasons for their non-school attendance, he considered such reasons as mere excuses and chose to ignore them. Some sociologists, such as Reynolds and Murgatroyd (1977), suggest that the neglect of school factors may be also the result of many LEAs reluctance to permit researchers to assess school variables in relation to non-school attendance. Reynolds (1985) has further suggested that the past neglect of school variables within pedagogical research may have been influenced by several 'political' issues:

- (a) Early research concentrated on school structure variables (e.g. age of the school building). Because this data suggested no correlations between the physical structure of the school and pupil disaffection, this led some authorities to conclude that the school had very little capacity to influence its pupils progress (e.g. Plowden Report, 1967).
- (b) There is a high prevalence of ex-teachers within the educational research sector (e.g. Tyerman) who may have preferred to present the problems of inadequate homes as a convenient model to explain truancy.
- (c) There has been a feeling of intellectual insecurity among early British educational researchers which was compounded by the possibility of practical problems arising from the reluctance of LEAs to allow their schools to be studied in relation to disaffection.

(d) Another reason which may have generated the belief that the school is not a determinant factor of disaffection includes the fact that the social engineering policies of the past two decades, which invested a vast amount of money into the welfare and educational systems, have nevertheless 'failed' to increase the turnover of educational talent and the unequal distribution of resources between the various social and racial groups (Finn, 1987; Reynolds, 1985).

However, Reynolds argues that the turning point came about in the late 1960's when most LEAs had to reorganise their schools along the lines of comprehensive approaches. At the same time the Newsom and Plowden Reports drew many educationalists' attentions to the social and educational problems faced by schools, especially those in the inner city areas. These problems were compounded by the news that the school leaving age was to be raised from 15 to 16 years which left many teachers feeling alarmed and overwhelmed (Hargreaves, 1967). This rather perplexed situation induced an interest among the educational practitioners who believed that the exploration of the basic social processes of the school may reveal some heuristic implications for the future benefits of both teachers and pupils (Hargreaves, 1967). Therefore, it is generally believed among the authorities that the work of the late 1960's may have provided the impetus for the expansion in school effectiveness studies (Reynolds, 1985; White, 1980). One such study includes work by Hargreaves (1967) which shifted the emphasis of research from the analysis of outside-school factors to a close investigation of how the schools themselves may influence their pupils' educational and social developments.

Hargreaves focused his research on one secondary modern school for boys which was situated in problem area. For one year he observed fourth year boys aged between 14 and 15 years. Hargreaves chose this age group because he believed that it represented a 'crystallization' of the values inculcated by the school and the end product of the

education process. The data were collected via cassette tape recordings of interviews, questionnaires and classroom observations. His data revealed that the streaming system affected the teacher-pupil relationship which appeared to be at the detriment of the lower streamed pupils. For example, the brighter boys were conscious of their academic 'superiority' which appeared to be at least partly enhanced by staff members' pressure and expectations. For instance, the top stream boys were not allowed to participate in non-academic activities, such as milk duties, especially if such duties clashed with their lessons. These duties would usually be assigned to someone from a lower form.

Hargreaves studied the attitudes of the boys as a means of measuring their commitment to the school. He assessed several dimensions including willingness to attend school, attitudes towards work, attitudes towards teachers and patterns of behaviour in school. With regards to school attendance rates, Hargreaves found a clear gradient from the top streams boys to those in the lower streams. The boys in the top stream had the highest average attendance rate (95.47 per cent), whereas those in the lowest stream only attained an average attendance rate of 83.30 per cent. Hargreaves also found a similar association between attendance, delinquency and achievement, with the better attenders tending to show higher achievement as assessed by the number of CSE subjects being studied; whereas the poorer attenders tended to show higher delinquent behaviour (as assessed by the number of court appearances for stealing) and higher underachievement rates. The boys in the top stream were also more likely to enjoy school, stay on longer in school and take up further education than the lower stream boys. Through discussions with teachers and pupils, Hargreaves also found that the teachers had higher regards for the top streams, especially in terms of their behaviour and appearance, and they would also select the vast majority of the prefects from the top streams; the lower stream boys despised the top streams who they perceived as effeminate, soft and teacher's favourites; and the top stream boys condemned the lower streams as unintelligent, lazy and

dirty.

Hargreaves concluded that the streaming system creates an elitist view of education, where only a small group of children (mainly the top streams) are educated and rewarded by their teachers, whereas the lower streams were largely perceived by both pupils and staff as more unruly, less intelligent and having poorer appearance. He suggests that if all children are to be educated then teachers may have to reform their relationships with pupils in order to ensure that all children receive a satisfying relationship with staff members regardless of academic ability. However, there are some gaps in this work, for instance, Hargreaves does not assess the possible home influences on pupils' attitudes towards the teachers and towards academic work. He assumes that through teachers changing their behaviour the pupils, especially the underachievers, will respond more positively towards school; but this assumption ignores the fact that there is a tendency for pupils in the lower streams to have conduct disorders which may also influence their relationships with teachers. Thus, the present author believes that this type of research may need to closely analyse the reciprocal relationship between pupils and teachers in order to gain a wider perspective of the complex social processes of the school environment.

Hargreaves's work in the 1960s assumed that the school system had its own affect on pupil behaviour which is independent of outside influences, such as parental attitudes, whereas the work of the 1970s, such as Bowles and Gintis (1976), argued that the education system inculcated the values of the ruling classes and, thus, introduced into pedagogy the wider issues of politics and economics. However, in the late 1970s the intellectual approaches to studying school effectiveness changed through some authors taking unparalleled paradigms by investigating how differences between schools may influence pupils' behaviour (Reynolds & Murgatroyd, 1977; Rutter et al., 1979).

Rutter et al. (1979) studied 1487 pupils who were

divided between twelve schools in London. The survey commenced in 1970 when the population was 10 years old and they were intermittently observed in school until the age of 14 years. Prior to secondary school transfer, the children's characteristics were matched in order to eliminate any extraneous variables, such as diversities in the schools' intakes, which may otherwise 'corrupt' possible data reflecting the influences of school differences on the pupils' behaviours. For example, to negate the intake variations of the twelve schools, Rutter et al. statistically equated the schools with respect to their pupils' rates of delinquency and reading difficulties as assessed by the primary schools. The population were assessed on several instruments including the NFER reading test, behavioural questionnaire (Rutter, 1967), and parent and teacher interviews. The success of these schools were measured using mainly one indicator, that is, examination passes.

The findings of Rutter et al. revealed that the more 'successful' schools tended to be successful for the majority of their pupils including those from the lower ability bands. They argued that these 'successful' schools tended to be associated with certain facets of school life:

- (a) In the more successful schools, lessons tended to be more work-orientated, with the teacher spending considerably more time focusing on the subject matter rather than on focusing, for example, on pupil behaviour. The lessons also started and ended promptly.
- (b) The teachers were more likely to work together in both curricular and disciplinary matters. Senior staff were also more likely to assess their teachers' own work and, although decision-making was largely centralized among the senior staff, nevertheless, all the teachers were given the opportunity to express their opinions.
- (c) Punishment seem to have very little affect on pupils' behaviour, whereas rewards, such as praise in lessons

and public commendations, did appear to be of some value to the pupils.

- (d) In the more successful schools pupils were expected to take greater responsibility within the school including caring for books. Rutter et al. also found that successful schools were more likely to encourage their pupils to participate in school meetings or assemblies. Such schools also tended to have pupil facilities, such as tuck shops, telephones and pastoral care provisions, which they interpreted as an indication of the schools concern for its pupils' welfare.
- (e) The staff of the more successful schools tended to have higher expectations of their pupils, tended to monitor homework and record books more closely and were more likely to display their pupils' work.

Rutter et al. asked the pupils for their opinions on what they considered to be the most important aspects of schooling. The majority felt that the preparation of school work and the passing of examinations to be extremely important. The authors, therefore, argued that the more successful schools seem to reflect what the children themselves were expecting from their time in school. Thus, Rutter et al. concluded that secondary schools may have some influence on their pupils' behaviour and attainment.

However, despite Rutter's et al. empirical evidence to suggest that schools do influence pupil behaviour, some authors have questioned the value of their work. Acton (1980), for example, argues that their main criterion for measuring school 'success', that is examination passes, is very limiting. He further argues that Rutter's et al. definition of 'successful' schools would be considered by the outside world as failures. For instance, among some of the more successful schools many of the pupils attained only CSE passes and virtually none received the necessary five 'O' level passes to embark on a professional career, such as teaching. Thus, according to Acton, out of the 12 schools in

Rutter's et al. study only about two would be considered as average, several more would be considered as fairly bad and the rest frankly awful if judged by world criteria. He further suggest that the Rutter project should have included other indicators of 'success', such as the number of children gaining employment after leaving school. However, the project was terminated before the pupils entered the job market. Furthermore, the present author believes the Rutter project criteria of school 'success' should have included some qualitative indicators, such as pupils' enjoyment of the school curriculum and parental satisfaction of their children's progress.

Interestingly, Rutter's et al. work has been confirmed further by extensive research conducted by Mortimore et al. (1988) who embarked on an ILEA study of junior schools. They found that the factors which appear to be associated with positive pupil outcomes (e.g. good reading skills) are similar to those factors associated with pupil success in the secondary schools (Rutter et al., 1979). Thus, like Rutter et al., Mortimore et al. found that the most successful schools emphasised teacher involvement in curricular planning, work-orientated lessons, encourage parental involvement in pupils' education and provide pupils with regular feedback on academic progress. Fortunately, Mortimore et al. extend our knowledge of classroom processes. by studying both teacher and pupil classroom behaviours via the use of the Pupil Record Sheet (Galton et al., 1980). They found that the most successful schools encouraged maximum communications between teachers and pupils; have high teacher expectations in the sense that they communicate a sense of confidence in their pupils' abilities by rewards and regular feedback; stress the importance of consistency in teacher approaches to lessons; and emphasized structured lessons in which the teacher would plan pupil activities, but allow the pupils some degree of freedom. Therefore, Mortimore et al. concludes that schools do make a difference: they can help pupils develop positively in an atmosphere where they (pupils') receive a challenging education which is rewarding and work-orientated.

However, the evidence, as understood within its limitations, seem to suggest that school factors, such as streaming, rewards and teacher expectations, may help to explain the development of pupil disaffection and deviant behaviour. Furthermore, the school factor which seems to be of particular influence on pupil behaviour is whether or not they are taking examinations. For example, Hargreaves (1967) argues that some pupils became deviant after realising that they had been 'written off' as examination prospects. Rutter et al. found that pupils tended to choose the passing of exams as the most important aspect of their school lives. This suggests that schools may have to rethink their policies on the selection of pupils as examination candidates to the extent of including all pupils, regardless of ability, in public examinations. Furthermore, the Rutter and Hargreaves projects may lead one to infer that the 'low' status of being non-examination pupils, may lead some children to becoming persistent absentees. This premise might be partly supported by the fact that non-school attendance among pupils rapidly increases in the last two years of secondary school, a period during most pupils become aware of their examination status (Galloway, 1979, 1980, 1985a; Hargreaves, 1967; Reid, 1985, 1986a). Conversely, there is also the possibility that community factors, such as poor housing, may have greater influential powers on older pupils' school disaffection than any institutional factors.

Despite the possible influences of the community on persistent absenteeism, work by various authors has suggested that school factors can exert some influence on children's school attendance rates. Reynolds and Murgatroyd (1977), for example, studied the effects school regimes have on pupil behaviour including truancy, delinquency and attainment. The authors studied nine secondary modern schools in South Wales that had been matched on the homogeneity of their catchment areas, as measured by the fact that all the areas were considered to be working-class

communities. The data were collected from school registers, and interviews with teachers and pupils. An analysis of the data revealed that the schools with high truancy rates also tended to have high rates of delinquency and underachievement.

The authors argued that despite the homogeneity of the intakes of the nine schools, there were consistent differences between the schools in their rates of the three indicators (i.e. school attendance, delinquency and academic attainment). They particularly drew attention to the fact that the differences between the schools in terms of their attendance rates was as much as 12 per cent, with one school having a relatively low attendance rate of 77 per cent, whereas at the higher end was another school with a comparatively good attendance rate of 89 per cent. The author, therefore, suggested that the differences in the pupils' behaviours may be influenced by the nature of the school itself. Demographic analysis revealed that differences in the number of rules enforced by the schools seem to determine the levels of truancy. The school rules which the authors considered to be significantly associated with high school attendance include:

- (a) The use of the school uniform, especially for pupils, especially for pupils in their first three years at secondary school.
- (b) Where there is a low degree of control of pupils' school behaviour.
- (c) Where there is less vigorous enforcement of rules, such as 'no smoking' and 'no chewing gum'.
- (d) Where the educational establishment tends to be relatively small. This may be because such schools are able to develop closer relationships between teachers and pupils.
- (e) Where pupils are encouraged to participate in the

running of the school, such as prefectship. This variable is also confirmed by Rutter et al. (1979) who also found that the more successful schools tended to give pupils greater responsibility in the running of the school system.

(f) Where there is a closer parent-teacher relationship.

Reynolds and Murgatroyd argued that their sociological approach suggested that school attendance rates are influenced by certain facets of the school's organization including school size and their rule norm. Unlike Rutter et al., Reynolds's and Murgatroyd's study attempts to assess their data using a relatively broad definition of 'success' to include high school attendance, low delinquency rates and low levels of underachievement. However, despite their use of broader criteria, Reynolds and Murgatroyd rather 'crude' facets of school life. Their evaluation of the school processes is mainly based on the use of school rules. They do not attempt to assess the pastoral care system, curriculum content and organization, and nor do they analyse classroom interactions between teachers and their pupils.

However, a further study by Reynolds et al. (1980), extended the discussion to include another facet of school life, that is, the pastoral structure of schools. In relation to the problem of truancy, Reynolds et al. found that in schools with high truancy rates most of the pastoral work with persistent absentees was carried out by middle management, such as the heads of year. They argue that this use of middle management, as opposed to the use of the form tutor, appears to enhance the significance of truancy. This attention from the middle management may be perceived by truants as rewarding and, thus, reinforcing the social significance of truancy as a rule breaking act. This argument is supported by the fact that their data show that schools with relatively few truancy problems tend to deal with such cases through the form tutor. This may also be further confirmed by Galloway (1983b) whose study on

pastoral care suggests that pupils' disruptive behaviours tended to escalate when such cases were referred to the middle management. Reynolds et al. conclude that although their data cannot determine whether or not the growth of middle management has increased truancy or whether such growth is simply a reflection of a problem that was already there, they, nevertheless, believe that this high association between the specific styles of school management and truancy rates is at least an interesting aspect which may require further investigation.

The findings on school effectiveness by Rutter et al. (1979), Mortimore et al. (1988), and Reynolds and Murgatroyd (1977) appear to suggest that schools may become more effective in producing 'successful' pupils if as establishments they encourage pupil participation in school activities, create more work-orientated lessons, have high teacher expectations and develop good parent-teacher relationships. However, Hargreaves (1980) argues that although the evidence presented by these authorities suggests that schools do make a difference in pupil behaviour, their evidence, nonetheless, over simplifies the issues. Neither Rutter et al. or Reynolds and Murgatroyd present a vivid picture of classroom life, such as the types of teaching material used, details of teaching style, and pupil-to-pupil relationships. They also ignore the fact that other school variables, such as classroom experience of teachers, and class size, may also affect pupil behaviour. Furthermore, neither model provides any information on how classrooms interact with the rest of the school. For example, do classes ever use the open-plan methods with several groups of pupils and their teachers working alongside each other in the same room? Or do senior teachers, EWOs or Home-School Liaison Officers ever visit lessons to provide extra class support? Hargreaves argues that these models instead simply provide a list of relatively isolated factors which are shown to be associated with pupil behaviour. He, therefore, suggests that pedagogical research on schools ought to show how school variables interact together and why schools choose to manage

their affairs in a particular way.

Furthermore, although Mortimore et al. have presented some data on classroom processes, nevertheless, their work (similar to Rutter et al., 1979) do not provide schools with any guidance on how to actually introduce the effective school factors. For example, should the role of the Headteacher be first redefined to include more democratic processes for the staff? Then followed by the introduction of more regular records to assess the problem areas and successful areas. Or should such factors be introduced simultaneously? Thus, the burning question is whether there is an effective method by which schools can introduce the policies suggested by the effective school research? Does such an introduction entail a hierarchical structural organisation of school effective factors so that the most effective school factors are introduced initially, whereas the lesser effective factors are introduced later? However, before such a question can be answered one needs to know if some effective school factors are more efficacious than others. Presently, there is very limited information on these issues and only by further research (probably by the School Effectiveness Movement of Mortimore et al., 1988; Reid et al., 1987; Reynolds et al., 1980; Rutter et al., 1979) will we be able to assess how best to introduce effective school factors into the educational system.

Fortunately, other researchers have attempted to analyse some of the more intricate facets of school life, such as the complex interactive processes teacher-pupil relationships, the effects of the psychological environment on the learning processes and pupils attitudes towards various educational processes, such as remedial teaching and career guidance (Clarke, Parry-Jones, Gay & Smith, 1981; Galloway, Martin & Wilcox, 1985; Haertel, Walberg & Haertel, 1981; Reid, 1984a). Here the author will attempt to draw together some of this research on school effectiveness by organising the studies into various sections reflecting school environment including teacher style, class size, the curriculum, the 'hidden' curriculum, pastoral care, and

pupils' perceptions of their schools. The author will also discuss the political and economical implications of this effective school research and how such data have influenced her own action research project.

Teaching Style

One method of examining the function of the school in relation to pupil disaffection is to study the characteristics and behaviours of the teachers. Early studies tended to concentrate on teacher characteristics that school administrators were concerned with, such as the number of years of teaching experience and teacher qualifications. The Plowden Report (1967), for example, suggested that effective teaching is associated with experience and with the teachers knowledge of the subject. The Report, therefore, recommends that teachers should be trained to the level of a degree (e.g. Bachelor of Education). The Report argues that such qualified teachers may markedly improve the quality of education, especially in terms of understanding scientific principles.

Clarke, Parry-Jones, Gay, and Smith (1981) studied the effects of teacher behaviour on the frequency of disruptive behaviour among pupils aged between 11 and 16 years. The study included two secondary schools and the data were collected from two primary sources: interviews with twenty teachers to elicit their perceptions of disruptive behaviour (e.g. being unduly noisy) and the observation of twenty lessons which they recorded via note form. The teachers behaviours were divided into two categories: 'directive' acts, such as threatening to impose sanctions or confiscating distracting article; and 'non-directive' acts, such as request or accepts explanation for behaviour, or notes awareness of pupil's difficulty by reassuring and placating. Clarke et al. found that there was a tendency for 'non-directive' teacher acts to be followed by a diffusion of pupil disruptively to the point where the pupil will immediately stop the disruptive act or the pupil gives a reasonable explanation for his or her behaviour. Conversely, they found that 'directive' teacher acts tended to be

followed by an escalation of pupil's disruptive behaviour to the point where the pupil will repeat the disruptive act or several other pupils will also participate in the disruptive activity. Although the data are based on a very small sample, Clarke's et al. study suggests that 'non-directive' teacher behaviour which attempts to restore peace is more likely to have positive consequences than the more challenging behaviour of 'direct' teacher acts which usually results in conflict.

Bennett (1976) studied the influences of teaching style on pupil progress. He investigated two main typologies of teaching approaches: (i) the progressive (informal) teacher who tends to encourage active pupil participation in lessons, prefers co-operative school work, does little testing, emphasizes intrinsic motivation (e.g. self-worth), and prefers out-of-class activities and creative work; (ii) the traditional (formal) teacher who tends to expect pupils to play a passive role, tends to use external rewards (e.g. high grades), prefers competition, regular testing, confinement of lessons to the classroom and prefers a more structured work setting. Pupils' progress was assessed on several indicators including standard NFER tests in English and mathematics, observation of classroom work activities and pupils' ability to write creative stories. Bennett found that the pupils taught by traditional styles showed significantly superior progress in English and mathematics tests when compared with those taught by the progressive approach. Bennett's observation of classroom activity revealed that pupils in the traditional classrooms were more likely to engage in work activity than those in the progressive classrooms. When analysing pupils' creative writing, Bennett's data revealed few differences between the traditional and progressive groups of pupils that could be attributed to teaching style. On the other hand, he found that classroom activities, such as work related interaction and pupil social interaction occurred more frequently with progressive teaching than with traditional teaching. Bennett argued that the poorer academic performance of the progressive classroom is partly due to the relatively lack

of stress on academic aims, while at the same time emphasizing the importance of self-expression and enjoyment of school. He concluded that pupils were more likely to benefit from traditional teaching, especially in the academic sense, while at the same time getting just as much emotional support under formal teaching as under informal teaching.

Other teaching behaviours that appear to be associated with effective teaching include high teacher expectations (Rutter et al., 1979), an emphasis on rewards, such as public acknowledgment (Rutter et al., 1979), classroom activity which focuses on work (Rutter et al., 1979), and encouragement of pupil participation in the school organization (Reynolds & Murgatroyd, 1977; Rutter et al., 1979).

In an evaluation of the literature on effective teaching, Rosenshine (1970) suggests that teaching style and effectiveness does not appear to generalise over time and curricular subjects. For example, he found in one set of studies that under new curricula where teachers encourage student statements or questioning, the pupils use of the new material increased compared with their use of old material. However, Rosenshine found that this 'positive' change in pupil behaviour was also true when similar curricula were presented to classes by teachers who did not encourage pupil comments. Rosenshine argues that this lack of stability in teacher effectiveness may partly explain why studies are unable to reveal a consistent teaching model which has positive pupil-outcomes.

The Curriculum

Defining the term 'curriculum' can be a difficult task and is well illustrated by Reid et al. (1987) who cited a range of quotations to demonstrate the plethora of opinions on this matter. One educator defined the term as a slippery word which in its broadest sense can mean the whole educative process of life experiences or in the narrow sense a syllabus of subjects (Richmond, 1971). While others argue

that the curriculum is what happens to pupils at school, namely the strategies used by the school to produce desired outcomes, or it is simply a planned programme of learning experiences for pupils (see Reid et al., 1987). Reid et al. themselves adopt a broad definition of the 'curriculum' which they believe should encompass an educational process which is opened to critical evaluation and capable of translating this into its structural organization.

Several studies have attempted to evaluate the effects of the various dimensions of the curriculum on pupil behaviour and achievement. Some of the curricular dimensions include the role of the teacher, difficulty of task and the system of assessment (Haertel et al., 1981; Sayer, 1987). Haertel et al. (1981) studied the socio-psychological impacts of the classroom on pupil learning. They studied several aspects of over 800 classroom activities cited in the literature which were selected from various countries including the USA and Canada. They analysed several learning environmental conditions, such as apathy, cliquishness, democracy and satisfaction. These environmental variables were correlated with pupil outcomes in order to assess which psychological factors are most closely associated with pupil success. The pupil-outcome measures were assessed via end-of-term tests scores and school attendance rates. Haertel's et al. analysis suggests that successful pupil outcomes were positively associated with cohesiveness, satisfaction, task difficulty, goal direction, democracy, formality and competition. The classroom variables which were negatively associated with successful student outcomes include friction, diversity, cliquishness, apathy, disorganization and favouritism. They concluded that the outcome measures seem to indicate that positive classroom environments and positive pupil outcomes appear to be highly associated with each other.

Sayer (1987) argues that with the debilitating of the education system caused by expenditure cuts, little consideration is given with regard to the improvement of the curriculum. He suggests that teachers are in a dilemma

because on one hand they are constantly being criticised by politicians who claim that schools are failing, while on the other their limited resources do not allow them to offer greater opportunities to pupils. Sayer stipulates that with the education system facing such criticism and yet not appearing to be addressing the needs of the pupils, especially school disaffecters, then it is a wonder that pupils attend school at all.

Sayer, therefore, proposes a curricular programme which is designed to improve the educational facilities presently offered to pupils aged between 11 and 13 years. He believes that this programme should aim at making school more comfortable for children through creating a nonthreatening environment where they may feel a sense of security and belonging. His proposed model argues for coherence between a learning group of about eight adults which should include teachers and parents. This learning group could co-ordinate various curricular activities by expanding connections across the home and community to extend the learning opportunities for pupils. The group should ensure continuity of learning themes when using the various resources in the environment (e.g. home and media). The group should record what experiences have been learnt and negotiate subsequent stages of learning. Pupil achievement should be monitored and given credit based on successful completion of work. Sayer argues that this measure of attainment should replace external examinations. The teachers should offer counselling provisions to parents, pupils and other teachers. Counselling skills should be pertinent to the personal, educational and vocational needs of those receiving pastoral attention. There should be an emphasis on co-operation between the various learning groups and working units in order to improve skills of communication and decision-making. Sayer also argues that it is imperative that the community is regarded as a source of learning. This would improve the linkage between schools and places of work which in turn may provide young people with further insights into the world of work. He concludes that this development of a community programme approach would not

only decrease truancy, but also negate the feelings of failure and alienation among the pupils.

In this connection with community aspects another research project called the Hargreaves Report (1984) investigated several LEA secondary schools and their organizations in order to make recommendations on how schools can improve curricula to address some of the problems of disaffection and underachievement, particularly among working-class pupils. Hargreaves collected data from questionnaires administered to pupils, parents and teachers. The aim of this exercise was to assess pupils' attitudes towards school, what appropriate actions should be taken to combat truancy and what procedures are most successful in helping pupils. Based on this data the Report presented several proposals for improving school effectiveness including:

- (i) For the 4th and 5th year pupils, the Report suggests that their two-year courses should be restructured so that instead of having an exam after a 'distant' two-year period, pupils should embark on a 4th year which is divided into a series of a six- or eight-week learning units each with its goals and assessment procedures. The Report believes that this redefined course with its short-term objectives would give pupils a greater sense of purpose and achievement.
- (ii) Pupils should be given a greater voice in the matters of school policies and decision-makings pertinent to the curriculum.
- (iii) Pupils' learning experiences in the classroom should be complemented by studies which include out-of-school activities, such as residential courses to foster friendly relationships between teachers and pupils, and fieldwork which allows pupils to develop investigative skills to deal with complex phenomena by formulating questions and testing hypotheses.

- (iv) The Report strongly asserts that there should be better links between the secondary schools and their communities. This link can be strengthened by encouraging parents to become more involved in school life, inviting adults from industry, commerce and trade unions to give talks in school, and in turn schools should regularly take pupils out into the community. The Report suggests that this two-way traffic between school and community will make pupil learning more interesting, relevant and motivated.
- (v) Pupils should be given greater opportunity for work experience. The Report considers that such interactions with employers may improve achievement especially in pre-vocational courses.

The Hargreaves Report argues that the evidence suggest that if the above proposals are implemented there would be a reduction in underachievement and disaffection, especially among the 14- to 16-year old. However, the Report recognises that these recommendations are not a panacea for disaffection because inspite of these measures many pupils will continue to be disruptive and to underachieve. The Report suggests that further provisions should be made for these pupils including:

- (i) Teachers may have to learn to change the way in which they perceive pupils because at present many disaffected pupils are treated as the problem. For example, Hargreaves et al. (1975) showed that through the concept of school rules, any pupil appearing to be breaking the rules (e.g. pupils must not drop litter in school) could be labelled as a 'deviant' or a 'misfit' through the punitive reactions of the teachers. The authors found that such punitive reactions may include non-verbal techniques, such as 'staring at the offending pupil', or the pupil may receive a berating from the teacher(s). They argue that if we hope to reduce deviant behaviour then we may have to reduce the number of school rules. This

can be achieved by abolishing rules that are not strictly necessary or do not serve any real purpose. Thus, the authors argue that this abolition of 'trivial' rules would also abolish all the associated deviances which would be in the interest of all concerned. They suggest that teachers could devote greater attention on examining pupils perspectives of school rules because they (pupils) may not always understand, nor appreciate the justifications of these rules and this in turn could lead to wide spread deviance. These data are also supported by Reid (1985) who found that disaffected pupils tended to dislike their schooling because of the school rules, among other things.

- (ii) The Report suggests that the schools may need on-site support units for pupils with relatively serious disruptive behaviours. It is argued, however, that such units can only be effective if they provide opportunities for pupils (e.g. to develop self-awareness) and encourage such pupils to maintain curricular contact with ordinary classes. The Report suggests that these units should encourage reintegration, but this can only be achieved through consultation with the home and the support of parents.

The Report also suggests that each school should have an effective attendance policy. It argues that such a policy must reflect several elements: (i) senior teachers should be given specific responsibility for pupil attendance; (ii) the school may devise a follow-up scheme on absenteeism, for example, by telephoning the home; (iii) Headteachers should monitor the work of form teachers; (iv) conduct regular 'spot checks' during lesson periods to monitor the number of pupils leaving the school before the end of the school day; (v) rewards should be introduced to encourage school attendance, for example, classes with the highest attendance should receive prizes or acknowledgments; (vi) persistent absentees should be welcomed back to school and efforts made to help them to reintegrate into the social and academic

structure of their classes. The Report also asserts that schools with good attendance records should be encouraged to report their strategies as part of an innovative exchange of ideas within the LEAs.

The Plowden Report (1967) suggests that a child-centred approach is probably the most effective educational paradigm for working with pupils, especially underachievers. The report suggests that children should be allowed to play naturally, and read and write when the teacher feels that they are ready. Teachers should encourage self-activities which should also overlap with reading and writing. Children should be allowed to spend a varying amount of time on a subject matter according to their individual interests and personality.

The Report argues that a 'flexible' curriculum should be developed which allows for individual rates of progress and attainment. A broad curriculum should be adopted to include language, science, environmental studies and expressive arts. The curriculum should avoid being rigidly compartmental, but instead should reflect topics which integrate subjects. Pupils should be encouraged to do individual work and projects which may increase their interest and curiosity. Here the teacher should adopt a consultative, guiding role, rather than a didactic one. Such projects may include building an aviary which should involve the painting of birds, building models with clay, and reading and writing stories about birds.

The Report stipulates that children should be encouraged to explore their environment. This may include looking at autumn leaves, discussing the seasons or looking at flowers, animals, streams, railways and local shops. Pupils should also be encouraged to learn through 'discovery'. By this term the Report means that children should be encouraged to make enquiries which may lead to discovery. The Report finally asserts that assessment of children's progress should be based on objective tests in school.

Kyriacou (1987) argues that to motivate successfully children's interest in topics the teacher should be aware of three essential conditions for learning. These essential elements, which are based on his classroom observations, include:

- (i) Attentiveness: the pupil must be attending to the learning experience. This can only be achieved if the topic includes a variety of activities and is well matched to pupils' interests and abilities.
- (ii) Receptiveness: the pupils must be motivated to learn. Kyriacou argues that pupils must be energised into wanting to learn. One way of achieving this is to create a real need to learn something, for example, through revising for an examination. This argument is similar to the Hargreaves Report (1984) which stipulates that regular short-term goals based on tests and reports may increase pupils' sense of achievement and interests.
- (iii) Appropriateness: finally, he suggests that the learning experience must be appropriate to the task. The appropriateness of the learning must match the pupils' interests, abilities and current understanding of the subject.

Kyriacou argues that although his model is not a panacea it may nevertheless provide a framework within which one can link teacher characteristics and pupil learning processes in order to explore the efficacy of teaching methods.

Generally, the evidence above suggests that an effective curriculum that may improve pupils' learning should several properties including: a positive psychological environment, such as cohesiveness, satisfaction, appropriateness and pupil attention and a group learning team approach which should include adults

from the community. There should also be regular assessments, more pupil participation in the decision-making processes of the schools, better school links with the community and home, a reduction in 'trivial' school rules which may otherwise impede better teacher-pupil relations, and a more child-centred approach which encompasses individual learning, discovery methods, and the integration of subjects, such as reading, language and painting.

However, despite the positive effects that these approaches may have on learning, we must nevertheless consider the implications for resources. For example, increased assessments may demand more teacher time in preparing assessments and marking. Furthermore, greater individual attention for the pupils, as suggested by Plowden, might be difficult for teachers because many British school classrooms containing about thirty pupils (Kogan, 1987). Thus, in order to implement some of these policies into the curriculum there may have to be an increase in the availability of resources including more teaching staff to aid with the increased demand for marking and testing, and 'trained helpers' to help develop more individual working patterns among pupils. However, this need for greater resources may be difficult to satisfy when considering the expenditure cuts which many LEAs have to face (Finn, 1987; Kogan, 1987; Reynolds, 1985). Whatever the outcome, much of the evidence suggests that improvement in the learning environment of pupils may greatly depend on the willingness of the educational professions to capitalise on the wealth of skills and knowledge which is usually freely available within local communities.

The 'Hidden' Curriculum

The notion of the 'hidden' curriculum is a rather ambiguous term because it could encompass a variety of meanings, such as a hidden programme with the intention to manipulate pupils subliminally or hidden because of neglect (Meighan, 1981). However, what is even more important than the meaning is the influences of the 'hidden' curriculum on pupils' behaviours. Some authors suggest that the 'hidden'

curriculum is enmeshed in the actions of teachers and/or in the organization of the school which can cause some pupils to feel a sense of failure (Hargreaves, 1967, 1978). For example, Hargreaves (1978) found that the streaming system fostered feelings of failure among many working-class pupils who found themselves at the bottom of the hierarchy. The teachers apparent behaviour of showing favouritism towards the top stream pupils was what Hargreaves regards as a clear message to the 'failure' group that they are unwanted by the school and as a consequence such pupils tend to develop negative attitudes towards school. Another good example of the 'hidden' curriculum is the work of Lippitt and White (1958) which analysed the effects of authoritarian, democratic and laissez-faire regimes on children's behaviours. They observed four groups of eleven-year-old boys as they experienced three types of adult relationships while involved in club activities, such as crafts. These three styles were labelled as the 'democratic' leader who encouraged group discussion and decision in policies on activities, the 'authoritarian' leader made all the decisions about group policies and the 'laissez-faire' leader played a rather passive non-interactive role and left complete freedom to the group to make their own decisions on activity procedures.

Their observations suggests that the same boys reacted differently under the different styles of leaderships even though the task work remained constant. Under the authoritarian condition the boys tended to be frustrated and exhibit aggressive behaviours, whereas under the democratic and laissez-faire leaders the boys tended to be more friendly and relaxed. However, when assessing task activities, Lippitt and White found that the boys tended to produce a higher standard of work in the authoritarian situation, followed by the democratic condition and they produced very little work under the laissez-faire leadership. Here the Lippitt and White study illustrates the ideas of the 'hidden' curriculum; while the official curriculum consisted of craftwork, the 'hidden' component of the adults' behaviours meant that the children learnt,

unintentionally or otherwise, to be either frustrated, relaxed, hard working or friendly depending on the type of adult interaction that they were experiencing at that particular time.

Bowles and Gintis (1976) draws attention to the possibility that this process of the 'hidden' curriculum may generate inequalities through the meritocratic systems which promotes and rewards pupils by allocating them into distinctive positions in the hierarchical system. Consequently, teachers interactive behaviours reinforce pupil behaviour, such as obedience and conformity, and therefore inculcate into the students the traits that are deemed necessary for an effective working labour force for the capitalist economy.

Therefore, the evidence suggests that there is an element within the school ethos called the 'hidden' curriculum which may influence pupils behaviours in such a way that they may perceive themselves, for example through the streaming system, as failures and feel rejected by the school with the possible consequences that some of these pupils may become alienated from school and eventually graduate to truancy (Hargreaves, 1978).

Pastoral Care

It is generally believed that effective teaching requires pastoral skills (Galloway, 1985b, 1987; Hamblin, 1977, 1981). However, before the author can discuss the system of pastoral care for school absenteeism, she believes that certain questions must be raised. For example, what exactly is pastoral care? How does it fit into the school curriculum? How effective is pastoral care as a managerial approach to the needs of non-school attenders and how can the pastoral system be improved to deal more effectively with the needs of persistent absentees?

Hamblin (1978) defines pastoral care as an essential element of the teaching process which focuses on pupils' personalities and on aspects of the environment which may

facilitate or impede learning and emotional stability. He also suggests that counselling should be concerned with modifying the environment to the extent that pupils' needs are met and, therefore, increases the chances of them succeeding.

The actual process of pastoral care basically involves an interpersonal relationship between the counsellor (e.g. teacher) and the client (e.g. pupil), with the counsellor serving as a confidante of the client (Hamblin, 1981; Galloway, 1987). The counsellors role is to provide advise and support as an integral part of the relationship which is essential for the social and educational well-being of the clients or pupils (Galloway, 1987; Hamblin, 1981; Reid et al., 1987).

Hamblin (1981, page 3) argues that if pastoral care is to be successful then it must be aided 'by a structural programme of skill-based guidance' that will raise the level of pupils' academic and social performance. He suggests that a pastoral care system should have at least four objectives: (i) to develop positive attitudes to academic work and devise effective methods of study for pupils; (ii) inculcate interactive skills with both peers and adults; (iii) prepare pupils for future tasks, such as in the transition from school to work; (iv) develop self-awareness and other personal skills to help pupils cope with their problems.

Most of the responsibility for pastoral counselling is usually mediated by the senior managers, such as the head of years (Galloway, 1987). Hamblin argues that this specialist role of the head of years can create undue pressure upon their timetables which may lead to inefficiencies. Therefore, he suggests that pastoral care can be improved by delegating more pastoral duties to the 'immediate level', that is the form tutors. He further suggests that pastoral care should not be solely an ephemeral framework which appears to only deal with pupils' immediate crises, but should also have long-term objectives where relationships are developed with all the pupils to

essentially help them to be successful achievers.

Unfortunately, there is very little research on the efficacy of pastoral care in relation to combating attendance problems and catering for the special needs of persistent absentees (Galloway, 1985b, 1987; Reid et al., 1987). Galloway (1987) has suggested that this lack of literature is probably due to the imbalance of work into absenteeism, undertaken before the 1970s, which focused on the importance of the home and individual pathologies at the expense of ignoring educational and institutional factors. However, it is only since the late 1970s that research has attempted show the pertinence of the school environment to the prevalence of its own truancy problems.

Galloway (1987) argues that for pastoral care to be effective the educational establishments must develop a 'whole school' approach which requires all the teachers to play an active role in counselling. He believes that all teachers should accept responsibility for their pupils' social and educational welfare.

Galloway draws attention to the fact that each absentee and his or her needs are unique, and, therefore, each case needs an individual approach. For example, he points out that absentees may suffer from severe stress caused by a variety of situations, with some coming from poor homes and others suffer anxieties about their parents' poor health. He suggests that an effective pastoral system for guiding pupils, especially absentees, must aim to: (a) to make sure that each pupil is known well by at least one teacher; (b) pupils' progress should be monitored and the information used in the planning of future programmes.

In a study on the effect of the pastoral care system on disruptive pupils, Galloway (1983b) observed four comprehensive schools to assess the success of their counselling systems. The data were collected via observations, and interviews with school staff and pupils to ascertain each school's concept and philosophy of pastoral

care.

Galloway found that all four headteachers emphasized the role of the pastoral care system as a means of enhancing children's educational and social progress. Two of the headteachers believed that effective pastoral care aims at identifying factors at home or school which may impede children's progress. For instance, if the home circumstances make it impossible for a child to complete his or her homework, then the school will make alternative arrangements. Similarly if pupils develop hostilities towards individual teachers then the problem is investigated. The other two emphasized the importance of a pastoral system that creates a sense of caring and stability. One headteacher in particular emphasized the role of the curriculum and teaching methods as an investigative aspect of dealing with disruptive behaviour. This headteacher further argued that the solution to disruptive behaviour lies in removing the sources of tension that arise from ineffective or inappropriate teaching.

The schools also distinguished between pastoral care and discipline. For example, disciplinary problems may be referred to the head of department, while pastoral problems are referred to the year tutor. However, in general class tutors were expected to deal with problems as much as possible, but seek help and advice when necessary. Only severe cases would be passed to middle management. Galloway's study suggest that this referral to senior staff tended to escalate rather than negate the problem. He suggests that this is probably due to the pupils seeing their problems increase in significance when they are referred to senior management and this in turn may reinforce the conflict. Thus, in order to negate these problems the role of the form tutor was emphasized, particularly because they tend to interact with the same pupils on a more regular basis than the senior teachers and may, therefore, have a deeper insight into pupils' personalities.

Another important characteristic of the schools was

the fact that teachers also received pastoral care from the senior management and other teachers. They were encouraged to seek help and advice in dealing with problem pupils. Furthermore, the teachers successes received recognition and appreciation.

All four schools stressed the importance of contact with parents as they can provide advice and co-operation in dealing with problems. In two of the schools teachers are encouraged to make home visits whenever parents are unable or unwilling to come to the school. Other means of contact include handwritten notes or log-books which includes information on pupils' progress.

Galloway concluded that the evidence suggests that the essential ingredients in effective pastoral care include clear objectives, support for all teachers and pupils alike, and a recognition of achievement.

Another important angle in the study on effective pastoral care is to evaluate pupils' perceptions of their schools counselling system. Regrettably, there are very few studies which examine this aspect of schooling (Galloway, 1987; Reid et al., 1987). Reid et al. (1987) suggest that this lack of data might be due to the suspicion of some local authorities as to the potential use and outcomes of such studies. However, the few studies which have been undertaken seem to disagree on pupils' opinions of their pastoral provisions. Murgatroyd (1977), for example, carried out a survey on pupils' perceptions of their pastoral guidance at school. He found that pupils tended to regard senior staff as the mediators of administrative work, such as checking school registers for truants and reporting attendance problems to the EWOs. Therefore, counsellors may not be seen as sources of care and support for personal problems.

Armstrong and King (1977) provide a model of a 'team' approach to pastoral care in a secondary school called Countesthorpe where pupils are encouraged to determine their

own educational programmes with the guidance of their teachers. The data were collected through recording the impressions of the students, teachers and parents. They stated that at first the teachers found it very difficult to integrate academic and pastoral roles. They found that much of the problems of combining learning and caring arose from the organization of the curriculum into two distinctive activities, the pastoral system of the year groups and tutors, and the academic system of subject departments and subject specialists. This organization resulted in some tutors never having the opportunity to teach their tutorial group. Therefore, in order to bring the two systems together the school created a system which involved the tutors participating in the work of their students across the curriculum. To achieve this the curriculum was reconstructed so that each year-group of students were divided into units of 100 to 150 students each. Each unit then became the direct pastoral and academic responsibility of a group of five to eight teachers. Together the students and teachers constituted the 'team' and, thus, creating a mini-school within the school. The job of the teachers was to get to know the students in their team (there was usually about 20 pupils per tutor), to work with them over a wide range of activities, and guide and assist their entire course of study at the school.

The pupils' timetable was organised so that one half of their school time was spent working with their tutors and the other half was devoted to academic work with specialist teachers. The authors argue that this arrangement encouraged a continual conversation between teachers and pupils and also helped the teachers to learn to appreciate the intellectual demands of their pupils.

The authors concluded that this method of 'team' caring provided some fruitful experiences for both teachers and pupils who felt that learning had become more dynamic through the continuous dialogue between the students and teachers. However, the authors do not comment on the possible effects of this 'mini-school' system on the

integrity of the whole school organization. For example, did the mini-school arrangement create any disunity or competition? Or did it reduce the amount of interaction between the year groups?

Reid (1985) studied persistent absentees perceptions of their schools. His interviews, with both poor and good attenders, revealed that twice as many good attenders enjoyed school when compared with poor attenders. The absentees tended to dislike school because of the teachers and the school rules. Many absentees were also disenchanted by the curriculum and teaching styles. They also tended to criticize the teachers for being too harsh and lacking understanding of their problems. Reid's work appears to confirm Murgatroyd's study on pupils' negative attitudes towards the school staff.

By contrast, Siann, Draper and Cosford (1982) found the opposite to be true. They carried out a survey on one Scottish secondary school which was considered by the LEA to have a well developed pastoral system. The sample consisted of 72 fourth year pupils to assess their perceptions on the effectiveness of their school's counselling ethos. They first interviewed a fourth year group with the purpose of gaining an insight into how adolescents solve their problems. They then devised a set of eight problems with four of them relating to the home/personal problems and four relating to school based-situations. The eight problems were read out to the pupils and they were asked to indicate which person they would most likely consult on each problem. Half of this sample received a list of prompts after each 'problem' presentation, such as father, sibling, friend and house counsellor. This group was referred to as the 'structured' group. Whereas the other half received no prompting and were instead encouraged to give as many responses as they wanted to each problem ('unstructured' group).

The data revealed that both groups were more likely to mention their parents as sources of help. However, when

comparing the school staff, the study suggests that both groups were more likely to consider the school counsellor as a source for guidance and help rather than other staff, such as the subject teachers. When the two categories of problems were separated, both groups also considered the counsellor as the most helpful member of staff, especially in relation to personal problems. The pupils were also asked to complete a semantic-differential test to ascertain whether the population regarded counsellors as having different personality constructs to subject teachers. The test revealed that pastoral staff were more likely to be seen as helpful, sympathetic, friendly, encouraging and interested in the pupils, whereas the subject teacher was more likely to be regarded as effective, clever and effective in getting pupil's obedience.

Siann's et al. information based on house staff meetings suggests that the counselling staff were well accepted and supported by the rest of the staff. Siann et al. therefore concluded that in a school where there is commitment to counselling, the pupils are likely to perceive the ethos of the school as a caring environment. However, they do stress caution on this interpretation because the study was based only on one school. Therefore, further work is needed before we are able to make any firmer conclusions on pupils' perceptions of their pastoral provision.

This inconsistency in the data on pupils' perceptions on school and pastoral care might be simply due to possible regional variations, for example, Siann et al. conducted their study in Scotland, while Murgatroyd and Reid conducted theirs in Wales. These inconsistencies may also be due to the differences in the characteristics of the Scottish and Welsh populations as suggested by epidemiological studies which indicate that the former has better school attendance rates than the latter (Reid, 1985). Therefore, this may further explain why Siann's et al. population perceived their counsellors more positively than in Murgatroyd's study. Nevertheless, despite the inconsistencies, the fact remains that many absentees may perceive school as uncaring

and harsh as indicative of their actions of non-school attendance (Reid, 1982a, 1982b, 1983b, 1985).

However, regardless of the potential benefits of school counselling, some eminent authorities, such as Hamblin (1986), have argued that pastoral care is failing. Hamblin proposed several factors which he believes contribute to the failure of pastoral care:

- (a) Teachers tend to be under stress particularly when the demands between pastoral care and teaching become conflicting. Yet, Hamblin points out the fact that there are very few managerial strategies adopted by senior staff to allow teachers to use their time more economically. Furthermore, many pastoral care systems appear to have vague objectives of 'get-to-know-them'. This is considered as ineffective because of the lack of clear assessment which can lead to confusion for both the teachers and pupils concerned.
- (b) The pastoral tutor tended to be dismissed as passive and insignificant by both the teachers and pupils.
- (c) The pastoral teams tend to operate within a fragmented and disorganised framework. For example, Hamblin argues that there tends to be little consensus between pastoral care and student development. He argues that the impoverished skills of pastoral heads means that although they can provide care and sympathy, they do not, however, extend their skills to the promotion of educational objectives that will increase pupil achievement.

Hamblin concludes that for pastoral systems to become more effective schools will have to develop clearer objectives that promotes the performances of both teachers and pupils, and actively incorporate ideas that will generate creative learning through increased appreciation of adolescent development.

What are the Future Directions for Pastoral Care and Guidance Procedures?

Marland (1983), in his review of the literature, argues that if future pastoral systems are to be more effective then schools must plan programmes that understand: (a) adolescent growth, sexuality, health and family; (b) society and its multi-cultural perspectives; (c) improve ways of coping with disputes between teachers and pupils; (d) how to use the welfare network to ensure that pupils and their families have access to the best professional help. He further suggests that pastoral staff should have a greater understanding of their school curriculum because presently many of those with pastoral responsibility tend to know only their own teaching subjects and have very little idea about the other curricular subjects. Marland suggests that a suitable course should be designed to teach pastoral leaders about the whole curriculum and how it interrelates with counselling. He argues that this type of training would give the counsellor a greater appreciation of pupils' educational environment and, therefore, may help the practitioner create more effective strategies for promoting cognitive development.

Generally, the literature suggests that pastoral care can only be effective in combating school disaffection if counselling is developed on several guidelines including: (i) setting clear objectives, such as preparing pupils for examinations; (ii) promote educational success; (iii) guidance that involve all the teachers and pupils; (iv) closer monitoring of all pupils' progress; (v) foster close contacts with parents; (vi) emphasize care and sympathy towards pupils; (vii) promote the status of pastoral care staff through encouraging teachers and presenting visible successes; (viii) gain a deeper understanding of pupil development and curricular content; (ix) to encourage greater integration between pastoral care and academic work through establishing 'teams' where teachers are encouraged to take responsibility for both the teaching and the counselling of their pupils. Unfortunately, there is very little pedagogical work in this area, thus, before any

certain conclusions can be made about effective pastoral care Reid et al. (1987) suggests that several issues must be investigated including: (a) what influence does the training, personality and educational background of pastoral teachers have on effective counselling? (b) How can middle management create a favourable school atmosphere among pupils? (c) To what extent do parents influence their children's attitudes towards school guidance? However, despite the lack of evidence most authorities believe that well organised pastoral systems can improve pupils' perceptions of their schools and may also improve their academic achievements.

Teacher Stress

One important factor that we must consider when examining school effectiveness is the possible stress experienced by teachers which could lead to depression and ill health (Kyriacou & Pratt, 1985). Kyriacou and Sutcliffe (1978) investigated the prevalence, source and symptoms of stress among 257 teachers at 16 comprehensive schools. The authors compiled a questionnaire which they then administered to the teachers. The purpose of the questionnaire survey was to ascertain several aspects including biographical information about the teachers (e.g. sex, age and qualification) and to ascertain data on their experiences of stress while teaching. The data suggest that about 20 per cent of the population found teaching either very stressful or extremely stressful. The biographical characteristics (e.g. age and sex) of the teachers appear not to be associated with self-reported stress. However, the authors found that the main sources of stress included pupil misbehaviour, time pressures, poor working conditions and poor school organization. The symptoms experienced by the teachers tend to include exhaustion, frustration and tension. Although further research is needed to establish the validity of this data, nevertheless, the study suggests that some school factors (e.g. teacher timetables) may need to be examined if teachers are to become more effective.

In a further study on teacher stress, Kyriacou and

Pratt (1985) examined the association between teacher stress and psychoneurotic symptoms, such as anxiety, phobia, obsession, depression and hysteria. They administered two types of questionnaires to each of the hundred-plus teachers. The two questionnaires included the Teacher-Event Stress Inventory (TESI; cited by Pratt, 1978) which measures self-reported teacher stress, and the Middlesex Hospital Questionnaire (MHQ; cited by Crown & Crisp, 1966) which measures aspects of psychoneuroticism. An analysis of the data revealed a high correlation between self-reported teacher stress and psychoneurotic symptoms, such as phobia, depression, anxiety and hysteria. The teachers tend to feel that the ability to teach with little stress is attributed to having long teaching experience, stable or adaptable personality, having a good home life, preparing their work well, and being a Christian. Conversely, the population associated stress with a personality tendency to worry or constantly insisting on good standard of work. With respect to coping with stress, the most frequently used methods included trying to stay calm, sharing problems with others, avoiding confrontations, praying and meditation.

The authors concluded that the high association between self-reported stress and psychoneurotic symptoms may provide a deeper understanding of the nature of teacher stress and mental ill-health, and also give an insight into the strategies used by teachers to help them cope with their anxieties. Thus, this paper suggests that there may be some fruitful work in exploring the relationships the levels of stress, teacher personality and coping strategies. Such work may further indicate some directions for developing more positive teacher-pupil interactions and, therefore, establish a more conducive school environment for learning.

Pupils' Perceptions of Schooling

Although pupils are the recipients of the education system their voices are rarely heard in any debate about education (White & Brockington, 1983). This again might be due to the reluctance of LEAs to allow researchers into their schools to interview pupils on this matter or simply

due to authors ignoring pupils' opinions (Reynolds & Murgatroyd, 1977). However, if pupils are to benefit from school then one of the important factors that educational philosophers must consider is the pupils' experiences of schooling. It is generally believed that schools can only be successful, in terms of high academic attainment and social adjustment, if their pupils are made to feel comfortable, appreciated for their efforts and encouraged to enjoy their curriculum (Galloway, 1985a, 1985b, 1987; Hamblin, 1981; Hargreaves, 1967; Hargreaves et al., 1975; Hargreaves Report, 1984; Reid, 1985, 1986a, 1986b). Conversely, if children feel that they are failures and unwanted by their school then they may withdraw from curricular activities, reject the school and strive to devalue its worth (Hargreaves, 1967; Willis, 1977). This implies that if pupils constantly find school unrewarding then they may become alienated and graduate to truancy (Reid, 1981, 1982e, 1983a). Therefore, in order to gain a wider understanding of school disaffection and underachievement a few studies have investigated pupils' perception of school and how such perceptions may affect attainment and school attendance.

White and Brockington, for example, interviewed 70 young British people aged between 16 and 23 years. The purpose of this study was to analyse the school experiences of these young people, who White and Brockington referred to as the customers of British education. The authors present the criticisms and ideas put forward by these interviewees with the purpose of providing some data which may indicate some directions for improving pedagogy which may increase the number of children who will enjoy their education and succeed academically and socially. The interviews focused on aspects of secondary education, such as the subjects, the teachers, the relevance of the school experience in job preparation and what changes should be made in schools in order to make them more effective. All the interviews were recorded by tape cassette recorder. The authors' valuable qualitative data revealed a wealth of information, for example, some interviewees stressed the importance of communication. They believed that there was not enough

communication between teachers and pupils. They also believed that the schools ought to become more 'open' places where there is less competition and more emphasis on group work with all the teachers and pupils of all ages participating together in various activities, such as informal discussions. Others stressed the importance of a representative system where pupils could raise issues about their school through a 'Head Girl' or 'Head Boy' who would periodically meet with senior teachers to discuss pupil problems and ideas.

Those young people who disliked school stated that they found education too rigid, they were given too much work or had to obey too many rules. Others had problems at home which adversely affected their schooling. One teenage girl, for example, had a violent home background where her mother, sister and herself were regularly subjected to beatings by her step-father. The home situation worsened because her mother worked and, therefore, this young girl would truant from school to do the house work and shopping in order to make her mother happy. She believed that her mother did not care about her education and the school did very little about her truanting. She suggested that this lack of school pressuring or questioning her absenteeism was because the staff were sympathetic to her problems.

On issues relating to the curriculum, some of the interviewees believed that the school should not only teach reading and writing, but should also teach pupils about the world outside. One interviewee stated that school teaches you nothing about with the lives of mentally and physically handicapped people. Another suggested that schools should make politics one of their main subjects. He argued that when you leave school at 16 years you realise that politics is the most important thing in your life, as it affects your standard of living, your human rights, the availability of resources and education. Yet, he asserts, that one leaves school totally ignorant of the political system and its impact on one's life. However, one young lady stated that she appreciated her Religious Education teacher. She said

that he was 'broad minded' and would converse with them as friend-to-friend. He would talk to her class about life including marriage, divorce and other social affairs.

The discussion on teachers highlighted the importance of an effective teacher to be understanding, patient, know how to captivate pupils' attention through the use of materials and active learning, shows no biases, and is prepared to listen to pupils' opinions. However, there were those who had negative experiences with teachers including some who believed that their teachers thrived on embarrassing them, showed favouritism towards some pupils while ignoring the others, and yet others believed that their teachers used corporal punishment to frighten them.

Many of the interviewees found their schools very weak in the careers guidance department. Their careers experience at school usually consisted of a careers teacher giving them a limited list of job choices, such as the police force or the navy. Some noticed that the clever pupils were given prospectuses for universities, while others were simply asked to write down a list of jobs they were interested in. One interviewee stated that he did not even know how to fill in a claims form when he left school. However, some people believed that their schools were quite helpful in their quest for jobs. The help offered included discussing interview techniques, allowing pupils to gain some work experience and some schools even telephone companies, on behalf of their pupils, to enquire about job prospects.

Generally, White's and Brockington's study appear to suggest that many pupils believe that schools can become more effective if: (i) teachers and pupils develop better communication; (ii) pupils are allowed to participate in school decisions; (iii) the curriculum teaches pupils about life, such as politics; (iv) teachers behave in a more friendly manner, show patience and understanding; (v) schools offer more assistance in career guidance, such as allowing pupils to practice interview skills and helping

them to fill out forms. The authors, however, found that despite the criticisms of the education system, more than half of their interviewees felt that they had enjoyed school, and although this sample is not strictly 'representative' (the authors state that to have a 'representative' sample they would have had to interview many thousands of young people), they, nevertheless, believe that the valuable perceptions of these interviewees probably reflect the opinions of many thousands of young people in Britain. Thus, they argue that such perceptions may be of heuristic value in the development of school practices.

Other pedagogical studies have attempted to investigate the school experiences of persistent absentees and compared the data with the school experiences of good attenders (Reid, 1981, 1983a, 1983b, 1986b). Reid (1981) investigated the relationship between alienation and persistent absenteeism. He studied two secondary schools in South Wales and the pupils were divided into three groups, that is, 77 persistent absentees, 77 Control Group 1 pupils who are good attenders of similar ability, and 77 Control Group 2 pupils who are good attenders and considered to be bright academics. All the groups were matched for age and sex. Reid collected the data by administering various questionnaires to ascertain the population's measures on alienation via a School Opinion Questionnaire (Cohen, 1974). Analysis of the data suggest that significantly more absentees and Control Group 1 pupils felt uncomfortable, helpless and alienated from the school community than the academic pupils in Control Group 2. Reid also draws attention to the fact that more Control Group 1 pupils than absentees felt helpless. He explained that this might be due to the absentees tendency to withdraw from school and, therefore, their truancy behaviour may negate some of the negative feelings of the 'psychological' discomfort of schooling.

A further analysis of the data suggest that when compared with the two control groups significantly more absentees tended to dislike the school building because it

was too large, believed that their interests received very little protection when they were in conflict with school authorities, and they also tended to find school confusing and unsupportive when they needed help. However, Reid found that the absentees were similar to the other two groups in that only a few felt isolated in school.

Reid concluded that the data indicate that absentees showed greater patterns of alienation from their school than the two controls. However, caution must be taken here because with a closer examination of the data, Reid found that on at least one variable (i.e. can pupils influence their school?) the majority of all the pupils in all the groups were uncertain about how to respond to this question. He found that pupils were unable to grasp the concept of the question, and this was particularly true for the persistent absentees and the Control Group 1 pupils. Therefore, this data must be interpreted within its limitations. Reid, nevertheless, argues that if schools are to provide adequately for pupils with problems, such as persistent absentees, then they must become more supportive, show greater interest and more closely monitor pupils progress to ensure that they become successful pupils.

Reid (1983a, 1983b) studied persistent absentees and good absentees using a similar research design to Reid (1981). The purpose of his investigations was to assess non-school attenders reasons for missing school. His data suggest that many absentees missed school for a multiple of reasons including fear of being bullied, dislike of lessons, such as art and games, dislike of tests, and fear of punishment for breaking school rule, such as not wearing a uniform. Reid argues that absentees' perceptions of school may influence truancy behaviour. However, he does caution against interpreting the data because some of the absentees have a history of deviance which may make their perceptions somewhat unreliable. Nevertheless, the author herself believes that the data may implicate some institutional factors as influencing school disaffection, particularly in the light of the work by Hargreaves (1967), Hargreaves et

al. (1975) and Willis (1977) whose studies strongly suggest that school factors may also influence the development of deviant behaviours in pupils.

In a later study Reid (1989a) confirms further the influences of institutional factors on new-school attendance. When interviewing absentees, he found that most of them perceived their school experiences as the cause of their truancy. The school experiences which appear to affect adversely pupils include school transfers (at the age of 11 years), examinations, the teachers (e.g. teaching style and discipline) and the desire to simply leave school early. Reid argues that schools are losing their credibility in the eyes of their pupils through promoting unrealistic courses. He suggests that schools should establish special needs programmes that reflect more imagination, providing extra lessons in reading and writing, and there should be a closer monitoring of the curriculum.

Generally, the studies on pupils' perceptions of their educational experiences suggest that schools can become more effective if they: (i) encourage better communication between pupils and teachers; (ii) closely monitor their curricula, and consider pupils' likes and dislikes of subjects; (iii) make schooling more relevant to the 'real world'; (iv) develop better career provisions; (v) make pupils feel wanted and cared for by negating feelings of alienation, for example, through pastoral care; (vi) develop more stringent policies on bullying; (vii) make closer investigations of the psychological traumas of examinations and the fear of failure.

Furthermore, when comparing the data on pupils' perceptions of school with the data from the school-difference studies (e.g. Reynolds & Murgatroyd, 1977; Rutter et al., 1979) and pastoral care studies (e.g. Hamblin, 1981; Marland, 1983), the author finds that there appears to be much concurrence between the various types of studies. For example, they all argue for better teacher-pupil relationships, closer contact with the local community,

stress the importance of communication on both the academic and social levels, and highlight the need for closer investigations of school rules. Thus, the author believes that the pupils' opinions of their school experiences may further confirm the premise that institutional factors do influence pupil behaviour.

Quantitative Aspects of the Schools' Organization and Facilities

Several studies have investigated the physical and organizational factors of schools to assess their association with pupil achievement. Such work include Rutter et al. (1979) and Reynolds et al. (1980). They have analysed school factors in relation to school effectiveness. Much of these factors are to a great extent uncontrollable by the schools themselves, such as age of the building and class size (i.e. teacher-pupil ratio). The data on class size appear to suggest that it is unrelated to pupil success (Rutter et al., 1979). In relation to school size, the data appear to be contradictory, Rutter et al. (1979) and Reynolds et al. (1980) argue that this variable is not related to success. However, Reid's (1981) study, albeit from a different perspective (i.e. the pupils'), suggests that persistent absentees tend to dislike their school building because of its large size. It also appears that the age of the school building may not be related to school effectiveness (Reynolds et al., 1980; Rutter et al., 1979). However, the adequacy of the building in terms of its maintenance might be related to school outcome. Rutter et al., for example, found that schools with relatively few signs of vandalism were associated with pupil success.

However, there appears to be a relatively close association between school effectiveness and school factors which can be controlled by the schools, for example, the school uniform and the enforcement of school rules (Reynolds et al., 1980; Reynolds & Murgatroyd, 1977).

Briefly, the mainstream critiques argue that school variables may influence pupil disaffection. They suggest

that disaffection can be combated if schools are prepared to show higher expectations for all their pupils, emphasize work-orientated lessons, encourage pupil participation in school activities, use effective rewards, such as public acknowledgments, create a positive learning environment, adapt a curriculum with a more child-centred approach, organise effective pastoral care, assist teachers in coping with stress through counselling and improved working conditions, and show greater appreciation of pupils' perceptions of their schools. Acton (1980) comments on the political implications of these pedagogical studies. He suggests that even if schools did successfully implement a positive teaching environment which raised the academic levels of the pupils: what would that mean to society? Acton asserts that this would mean that society would have to find more and better jobs for these 'well' qualified school leavers, and it would also mean more funds will have to be available to support the increase in the number of students entering higher education. However, he suggests that the most probable outcome would be that society will not provide these greater opportunities, instead it will simply increase the competition for such resources because of the increased number of successful pupils. Furthermore, he doubts whether school difference research will actually inspire teachers to do better because much of these research models are not consist in their descriptions of the teacher-pupil interactions (Rosenshine, 1970). Acton also states that in many cases it may be difficult to persuade disaffected pupils that gaining, say, four CSEs is any more beneficial than two.

However, the implications of this research must be understood within its limitations. For example, much of the work ignores the fact that teachers' and pupils' experiences within the same school may vary from class to class (Hargreaves, 1980). The literature also tends to base its evidence on a relatively narrow range of school variables, for example, Reynolds and Murgatroyd (1977) analysed school rules, but ignored the teacher-pupil classroom interactions, and although Rutter et al. (1979) studied a wider range of

school variables which included classroom interactions and the school ethos, they, nonetheless, used only one indicator of school success, that is, examination passes, without assessing pupils' perceptions of the schools. However, there is much work to be undertaken if we hope to widen our view of schooling as an important determinant of pupil demeanour. Reynolds (1982) has suggested that future research may have to compare primary school variables with secondary school variables and analyse their efficacy on pupil outcomes, and also assess what outside factors help to establish effective schools, such factors may include LEA policies or community relationships.

The Relevance of the Literature to the Present Action Research Project

1. To evaluate non-school attenders attitudes towards their education and how they perceive the school's opinion of their special needs programmes.
2. To study the use of school rules and examine pupils' attitudes towards their school's ethos.
3. The research will assess the effects of teaching styles on the behaviour of disaffected pupils.
4. To assess whether or not pupils consider their schools as democratic to the extent of including students in the decision-making process.
5. To assess the link between the community and the school.
6. The research will examine the how much out-of-classroom activities are included in the pupils' timetable.
7. Study how much of the school timetable is devoted to pupil work experience.

Here the mainstream critiques strongly argue that schools do matter which, in turn, implies that they must reorganise their curricula if they hope to provide more

effective education. The mainstream critiques suggest that effective schools are associated with academic-orientated lessons, greater pupil participation in the running of schools and closer parent-teacher relationships. However, their approach to the management of non-school attendance is only one perspective on this issue. For example, many LEAs and schools have opted for 'off-site' behavioural units which some authors (e.g. White, 1980) believe can provide heuristic models to be incorporated into mainstream school. While others are concerned that the rapidly growing special unit industry reflects an increasing danger that schools are using these units as sin-bins in order to avoid their own responsibilities (Newell, 1980). Thus, in the following part of this chapter the discussion will focus on the managerial methods of special educational units, truancy centres and other alternative curricula in terms of their successes, limitations and future implications.

Part III: The Management Strategies By LEAs and Special Centres for Dealing with Non-School Attendance and Associated Problems

The literature suggest that LEAs vary in their policies on dealing with disruption, absenteeism and underachievement. Such policies are usually a significant factors in the allocation of resources (Young, Lawrence & Steed, 1979, 1980). Young et al. (1979) studied 49 LEA responses to questionnaires concerned with their policies on disruption in secondary schools. They found that the characteristic of an authority's tended to be related to its definition of the problem of disruption. Where the definition is global, then it includes a conglomeration of behaviour (e.g. truancy) and institutional factors (e.g. lack of school counselling facilities). Therefore, such LEAs tend to establish policies which tend to cover a wide spectrum of school activities and make recommendations along these lines. The LEAs also tended to support the modifications of school activities to include a greater emphasis on pastoral care and remedial education as a means of preventing frustration and failure in potentially

disruptive children. Conversely, those authorities that define disruption as directly related to problem pupils themselves, tend to emphasize the importance of early screening procedures and try to 'treat' such pupils by placing them into off-site units where they receive special educational programmes including more individual teaching and counselling. Young et al. argue that those LEAs which tended to emphasize the modification of the school also tended to be less helpful in a crisis situation, such as when a pupil has been violent towards teachers or other pupils. However, the LEAs which tended to use special units would usually remove the violent pupil to a unit as an emergency measure. However, the authors argue that this general emphasis by LEAs towards more counsellors, remedial staff and special units tended to be practised at the expense of investigating the quality and nature of the work undertaken. Young et al. concluded that despite the Warnock Report (1978) which emphasizes the integration of special needs pupils into ordinary schools, there appears to be a growing preference towards the use of off-site special-units where disruptive pupils are separated from ordinary school classes for varying periods of time.

In a later paper Young et al. (1980) studied the reasons for LEAs establishing special units, and the advantages and disadvantages of these units. Their data are based on the collection of LEA responses to a questionnaire administered during an earlier study (Young et al., 1979). The information indicated that LEAs used various exploratory procedures before establishing the units. These procedures included defining the problem (e.g. violent behaviour, truancy or school phobia), and then preparing a report on the possible use of various managerial strategies (e.g. suspension and special units). Such reports usually led to the acceptance of special units. Young found that this acceptance of special units was usually influenced by the expressed concern of the police and magistrates in the cases of vandalism and other forms of delinquency, and pressure from large organizations, such as teachers' unions, parents and Social Services. The perceived benefits of these units

by the LEAs greater support for disruptive children via the arrangement of low teacher-pupil ratios; flexible timetables which can be modified to meet the pupils' needs; and the use of youth workers which may extend the opportunities for pupils to socialise. The disadvantages include high costs in terms of low teacher-pupil ratios, the long-term effects of these units have not yet been proven, and problems tend to arise when transferring pupils from the units back to ordinary schools - it is believed that these problems are the consequence of pupils being unable to readjust to a more structured school life (Reid, 1982d).

The type of children who attend these units tend come from the 14- to 16-year age group and tend to be seen as having special needs in that they require social skills training to help them come to terms with their problem behaviours.

Young et al. argue that these off-site units cater for children who regarded by the schools as unsuitable for their curriculum because such pupils exhibit 'intolerable' behaviour (e.g. aggression). Thus, this may give rise to the notion that these units are perceived as penal centres. Young et al. found that this notion caused some concern among LEAs who stressed that the units are not centres of containment and yet the authors found that many of the letters from LEAs to parents stating that their child is being considered for placement on a unit penal reasons, such as 'the child's behaviour can not be tolerated any longer.' Thus, the authors conclude that because units may appear to offer a quasi-penological form of management for difficult and anti-social adolescents, then the future of these off-site units may have to be considered carefully as they may be vulnerable to abuse by both the educational and legal systems who may just simply want the convenient removal of problem pupils from mainstream schooling.

Her Majesty's Inspectorate (HMI, 1978) conducted a major survey in England and Wales on 239 special units with 3,962 possible places. One of the main features studied was

the actual number of pupils attending these units. The survey revealed that among the 108 units actually visited by the HMIs there was a total of 1,890 pupils, of which 469 (24.8 per cent) attended the units which only ran full-time programmes and 655 (34.7 per cent) attended units which were exclusively part-time. The remainder, that is 766 (40.5 per cent) pupils, attended units which took both part- and full-time pupils. Children of junior age (i.e. 8 to 11 years) were represented in 12 per cent of the units and pupils of secondary age (i.e. 11+ to 16 years) were present in 97 per cent of the units. The average length of stay at the unit, by the pupils, was one year and the problems that the units attempted to deal with included disruptive pupils, the emotionally disturbed, school refusals, truants and pupils suspended from school. The survey indicate that the average pupil attendance to these units was 83 per cent which the HMI believes is probably higher than when such pupils attend mainstream school because many were very poor attenders at school.

The educational programmes in many of the units included a high incidence of remedial work in English and mathematics to cater for the underachievement of their pupils. Such therapy usually involved the assessment, via observation, of the behavioural patterns of individual pupils to ascertain any changes in behaviour. The units also tended to use a children's behavioural scale (Rutter, 1967) to assess teachers' opinions of their pupils' behavioural patterns. The units tended to use a system of awarding points for good work and improved behaviour in order to encourage positive attitudes towards their (pupils) programmes and other people.

The ACE (1984) conducted a survey on the methods which LEAs use to combat non-school attendance. They administered questionnaires to several LEAs in England and Wales. The ACE found that during the initial stages of truancy, several LEAs (e.g. Bradford and Buckinghamshire) would increase pressure on the parents concerned by verbal and written warnings, and visits from EWOs. With respect to

Attendance Panels, ACE found that LEAs tend to differ in their use of these panels. Avon, for example, has a committee hearing to discuss problems with children and their parents. In Buckinghamshire the panels conducted interviews with parents and children at which legal proceedings are threatened, and in Cleveland parents and children go before a School Attendance Sub-Committee which can authorise prosecution.

In another survey carried out by the ACE with the National Association for Multiracial Education (NAME) (1981) they focused on the use of disruptive units in 84 United Kingdom (UK) local authorities. According to the responses to the ACE/NAME questionnaires received from 59 LEAs, there are about 439 units offering 6,766 places. When compared with the HMI survey, which indicated that there were 3,962 unit places in England and Wales in 1978, the data suggest that the number of disruptive unit places has increased by 71 per cent. The authors argue that this dramatic increase in the expansion of disruptive units is a manifestation of the increasing tendency to label and segregates pupils who do not conform to conventional school standards. They state that teachers and LEA professionals tend to blame the increased 'need' for these units on the pupils' experiences of social deprivation, including low interest of parents, low literacy level at home, and low aspirations. When the social deprivation argument is applied to children from ethnic minority groups, then poor self-image as a result of racial discrimination by the dominant (white) group.

The authors suggest that such 'psychological' explanations have encouraged a management approach that perpetuates ordinary school curricula and protects them from criticism. They suggest further that other factors should be considered, such as relatively high youth unemployment which may destroy the pupils' incentives to achieve in school. The authors also point out some possible dangers of these behavioural units:

1. There is a possibility that some schools use the units as

a first resort when a reappraisal of the mainstream curriculum may be all that is needed to manage disruptive pupils. The authors also argue that it is quite possible that some pupils become disruptive because of boredom with school.

2. The LEAs are rather inconsistent in their reasons for referring pupils to the units. For example, Staffordshire referred pupils with emotional and social problems, and Kent stated it used the units for pupils exhibiting 'unacceptable' behaviour. The HMI also presented a lack of precision in defining 'disruption' which encompassed a variety of behaviours, such as school phobia, truancy and emotional disturbance.
3. There are fears among black parents that racial discrimination is leading to a disproportionately large number of students, from ethnic minority groups, being placed on these units. In Birmingham, for example, although black children make up only 10 per cent of the school population, over half the children referred to these units are black. The ACE/NAME suggests that this discrimination occurs because education is constructed by white middle class standards which alienates black pupils.
4. Parents and pupils have no choice in the matter of referrals to units. Although the HMI and the ACE/NAME found that most LEAs contacted parents at the time of referral, none of them indicated that parents and pupils had the option of refusing a referral to a unit once the LEA officials had decided on a placement. The referral system varies considerable with some referrals made through a committee of senior staff, while others use referral systems educational psychologists, social workers and probation officers.
5. Once labelled as disruptive, many pupils are rarely given the opportunity to return to mainstream school.

6. The units may offer an inferior education which is based on a narrow curriculum with a heavy emphasis on remedial work.
7. Many units emphasize the use of behaviour modification techniques. However, the authors argue that there are dangers in the use of these techniques including the fact that teachers control the assessment of behaviour, decide how it should be altered and design a programme to increase the desired behaviour; and the behaviour therapy states nothing about education.

The ACE/NAME concluded that the limitations of these units and the possible changes points a way for possible abuse (a point which is further confirmed by Young et al., 1980), and, therefore, the authors argue against the use of these units as an expanding form of educational provision.

Newell (1980) argues in his review of the literature on disruptive units that the expansion of the special unit industry must be seen in the context of the school system's tendency to label and segregate larger and larger numbers of pupils. He asserts that of course some pupils are disruptive, but the schools are also partly to blame because many of them retain practices that attempt to establish conformity and, therefore, face the consequences of apathy and rejection from pupils. He argues that it is these schools that should be labelled as disruptive and not the students.

Newell believes that what is needed is alternative schools within the maintained system. Such schools would safeguard children from being placed into segregated units. These alternative schools should reflect several principles including: (i) they should be non-fee paying; (ii) should be non-selective on the grounds of aptitude; (iii) they must give the community any details on their organization, methods and goals; (iv) they should not discriminate on the grounds of religion, sex or race; (v) the governing bodies should include representatives from the community and the

'world of education'. He believes that this more integrated approach would be more democratic, open, non-violent and non-hierarchical. Apparently such schools already exist in New Zealand, Australia and the United States.

Generally, the literature suggests that LEAs are increasingly relying on the off-site unit provision to manage disruptive pupils. Some authorities (e.g. ACE/NAME, 1981) argue that this separatist policy can be dangerous because it may lead to many schools trying to use the units as convenient sin-bins to contain 'difficult' pupils.

Truancy Centres and Alternative Curriculum

White (1980) describes a special unit called the Bayswater Centre which was established to provide full-time education for adolescents aged between 14 and 15 years who are described as being either 'phobic', 'disruptive' or 'maladjusted'. The aim of the Centre is to provide a 'meaningful' educational programme that would be positively accepted by the disaffected pupils. White interviewed pupils at the Centre and their parents, and administered questionnaires to students who helped at the Centre. This study was carried out in order to ascertain the type of curricular models that may effectively deal with the needs of non-school attenders. The analysis of the data suggest that a successful curriculum must reflect three elements:

1. Responsibility: the Centre encouraged pupils to take the responsibility for caring and maintaining equipment, and managing their own education. The Centre believed that this pupil role helped the adolescents to develop a sense of self-determination and a positive self-image.
2. Articulation: pupils were encouraged to articulate with both staff and peers by allowing them to discuss any topic of interest during lessons, such as fashion, club activities and food.
3. Relevant education: with the guidance of the teachers, pupils draw up their own weekly timetables which they

feel reflects their own needs. The timetables included typing, climbing, community work, English and Mathematics.

Each working group usually consisted of about seven children and two teachers. This arrangement allowed the staff to give individual pupils greater attention in both their academic and 'creative' work. The Centre also encouraged parental support through regular contact via telephones, letters and home visits. The staff believed that parent support was vital pupil school attendance is to improve. Other crucial factors in the Centre's approach included simply accepting pupils as they are. The staff advocate that the pupils were 'unconditionally' accepted with whatever clothes they chose to wear and whatever habits they have, such as smoking or swearing. The Centre believes that their acceptance of the adolescents, as they are, is a prerequisite for the children learning to accept themselves. This approach is considered as necessary because many of the truants at the Centre demonstrated low self-esteem, low opinions of their academic abilities and the unwillingness to try anything new in case they fail yet again. This characteristic of low self-concept among truants is also noted by other authorities in the literature (Cooper, 1984; Reid, 1982a, 1984a). The staff further argued that their willingness to 'unconditional' acceptance of pupils usually led to the pupils increase in understanding their limits working towards improving themselves academically (e.g. in reading and writing), in terms of conversational skills and self-image. However, White admits that it is difficult to assess this change in pupils' self-confidence, but the Centre usually assesses pupils' 'increase' in self-worth via the pupils exhibiting an increased willingness to accept that other people have different opinions to themselves, and their gradual learning of seeing things from other people's perspectives. This process is, thought by the Centre, achieved through counselling and staff acceptance of pupils personalities.

White argues that units like the Bayswater Centre may

provide some heuristic value for future curricular models in the mainstream educational system. He asserts that off-site special units are expensive to run and can only provide for a very limited number of 'problem' pupils. Therefore, the ethos of these special units can offer a framework for exploring new educational approaches within schools. He argues that such approaches should emphasize pupil participation in the curricular structure, increase self-awareness, and possess a detailed knowledge about pupils' backgrounds to enable schools to appreciate any problems which the pupils may experience from time to time. White draws attention to the fact that the Centre succeeded in the sense that it helped pupils to increase their self-worth, improve their school attendance and many successfully attained jobs and college places after leaving the Centre at the age of 16 years. However, there were 'failures' which included some pupils being referred to remand homes or detention centres for delinquency (e.g. stealing). Furthermore, the measurement of the Centre's success is also limited because there is no criterion of examination achievement which might give some objective measure of the pupils' academic performances. However, despite these limitations, White argues that given the fact that many of these cases became more self-assured, then there may be some grounds for further exploration in the models used by special units which may give mainstream schools a deeper insight into the needs of persistent absentees.

Other authors have studied alternative curricula which are established within schools to cater for the needs of underachievers. Clare (1986), for example, observed such a curriculum in a German secondary school. The aim of this Alternative Curriculum (AC) was to make school seem more relevant by offering underachievers exercises that would prepare them for the real world of work through emphasizing academic work, technical courses and work experience. He observed that at the age of 14 years each AC pupil had to decide what type of work he or she is interested in. The school then approaches the employers. The AC pupils usually

spend about four hours a week on work experience and this timetabling last for two years (i.e. 4th and 5th years). Clare argues that this timetabling of work experience compares favourably with British schools where most pupils only receive about one weeks work experience during their school lives. Most of the AC pupils acquire their work experiences through working at a local German chemical factory where they work alongside company apprentices and technicians. This experience allows the pupils to get a feel of what the company has to offer and also provides the AC pupils with a guideline for their own careers. Clare felt that the academic emphasis of the AC was quite impressive. For example, to achieve a school certificate the AC pupils have to achieve a satisfactory standard in several subjects including mathematics, German, physics and biology. When analysing the term 'satisfactory standard', Clare points out the fact that according to the National Institute of Economics and Social Research (NIESR) the underachievers in Germany, at the age of 15 years, were at least two years ahead of their English counterparts in mathematics. Thus, suggesting that this 'satisfactory standard' in German schools is relatively high. He also argues that the AC's emphasis on intertwining the two elements of education and vocational preparation may provide a 'high quality' academic programme for the bottom 40 per cent of British pupils which may offer them a variety of instructions and training pertinent to their interests, abilities and aptitudes.

The Management of Underachievement

It has been well establish that underachievement tends to be associated with persistent absenteeism (Fogelman et al., 1980; Galloway, 1980; Jardine, 1987; May, 1975; Reid, 1982a, 1985, 1986a; Tyerman, 1958, 1968). The term underachievement usually refers to pupils who show slow academic progress when compared with most pupils of their age group (Clare, 1986; Mortimore, 1982; Warnock Report, 1978). Thus, the issue of interest here is to assess the responses of the various governments and educators to the problems of underachievers since the mass introduction of comprehensive schooling in the early 1970's.

Prior to the mass introduction of comprehensive schooling, the Newsom Report (1963) was conducted to consider the education for pupils, aged between 13 and 16 years, who were believed to have average or below average academic ability. The data for this Report were collected on over 6,000 pupils which included a cross-section of all abilities from the brightest to the weakest. Information was collected via questionnaires completed by headteachers and pupils in various English schools. The questionnaires contained information about the pupils' abilities, and home and school backgrounds. All the pupils in this study were given reading tests developed by the Ministry of Education (see Newsom Report, 1963). When comparing the least able children with the brighter ones, the Report findings suggest that the former tended to be physically smaller, tended to come from larger families, were more likely to be persistent absentees, and less likely to be given homework.

The Report also found that many of the distinctive school courses (e.g. technical courses) for the over 15-year olds were designed for the brighter pupils, with the consequence of the schools experiencing disinterests among the below average pupils probably because they feel that the schools lack interest in their needs. Such pupils appear to be bored with their curriculum and felt that school was pointless because they would be leaving with nothing in terms of qualifications.

Based on this empirical work, the Report postulated several recommendations in order to make school more effective for underachievers. These recommendations include:

1. The school leaving age for all pupils should be raised from 15 to 16 years. The Report stipulates that the raising of the school leaving age will increase the educational opportunities, especially for those children who show slow progress.
2. All schools should provide a wide choice of programmes

including a range of courses which reflect the vocational interests of the pupils. Schools should make education a more creative experience through art, and the personal and social development of pupils. Excessive streaming of pupils should be avoided in order to negate the effects of the stigmatising of underachievers, and particularly in the final year, groups should be organised according to subject or course choices.

3. Local authorities should take a greater interest in the provision of residential courses available for all pupils, especially during their final two years at school.
4. Adolescent pupils should receive 'positive' guidance on sexual behaviour. This should include the biological, social and personal aspects. The social mixing of boys and girls should be encouraged within the educational environment.
5. There should be more tenacious links between schools, the youth employment services and adult organizations. The Report believes that such links would provide greater opportunities for pupils to experience the real world of work and leisure.
6. The provision for practical subjects should be reappraised to include extended workshops and technical facilities, such as televisions and audio-visual aids.

The Report argues that below average ability pupils tend to come from socially disadvantaged backgrounds and receive less than their fair share of the educational resources. It, therefore, concluded that if society is to address the problems experienced by underachievers then more resources should be invested into their education because their future role, politically, socially and economically, is vital to the nation.

Benn and Simon (1972) investigated the comprehensive

schooling in Britain to ascertain, among other things, how pupils of different academic abilities are organised in the curriculum. Their data which were collected from various headteachers throughout Britain indicate that many of the comprehensive schools use a 'broad ability band' system as opposed to the rigidly selective system of the secondary schools (see Hargreaves, 1967). This 'broader' form of organising is a coarse modification of streaming and is regarded by the authors as a transitional stage towards non-streaming. For instance instead of dividing 1st year pupils into rigid forms of, say, 12 divisions, The school may use three broad bands with 'A' band consisting of four classes, 'B' band consisting of five classes and 'C' band consisting of four remedial classes. Within these bands pupils are graded into streams or arranged into 'parallel' forms. However, although streaming in the 1970's had been modified to a more 'flexible' system, nevertheless, underachievers were still being separated from the rest of the school population.

The mid 1970's saw the decline in the world economy which was reflected by a rapid increase in British youth unemployment (Finn, 1987). Finn argues that this increase in youth unemployment caused fears among the Government of the possible political and social unrest that might follow prolonged unemployment. This spurred the Government to develop an employment centre called the Manpower Service Commission (MSC) and also increased the pressures on schools to be more responsive to the needs of industry. Finn asserts that the main aim of these policies was to ensure that the young people would be employable and effective workers when they did eventually get jobs. The MSC, for example, was created by the Employment and Training Act 1973, which gave it the power to assist and train people for jobs, and to assist employers in finding suitable employees (Finn, 1987). One of the schemes introduced by the MSC was the Youth Opportunity Programme (YOP) which was created to create people for work. This scheme is restricted to the 16 to 18 year olds who receive financial allowances while on the YOP course. The course may include six months work experience on

employers premises (e.g. mechanic), or one year in training workshops or community services. The subsequent expansion of the MSC programmes have had an impact on the education sector with the 1980's accompanied by many schools and colleges establishing work-orientated courses. The MSC (1988) has listed some of these courses which include:

(i) the Technical and Vocational Educational Initiative (TVEI) which is a scheme to give pupils the opportunity to cover courses, such as the GCSE and business courses (e.g. Business and Technical Education Council (BTEC)); (ii) the Youth Training Scheme (YTS) which offers work experience (e.g. paint and decorating) to students aged between 16 and 17 years; (iii) Certificate of Pre-Vocational Education (CPVE) which is a one year course taken by 16+ year olds and is meant to give students practical experience in business, industry, administration and production.

Finn argues that these differential levels of curricula have simply reinforce rather than challenge academic hierarchies, with the pupils who are taking 'O' and 'A' level courses at the top of the academic scale, followed by the BTEC, TVEI and CPVE, and at the bottom of the meritocratic scale is the YTS programme which mainly trains pupils in non-professional jobs (e.g. bakery). On the YTS scheme the trainees work full-time for an employer while receiving as their income the equivalent to state benefits instead of the better rate of pay of an apprenticeship. Finn argues that this YTS programme is simply a process used to subordinate non-academic working-class pupils to a training that turns them into suitable packages for potential employers. Finn further argues that many teachers, pupils and parents are now sceptical about this YTS scheme which proclaims to meet the needs of trainees. He asserts that this scepticism of the YTS has led many young people to reject its ideology and it has instead increased the number of adolescents who are opting either for continued full-time education, or they simply oscillate between low paid, monotonous work and periods of unemployment probably because neither conditions are tolerable for long periods of time.

Finn argues that in the 1980's many young working-class people need protection from exploitation. He states that despite the campaign to create equal educational opportunities, through the raising of the school leaving age and the comprehensive reorganization of schools, the Government has failed to deliver all its promises, with pupils receiving irrelevant or oppressive training courses which very rarely lead to permanent and meaningful employment. He suggests that more adequate training courses for school leavers should be structured on a different line to the YTS with greater emphasis on the acquisition of practical skills (e.g. computing), democratic participation and properly negotiated rates of pay. Finn concludes that if these alternative courses to education and training are not established for the genuine advancement of young people then many working-class pupils, and their parents, will become increasingly discontented with the MSC's training programmes which may not necessarily lead to jobs.

The Relevance of the Literature to the Present Action Research Project

1. The author will study the educational programmes offered by the special units for disaffected pupils to assess their relevance to the pupils' needs and vocational interests.
2. to assess the teaching material used by special educational programmes to help pupils combat any learning difficulties which might experience.
3. The author will study the methods used by these units to help their pupils to reintegrate into mainstream schooling.
4. To evaluate the technique of behaviour modification used in these special units and study its consequence on the behaviour and attitudes of disaffected pupils.

Generally, the literature suggests that many LEAs and schools have established strategies for managing persistent

school absenteeism and underachievement. Many emphasize the need for pastoral care and remedial teaching, where as others emphasize the need for special units, truancy centres and alternative curricula. However, some authorities (e.g. Reid, 1982d) have warned that the unstructured approach of these special units may make the pupils' successful return, to the more traditional mainstream schooling, a very difficult task for all concerned, especially for the pupils themselves. Future training programmes (e.g. YTS) for students may have to be reappraised to include more emphasis on practical skills that will lead to genuine advancement of the young people, especially those who are considered by teachers as having learning difficulties.

So far in this chapter the discussion on schooling has focused on studies which have suggested that schools do influence pupil outcomes and on the studies on various managerial techniques used by institutions to manage disruptive pupils. However, many would agree that none of these studies could hope to influence our education system without the support and recognition of our politicians who control the country's resources. Therefore, in the following section the discussion will focus on how the Government has responded to the special needs of school children (i.e. the 1988 Education Reform Act) and whether such political responses have been in accordance with the advice from the mainstream researchers (e.g. Hargreaves Report, 1984; Mortimore et al., 1988; Reid et al., 1987; Reynolds et al., 1979; Rutter et al., 1979).

Part IV: The 1988 Education Reform Act and the National Curriculum and the Future Implications for the Schooling of Non-School Attenders and Underachievers

In this sub-section the author will discuss the possible future schooling environment as proposed by the 1988 Education Reform Act. She will attempt to assess the importance of this Act in relation to: (i) How far does it cater for pupils with special educational needs? (ii) How

far does the Act reflect the pedagogical concepts that should be developed according to the educational critiques (e.g. Reid, White, Hargreaves, Holt, & Willis)? (iii) What are the implications of the Act for the future school population, especially for persistent absentees?

The Political Background to the 1988 Education Reform Act

The adolescent generation have increasingly attracted public attention over the past few decades, particularly the increase in street violence and youth unemployment (Muncie, 1984; Reid, 1986a). Muncie argues that this general concern with youth violence has been amplified by the media frequently portraying teenagers as having lack of respect for authority, and associating them with drug abuse, football hooliganism, street riots, truancy and vandalism. Youths are increasingly being seen as a social problem which is partly confirmed by the fact that in the 1980's more young people are being arrested and placed into custody than ever before (Muncie, 1984).

This increased attention on the 'delinquent' behaviour of the adolescent population has caused a resurgence of interest among educational authorities, parents, politicians, and the general public in the behaviour of the youth (Muncie, 1984; Reid, 1986a). The media, in particular, began to claim that indiscipline in the schools was to blame for the deteriorating behaviour of the young generation (Muncie, 1984). Much of this blame on education may stem from the fact that Britain had invested a vast per capita sum into education in the 1960's, motivated by both the increased demands to enhance the aspirations of 'ordinary people' and to enhance economic growth (Simon, 1988; White, 1980). However, despite the country's generous investment into education, the economic crises of the 1970's was accompanied by mass unemployment particularly among the young and also by increasingly dissatisfied industrialists who claimed that schools were 'failing' to equip young people with the necessary skills for industry (Simon, 1988). With this shaken confidence in education, the teachers became the scapegoats for the country's decline (Muncie,

1984; Reid, 1986a; Simon, 1988). Subsequently, many in Britain are questioning the type of education that children are receiving and how this may affect the increase in pupil disaffection and deviant behaviour. Thus, some authorities believe that it is this general concern with the 'decline' in educational standards and the 'deteriorating' behaviour of the adolescents which has, at least partly, provided the political forum for the present Government's interest in attempting to reform the educational system (Simon, 1988). Simon argues that the Government has capitalised on people's general dissatisfaction with the present educational system where young people are believed to be exhibiting violence, disruption and underachievement. therefore, in Simon's view the Government is using its reform bill primarily as a springboard to increasing their chances of winning the next election.

However, the Government holds a different stance on the issue of its educational reform and argues that this reform is an attempt to reappraise the system in order to improve standards of education, particularly at the secondary school level. Therefore, it introduced the 1988 Education Reform Act to provide a national curriculum for pupils aged between five and 16 years who attend maintained schools throughout England and Wales. The Education Secretary, Kenneth Baker, announced that this national curriculum would best serve the interests of children in Britain and also raise the standard of education to those enjoyed by France and Germany who also use national standard syllabuses (Lawton & Chitty, 1987). The DES (1987), therefore, presents several arguments in support of the national curriculum including:

- a) The Government believes that a national curriculum will improve the standard of attainment among the 5 to 16 year olds throughout England and Wales.
- b) to equip pupils with the necessary qualifications for the employment market.

- c) To ensure that all pupils regardless of sex, ethnic origin and geographical location, have access to broadly the same curriculum.
- d) To secure that the curriculum offered in all state schools has sufficient in common to enable children to move from one region of the country to another with minimum disruption to their education. The national curriculum may also secure the continuity and coherence within and between primary and secondary education,
- e) Schools will be better able to evaluate the progress of their pupils against local and national target figures as assessed by regular testing. The Government argue that these tests will also serve as forms of diagnostic assessments so that pupils who are experiencing difficulties can be given special attention. Furthermore, parents will be able to judge their children's progress against the agreed national targets and will also be able to judge the performance of their children's school.

The 1988 Act states several provisions including:

The National Curriculum

It is the responsibility of the Secretary of State, the LEA and headteachers to ensure that all maintained schools fulfil the requirements of the national curriculum, that is, to provide a broadly based curriculum which promotes the spiritual, moral, cultural, cognitive and physical development of pupils, and to prepare pupils for the responsibility of adult life.

The national curriculum is comprised of the core and foundation subjects, and religious education. The core subjects are mathematics, English and science, and the foundation subjects include history, geography, technology, music art, and physical education. All pupils will be assessed mainly on the core subjects and some foundation subjects near the end of each key stage to ascertain their attainment targets for that stage. The key stages for

testing pupils are at seven, 11, 14 and 16 years of age.

Under this Act there will be the establishment of councils including the National Curriculum Council, and the School Examination and Assessment Council. Each council will consist of between ten and 15 members appointed by the Secretary of State. The function of the National Curriculum Council is to review all developments of the national curriculum for maintained schools to advise the Secretary of State on matters relating to the curriculum, to assist the Secretary of State on matters concerning pedagogical research programmes, and to assist in the publication of the curriculum. The functions of the School examination and Assessment Council includes keeping all aspects of examinations and assessments under review, advise the Secretary of State on matters concerning the examination and assessment procedures, to advise the Secretary on research relating to assessment and examination procedures, and to assist in the publication of information relating to examinations and assessment.

The Components of the National Curriculum and Assessment Procedures

As already mentioned the national curriculum of the core subjects, such as English, mathematics and science, and the foundation subjects will include history, art and geography. Here the author will discuss how the framework of the curriculum will operate in schools.

Programmes of Study

The programmes of study should reflect the attainment targets, and develop the skills and knowledge relevant to pupils needs. The DES (1987) states that the GCSE syllabuses may have to be revised in order to reflect the requirements of the national curriculum.

The framework of the study programmes are mainly based on a report chaired by Professor Black (Task Group on Assessment and Testing (TGAT), 1987). The primary purpose of TGAT was to devise models of study and assessment that would

adequately reflect the performances of the pupils within the national curriculum. The TGAT report proposed several recommendations for the attainment targets for each subject. For example, in the national curriculum for science the Report recommended seventeen attainment targets for pupils aged between seven and 11 years, and 22 attainment targets for pupils aged between 11 and 16 years. The Science Working Party (1988a) suggests that each attainment target should be divided into ten levels. For instance, at Attainment Target 3 the programme of study is 'Genetics and Evolution'. At Level 1 pupils should know that there is a variety of living things, at Level 6 they should know that hereditary characteristics are passed from one generation to the next in the form of genes, and at Level 10 pupils should understand the principles of Deoxyribonucleic Acid (DNA) replication, monohybrid crosses and the principles of genetic engineering in relation to the syntheses of hormones and drugs.

For the teaching of English, the Report recommends six broad attainment targets (see English Working Group, DES, 1988b). Each attainment target is divided into five levels. For example, in Attainment Target II, the study programme is 'Spelling'. At Level 1 pupils should begin to understand the difference between numbers and letters, at Level 2 they should know the alphabet, and at Level 5 the pupils should be able to spell a fairly wide range of words.

The Report recommends twelve attainment targets for the teaching of mathematics (see Mathematics Working Group, DES, 1988c). The working group has divided the attainment targets into three profile components: (i) understanding numbers, algebra and measurements; (ii) knowledge in shape, space and data handling; (iii) practical applications in mathematics, such as interpreting data. For example, Attainment Target 1 deals with the first component where pupils learn a study programme which is based on understanding numbers and number symbols. Attainment Target 8 embraces the second component where the study programme is based on shapes and space which includes an study of the

properties of circles and triangles. Attainment 10 encompasses the third component where the study programme is based on pupils learning the practical skills of collecting, recording and processing data.

The detail and organization of the study programme will be the responsibility of the teachers. The DES (1987) suggests that schools should set out schemes of work for the teaching of the various stages in order to improve coordination. The Government believes that by giving the teachers the scope to organise the curriculum, the schools will be able to incorporate other programmes, such as the TVEI within the national curriculum framework.

Assessment and Examinations

Pupils will be assessed on the core and foundation subjects at the various key stages, that is seven, 11, 14 and 16 years. However, for those pupils who will be taking the GCSE at the age of 16 years, then their performance on this examination will provide the main means of assessment. Exactly how the key stages will be assessed is yet to be evaluated by the TGAT.

Availability of Information

Pupils and parents will be informed about the contents of the school curriculum and how it relates to the attainment targets. The attainment targets as assessed via examinations will be published to allow the schools, parents, employers and the local community to assess the performance of the local schools and other LEAs.

Special Needs

Each National Curriculum Working Party has made some recommendations for creating study programmes for pupils with special needs. The Mathematics Working Group describes children with special needs as those pupils whose abilities lie at either end of a normal distribution. For example, 11-year-old pupils who show mathematical attainment characteristics that are similar to most pupils of their own age would be classified as normal. However, if such pupils

have mathematical abilities similar to those of an average 14-year-old or of an average 8-year-old then they are defined by the group as special needs. The Group suggests that about 20 per cent of the pupil population have severe learning difficulties. This group encompasses a wide variety of children including epileptics, conduct disorders, the deaf, the visually impaired and slow learners.

The Working Party recommends that as far as possible children special educational needs should remain within the mainstream framework of attainment targets and programmes of study. Although the Group does suggest that the teaching scheme should be modified to meet the special needs of pupils, it does not indicate what form these modifications should take within the study programmes. Both the Science and English Working Groups use the term 'special needs' in a similar fashion to that of the Mathematics Working Group. The Science Group recommend that children with special needs should work within the framework of attainment targets because the Group believes that such targets may encourage special needs pupils to develop and promote personal qualities, such as self-esteem. However, the Science Group believes that this can only be accomplished by developing test materials and assessment procedures that would respond to the needs of such pupils. The English Group suggests that children with learning difficulties are likely to make slow progress in reading and writing. Therefore, they recommend that such pupils should be given study programmes with a greater emphasis on oral work. The group also recommends that pupils with motor disorders (e.g. cerebral palsy) should be allowed to perform their written work on typewriters. Children with visual impairment will naturally experience reading difficulties, and thus, they should be allowed to read from special large print books, optical devices that enlarge the print, or be taught braille. Unlike the other two working groups, the English Group argues that schools should seek assistance from outside agencies, such as psychologists, in order to enhance the communicative achievements of special needs pupils.

A Critique of the 1988 Education Reform Act and the National Curriculum

Despite the potentials of the national curriculum as a framework for increasing parents' freedom and the possible diagnostic benefits for pupils, there are, nevertheless, many critics who believe that the standardisation of the syllabuses may threaten the quality of education. Such critics have questioned several issues relating to the provisions of the 1988 Act including:

1. Testing

The Government intends to introduce national tests for all pupils at the ages of 7, 11, 14 and 16 years. However, statements by various teaching associations including the Associations for Science, Education, Mathematics and English (Haviland, 1988) argue that nationally prescribed tests may be counter productive. They believe that the tests may focus attention on what children cannot do rather than on what they can achieve. This test-orientated curriculum may force schools to narrow their educational programmes to only reflecting the knowledge based on such pre-set tests. This narrow approach could limit pupils' ability to cope with the demands of an increasingly technological world which constantly requires new and changing skills. To surmount some of these problems, the Associations suggest that a wider model should be incorporated within the national curriculum framework. This model may include student profiles and records of achievements which may give employers a more descriptive indication about pupils' strengths and weaknesses than, say, a mark of 50 per cent. The Associations also argue that self-assessment should be included as a model in providing a fuller picture of achievement and improving pupils motivation.

Simon (1988) and the National Association of Schoolmasters/Union of Women Teachers (NASUWT, 1988) also iterate the fears shared by the various education association. They argue that these national tests will assume excessive importance in the eyes of both the

teachers and pupils. Teachers will be tempted to teach to the requirements of the tests because they may believe that such tests will reflect their professionalism rather than to assess what the pupil has learnt. They argue that these tests will re-introduce the old 'eleven-plus' criterion, therefore, causing stress among pupils, and debasing the value of broad education. Lawton and Chitty (1987) that testing would create a norm-related criteria with judgments being made on how a statistically 'normal' child should perform. Such examinations could lead to a sizeable proportion of the age group being considered as 'failures', while neglecting to stretch those above average. They also raise the issue on what will happen to children who 'fail' - will they be given extra lessons or will they have to repeat the year? Lawton and Chitty further argue that these examinations will put the clock back to over a hundred years to the period when working-class children were not schooled as a method to impart knowledge and skills, but rather as a way to improve the roll numbers and image of the school establishment. They conclude that a nationalised curriculum which is assessed on examination marks will re-create the Late-Victorian England where children are educated only to pass exams, with the added danger of schools and teachers being judged on the limited criterion pass rates. To free the education system of this 'straight-jacket', Lawton and Chitty suggest that teachers should be given the right to be involved in the planning of the school curriculum and that the system should be free of age-related testing in order to improve the quality of education as a whole.

2. Other Implications

The national curriculum emphasizes the importance of subjects including science and technology. However, there are shortages of teachers in these subjects, and with inadequate levels of pay, a large exodus of teachers and low morale, the remaining teachers may find it very difficult to implement the national curriculum. Resources are also needed to meet the costs of retraining teachers,

establishing new study programmes, and proving the materials and equipment for pupils. The NASUWT (1988) argue that these problems are further compounded because teachers have been excluded from the advisory groups on the national curriculum.

Selection will also become an issue which may encourage the development of ghetto schools (NASUWT, 1988). The association argue that the freedom of choice will mean that some pupils will be selected for 'popular' schools at the expense of other children. This could lead to a dangerous situation where the 'popular' schools may have to be selective perhaps with the criteria including a social, religious or racial bias. The less popular schools may have serious problems as a consequence of parents not having the 'choice'. Thus, parents and pupils may be less committed to these 'unpopular' schools and they may also feel despondent because of a genuine sense of injustice and discrimination.

Simon and the NASUWT suggest that we could end up with a hierarchical education system, with angry parents making repeated attempts to move their children to popular schools. They argue with low morale among the teachers, the constant movement of teachers looking for secure jobs and no increased funding to cope with the increased resources needed for the new curriculum, many pupils' education may suffer from the disruption created by despondent parents and insecure teachers. The NASUWT concludes that given the current spending levels, schools can only provide an efficient education within the existing establishment.

What are the Implications of the 1988 Education Reform Act for the Schooling of Non-School Attenders and Underachievers?

In the difficult task of attempting to predict the probable outcomes of social engineering policies, we must first study the empirical, to date, from which we may be

able to generalise and, therefore, assess probable consequences. Thus, the author, in her examination of the 1988 Act, will draw up arguments from the literature in order to help her assess the probable effects of the Act on the schooling of disaffected pupils. In doing so she will present arguments both for and against the 1988 Act.

Arguments in Favour of the 1988 Act

1. The evidence suggests that non-school attenders tend to experience learning difficulties at school (Fogelman et al., 1980; Hersov, 1966a; Jardine, 1987; May, 1975; Tyerman, 1968). Therefore, the regular testing as proposed by the Act may enable teachers to note any intellectual weaknesses of such pupils and increase the chances of early diagnosis. Thus, this regular testing procedure may make schools more effective in establishing special needs programmes and also provide 'short-term' goals for pupils to work towards rather than the relatively long drawn out courses of the GCSE. The Hargreaves Report (1984), for example, suggests that schools may become more effective if pupils are allowed to embark on courses which are divided into short-term learning units, each with its own goals and assessments. The Report argues that such an assessment may give pupils a greater sense of purpose and achievement. This argument is further confirmed by Rutter et al. (1979) who found that pupils tended to prefer work-orientated lessons and saw the passing of exams as their main interest in school. Furthermore, the regular testing may pave the way towards 'abolishing' the non-examination status that many disaffected pupils find themselves in (Hargreaves, 1967; Reid, 1985, 1986a, 1986b; Willis, 1977). Therefore, the tests may provide a purpose some for school attendance, particularly among the school population who frequently argue that school attendance is pointless if one is not sitting exams (Hargreaves, 1967; Reid, 1985, 1986a).
2. The Act emphasizes the importance of continuity of the educational programme throughout primary, junior and secondary schooling. Therefore, this continuity may help

to negate the traumas experienced by some pupils during their transfer from junior to secondary schooling (Reid, 1983a, 1983b).

3. The Act stresses the importance of special needs programmes which is particularly relevant to non-school attenders who tend to have remedial needs as suggested by the work mentioned above. The DES (1988a, 1988b, 1988c), for instance, emphasizes the need to create effective special needs programmes that would allow slow learners to remain within the mainstream framework of school, presumably to encourage integration as indicated by the 1981 Education Act. The DES further suggests that teachers should modify the programmes of study to meet the needs of slow learners and wherever necessary use additional resources (e.g. psychologists) to help such pupils cope with their learning difficulties.

The Arguments Against the 1988 Act

1. Much of the evidence suggest that persistent absentees tend to come from disadvantaged home backgrounds with poor housing conditions, large families; and parents who may exhibit violent behaviour or alcohol abuse, or may suffer from ill health (Fogelman et al., 1980; Galloway, 1979, 1980, 1985a, 1987; Hersov, 1966a; Reid, 1982a, 1982b, 1983a, 1983b; Tibbenham, 1977; Tyerman, 1958, 1968). Therefore, disaffected pupils' home conditions may not be conducive for academic achievement probably because of the stress caused by poverty, the lack of material resources, such as books, and the lack of well read parents (Bowles & Gintis, 1976; Tyerman, 1958; 1968). The non-school attenders themselves also tend to exhibit personality pathologies, such as delinquency, drug abuse and maladjustment, which may make it difficult for such pupils to cope with school life (Farrington, 1980; May, 1975; Pritchard et al., 1987; Stott, 1966; Tyerman, 1968). Thus, with the evidence suggesting that persistent absentees tend to suffer from both home and personality problems which may influence their truancy behaviour, then one may deduce that the additional

pressures placed on pupils by the introduction of the regular test procedures may, in turn, make schooling even more difficult for persistent absentees to cope with and consequently, this could lead to an escalation in truancy.

2. It is generally agreed that for any curricula to be effective there must be a good teacher-pupil relationship (Galloway, 1985a; Hamblin, 1981; Schostak, 1982). However, much of the evidence suggests that many non-school attenders believe that they are victimized and treated with disrespect by their teachers (Jardine, 1987; Reid, 1985a; Seabrook, 1974; SED, 1977; Reid, 1985). Thus, with the additional pressures of organising the national curriculum and its examinations, this may further weaken an already seemingly tenuous relationship between teachers and disaffected pupils.
3. Empirical studies suggest that persistent absentees tend to truant because of low self-concept, feelings of alienation from school, fear of examinations, fear of being perceived by other pupils as being 'backward', and fear of being teased about their poor dressing (Reid, 1981, 1982a, 1983b, 1983c, 1985; Schostak, 1982; Seabrook, 1974). Thus, the low self-esteem of the non-school attenders may lead to increased anxiety about the prospects of regular tests and examinations, and this may in turn lead to an increase in school absenteeism among such pupils.
4. The possible dangers of regular testing has been suggested by a report compiled by Broadfoot, James, McMeeking, Nuttall and Stierer (1988). This working team investigated the policies of recording pupil achievement in 21 secondary schools. They collected their data via questionnaires administered to the schools, pupils and parents. The data suggest that assessment procedures can be disadvantageous to low achievers because the structured approach of assessment may create a hierarchical system whereby such pupils find it difficult

to gain any 'respectable' grades or marks when compared with brighter pupils. Furthermore, testing will inevitably differentiate between pupils and this implicit normative approach will emphasize the differences between the slow learners and bright pupils (Broadfoot et al., 1988). Therefore, this infers that it may be difficult for the national curriculum to establish the aim of giving all pupils a sense of achievement, especially if low achievers compare their marks with those other pupils.

5. There is much to be learnt from the sociological studies on establishing effective curricula for pupils. Here the literature suggests that pupils may respond more positively towards schooling if their education promotes high teacher expectations, good pastoral care systems, encourages pupils to develop their self-worth, create a positive working environment, create good teacher-parent relationships, allow pupils more democratic rights, and attempt to cater for pupils' learning and vocational interests (Armstrong & King, 1977; Clare, 1986; Haertel et al., 1981; Hamblin, 1981; Hargreaves Report, 1984; Reid et al., 1987; Reynolds et al., 1980; White, 1980). However, the 1988 Act does not stress the importance of these qualitative human interactive processes, but instead promotes the importance of quantitative measures in the form of target assessments and testing (DES, 1987, 1988a, 1988b, 1988c). Therefore, with the 1988 Act emphasizing a pedagogical approach which may not essentially concur with the literature on school effectiveness, then based on this evidence one may deduce that disaffection may increase among school pupils, and particularly among those with personality deficiencies, such as poor self-worth, anxieties about schooling and conduct disorders.

Therefore, when pooling all the evidence together, the literature suggest that although the 1988 Act may provide valuable diagnostic assessment and it also stresses the needs of pupils with learning difficulties, there is,

nevertheless, a weight of evidence to suggest that if the Act is to become more effective in combating underachievement and pupil disaffection, then the Government may have to consider further the importance of the more qualitative nature of school life if it hopes to ensure that pupils receive the necessary support and care needed to cope with the pressures of education.

In the following chapter the author will present a summary of both the psychological and sociological theories on non-school attendance. She will attempt to make comparisons between the two theories and then present an argument for a multi-disciplinary approach to combating school disaffection. This will be followed by the proposal of several hypotheses, based on the author's understanding of the literature, which she hopes may provide further insight into effective managerial approaches to non-school attendance.

Chapter 6

A Summary of the Psychological and Sociological Models of Non-School Attendance: A Multi-disciplinary Approach

In this chapter the author will briefly reflect upon some of the factors that are associated with school disaffection. Here the two main schools of thought on the issue of persistent absenteeism are presented: (a) the psychological model which argues that truancy is generated by social pathologies within the children and their families; and (b) the sociological model which argues that truancy has its roots in inadequate school management of the needs of the pupils.

Firstly, the psychological model suggests that non-school attendance is associated with several factors including:

- (a) delinquent behaviour, with research suggesting that truancy is significantly associated with crimes, such as shoplifting and drug offences (Farrington, 1980; ISTD, 1970; May, 1975; Pritchard et al., 1987; Robins & Ratcliffe, 1980; Tyerman, 1968);
- (b) truancy tends to be associated with learning difficulties and lower IQ scores (Fogelman et al., 1980; Fogelman & Richardson, 1974; Hersov, 1960a; Jardine, 1987; May, 1975; Reid, 1982a, 1982b, 1984a);
- (c) persistent absentees tend to have fewer friends at school than good attenders and they were more likely to be considered by their teachers as being unpopular with their peer group (Cooper, 1986; May, 1975; Reid, 1984a);
- (d) many persistent absentees tended to believe that their teachers exhibited condescending attitudes towards them, especially towards their standard of work (Jardine,

1987; Reid, 1985, 1986a; Schostak, 1982; Seabrook, 1974);

(e) truancy is significantly associated with maladjusted behaviours, such as aggressiveness, jealousy and lying (Pritchard et al., 1987; Stott, 1966; Tyerman, 1968);

(f) truancy is significantly related to pupil's dislike of school activities (Mitchell & Shepherd, 1980);

(g) truants are significantly more likely to have lower global self-concept scores and are also more likely to have negative attitudes towards their school work (Cooper, 1984; Reid, 1982a, 1984a);

(h) truants are significantly more likely to come from unclean, overcrowded homes, to suffer corporal punishment from parents, to come from relatively large families, and have parents who show little interest in their education (Fogelman & Richardson, 1974; May, 1975; Tibbenham, 1977; Tyerman, 1958);

(i) truant children are more likely to come from lower income families (Blagg & Yule, 1987; Fogelman et al., 1980; Fogelman & Richardson, 1974; May, 1975; Tyerman, 1958, 1968).

When the psychological approach to intervention (e.g. behaviour modification) is applied to the problem behaviours of persistent absentees, the evidence suggests that there is a significant tendency for truants to respond positively to such programmes (Ayllon et al., 1974; Blagg & Yule, 1984; Brooks, 1974; Herbert, 1978; Kennedy, 1965; Lawrence et al., 1982; Morgan, 1975). For example, Herbert applied the principles of behaviour therapy via contingency contracts to help persistent absentees return to school. In one case, Barry aged 15 years, started to truant from school after his mother's death. Therefore, a contingency schedule was introduced in which Barry's father agreed to lend him 20 pounds to buy a moped on condition that he returned to

school. The programme also included counselling in order to help both Barry and his father develop better relationships. Consequently, Barry successfully returned to school. Thus, the psychological model suggests that persistent absentees are more likely to come from poor home backgrounds, they also tend to have learning difficulties, and are most responsive to behaviour modification as a remedial approach.

In contrast, the sociological model suggests that persistent absenteeism is generated by deficiencies within the school organization. Thus, the School factors which tend to be associated with non-school attendance include:

- (a) the streaming system of the school appears to influence truancy with many disaffected pupils finding themselves in lower stream classes (Hargreaves, 1967);
- (b) schools that tend to experience high rates of underachievement also tend to place less emphasis on work-orientated lessons, their pupils are less likely to participate in work orientated lessons, the teachers are more likely to have low expectations of their pupils, and the schools are less likely to use reward techniques to encourage pupil progress (Mortimore et al., 1988; Rutter et al., 1979);
- (c) truancy is significantly associated with schools where the uniform tends not to be worn, where there is a high degree of control and a rigorous enforcement of the rules, where there is less pupil participation in the running of the school, and where there is poor parent-teacher contact (Mortimore et al., 1988; Reynolds & Murgatroyd, 1977; Rutter et al., 1979);
- (d) classroom disruption appears to be associated with teachers who tend to confront their pupils' undesired behaviours (e.g. being aggressive) rather than pacify them (Clarke et al., 1981);
- (e) poor academic performance appears to be associated with

lessons where there is less emphasis on academic work, less testing of pupils' knowledge, and where there tends to be friction between teacher and pupils, disorganisation and favouritism (Bennett, 1976; Haertel et al., 1981; Siann, et al., 1982);

(f) ineffective pastoral care which tends to emphasise crisis situations and lack counselling in academic activities also tends to be associated with pupil disaffection (Galloway, 1983b; Hamblin, 1981);

(g) truancy tends to be associated with pupils who tend to perceive their school as harsh, boring and irrelevant to their needs (Reid, 1985);

(h) school disaffection appears to be associated with curricula that lack good career guidance, lack good teacher-pupil communication, and tends to generate feelings of alienation among the pupils (Reid, 1981; White & Brockington, 1983);

(i) schools which do not have school-based special needs projects are more likely to experience non-school attendance than those schools which do have their own established special needs programmes (Hargreaves Report, 1984).

Here we see that the sociological model suggests that poor school organisation which lacks awareness of the needs and attitudes of its pupil is more likely to generate truancy and school disaffection.

The Limitations of the Two Models

While the psychologists and psychiatrists have attempted to address the individual needs of the absentees and their families, they have nevertheless tended to minimize the contributory factors of the school's organisation in the generation of poor school attendance. In contrast, the sociologists tend to emphasise the importance of changing the school curriculum in order to better address

pupils' needs and interests, while at the same time implying that the individual needs of the children and their families are less influential in the aetiology of school disaffection. Therefore, although the two models present invaluable data on the understanding of persistent absenteeism, they nevertheless appear to have opposing analytical concepts on this issue.

Resolving the Conflict of the Two Models

Considering that both the psychological and sociological models provide valuable empirical work on school absenteeism, then it seems logical that an integration of the two models may further our appreciation of the special needs of persistent absentees. With this integrated approach in mind one of the first questions which one may need to ask is: "How do we resolve this apparent conflict between the psychological and sociological models?" The author believes that this conflict between the two seemingly opposing theories might be resolved by first assessing the needs of the pupils through investigating how the pupils perceive their schools which, in turn, may help teachers to become more appreciative of any deficiencies within the curriculum. Other assessments may also include diagnostic tests and behaviour assessments in order to examine pupils' learning difficulties. Once these first evaluative steps have been taken then the next stage may require two main changes in order to achieve a more effective management of school disaffection: (a) the school may need to modify its curriculum in such a way as to more closely reflect the needs and interests of its pupils by providing a curriculum which encourages pupils' confidence in their academic work and the school may also improve school-community relationships which may lead to greater pupil exposure to the world of work; (b) the individual problems experienced by pupils, such as delinquency, might be negated by the introduction of psychological techniques (e.g. behaviour modification) in order to motivate the pupils to respond more positively towards school and, therefore, help them to capitalise on any empathetic changes in their 'modified' curriculum. Thus, the author believes

that by modifying both the school curriculum and the behaviour of the disaffected pupils we might be able to resolve at least some of the possible conflicts between the psychological and sociological models. This may then further our appreciation of the problems experienced by both the persistent absentees and their schools. A further development of this argument in the literature may therefore imply that persistent school absenteeism is probably a multifaceted problem requiring multi-disciplinary approaches.

The Multi-disciplinary Approach to Non-School Attendance

The multi-disciplinary model argues that persistent absenteeism is generated by social, institutional and psychological factors within the pupil's environment (Galloway, 1979, 1982, 1985a; Reid, 1984a, 1986a, 1986b). Therefore, in recent years the literature has seen an increase in empirical work which investigates both the non-school attenders themselves and their school organisations. Such studies have been pioneered by eminent authorities within this field including Reid (1984a, 1985, 1986a, 1986b, 1989a) and Galloway (1980, 1982, 1985a). These authorities have not only attempted to examine the social pathologies within the persistent absentees and their families, but they have also attempted to highlight the deficiencies within the school curriculum which may influence school disaffection. For example, Reid (1984a) found that persistent absentees tended to experience family disruption, such as parental separation, lack of material resources and their families also tend to have criminal backgrounds. When examining the school experiences of these absentees, he found that they tended to enjoy fewer academic subjects than good attenders, they tended to dislike their teachers, they tended to show lack of confidence in their career aspirations, and they also tended to receive less homework from school than their brighter peers which apparently caused much resentment among the disaffected pupils because they believe that such a school approach reflected their teachers' indifferences to their academic needs. Reid (1989a) also sites other social and

institutional factors associated with the persistent absenteeism. He argues that pupils who are most at risk of becoming disaffected tend to be those with learning difficulties, living in poor home conditions, and come from single-parent families. He states further that many low achievers believe that schools are not meeting their needs. Reid believes that there are several reasons for this negative attitude including: (a) the pupils believe that their non-examination curriculum is irrelevant to their future; (b) the schools do not provide a pastoral curriculum. He suggests that only when schools attempt to foster better teacher-pupil relationships through linking pastoral and academic activities which promote the pupils interests and ambitions will they then be better able to combat school disaffection. Therefore, Reid concluded that persistent absenteeism is a multifaceted problem which requires a wider conceptual analytical tool than was previously available in the literature.

Thus, the review of the literature suggests that any research into the management of non-school attendance must consider characteristics within the truants themselves, their families and their schools in order to heighten our awareness of the problems associated with persistent absenteeism. Therefore, the influence of the literature, especially the arguments presented by the multi-disciplinary commentators, has raised a central question for investigation in this thesis:

How best can practitioners reinforce and maintain school attendance?

This question raises several issues which are pertinent to this investigation on non-school attendance:

1. That the management of non-school attendance should be explored within school-based projects for an alternative concept of remedial work to the limited resources of clinic-based approaches and off-site behavioural units.
2. That non-school attendance is a conduct disorder which is

acquired from within the child's environment and, therefore, should be studied within the framework of the social learning theory in order to examine the possible variables within the environment which may motivate school attendance.

3. The success of the school-based project may depend upon how well the school can meet the needs of its pupils. This suggests that it may be important to analyse possible variables within the school system which might affect pupil-outcome (e.g. school attendance and academic performance). This approach is relevant to the systems analysis theory which emphasises the importance of effective interrelationships between the various elements of an institution (e.g. home, school and community) in order to enable it to address impending problems more adequately.

These issues have led the author to propose three major hypotheses:

1. Non-school attenders will tend to exhibit greater conduct disorders and family pathologies than good school attenders.
2. Non-school attenders who receive a behaviour modification programme will show a significantly greater increase in school attendance than non-school attenders who receive the mainstream school curriculum programme.
3. For non-school attenders who receive a special needs programme; the greater the interactions between their homes, mainstream school and the special needs project the more positive will be their attitudes towards schooling and their school-based project.

The above issues and hypotheses suggest that a multi-disciplinary approach to the management of non-school attendance may provide a fruitful concept for practice. Therefore, this multi-disciplinary approach will encompass

two theories - the social learning theory from the psychological discipline and the systems analysis theory from the sociological discipline. Both theories are discussed in the following chapter.

Chapter 7

A Conceptual Management Framework for the Analysis of Non-School Attendance

In this chapter the author will discuss the social, psychological and institutional factors that appear to influence non-school attendance within their theoretical perspectives. This discussion will emphasise the importance of the social learning theory in understanding the learning processes in acquiring inappropriate behaviour and how such a model can be used to help pupils 'unlearn' deviant behaviours through the use of contingency rewards. The discussion will also emphasise the importance of the systems analysis theory which argues that school problems might be generated by institutional factors such as a lack of relevant educational programmes for pupils with problems. The systems theory asserts that schools may effectively combat disaffection by analysing the interactional processes of their institutions, such as teacher-pupil interaction, in order to assess the school factors which might be related to the school problems. The theory argues further that once such an analysis is attempted then the whole school is in a better position to design more appropriate remedial activities.

In the final section of this chapter the discussion will focus on a combined managerial approach which incorporates principles of cognitive-behaviour therapy (derive from the social learning theory) and school interactions (derive from systems analysis theory). This combined management technique will emphasise the use of rewards and sanctions, and the use of classroom evaluation techniques in order to assess teacher-pupil relationships

Social Learning Theory

The main objective of this section is to demonstrate that non-school attendance and other associated behaviours, such as delinquency (see Chapters 2 and 4), can be partly explained within the conceptual framework of the social learning theory. As already discussed in Chapter 2, the empirical evidence strongly suggests that persistent absenteeism is associated with personal factors, such as low self-esteem (Reid, 1982a, 1984a), delinquency (Farrington, 1980), and poor scholastic performance (Fogelman & Richardson, 1974; Jardine, 1987). Research also suggests that family dynamics may also influence persistent absenteeism (see Chapter 4), especially where there are social disadvantages, such as family neglect (NACEWO, 1975), poor overcrowded home conditions (Tibbenham, 1977), high rates of unemployment among parents (Blagg & Yule, 1987; May, 1975), low income families and slum conditions (Farrington, 1980; Tyerman, 1958, 1968), and is also associated with relatively high incidence of criminality among the parents (Farrington, 1980).

The author believes that non-school attendance is generated by a multitude of factors, such as poor housing and pupil alienation in school. However, here the discussion will focus persistent absenteeism from a psychological perspective. Non-school attendance, like many other conduct disorders, is either a consequence of a failure to learn to appreciate the importance of education or a consequence of faulty learning through, say, the receiving of extra attention from the teachers because of truancy. For example, research suggests that truants tend to come from families who show a lack of interest in their child's education (Fogelman & Richardson, 1974; Tyerman, 1958, 1968). Therefore, it is quite possible that the truants have failed to learn to appreciate schooling. The data also suggest that faulty learning may occur in cases where persistent absentees receive attention (e.g. from teacher or parent) because of their undesired behaviour which may lead to an

increase such behaviour in order to maintain the extra attention (Ayllon et al., 1974). Basically, the social learning principles are adopted here, whereby learning occurs through direct experience or by observing the behaviour of others (Bandura, 1977). This learnt behaviour is then shaped by the use of rewards and punishment. Unfortunately, the very processes which help pupils to learn appropriate behaviours can, under certain circumstances, also be the very methods by which children develop maladaptive behaviours (Herbert, 1978).

Therefore, social learning theory is concerned with explaining the development of behaviour mediated by interpersonal and social settings. The theory focuses on patterns of behaviour which individuals learn in order to cope with their environment. These behaviours are then explained in terms of a continuous reciprocal interaction between cognitive, behavioural and environmental determinants (Bandura, 1977, 1982; Mischel, 1973). The process of reciprocal determinism allows people to develop successful behaviour patterns which are rewarding and, therefore, are maintained, while responses with punitive consequences are extinguished. The theory argues that people are neither passive reactors to environmental forces nor are they free agents who can become whatever they choose, but instead people and their environment have reciprocal influences on each other.

The social learning theory as we know it today is based upon the approaches developed by Bandura (1969, 1977, 1982) and Mischel (1973). Their theories of the concept of human learning emphasises the prominent roles played by reinforcement, vicarious learning, symbolism (cognitively presented conscious experiences), and self-regulatory processes. The author will explain these processes in some detail in relation to their psychological functioning in the acquisition and the changing of both socially approved and socially deviant behaviours. The first of these theories to be discussed will be Bandura's theory which emphasises the influence of rewards, social approval and self-evaluation in

the probability of the observer repeating the observed behaviours. This discussion will be followed by an examination of Mischel's cognitive social learning theory which stresses the importance of person variables, such as reward preferences and the intellectual ability to cognitively reconstruct learnt behaviours, in the process of developing behaviour patterns. In the final section the author will discuss the influences of self-confidence on the probability of behaviour being performed (Bandura, 1982).

Observational Learning

Bandura suggests that this type of learning is mediated by several processes including:

1. Principles of Reinforcement

Patterns of behaviour can be acquired either through direct experience or through the observation of other people's behaviours. Some responses may be successful, whereas others may produce negative results. The person eventually tends to select those successful behaviour patterns and discards the others. When a particular type of behaviour increases it is said to be reinforced. Therefore, reinforcement is defined as any event whose occurrence increases the probability of an organism evoking a response as a consequence of that event (Skinner, 1953). There are two distinct types of reinforcement contingencies: positive reinforcement such as praise or food, which on being presented after the behaviour increases the probability of the response; and negative reinforcers, such as a monetary fine or a smack, which on being presented after the behaviour increases the probability of the behaviour being avoided. Therefore, the social learning theory assumes that positive reinforcement is crucial for the performance of learnt behaviour, and that people will behave in ways likely to produce reinforcement.

The social learning theorists regard the situation as an important determinant of behaviour. Thus, a person's responses in a given situation is dependent upon his or

her past experiences in terms of reinforcements in similar situations, or past observations of others in similar situations. Thus, given the non-school attendance phenomenon, the social learning theorist would argue that truancy is influenced by parents showing a lack of interest in education and, therefore, may tend not to reinforce school attendance among their children (Fogelman & Richardson, 1974; Reid, 1985; Withrington, 1975). It is also possible that truants may tend to experience boredom of the school curriculum and may also experience poor teacher-pupil relationships which consequently influence their truancy behaviour (Jardine, 1987; Mitchell & Shepherd, 1980; Reid, 1981, 1986a, 1986b; Schostak, 1982; Seabrook, 1974). Therefore, one could surmise that such pupils tend to find school unrewarding and, as predicted by the theory, the consequence would be a deterioration in school attendance.

Reward and Punishment in the Control of Learning

Learning is said to have occurred when a relatively enduring change in behaviour is apparent as a result of instruction or experience (Herbert, 1978, 1987). The type of behaviour that one exhibits partly determines the reward or punishment which one receives as a consequence. This consequence in turn may influence future behaviour. In other words, there is a reciprocal interaction between behaviour and environment.

Rewards can be used as an incentive for increasing the incidence of learnt behaviour (Brooks, 1974; Skinner, 1953). Thus, in daily life, situations are arranged so that an appropriate response is closely followed by a reward. For example, a mother may praise her child for achieving good grades at school. The words of praise is then considered to act as a social reinforcer or reward. One can also increase appropriate behaviour by removing an aversive stimulus or punishment. For example, a mother may warn her children that she will smack them if their behave badly at school. If the rate of good behaviour

increases then the avoidance of a smack has acted as a negative reinforcer. Thus, like the application of rewards, avoidance of aversive outcomes tends to increase the required behaviour (Skinner, 1953).

The empirical evidence suggests that the method of positive reinforcement can change behaviour in a variety of ways: (a) by incorporating a new behaviour in the subject's repertoire (Herbert, 1978, 1987); (b) by increasing the strength of an already acquired behaviour pattern (Merrett, 1986); or (c) diminish the strength of an undesired behaviour by effectively increasing the strength of a competing behaviour (Eysenck & Rachman, 1965; Lazarus, 1960; Yule et al., 1980). Thus, social learning theory as a management framework may be used to analyse and change the behaviour of truant children. In fact investigators have suggested that school attendance rates tend to increase among disaffected pupils when they are managed under a reward programme (Ayllon et al., 1974; Brooks, 1974, 1975; Morgan, 1975).

As already mentioned, negative reinforcement refers to a contingency which occurs when a response results in an increase in the rate of that response being avoided (Ayllon et al., 1974; Bandura, 1977; Herbert, 1978; Skinner, 1953). Punishment is divided into two procedures: one involves the use of aversive stimuli, such as a smack, as a consequence of undesired behaviour, and the second consists of following such behaviour by the withdrawal of some reward, such as a toy. However, as a controller of behaviour, punishment is often seen as less effective than reward because it tends not to reverse the learning processes of the acquired deviant behaviour. For example, Hargreaves et al. (1975) found that what was meant to be 'aversive' consequences, such as detention, for missing schools did not reverse the truancy rate of the disaffected pupils, but instead the pupils rebelled by increasing their non-school attendance.

2. Vicarious Learning

For social learning theorists reinforcement is not seen as necessary for learning, but it is crucial for the performance of the learnt behaviour. Therefore, observational learning is distinguished into two phases: the acquisition phase and the performance phase. During the acquisition phase the person observes a model and the stimuli is encoded images or words which are stored in memory. The observed stimuli can be subsequently retrieved and imitated. The performance of the observed behaviours are influenced by the observed consequences - the more rewarding the consequences the more likely it is that such behaviour will be elicited by the observer. For example, a person may learn how to uncork a bottle of wine simply by observing another person performing the task. However, for the observer then actually to perform a similar task it might be crucial that he or she finds the task to be beneficial or rewarding. Thus, the theorists stress that much of human learning for socialization is observational or vicarious learning. The patterns of such learnt behaviour is then shaped by observing the consequences of other people's actions - the degree to which their actions are rewarded, ignored or punished. Thus, it could be argued that some persistent absentees may vicariously learn to dislike school because they have observed their parents or other siblings express negative attitudes towards their own school experiences. In fact there is some evidence to suggest that persistent absentees tend to come from families who themselves expressed a dislike towards their own schooling (Jardine, 1987; Mitchell & Shepherd, 1980; Reid, 1983a; Seabrook, 1974).

Therefore, social learning theorists emphasise the responsibility of the models in transmitting both specific and emotional responses. Subsequently, a child who learns to imitate an adult may not know whether it is deviant or appropriate behaviour that is being modelled. Generally, seeing behaviour succeed for others increases the tendency for the observer to behave in a similar way,

while observing behaviour being punished decreases the tendency for the observer to model such responses.

Modelling can be used as an interventive procedure to reduce or eliminate problem behaviour by a therapist systematically demonstrating (or modelling) alternative behaviours (Bandura, 1969, 1977). This procedure can also be used to teach new skills or alternative behaviours, such as learning to relax in school situations and, therefore, reduce inappropriately learnt anxieties (Bandura, 1969, 1977; Mischel, 1973). Thus, the therapist can direct the modelling intervention towards the relationship antecedent conditions and the deviant behaviour (classical conditioning - see Chapter 4), or between the deviant behaviour and its consequences (operant conditioning - see Chapter 4). If the consequences of the observed behaviour are rewarding then such behaviour is more likely to be imitated by the observer than if punishment is associated with the observed behaviour.

3. Cognitive Processes

Social learning theory stresses the importance of cognitive processes in the patterns of behaviour. Humans possess the extraordinary capacity to analyse their conscious experiences, to communicate to others, to make plans for the future and to represent situations symbolically in their memory. Although some human actions are instigated by immediate stimuli such as thirst or hunger, there is, however, a great deal of human behaviour which is initiated and sustained over long periods of time in the absence of any compelling immediate stimulation. For example, human beings are quite capable of taking foresightful actions, such as taking out a car insurance in order to negate the effects of any potential damage. In such instances the theorist argues that the inducement to take mitigating actions are rooted in cognitive activities.

According to the theory people are also able to

encode and group information from stimulus objects. People can select aspects of a stimulus (e.g. taste versus the texture of a food object), and then interpret and categorise the information. Such selective attention can affect the impact that the stimulus exerts on behaviour. Thus, a person may dislike the texture of a food object and as a consequence may tend to avoid such food in the future. Likewise, the manner in which perceivers encode and selectively attend to observed behaviour sequences may greatly influence their learning and their subsequent actions.

The capacity for humans to store cognitive representations of future outcomes functions as a current motivator of behaviour. Therefore, many instances of people's lives are presented symbolically in their thoughts. This symbolic function then enables them to foresee the probable consequences of their actions and alter their behaviour accordingly. People generally direct their behaviours towards gaining anticipated benefits and to evade future difficulties. Thus, a student may pursue academic activities for three years in order to gain a degree which in the future may lead to a relatively well-paid professional career.

4. Self-Regulatory Processes

The social learning theory postulates that human behaviour is to a great extent influenced by self-perception and self-control. Thus, a specific behaviour may produce two instances - an external outcome and a self-evaluation reaction. People set their own standard of conduct and performance, and respond to their behaviour in self-rewarding or self-critical ways depending upon how the behaviour relates to their standards. Therefore, the development of self-evaluation functions to provide important and continuing source of personal satisfaction, interest and self-esteem. If one's performance on a task accomplishes a sense of personal achievement, this increases interest in the activity and produces self-reinforcement. Without standards of conduct

and self-evaluation, people may become unmotivated, bored and dependent upon momentary stimulation for their satisfaction as may be the case for persistent absentees who being aware of their learning difficulties may become self-conscious and bored with schooling, with the suggested consequence that they increasingly truant and may turn to delinquency (Farrington, 1980; May, 1975; Pritchard et al., 1987; Robins & Ratcliffe, 1980; SED, 1977; Tyerman, 1958, 1968; West & Farrington, 1973, 1977). This principle can be applied to the behaviour non-school attenders who tend to have low self-esteem which may be particularly salient at school where many feel that teachers tend to disregard them (Cooper, 1984; Reid, 1982a, 1984a). Consequently, such school absentees would tend to avoid school as predicted by the theory. However, the theory argues that the internalisation of extreme austere standards for self-evaluation can also function a continuous source of personal stress because such people may find it difficult to maintain such high standards and, therefore, they may suffer disappointment. Thus, self-reinforcement may play a crucial part in human observation and learning.

The theory further argues that in competitive, individualistic societies people are more likely to make self-judgments in terms of social comparisons rather than in reference to their own capacities and standards. The theory asserts that self-appraisal is promoted where one person's success represents another person's failure.

Establishment of Self-Regulative Functions

The social learning theory postulates that self-reinforcing responses can be established either by tuition or by modelling. People learn to evaluate their behaviour partly on the basis of how others have responded to it. Thus, adults will generally praise children when they achieve or exceed valued standards, and show disappointment when their behaviour falls short of valued levels. As a result of such differential reactions children eventually learn to respond to their

own performance in self-appraisal or self-critical ways depending on how it compared with the evaluative standards set by others, such as parents, teachers or peers.

However, the degree to which a person will model their own behaviour on another person's behaviour will not only depend on the consequences of that behaviour, but will also depend upon the evaluative standards of the observer. Therefore, if the observers believe that the standard of the modelled behaviour is beyond their own competence then they are more likely to reject the observed stimuli. Thus, social learning theory argues that greater the disparity in competence between the models and the observers, the more likely will the observers reject the standards of the models' skills. This interpretation can also be applied to persistent absentees who tending to experience learning difficulties may find a great disparity between their own limited skills and those of their models in the classroom (e.g. teachers or peers). Research suggests that this tends to be the experience for many absentees. For example, the SED (1977) found that non-school attendance is partly the result of pupils being unable to cope with the standard of skills demanded of them by their schools. This may, in turn, lead to the absentees rejecting the such high standards and, instead, set their own standards of requirements which, as would be predicted by the social learning theory, may include school absenteeism.

In summary, social learning theory proposed by Bandura emphasised the important role played by modelling in the acquisition and performance of behaviour. He argues that the performance of observed skills are mediated by reinforcements, self-evaluation, cognitive processes (e.g. the ability to code information into memory), and the reactions of others to the behaviour. Generally, his theory predicts that the more rewarding are the consequences of the observed behaviour, especially in terms of self-satisfaction and the approval from others, the more likely it is that the

observer will imitate the observed behaviour. In the next section the author will discuss the social learning theory proposed by Mischel (1973) which stresses the importance of person variables (e.g. memory and attitudes) in the learning processes.

Cognitive (Person) Variables in the Regulation of Behaviour and Self-Control

The theory proposed by Mischel (1973) postulates several cognitive variables which mediate people's expectancies of out-comes, self-control and interpersonal socialisation. Much of Mischel's theory agrees with Bandura's theory in that he emphasises observational learning, the ability of individuals to encode information into memory in order to repeat behaviour, and he also emphasises the importance of reinforcement in learning. In addition, Mischel proposes two other variables in cognitive social learning: (a) subjective stimulus; (b) self-regulation.

(a) Subjective Stimulus Value

Although individuals may have similar expectations, they may select different behaviours because of the differences in their subjective values of the outcomes. For example, we may have two truants who both expect praise from their teachers and parents as a consequence of increased school attendance. However, one of the truants may increase his school attendance behaviour because subjectively he highly values such praise, whereas the other truant may continue to miss school partly because he has a low subjective value for adult approval. Therefore, the social learning theorists consider it necessary to understand the individual's stimulus preferences and aversions in order to predict behaviour. This may then provide some insight into the type of stimuli that have acquired the power to induce positive or negative emotional states in the individuals as well as function as incentives for their behaviours. The theory asserts that the subjective value of a stimulus can be acquired or modified through

observations, direct experiences or instruction.

Stimulus values can be assessed by measuring the individuals' actual choices in life-like situations as well as their verbal/written preferences or ratings. Thus, reinforcement preferences can be monitored by providing individuals with opportunities to select the outcome that they want from an array of alternatives. For example, studies have found that subjects were more likely to pay a higher 'price' for outcomes which they subjectively highly valued (see Mischel, 1973).

(b) Self-Regulatory Systems and Plans

While behaviour is controlled to a considerable extent by external consequences of behaviour, individuals also regulate their own behaviour via self-imposed goals (standards) and self-produced consequences. The theorists argue that the essence of the self-regulatory system is the person's adaptation of contingency rules to guide behaviour in the absence of immediate external situational pressure. Such rules specify the appropriate behaviour under particular conditions, the standard of performance which the behaviour must achieve, and the consequences of attaining or failing to reach those standards. For example, a person with alcohol problems may attempt to adopt a standard of behaviour which allows him to consume much less alcohol. In order to achieve this he may have to learn to regulate his 'drinking' behaviour which may consequently lead to better relationships with his family.

The organisation of self-regulatory behaviour which includes 'priority rules' for determining the sequencing of behaviour and 'stop rules' for the termination of particular behaviours is construed within 'plans'. Such plans refer to a hierarchical process which controls the sequence of operations in behaviour. Subjectively, people seem to generate plans which once performed (e.g. going on a day trip) elicits a whole series of

sub-routines (e.g. organising transport and preparing sandwiches).

Briefly, Mischel argues that human behaviour is at least partly governed by cognitive processes involving ability to construct information into the memory, to be able to assess the situations which moderate any consequences, to be able to modify behaviour to meet new contingencies and to plan behaviour routines that will lead to the subjectively most valued rewards.

However, as a complement to the social learning theory so far discussed, Bandura (1982) proposed a self-efficacy mechanism which suggests that people's confidence in their ability to perform certain skills will influence their choice of behaviours. Thus, the greater their confidence in performing a skill the more likely it is that they will exhibit that behaviour. This mechanism is discussed in more details below.

Self-Efficacy Mechanism

In this final section on social learning theory Bandura (1982) argues that people's 'self-confidence' may influence their choices of behaviour. Thus, self-appraisal of operative capacities function as one set of determinants on how people behave, their thought patterns, and the emotional reactions they experience in taxing situations. In their daily lives people continuously plan courses of actions to pursue an outcome and they also plan how long to continue those courses of actions which they have undertaken.

Bandura suggests that people's own self-perception or confidence of efficacy influences their choice of action and environmental settings. People tend to avoid activities which they believe exceed their coping capacities, but they undertake and perform assuredly those actions that they judge themselves capable of managing. The theory suggests that the higher the level of induced self-efficacy the higher is the probability of the performance being

accomplished and the lower the emotional arousal.

When interpreting this mechanism in relation to truant children one may argue that their behaviour might be the result of their low self-confidence in achieving an efficacious outcome from school attendance. As truants tend to have learning and behavioural difficulties (Farrington, 1980; Fogelman et al., 1980; Fogelman & Richardson, 1974; Hersov, 1960a; Jardine, 1987; May, 1975; Reid, 1982a, 1984a) they may tend to believe that the schools expectations of them exceed their coping capacities. Thus, as a consequence the truants may avoid school in order to achieve a state of low emotional anxiety.

The Social Learning Theory's Interpretation of the Causes of Non-School Attendance and Other Associated Conduct Disorders

The social learning theory suggests that the same way in which socially appropriate behaviour is acquired may also explain the acquisition and maintenance of conduct disorders. Therefore, the social learning theorists have postulated several processes by which undesired behaviour, such as truancy, might be acquired and maintained. These processes include:

1. The Paradoxical Effects on Punishment

Although punishment can reduce the frequency of responses, it can also, paradoxically, have positively reinforcing effects on undesired behaviours (Bandura, 1969). Because of the disturbing qualities of undesired responses, children's disruptive behaviour, for example, may attract the attention of others who in turn may reprimand their behaviours. Subsequently, the attention which the children receive as a consequence of their disruptive behaviour may unwittingly perpetuate such inappropriate behaviour, despite the supposedly negative aspects of the attention.

2. Modelling of Inappropriate Behaviour

Bandura (1969) found that children who observed a model behaving aggressively in response to frustration

also tended to exhibit similar aggression when they themselves were frustrated. Whereas equally frustrated children who had watched a non-aggressive model tended to display less aggression. Therefore, this theory suggests that undesired behaviours might be modelled through the observations of others. Thus, it is possible that some truants model their behaviour from others, such as siblings or peers.

3. Insufficient Incentive

If a behaviour is insufficiently rewarded then this may lead to the extinction of the respective behaviour (Bandura, 1969). In the case of truants, some may believe that their schools are boring and, therefore, lack any incentive for them to attend. Some truants may also tend to experience very little rewards from their parents for school attendance possibly because such parents may tend to be indifferent to their children's educational progress (Fogelman & Richardson, 1974).

4. Low Self-Efficacy Mechanism

Truants tend to experience learning difficulties which may make them more vulnerable to feelings of alienation and inadequacy at school (Reid, 1981). Such negative experiences may arouse anxieties among the truants who as a consequence may attempt to avoid school.

5. Subjective Stimulus Value

Although school may have some incentive qualities and parents may make the effort to encourage school attendance, this, however, may not be reinforcing enough for some truants who tend to find out-of-school activities, such as gambling on the one-arm bandits, more exciting than schooling. For example, Murgatroyd's (1987) 'paratelic' absentee tends to find school rather lacking in inducing excitement and, therefore, tends to seek arousal outside of school. Thus, the theory asserts that a positive reinforcement is only effective if it is subjectively highly valued by the recipient.

Summary

Social learning theory attempts to provide a unified theoretical framework for analysing human thought and behaviour. It emphasises the prominent roles played by reinforcement, vicarious learning, cognitive processes, self-regulation and self-efficacy mechanisms in human responses. The theory also provides some interpretations of the possible causes of truancy. Therefore, as a conceptual framework it generates a valuable practice for the management of disaffected pupils. The management technique which derives from this theory is called behaviour modification (therapy) and is concerned with addressing and changing behaviour. This management technique will be discussed later.

As already discussed in Chapter 5, there is strong evidence to suggest that variables within the schools themselves may also generate pupil disaffection. Therefore, in the following section the theoretical framework of systems analysis will be discussed as a possible concept for interpreting persistent school absenteeism.

The Systems Analysis Theory

Here the author will attempt to demonstrate that the problem of non-school attendance can be also explained within the functional framework of the systems analysis theory. The plethora of data presented in Chapter 5 strongly suggest that the organisation of the school may influence pupils' behaviours. For example, the empirical evidence suggests that several school variables tend to be associated with poor pupil outcome: (a) the meritocratic system of the school appears to affect pupils' attitudes towards their education with lower stream pupils tending to exhibit greater delinquency and truancy rates (Hargreaves, 1967); (b) factors such as high teacher expectations, the use of rewards, close parent-teacher relationships and an emphasis on encouraging pupil participation in caring for the school all appear to be positively associated with pupil success (Mortimore et al., 1988; Rutter et al., 1979); (c) the use

of certain school rules, such as the wearing of the school uniform, appear to be associated with good school attendance (Reynolds & Murgatroyd, 1977); (d) teacher behaviour appears to influence pupil behaviour, for example, teachers who tended to pacify rather than confront pupil disruption also tended to experience more pupil co-operation (Clarke et al., 1981); (e) an effective pastoral care system which tends to emphasise assistance with academic work might be associated with positive pupil outcomes (Hamblin, 1981). When authors examined the pupils' perceptions of their schools, the data suggest that pupils tended to believe that schools could be more efficacious if their ethos included a greater emphasis on teacher-pupil communication, more pupil participation in the decision-making processes of the school and a greater emphasis on discussions about life issues, such as politics (White & Brockington, 1983). Reid (1981) provides some further insights into pupils' perceptions of their schools by investigating the relationship between alienation and school absenteeism. His investigation suggests that school absentees are more likely than good school attenders to perceive their schools as showing very little interests in their needs and they also tended to regard teachers as unsupportive when they needed help. The poor school attenders were also more likely to feel uncomfortable in school and feel alienated from the academic life of the school.

Thus, the empirical evidence suggests that school disaffection may be influenced by possible deficiencies within the educational environment. Therefore, the author believes that in order to further our understanding of non-school attendance it is important that the school's organisation is analysed in order to assess possible changes within the curriculum which might lead to more positive pupil outcomes. In other words the conceptual framework of systems analysis is applied here with the objective to help the school effectively combat pupil disaffection. Thus, this section will focus on a systems analysis theory proposed by Burden (1978, 1981) which essentially argues that the school must attempt to reappraise its curriculum through improving

teachers' awareness of their pupils' problems and through the fostering of more effective communication with other elements, such as the family system.

Systems Analysis

Burden starts with the argument that in order to effectively work within the framework of systems analysis one must first assume that schools are institutional edifices of our society, and that children are compelled to attend them and they (children) are usually expected to behave in a certain way within the educational system. Thus, such an assumption seeks to explain how the organisational structure of the school affects the perceptions and behaviours of its pupils in such a way as to lead some of them being described as problematic. In other words, Burden believes that the interactional dynamics of the school environment may operate on pupil behaviour which may consequently lead to the generation of disruption and conduct disorders.

In order to understand the effects of a system on human behaviour the theory attempts to examine the interactional processes of a network of various related elements (e.g. subject teachers and pastoral tutors) within a system. Burden (1981, page 30) suggests that a system can be considered as: 'comprising a number of components directly or indirectly related in a casual network, such that each component is related to at least some others in a more or less stable way within any particular period of time'. Therefore, when the systems theory is applied to the pupils' learning environment it is possible to analyse the interrelationships between, say, the school and the family systems; or between the various elements within the school, such as the pastoral care system and the special needs department.

The various components within any system are believed to be in a constant state of dynamic change whereby the experiences that occur within it may establish a more or less stable relationship in such a way as to produce a

degree of 'wholeness' with some degree of continuity and stability. For example, a school can be divided into various components, such as mainstream school and special needs project. It is only through the various components continuously establishing and building intrinsic relationships with each other through, for example, meetings or information booklets, that they are able to generate a sense of 'wholeness' and continuity. This interrelationship may then enable the school to design common objectives and, therefore, more successfully execute their aims with a 'united' system. Thus, Burden asserts that the systematic concept of the various school components should be viewed from the point of the process of interrelationships rather than as separate static entities. The next stage should then include an assessment of the impact of such process variables on the product (e.g. pupil's academic achievement and school attendance rates).

The ways in which systems operate can be considered within the paradigm of either an 'open' system or a 'closed' system. A closed system is an approach which considers an element in isolation and therefore assumes that it is self-contained. This inherently leads to an analysis of organisations which emphasises internal structures, such as task and formal relationships, without references to external environmental influences. For example, if a school-based project and its external environment (i.e. mainstream school) are considered within the closed system, then such an analysis of the project would include an examination of its structure, aims and tasks in isolation of any influences that the mainstream school might have on the organisation of the project. Conversely, the open system approach tends to examine the interrelationships between an organisation and its external environment. This paradigm suggests that it is only through a continuous development of a dynamic two-way relationship between the organisation and its environment that a successful equilibrium can be achieved. This, in turn, may provide continual feedback between the elements. Burden argues that such feedback mechanisms would then have the potential of balancing out

any effects of possible tensions within the dynamic relationships. If we then analyse the school-based project and its environment within the open system, then we could assess the two-way relationship between the two elements, examine the ways in which they influence each other, assess their methods of providing mutual support for each other, examine the process by which they arrive to mutual decisions about objectives and selection criteria, and so forth.

It is this open systems which is emphasised by Burden's theory in which he argues that because the closed system ignores the influences of the external environment upon the organisation then this isolation of the elements could lead to disorganisation and chaos if the interrelationships are not investigated in order to appreciate problems and objectives. Whereas Burden asserts that the main advantage of using an open system is that it allows the various related elements to develop an equilibrium which helps to clarify aims, objectives and needs. This means that all the elements concerned are continually interacting with each other, and, therefore, helping to increase appreciation of the need for change and development in order to adequately address the problems faced. Subsequently, as these interactions become more effective the various components are able to evolve a more intricate structure of management and organisation.

The systems analysis theory highlights three levels of management within organisations. The first level is referred to as the technical level which is actually concerned with the task performance, the second is the institutional level which examines the actions of the systems towards their environment, and the third is the organisational level where the technical level is integrated with the institutional level. Thus, when applied to the school-based project, the technical level would define the goals and objectives (e.g. increase school attendance and improve reading skills). Once these goals are clarified then the management at the institutional level would prompt action to these needs, such as reorganising the curriculum

or placing a greater emphasis on individual teaching. Then organisational level would allow for continuous interactions in order to monitor developments and ensure that the goals are kept in focus. However, Burden warns that because the open system inherently involves the dynamics of interaction processes which may encounter change, uncertainty and ambiguity, managers must develop skills at all three levels or arrange situations (e.g. organise systems of senior management, subject departments and special needs programmes) that will enable the three levels to be established within the organisation itself. This would then allow for continual assessment of the tasks and the remedial actions which could then provide clarity and feedback for all levels managerial personnel.

Burden argues that because this systems theory attempts to analyse the interrelationships of the various components within the school and examines the level of its management skills, it therefore provides several advantages in the understanding of behaviour problems in school: (a) it offers a framework within which research can examine the functional aspects of large complex organisations, such as comprehensive schools; (b) it emphasises a 'wholeness' approach to addressing problems, as opposed to a piecemeal approach, which centres upon the intricate relationships of the various elements within the school system and, thus, treats them as a united process; (c) it emphasises the developmental processes of interrelationships which then allows one to examine the adaptability of the system to the changing demands of its environment; and (d) it offers greater opportunities for more permanent change since it not only suggests that deviant behaviour can be understood within specific situations, such as in English lessons, but it also allows for a well designed systems analysis which might be able to predict an array of behaviour outcomes and, therefore, enable the school to make more efficacious changes to meet the new demands of its pupils. Burden further states that what might follow from these advantages is an increase of awareness among teachers in relation to disruptive behaviour in the widest possible context. This

means that teachers can start at the institutional level of management and work from the supposition that disruptive behaviour can, at least partly, be viewed as a problem of the school organisation rather than exclusively within the context of social pathologies within the children and their families.

Therefore, Burden concludes that the school needs to be seen as an open system in constant dynamic interaction with the environment it serves, especially with regards to the parents, the neighbourhood and the current expectations of society. The school's success must be assessed according to how well it maintains a state of equilibrium whilst adapting to the ever changing demands of the environment. Furthermore, he asserts that it is only when the school defines its aims, and organise its human and technical resources to accomplish those objectives, will it then succeed in achieving satisfaction for both its teachers and pupils.

Thus, the systems analysis theory provides a broad concept in which non-school attendance can be analysed as partly a consequence of possible deficiencies within the school system which would then enable the school to better adapt to the needs of its truant cases.

In the following section the author will discuss the techniques derived from both the systems analysis and social learning theories in order to provide a wider management framework of non-school attendance.

A Combined Management Model of Non-School Attendance: Behaviour Modification and School Organisation Analysis

This section will focus on the two techniques with the main aim of presenting the relevant principles of each model which suggest possible ways of changing both the persistent absentees and their schools in order to achieve more efficacious management approaches to pupils' needs.

Behaviour Modification (Behaviour Therapy)

Social learning theory is concerned with the evaluation of personality mainly for the purposes of achieving behaviour change. The management technique which derives from this theory is called cognitive-behaviour modification and is concerned with modifying the client's behaviour. This technique works on the premise that conduct disorders are acquired through learning in a social malaise and, therefore, by changing the variables within the environment such behaviour can be unlearnt (Bandura, 1969; Herbert, 1987). Thus, because non-school attendance, especially truancy, is considered to be a conduct disorder (Farrington, 1980; Herbert, 1978; Hersov, 1960a; ISTD, 1970; Pritchard et al., 1987; Robins & Ratcliffe, 1980; Reid, 1984a, 1984b) it is possible that it was acquired as a function of faulty learning processes, such as a lack of parental incentive. Therefore, the principles of behaviour modification will be applied with emphasis on the social nexus in which learning occurs, for example, rewards, punishments modelling and other events mediated by human agents within a given social setting. Below the author will discuss some of the components of the behaviour modification model.

The Triadic (Consultative) Model of Therapy

When professional therapists directly interact with their clients during intervention then this type of therapy is known as the dyadic model (Tharp & Wetzel, 1969). However, many problem children tend to exhibit undesired behaviours while in their own environments, such as the classroom or the home. Because it is believed that behaviour change is best achieved in the situations where the faulty learning occurred (Herbert, 1978, 1987), the triadic model is usually introduced into the intervention programme. In the triadic model the therapist instructs the people who are directly involved in the problem children's lives (e.g. teachers or parents) on the principles of modifying behaviour (Tharp & Wetzel, 1969). This allows the children to remain within their 'natural' environment while working with those people who are part of their daily lives. Tharp

and Wetzel argues that part of the advantage of this triadic model is that it allows the children to utilise and improve their natural relationships with their parents or teachers. The authors explain the triadic model in the following diagram:

Consultant —————→ Mediator —————→ Target

Tharp and Wetzel suggest that the consultant can be a psychologist, social worker or teacher (anyone with a knowledge of behaviour modification), the mediator can be the teacher, mother or father (anyone with access to reinforcers), and the target can be the patient, pupil or delinquent (anyone with the problem). The mediator should be someone who is in the client's natural environment and has control of the contingency rewards, and can also monitor and record the client's behaviour. The authors suggest that the mediator should conduct this programme on a daily basis. The role of the consultant is to select the mediators and behaviours which will maximise the possible outcomes, and to also provide the mediator with the appropriate programme to successfully achieve these outcomes.

Operant Conditioning

This process focuses on the consequences of a behaviour as the controllers of the strengths and frequencies of future responses. Thus, this principle asserts that the probability of a person repeating a response will increase or decrease according to the consequences. Therefore, those responses which are followed by consequences which the individual finds rewarding tend to be repeated frequently, whereas those responses followed by consequences which the individual finds aversive tend to reduce in strength and frequency. Thus, the central paradigm of this intervention model is the relationship between the problem behaviour and its consequences for the child (see Jechu, Hardiker, Yellowly & Shaw, 1972). There are three basic consequential control procedures which are based on the operant principles: (i) reinforcement procedure (response increment) which tends to increase the probability

of a desired behaviour being repeated if followed by the reward procedure; (ii) punishment (response decrement) as a procedure tends to decrease the likelihood of undesired responses being repeated if they are followed by punishment; (iii) extinction procedure is a process by which a reinforcer is withdrawn and, therefore, decreases the frequency of undesired behaviours if the person is deprived of a reward as a consequence.

Response Increment

This procedure aims at increasing the strength and frequency of a desired behaviour. Contingency management is one of the methods used to increase the frequency of desired behaviours. This method involves the manipulation of reinforcement which entails the presentation of a reward (e.g. money, sweets or toys) after the desired response is emitted. The effect is that the response increases in strength and frequency. Therefore, the circumstances must be arranged so that the desired behaviour is followed closely in time by the rewarding consequences. This gives the person the opportunity to learn that the desired response has desirable consequences. Subsequently the desired response may then increase in frequency and, thus, the contingent management procedure can then be regarded as successfully changing the person's behaviour.

Response Decrement

The main aim of this procedure is to decrease the occurrence of inappropriate behaviours which are considered excessive in frequency and strength. Therefore, a child who may frequently swear might be considered by his or her teacher to be emitting excessive undesirable behaviour. By incorporating the principle of punishment (e.g. detention after school) as a consequence of the swearing behaviour the child may in future decrease the frequency of such behaviour. Thus, punishment is defined as a process which when following a response has the effect of decreasing the rate of such responses in the future. There are two basic types of punishments. One involves the delivery of an aversive stimulus, such as a smack, as a consequence of

inappropriate behaviour. The second consists of following such behaviour by the withdrawal of a reward.

Extinction

This procedure is used to eliminate a behaviour from a person's repertoire. This can be achieved by the discontinued use of a reinforcement which previously followed an operant behaviour. For example, to stop a child from behaving in a disruptive attention-seeking manner, conditions can be arranged so that he or she receives no attention following the disruptive behaviour. Consequently, the reinforcing elements are removed and the maladaptive behaviour may decrease in frequency.

Response-Cost

This procedure refers to a method by which a person may lose a reward as a penalty for violating a rule. In other words, the withdrawal of the reward constitutes the 'cost' for the inappropriate action. Thus, response-cost is a form of punishment which seeks to reduce the future frequency of a response.

Aversive Stimulation

This procedure involves the administration of an unpleasant stimulus as a consequence of an inappropriate behaviour. Aversive stimuli may include smacking which when administered as a consequence tends to decrease the future probability of the response being repeated. However, there are some ethical misgivings concerning the inflicting of pain as a punishment (Herbert, 1978). Herbert argues that aversive stimulation may induce a fear response in the person to the extent that he or she becomes incapacitated and is then unable to escape from the aversive stimulus. He asserts that this excessive anxiety is unlikely to result in learning. However, the administering of milder forms of aversive stimuli, such as a reprimand, following an undesired behaviour may result in the decrease in the rate of such behaviour.

Response Acquisition

This procedure involves people adding new behaviours to their repertoire. This method can take two forms - shaping or modelling.

1. Shaping

This process involves encouraging the clients to gradually build new responses into their behaviour by making reinforcement contingent upon successive approximations to the final behaviour. To achieve this 'shaping' the therapist can work out mini-steps towards the final goal and each mini-step is followed by an approximate reward. Therefore, the closer the behaviour is to the desired behaviour the greater the increase in reward outcomes. Therefore, the therapist will first start to reinforce very small changes in behaviour which are in the right direction and as the clients' skills to emit the behaviour improves so does the strength of the positive reinforcement.

2. Modelling

In order to teach a new pattern of behaviour the clients are given the opportunity to observe others perform the desired behaviours and also observe the consequences for the models. If the consequences of the observed behaviour is rewarding then the observers are more likely to imitate the behaviour than if the consequences of the observed behaviour is negative. Therefore, parents and teachers can use this procedure to demonstrate a task to the children who may then imitate the observed behaviour, especially if it is followed by positive consequences.

Self-Control

This procedure refers to the clients' display of self-control in the absence of immediate external constraints. Thus, clients may engage in a behaviour (e.g. non-smoking) whose previous probability has been less than that of the alternative behaviour (e.g. smoking). Therefore, when people are able to manipulate their environment to

produce changes in behaviour which reach some acceptable standard then they are regarded as emitting self-control. Therefore, the aim of behaviour therapy is to help people eventually learn to control their own behaviours and achieve self-selected goals. However, the degree to which this might be achieved may depend upon the age and maturity of the individuals concerned (Herbert, 1978). Self-control techniques may include self-recording, self-evaluation and self-reinforcement to allow the persons to assess their progress and to also provide some feedback on their behaviour.

Written-Contracts

Contracting is a technique which uses reinforcement contingencies to organise and structure behaviour therapy. This behaviour contract is an agreement(s) between the individuals who wish for some behaviour change (e.g. parents) and those whose behaviour is to be changed (e.g. child) (DeRisi & Butz, 1975; Tharp & Wetzel, 1969). DeRisi and Butz argue that for a contract to be successful it is necessary that the requirements for all parties concerned are written with clear and explicit agreements (instructions). They state that a contract should usually consist of date of agreement, the behaviour targeted for change, the rewards to be exchanged for successful behaviour change, a schedule for the delivery of the rewards, the signatures of all the parties (e.g. parents, teachers and child), and a schedule for the review of progress.

Problem-Solving

Here the children are encouraged to define all the aspects of their problems and discuss a variety of solutions which they can use to help alleviate the problem. Once the decisions are made between the children and the therapist about the most appropriate alternative course of action to take and the consequences of those alternative courses are assessed, then action is taken. The assumption here is that the alternative course of action will have more positive consequences than the undesired actions and, therefore, this would lead to an increased rate in the alternative activity

while at the same time decrease the rate of the undesired behaviour. For example, some children may find it difficult to control their tempers and as a consequence they may frequently find themselves in confrontations with teachers and other pupils. By encouraging the children to, say, count to ten when they feel angry may help them to control their feelings while at the same time avoid a confrontation. This may then lead to improved relationships with others and, therefore, provide a reinforcing element to encourage them to control their tempers.

The author has attempted to describe some of the main principles of behaviour therapy that are related to her investigation. This behaviour technique suggests that once the environment is manipulated (e.g. introduction of rewards) so that the consequences of improved school attendance, for example, are perceived as more rewarding by the truants, then they are more likely to increase their school attendance rates. Therefore, behaviour therapy may enable clients successfully to achieve more positive behaviour changes.

However, changes within the pupils themselves may not be enough to achieve more permanent improvement in behaviour (Reid, 1982d). Reid suggests that when persistent absentees are placed in special units (which usually incorporate behaviour therapy) their attendance tends to improve. However, when such pupils are returned to mainstream schooling their attendance rapidly deteriorates which suggests that the pupils are unable to adapt from a special behavioural programme with its more unorthodox approaches (e.g. greater emphasis on material rewards such as food) to the mainstream school with its more disciplinary approaches. Reid's comments suggest that behaviour therapy alone may not achieve the desired permanent change in behaviour. Therefore, such a long-term goal may require further changes not only in the problem pupils themselves, but also within the school system itself. Thus, the following section will focus on the techniques of systems analysis within the context of the school's organisation.

Systems Analysis

The main aim of the systems analysis approach is to assess the objectives of the system and its line of action taken in order to achieve those objectives (Burden, 1978). The theory asserts that in order to ensure that appropriate action is taken it is essential that the lines of communication are established to enable all the agencies concerned to negotiate their expectations and roles played in the process of intervention.

Burden suggests that in order to ensure an effective analysis of a school-based project is achieved then several stages must be established:

Stage 1: Recognition and Formulation of the Problem

In the first stages of the analysis of a school-based project is to investigate how the problem arose, who are the people believed to be the problem and whether the problem is a manifestation of other deeper or different problems.

Stage 2: Organisation of the Project

The project should be organised so that it has access to any necessary information or person. Thus, effective teamwork is essential with each person in the team having a clear, specific function to perform. Such a team may include the team lead, social worker and a liaison officer. This teamwork approach would then allow the project to organise itself in order to utilise any possible contacts with the environment. Once this network of communication is established then the project would be able to analyse the problems within its environment and take appropriate action. However, Burden warns that to organise a project team with a high degree of specificity may have its drawbacks. There is a danger that such a structure may intimidate the team members by impose artificial barriers on the production of important information which might otherwise be readily forthcoming in less formal situations. He advises that a balance must be established to ensure that the necessary information is gathered as efficiently as possible.

Stage 3: Definition of the System

The next stage is to define the system which is to be analysed. Once this process of analysis is achieved then the system can be broken down into sub-systems. The communication process between the sub-systems should be assessed with the main objective of synthesising them so that they work together towards achieving an overall objective. For example, the problem pupils' 'natural' environment can be seen as the system which is then broken into three main sub-systems: the home, the mainstream school and the school-based special needs project. Here the systems theory asserts that these three sub-systems should open channels of communication to ensure that the needs of the project is understood.

Stage 4: Definition of the Wider System which Contains the System being Studied

Burden argues that it is important for the system to be aware of its environment. It is only through clearly defining its environment will the system be able to consider the wider issues related to its objectives and be able to assess the attitudes of the people around it. For example, the school-based project may need to assess the attitudes of the teachers in the surrounding mainstream departments. This may then provide the project with feedback on its success and also help the project to continually assess any changes in the needs of the target pupils. Therefore, the project would be in a better position to adapt to the changing demands of its environment.

Stage 5: Defining the Objectives of the Wider System

The theory asserts that for a junior system (e.g. project) to become more productive it may have to incorporate the aims and objectives of the senior system (e.g. senior management or the mainstream school). This may mean that the criteria of the project may have to be defined within the context of the mainstream school. Thus, the junior sub-system can then be seen to contribute effectively to the wider goals agreed upon by the more senior

sub-systems.

Stage 6: Definition of the Objectives within the System Under Study

Once the objectives of the senior sub-system are understood, then the project should formulate its own objectives and criteria which it believes are feasible given the resources available. Once these objectives are clearly defined and agreed upon then all concerned should be informed about any decisions made.

Stage 7: Definition of the Overall (Economic) Criterion

The system should aim to establish precise objectives which can lead to the setting up of quantitative criteria. For example, a project's main objective may include increasing school attendance among truant pupils. This may then lead to several other criteria, such as decrease disruptive behaviour and increase reading tasks. This may then direct the project towards a clear goal for success in the sense of producing better school attenders with improved reading skills. Such precise objectives and criteria may then help the project to avoid vague terms such as 'happy' and 'pleasant' which may cause confusion and misunderstanding among all parties concerned.

Stage 8: Information and Data Collection

Burden suggests that this stage should be the most extensive approach of the investigation. The data should be collected by interviewing from as many key people as possible and all sources of information (e.g. reports and school registers) should also be explored. The data should not only provide information on the current operation of the system, but should also be analysed to help the team make forecasts of the environment in which the system will have to operate in the future. Such information can be collected via informal interviews, structured questionnaires or analysis of classroom interactions.

Burden suggests that a CIPP (Context, Input, Process, Product) model of analysis may provide a suitable evaluative

framework for school-based projects. The main objective of the first level of evaluation, the context, should be carried out during the planning phase of the project. The context evaluation should involve: (a) assessing the environment where the change is to occur (e.g. school-based project, remedial classes or off-site units); (b) examine the needs of the environment which need to be met (e.g. control truancy); (c) investigate the problems underlying those needs (e.g. poor teacher-pupil relationship, unchallenging curriculum, problems at home, delinquency problems); and (d) assess the opportunities for change, for example, staff willingness to become involved in the project or the availability of skilled volunteers in the community. At this stage the information should lead to the establishment of the goals and objectives. The next approach is the input evaluation stage which should provide information on the human and material resources available to the project. This would then enable the project to assess its capabilities and it could then design the appropriate programmes to meet its goals. The following to this approach is the process stage which should provide the project with feedback information from its environment in order to enable it to refine its plans, and detect any defects and areas of potential failure. The final stage is the product evaluation where the outcomes are compared with the objectives. Here the effectiveness of the project is determined by defining the goals and measuring whether these have been achieved. Such evaluation can then lead to the decisions on whether the project should be continued, terminated or modified.

Burden argues that this systems model if successfully applied may allow the school to practice more meaningful strategies to combating the problems faced by its pupils rather than using the limited 'individual-child-crisis-type-referral-system'. He asserts that such an ephemeral approach tends to ignore the deficiencies in the school environment that might be generating the problems and, therefore, usually leads to failure when attempting to reintegrate the special-unit pupils into mainstream school - a problem which has been further noted in the literature

(Reid, 1982d). Thus, the central aim of the systems approach to intervention is to allow the key persons the opportunity to view the problems within the wider context of the school systems, and, therefore, place them in a better position to discover where the real problem lies. Such an approach may help the school to provide strategies from within the environment that are likely to be most effective in achieving satisfactory solutions for all parties concerned.

Summary

The theoretical framework described so far has attempted to present the problem of non-school attendance within the context of both the social learning theory and the systems analysis approach. The author believes that this multi-disciplinary conceptual approach may provide some fruitful strategies to the management of school attendance. Further, this multi-disciplinary approach suggests several possible criteria:

1. Reduction in excessive undesired behaviour (e.g. stealing) via the extinction procedure.
2. Increase desired behaviour (e.g. school attendance) via the use of rewards and other contingency approaches, such as written contracts.
3. Reduction in disruptive behaviour via response-cost techniques, reprimands or class detentions.
4. Increase pupils' self-confidence within their school environment via problem-solving and self-control techniques.
5. Clearly define the problems within the school environment.
6. Design appropriate changes (e.g. introduce projects or expand the pastoral system) within the school in order to meet the needs of 'problem' children.

7. Establish communication networks between the key persons so that the objectives can be clearly defined and that the goals can be more efficaciously achieved through the co-operation of all parties concerned.
8. The school can then establish a programme schedule with the main aim to correct any deficiencies within the school curriculum that might be generating 'problem' behaviours.
9. Information should be collected from the key people to enable the school to assess the problems, to obtain some feedback and to examine future strategies.

Here the author has attempted to described persistent absenteeism within both its theoretical framework and intervention model. As a continuation of this stage, the following chapters will present the action research programme and the data collected in relation to the multifaceted problems of non-school attendance. This data will also be analysed in order to evaluate the effectiveness of the multi-disciplinary model in relation to the needs of the poor school attenders.

Chapter 8aA Study on School Disaffection and a School-Based Unit

The aim of this chapter is to give a brief account of some of the author's early observations at a school-based unit and how such studies influenced her methodology.

The Early Research Period

During the author's early days as both a teacher and an active researcher in secondary schools, she first observed a form of disaffection which involves pupils who attend school, but do not actually attend their lessons. Instead, such pupils tend to roam the school corridors during lesson time and occupy themselves with activities such as sitting in the reception area, running and shouting along the corridors, or interrupting classroom lessons while they are in progress. Because such pupils tend to spend much of their out-of-lesson time in the corridors, the author decided to colloquially refer to them as the "Corridor Kids".

To gain a better understanding into why some pupils disaffect from their lessons and become 'corridor kids', the author informally interviewed two senior teachers using an unstructured procedure. The two interviews occurred during April, 1984, and all the information was recorded via note form. The interviews revealed several factors relating to the teachers' perceptions of the 'corridor kid' phenomenon including:

1. Generally, such pupils tend to be considered by the school staff as disruptive when present in lessons, and it was relatively common for them ('corridor kids') to experience serious personality clashes with their teachers, such as arguments or one party physically threatening to beat the other.

2. The 'corridor kid' phenomenon is most prevalent among pupils aged between 14 and 16 years. One senior teacher has suggested that this problem is most prevalent among this age group probably because it is usually during this stage that most pupils are informed about their examination entrances. Consequently, some pupils realising that they are in the 'non-examination' category may then decide to absent themselves from classes. This argument is also supported by Hargreaves (1967) who has suggested that some pupils become disaffected with school after realising that they have been 'written-off' as examination candidates.

3. The number of children found in the corridors by senior teachers varies from week to week, but the teachers estimated that on average they apprehended about six pupils per week roaming the corridors and it was usually the same pupils. However, the prevalence of 'corridor kids' varied markedly from term to term, with the school experiencing a relatively high number of pupils roaming the corridors during the Autumn and Spring terms, whereas during the Summer term the 'corridor kid' phenomenon virtually disappears. The senior teachers suggested that this might be due to the fact that during the winter the warm corridors of this very modern school building (the school was built during the 1980's) with its colourful decorations, for example Asian and Rastafarian art, dimly lit lights and soft comfortable chairs, may seem more attractive to the 'corridor kids' than the prospect of roaming the streets during inclement weather. However, during the Summer term the streets may seem more attractive to the 'corridor kids' who may then prefer the City Centre and shopping parades to the confinements of the school corridors - hence the phenomenon diminishes during good weather.

The Management of 'Corridor Kids'

A senior member of staff is usually on corridor duty during lesson periods. The corridor duties usually involve

the senior teacher periodically walking around the school corridors and checking on pupils who may be wandering around the school building instead of attending their lessons. If the pupils cannot produce an 'excuse' slip, signed by their lesson teacher, stating the reason for them being out of their classrooms, then they are escorted back to their lessons by the senior teacher on duty. Once returned to their lessons, the senior teacher will wait until the pupils concerned appear settled and then he or she will withdraw from the classroom. It is also the school's policy that all teachers are obliged to keep an attendance register of all their pupils for each lesson and any pupil who is missing should be reported to the senior staff via notes.

However, the senior teachers believe that one of the main problems with this management strategy is that some 'corridor kids' may feel that they are receiving individual attention from the senior staff and this may in turn encourage pupils, particularly the disruptive ones, to roam the corridors. To negate this problem the teaching staff has made it a policy that once the 'corridor kids' are returned to their lessons, the teacher concerned must try to treat them similarly to the rest of the class and also try to avoid drawing any attention to the fact that the "corridor kid's" absence had been noticed by the class. To achieve this the staff employ several strategies: (i) the senior teacher tries to ensure that such pupils enter the classroom quietly and are discretely placed at the back of the classroom; (ii) the class teacher should continue the lesson and, if possible, avoid noticing the presence of the 'corridor kid' and the senior teacher; (iii) once the senior teacher has left the classroom, the class teacher should avoid asking the 'corridor kids' about their absence, but should instead give them some work to do as soon as possible.

The Efficacy of the Management Strategies for Dealing with 'Corridor Kids'

The interviews revealed that the senior teachers felt that the management strategies had not necessarily reduced

the number of 'corridor kids', but they also stressed that since introducing these policies the number of pupils roaming the corridors have not increased either. When asked why such management strategies seem ineffective in reducing the number of 'corridor kids', the senior teachers suggested two reasons: (i) that many of the pupils who become 'corridor kids' also tend to exhibit disruptive behaviour which, in turn, may tempt some teachers to condone such pupils' absences from their lessons; (ii) many pupils are well aware of their legal position and know that their school corridor explorations can be done with relative impunity because the law and the EWOs are virtually powerless in dealing with them - after all these pupils are attending school if not the lessons.

The Limitations of the School's Approach to Managing 'Corridor Kids'

The author considers the school's approach to managing 'corridor kids' as somewhat limited because its strategies seem to have little positive effect on such pupils' behaviour and their educational experiences. Such limitations might be due to several factors including:

1. The school does not provide any counselling sessions for such pupils.
2. Disruptive or potentially violent 'corridor kids' are usually ordered to sit outside the Principal's office and made to write 'lines'. This method of punishment may not adequately cater for the needs of such pupils who may have social and academic problems that might require a carefully planned educational programme.
3. The school appeared not to consider in depth the greater issues relating to non-examination pupils and disaffection which are highlighted by the apparent presence of the 'corridor kid' phenomenon. Although some teachers stated that they sympathized with the non-examination pupils who felt that schooling was pointless, nevertheless, the school did very little in

the way of addressing the problem through curricular reorganization to meet the needs of such pupils. Nor did the school provide a meaningful assessment procedure whereby non-examination pupils can achieve some form of basic qualifications/certificates which they can then show to potential employers.

4. It is quite possible that some pupils become 'corridor kids' because of genuine grievances against a member of staff, or because they find the contents of their lessons boring. Thus, before the school can overcome some of these problems it may have to regard its pupils as 'clients' with the right to participate actively in the school decision-making processes and also to be allowed to state their opinions on various curricular activities. In fact, there is evidence which suggests that in schools where pupils are allowed to participate in the decision-making processes there also tend to be relatively few disaffection problems (Mortimore et al., 1988; Reid, 1986a; Reynolds & Murgatroyd, 1977; Rutter et al., 1979; White & Brockington, 1983).
5. The school has carried out very little research to assess the effects that the "corridor kids'" activities may have on other pupils.

The Limitations of the Author's Study on the 'Corridor Kid' Phenomenon

Some of the limitations of the author's early investigations include:

1. The author did not actually interview any of the 'corridor kids' to ascertain the reasons for their corridor adventures and their opinions of the school. One of the reasons for this is that many of these pupils tended to be in school when the author was actually teaching and they were very rarely present in the school during breaks and lunchtimes.
2. The author only interviewed two members of staff because

of the limited time due to teaching. Therefore, the information based on such limited data should be treated with caution.

3. Many of the teaching staff, including the author herself, have experienced verbal abuse and disruptive behaviour from 'corridor kids' who would literally barge into one's lessons screaming, shouting or singing, and on some occasions they have physically attacked other pupils. Such unfortunate experiences may have adversely influenced the teachers' attitudes towards 'corridor kids' and as a consequence the model of these pupils based on this limited information, may reflect at best only part of the 'story' and at worst the biased opinions of the staff. It is, for example, quite possible that some of the 'corridor kids' include pupils who are relatively intelligent and not necessarily disruptive, but nevertheless, prefer not to attend lessons because of genuine discontentment with the curriculum.

The Influence of this Early Study on the Present Action Research Project

The 'corridor kid' phenomenon was one of the author's earliest contacts with school disaffection while she was teaching and actively researching. This early experience raised several issues for future research including:

1. Whenever possible, interviews should be recorded via a cassette recorder rather than note form, because note-taking can distract the interviewer from the main issues developing in the interview; make difficult to record all the details of the interview; furthermore, it can be very laborious.
2. To capitalise on the plethora of opinions and experiences that are available from teachers, pupils, parents and outside agencies of all 'political' affiliations, both 'traditionalists' and 'radicals' alike. Such investigations may provide an insight into the range of issues being raised about the subject concerned and may

also be a valuable preparation for developing questionnaires that attempt to approach an issue from various angles and, therefore, negate some of the effects of biases and prejudices.

3. To observe a variety of management approaches that attempt to cater for the needs of disaffected pupils. This will include both school-based and off-site projects.

Through contacts with various professional colleagues, the author became aware of two special needs units that were established primarily to provide curricula to meet the needs of disaffected pupils with learning difficulties. The author was eventually introduced to the units, that is, Unit 1 and Unit 2 which are both based in Leicester. She carried out several case-studies at the two units over an eighteen-month period from January, 1984, to September, 1985. The author also studied the backgrounds of the units and how their curricular approaches affected their pupils' cognitive and social developments. The Unit 1 project will be discussed in this chapter and the Unit 2 project shall be discussed in the following Chapter.

The Unit 1 Study

The Unit 1 project is based at a comprehensive school which caters for pupils aged between 11 and 19 years. The school serves a catchment area which consists mainly of skilled and unskilled working families. The Unit was established in 1980 to cater for the special needs of pupils aged between 11 and 15 years. The author made her first visit to the Unit on the 17th January, 1984, with the aim of gaining some insight into the type of educational programmes which the Unit had established for pupils with learning and school attendance problems.

Unit 1 became one of the author's main studies because of the opportunities it provided in terms of non-school attendance cases and it also allowed her to study the effects that the school's system of rewards and

sanctions might have on non-school attenders. The author also studied the structural organisation of the Unit to assess how it used its relatively limited resources to cater for the special needs of its pupils. Most of this information was collected from interviews with the Unit 1 teaching staff, pupils, and relevant documents and reports. The data were recorded either by note form, or via cassette tape recording and later transcription.

The Structure of the Unit 1 Project

The pupils worked in a fairly relaxed atmosphere of an open-planned area. There were, at any one time, no more than four groups of pupils and each group consisted of about six children. Each group had one teacher and there were usually about two sixth-form students in the Unit who provided voluntary help.

Materials

There is a wide range of reading and spelling books; and an array of games including crossword puzzles, and snakes and ladders.

Teacher-Pupil Ratio

There were normally no more than six pupils to one teacher. However, to assess this ratio, the author carried out a small survey in the mainstream school with the permission of the Headteacher and several subject teachers. On the 10th April, 1984, the author observed ten classes which included five classes who were studying English and five classes studying Mathematics. These two subjects were selected because they are similar to the teaching subjects in the Unit 1 project. The age groups were also selected to match those of the pupils attending the Unit. The groups included two classes from each age group, that is, from the 1st Year through to the 5th Year groups. When the author entered each class she would first note the age group, the teaching subject, count the number of pupils present including the late arrivals and, when time permitted, she would also participate in the lesson (e.g. help pupils with reading). The author calculated that the mean average number

of pupils who attended these lessons was 26 per teacher. The survey, therefore, suggests that the teacher-pupil ratio in the Unit 1 project is very good when compared with similar classes in the mainstream school. The project's ratio of 1:6 may be relatively more conducive in allowing the teachers to give greater individual attention to their pupils.

Screening and Assessment

All first year pupils are screened at the Unit. The screening tests include the "London Reading Test A" (ILEA, 1980) and the "Diagnostic Spelling Test Form A" (Vincent & Claydon, 1981). After diagnosis the Unit would then design special educational programmes for pupils who appear to have significantly more reading problems than the majority of the children in their own age group, as suggested by the diagnostic tests. Other criteria for Unit attendance included pupils whose learning difficulties were compounded by their truancy and/or disruptive behaviours.

Reward Systems

Pupils were awarded points in accordance with the correctness and neatness of their work. The pupils' points were recorded in their 'Daily Point Summary Chart' at the back of their working books. These points seemed particularly important among the eleven to thirteen-year age group, probably because the points could be traded for a discount from the cost of the annual school summer trip, with the more points earned by the pupils the bigger the discount. Needless to say, the pupils were very diligent when adding up their earned points.

One of the Unit's teachers used edible rewards, such as chocolate bars, to encourage a 3rd year - which the teacher described as 'disruptive' - to participate in reading and spelling tests. Those pupils who attained a relatively good level of competence in the tests were awarded a chocolate bar both for their co-operative behaviour and for demonstrating their skills in spelling. The teacher claimed that before the edible rewards were introduced, the group was totally uncontrollable and 'out of

desperation' (the teachers words) she decided to use the edible rewards as incentives for school work. Other rewards used by the project teachers included praise and attention; although there are limitations with these types of reinforcements. For example, if a teacher uses, say, the term 'good' as a form of general expression rather than using it predominantly in association with pupil outcome, then such an expression may become less effective as a reward (Brophy, 1981).

Sanctions

The Unit's senior teacher claimed that the main sanction used in the Unit was the 'ignoring' condition. If a pupil exhibited any disruptive behaviour, such as tapping the desk with a pencil, then the behaviour was ignored and the senior teacher would continue the lesson as if nothing was happening - this seemed a very difficult task for the teacher because he said there is always the temptation to react, especially when the pupil becomes abusive. The senior teacher believed that this was a very effective method in reducing disruptive behaviour. He stated that his experience of other sanctions, such as shouting and detentions, proved to be very ineffective on pupils' disruptive behaviour.

A Case-Study

As part of the author's study, she conducted two interviews with one male truant who attended the Unit. All the information gathered from these interviews were collected via note form. The author had worked fairly well with this truant for two months preceding the interviews, with much of this work consisting of helping him with reading, mathematics and essay writing. The demographic information based on the interviews is as follows:

Mark, age 15 years.

Interviews: The interviews occurred on the 7th February and 3rd April, 1984.

Venue: The Unit 1 Project.

Background

Mark comes from a family of four which consist of three children and a mother (his parents are divorced). Mark is the eldest child, and both his younger brother and sister attend the same school.

His mother had been working as an auxiliary nurse for six years at the time of the interview. Because of the nature of her job, the mother had to work regular night shifts. Mark stated that at first he hated it when his mother worked these night shifts. However, as he got older his attitude changed and he now enthusiastically looked forward to his mother's night work and explained,

"It's great now when Mum works nights, especially at weekends. I can do what I like and go in really late about four O' clock in the morning".

Mark's brother who is 12 years old and his sister who is 11 years old look after themselves when Mark and their mother are out of the house. Mark said,

"Mum leaves me to look after my brother and sister, but I can't stay in all the time".

He claimed that before he goes on his late night adventures he will always buy the younger ones some sweets. his late night adventures usually include gate-crashing parties or visiting the pubs. His mother, naturally, dislikes his late night 'street walks', but Mark believes that there is very little that she can do about this situation.

Mark's father lives very close to the home and he (Mark) visits him about once every two months. His father is apparently a frequent drinker of alcohol and Mark finds this very upsetting. He commented, "Dad can get very nasty". Mark, however, declined from giving any details about what he meant exactly by the word 'nasty'.

Behaviour

One teacher described Mark as having a very bad temper and he has in the past physically threatened at least two male teachers. Mark has also been involved in several fights with other pupils. He is physically very big for his age, and was well known by the staff and other pupils for his bullying tactics: male pupils have complained about Mark bullying them for their money, marbles and watches, and those pupils who refused to surrender were punched. A male teacher mentioned one incident where Mark, then a 4th year, walked into the Unit 1 project with a metal bar and waved it in the air in a provocative manner. The teacher said that he calmly asked Mark to put down the object before he (Mark) hurts somebody. Mark replied that that was indeed the idea, to hurt somebody, and then he proceeded towards the teacher waving the metal bar. The teacher stated that he did not move from his position, Mark responded with a smile and then threw the object onto the floor.

However, the teachers felt that as a 5th year student, Mark was displaying much less aggression. For the academic year of 1983/84 Mark had only one fight with another student whom he claimed had referred to his father as a 'drunken bat'. Besides that incident, the teachers felt that Mark was much more settled.

The author asked the project teachers what they felt might be the reasons for Mark's 'improved' behaviour. One teacher suggested that Mark is probably more settled because he is simply 'growing up'.

Educational Attainment

The Unit teachers said that Mark has reading problems and finds it difficult to spell words, such as 'cupboard'. He is a non-examination student who will, unfortunately, be leaving school without any formal qualifications.

Truancy Behaviour

Mark started truancy at the beginning of his 5th

year around October, 1983. He said,

"I started to miss P.E. (Physical Education) lessons because I don't like the teacher and he doesn't like me. I used to get my mark in the morning and then disappear, usually to town. I'd just play around, and sometimes me and my friends used to chase each other around the Haymarket. Then we'd get chased by those security men - it was great - they never caught us. Then I started to miss other lessons like maths because I wanted some more fun.

I got into trouble. My form tutor told me that the school is going to send a letter home to me mum telling her that I've not been attending school regularly. Mum was not surprised, she said that she was fed-up with me.

Mum had to come to school with me to discuss my future. Me and Mum sat in the Headmaster's office with my tutor. They asked me why I was missing school, told me how I was ruining my future and was upsetting Mum. The Head said that I ain't got much time left in school so I should make the most of it if I want a good report when I leave school. So I told them that I'll come back to school only if I didn't have to do P.E. They said they'll see what they can do".

Instead of attending P.E. lessons, Mark was allowed to attend Unit 1 on Tuesday mornings. He said that he liked the Unit 1 senior teacher because, "I can make a joke with him". Mark further commented,

"I don't think I'd miss school again because I've only got eight weeks left here. It's not worth it. Anyway, it keeps Mum happy".

Future Plans for Unit 1.

Faced with problem pupils like Mark, the Unit wanted to introduce an extended pastoral care system to allow the teachers to devote more counselling time to pupils with domestic and behavioural problems. The Unit then put forward

some objectives for extended pastoral care. These objectives included:

1. Counselling sessions where pupils can discuss any problems and seek advice.
2. Pupils will receive more individual care.
3. Individual discussions on homework and areas of academic work which the pupils may find particularly difficult.
4. Extra individual help with reading, writing and spelling.

The Attitudes of Mainstream Teachers towards the Unit 1 Project

The Unit teachers believe that many of the mainstream staff welcome the Unit because it offers individual help to remedial pupils who may have otherwise been neglected because of the relatively large classes in mainstream which may pose a greater limit on the amount of time that mainstream teachers can spend with individual pupils.

However, some of the Unit 1 project staff believe that they have to face some very difficult political issues posed by some mainstream school teachers and these issues include:

1. Although the Unit needs more money for reading materials, some faculties in the school believe that their needs are more imperative because unlike the Unit, they have to get students through public examinations.
2. The Unit wants to extent its pastoral care system, but some mainstream teachers have argued that this is superfluous because they feel that the two periods (equivalent to an hour) per week already allocated by the school for pastoral care is quite adequate.

The relevance of the Unit 1 Study to the Literature and the Research Methodology

Mark's case seems to reflect some of the findings in the literature on non-school attenders which include:

1. Mark is a poor academic achiever and the literature suggests that there is an association between poor academic performance and truancy (Fogelman & Richardson, 1974; Fogelman et al., 1980; Jardine, 1987; May, 1975; Reid, 1982a, 1984a).
2. Mark has exhibited both anti-social and disruptive behaviour. Here again the literature suggests that truants tend to display conduct disorders and delinquent behaviour (Farrington, 1980; May, 1975; Pritchard et al., 1987; Robins & Ratcliffe, 1980; Tyerman, 1958; West & Farrington, 1977).
3. Mark lives with one parent and reports indicate that his father exhibits at least one social pathology, that is, alcoholism. Here empirical work indicates that truants tend to come from families with several social problems such as alcoholism and violence (Farrington, 1980; Reid, 1985; SED, 1977; Tyerman, 1958, 1968).

However, there is at least one aspect of Mark's truancy behaviour which is not in accordance with the general findings in the literature which suggest that truancy usually starts between the ages of 11 and 13 years and reaches a peak in the final years of school, that is, at about 15 to 16 years of age (Fogelman & Richardson, 1974; Fogelman et al., 1980; Galloway, 1979, 1980, 1985). However, Mark actually started truanting in his final school year (i.e. age 15+ years) which, in accordance with the literature, is quite unusual.

What has the author learnt from the Unit 1 Study

The Unit 1 study gave the author the opportunity to observe and assess several aspects of a special needs

programme in relation to the caring of pupils with difficulties. Some of the author's observations include:

1. The author gained an insight into the types of instruments used in the screening and assessment of pupils with learning difficulties.
2. The author was able to assess the importance of various teaching methods and classroom organization in creating a more conducive working atmosphere particularly for individual tuition.
3. The author became aware of the different types of rewards used by the Unit and their affects on pupils' behaviour. The author, therefore, believes that her methodology should include an assessment of the reward preferences of non-school attenders and an analysis of the efficacy of such incentives on school attendance and academic performance.
4. Considering the possibility of the effects that mainstream teachers' attitudes may have on special needs units, the author believes it is important to develop a teacher questionnaire which may give an insight into the type of relationship that might exist between the two sub-units (i.e. the mainstream school and the special education projects).

In the following chapter the author will discuss the Unit 2 project which, unlike Unit 1, is an 'off-site' unit based on its own site. The author will also discuss how the Unit 1 and Unit 2 studies have influenced her action research project.

Chapter 8bA Study of an Off-Site Unit

The Unit 2 project is an off-site establishment which is funded by the Leicestershire Social Service Department. The Unit is staffed by a team of professionals which includes teachers and social workers. The Unit works primarily with children who have severe behavioural problems and poor school attendance rates. In January, 1985, the author asked the Unit and the Social Service Department for permission to study some of their clients (i.e. school children). Prior to receiving permission to carry out some research work at the Unit 2 project, the author was interviewed by both the Unit 2 Team and a research officer at the Social Services. Several issues were raised by the two interviews including:

1. The author's role at the Unit and the limits to how far she will be allowed to intervene in the Unit's educational programmes

The author stated that her main role will be to investigate the effects of different types of reinforcement on school-related behaviours, such as school attendance and the teacher-pupil relationship.

The Team felt that it would be best if the author intervened in their clients programmes via the key workers (i.e. the Unit 2 teachers) because they have more knowledge and experience of the children's backgrounds. Furthermore, the involvement of the key workers will also ensure that: (i) the clients will only receive any additional intervention which the key workers consider to be most responsive to their (clients) needs; (ii) provide an opportunity for the author and key workers to share knowledge which might be of value both to the project and to the author's research.

2. Ethics

Both the Team and the author agreed that the children's interests are paramount to any intervention programme no matter its heuristic value. For example, the Team Leader stated that a child will not be kept on any programme if it is felt best for him or her to be referred to residential care, especially in cases where there are suspected abuse or neglect by the families concerned.

3. How Far does the Author Intend to Actually Influence Unit 2 Project's Policies

The author stated that, firstly, she expects her study to be carefully monitored by the Team; and, secondly, because the Team consists of intelligent and very experienced professional people, she was in no doubt that her ideas will be first discussed and analysed by the Team before they are implemented. Thus, her influence, if any, will hopefully be positive.

The Outcome of the Two Interviews

All the parties concerned decided that the author may have some valuable contributions to make in relation to non-school attendance, and her data may also give some insights into how best to reintegrate 'problem' pupils into mainstream education. The author was then given permission to study the Unit 2 project.

After the author commenced her study at the Unit 2 project, one of her first tasks was to collect information on the background and organizational aspects of the Unit via interviews with the Team. Most of this background information was collected either from documents, or via recorded interviews and later transcribed.

Background

The 1981 summer riots which occurred in various inner city areas of Britain served as an impetus for an influx of new ideas which were proposed in order to improve the conditions of these areas, particularly for the youth. Among

the various professionals, including social and community workers, there was a growing feeling that some alternative provision to residential care should be introduced. The Team Leader stated that some social workers felt that some juvenile problems occurring in the home or school would not necessarily be solved by taking the children out of their home environment. He argued that in some cases it was probably better to keep children with their families, and offer help and support while the families attempted to sort out their problems. There is also some evidence to suggest that it might be disadvantageous to place children into residential care because such an environment exposes them to many other patterns of deviant behaviours (Cornish & Clarke, 1975). With this in mind efforts were made by several social workers to develop an alternative programme to residential care. Consequently, the Unit 2 project was established in 1982 to serve an inner city catchment area.

Organizational Perspectives

The Unit was first set up as a pilot scheme with certain key elements including:

1. The Unit was to be locally based within the area it served to enable it to capitalise on local resources, such as voluntary workers.
2. It was to have a multidisciplinary approach, employing both social workers and teachers with the purpose of developing an integrated scheme.
3. The Unit was to provide an alternative to residential provision and, therefore, focus on those children who would otherwise be in residential care.

Reduction in the use of certain types of care orders

The Unit's first objective was to reduce the number of children going into and remaining in residential care under Section 1 (2)d (beyond parental control) and 1(2)e (non-school attendance) of the children and Young Persons Act (CYPA, 1969). The Unit also felt that the introduction

of the 1981 Education Act provided some additional scope for retaining difficult children within their own communities, mainly because such children tend to have special educational needs (Fogelman et al., 1980; Hersov, 1960a; Jardine, 1987; May, 1975; Reid, 1982b, 1984a). Table 8b.1 below shows what has happened to these types of care orders since the establishment of the Unit 2 project. The figures in Table 8b.1 indicate that between 1981 and 1984 there was a diminution in the number of care order applications, of the type mentioned above, made in the Unit's catchment area. The Team Leader suggested that the reductions in these type of care orders are probably due to the greater willingness of social workers and magistrates to consider revocational alternatives. The Unit, therefore, believes that its establishment may have contributed to the reduction in the number children, from its catchment area, who are being placed into residential care under Section 1 (2)d and 1 (2)e of the 1969 Act.

Table 8b.1: Numbers of Section 1 (2)d and 1 (2)e (of the 1969 Act) Care Orders made per Year in Unit 2's Catchment Area

	Section 1(2)d	Section 1(2)e
1981	1	3
1982	0	3
1983	0	1
1984 (to March)	0	0

Table 8b.1 shows that there was a gradual reduction in the number of children being taken into care under Sections 1(2)d and 1(2)e of the 1969 Act.

Referral Criteria

After a careful study of juvenile cases, the team pooled together all their experiences with juvenile delinquents and established a criteria for referral. This criteria includes:

1. The child must be considered to be in danger of being taken into care under Section 1 (2)d or 1 (2)e of the 1969 Act.
2. To work mainly with children aged between 10 and 15 years, because the team believes that it is this age group who is most at risk in being placed into care under the above mentioned Sections of the 1969 Act.

Pre-Referral Discussion

Prior to referral, the Unit and the schools concerned will discuss the children who they believe to have serious problems. Once the referral has been accepted then the children concerned are observed and assessed.

Observation Procedure

Whenever possible, the child is observed daily for two weeks while present in classroom lessons. The Team chose a two-week observation period because although it is relatively short, it nevertheless gives them some insight into what might be the problem facing both the children and their schools. This brief observation period also means that there is a relatively short delay in introducing the children to special educational programmes and, therefore, negate any escalating problems which might otherwise occur in more protracted observation schedules.

One of the main observation techniques used by the Unit is the Pupil Record Sheet (Galton et al., 1980). The Unit included this schedule in their assessment procedure primarily to reduce misunderstanding between themselves and the schools concerned. The Unit believes that there were great differences between themselves and the schools in terms of what the schools expect the Unit to achieve, especially with pupils with behavioural problems, and what the Unit has actually succeeded in accomplishing. The Team argues that this misunderstanding was partly the result of the Unit accepting pupils for the special needs programmes having only vague information on such pupils, for example,

teachers may describe them as 'a pain at school'. The Unit found that such information was of limited value when they attempted to provide realistic programmes that will help the pupils come to terms with their problems so that they can be reintegrated into mainstream education. To counterbalance some of these problems, the Unit introduced the Pupil Record Sheet to collect detailed information about the pupils' patterns of activities within the classrooms (e.g. working on task work, distracted, horseplay, interacting with teacher, etc.). Such information was also recorded for several 'control' pupils who attend the same classes as the target pupils. These 'control' pupils were chosen at random and observed so that comparisons can be made.

The observation schedule was discussed with the teachers concerned, social workers, educational psychologists and the Special Needs Team from the LEA. The Pupil Record was welcomed by the Special Needs Team and educational psychologists who also supported the Unit's selection of clients and approved of the programmes that were developed based on the data revealed by the observation schedule. The Unit also found that the schools felt that the Pupil Record Sheet had consistently reflected the target pupils' behaviour and it helped them (schools) to develop a more realistic attitude as to what could be achieved with such pupils.

The author asked the Unit teachers several questions relating to the Pupil Record Sheet including:

1. How valid is the schedule in assessing the behaviour of pupils aged between 11 and 15+ years, when in fact it was developed to assess children mainly in the seven to ten-year age group?
2. The schedule was designed for use in informal lessons where the children are seated in small groups. Therefore, how valid is the schedule in formal class situations?

The Unit teachers stated several reasons for using the

Record Sheet:

1. The schedule reflects the instances of older pupils classroom activities as indicated by comparisons with the 'control' groups and the comments from the teachers concerned. The schedule also allowed the Team to assess 'objectively' the rates of disruptive incidents or co-operative behaviour displayed by the pupil concerned.
2. The Team believes that the Pupil Record Sheet has been able to provide more relevant educational programmes for such pupils. They believe further that the findings of the Pupil Record suggests that the schedule may be consistently assessing some of the realities of the pupils' problems.
3. The Pupil Record is one of the few 'thoroughly' researched schedules that can provide multiple codings of the pupils' behaviour at any one particular instance in time. For example, the schedule reveals data not only on the pupils' activity, but also on who they are interacting with and their location in the classroom.
4. The schedule had been used by other teachers in the community and their experiences were readily available to provide assistance and advice on the benefits that the schedule may offer pupils whose special needs programmes are based on such data.

Contracts

The purpose of a contract is to present a written statement which states precisely what is required by all parties concerned, that is, the child, parents, school and Unit (DeRisi & Butz, 1975). The contract is discussed and once all the parties reach some agreement the contract is signed by all (see Chapter 7 for details of a contract). If the contract is broken by the child then penalties are introduced which include extra meetings with school and parents, and disapproval from befrienders. If needed, the contract could be revised or changed.

Team Members

The team consists of several professional and volunteer groups including two social workers, two teachers, three project workers, and several befrienders and volunteers.

Teachers

The main role of the teachers is to provide both counselling and education for the clients. Teaching may involve remedial work for those with learning difficulties or organising curricula to help the absentees catch up with their school work. Most of the teaching material at the Unit is usually set by the clients' subject teachers at school and collected by a team member. The Unit believes that this helps to create a 'bond' between the clients and their schools, plus it also gives them a sense of achievement when they re-enter school lessons to find that they are already familiar with some of the topics. This in turn may lessen the traumas of reintegration into full-time schooling.

Social Workers

The social workers are responsible for both the detection and prevention of school absenteeism. Once a case has been accepted by the Unit, it is then the duty of the social workers to assess the clients' home backgrounds both financially and emotionally.

Project workers

The project workers organise a variety of activities for the clients, such as canoeing, camping and residential holidays.

Befrienders

A befriender is an adult who shares some mutual interests with a client, for example, motorbikes and art. The befriender usually sees the client at the Unit after school hours. Together they pursue various activities such as snooker and also build up a relationship of trust where the befriender has the client's interest 'at heart', so to

speak.

Volunteers

The volunteers are involved in various activities and many help the clients with curricular subjects such as English and Mathematics. The volunteers usually include unemployed teachers, musicians and artists.

Programme Timetable

As already mentioned, in the signing of the contract, the client agrees to participate in various activities including:

1. Intensive Individual Counselling (Behaviour Therapy)

At a meeting the client, parents, school and Unit discuss what has been assessed and isolate particular target behaviours. For example, one of the child's problems might be his or her frequent use of obscene language. The Unit would then encourage the child to gradually decrease the frequency of the target behaviour.

The next stage would be to identify those factors which might be associated with such behaviour. If, for example, the child swears in the classroom and gains the attention of the rest of the class and the teacher then this attention, although it might be negative in terms of a rebuke, nevertheless serve as a positive reinforcer for the offensive behaviour. Consequently, the key workers on the Team are asked to ignore the child when engaging in such behaviour. In addition, the Team also assesses what might serve as effective rewards for the child, such as praise or day trips.

2. Rewards

The Unit uses various types of incentives including: (i) edible rewards such as chocolate bars, biscuits and cakes; (ii) adult and peer approval; (iii) activity rewards, for example, computer programing, free periods and sports; (iv) a point system, if a client earns twenty or more points in a particular week for good behaviour or work then he or she is allowed two free items from the

Unit's tuck shop, such as crisps and soft drinks.

3. Punishment

Certain sanctions are made contingent upon the target behaviour. If the clients' behaviour has not been satisfactory then they may lose points or be temporarily prohibited from engaging in a favoured activity.

4. Programme Schedule

Clients are usually expected to attend the programme on a full-time basis for one or two terms. The programme consists of various activities including residential holidays, counselling, academic work and club events (see Table 8b.2 below).

Table 8b.2: The Programme Schedule for the Unit 2 Project

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Weekends
0915	0915	0915	0915	0915	one resi-
Day	Day	Day	Day	Day	dential
Care	Care	Care	Care	Care	weekend
					per
					month
		1400		1400	
1530	1530		1530		
After	After		After		
School	School		School		
Acti-	Acti-		Acti-		
vities	vities		vities		

EVENINGS:

Club: counselling sessions and group activities.

Group work sessions. Monthly volunteers' meeting with the Unit.

Teacher-Pupil Ratio

There is usually no more than eight pupils to 1.60 teachers. However, during the author's study there were three pupils to one teacher due to the low in-take demands at that time.

Parent and Unit 2 Project Contact

The Team meets the parents concerned once a month to discuss the child's progress. A member of the Team (social worker or teacher) also visits the homes of their clients on a fortnightly basis to discuss progress, and offer help and advice.

School-Unit Contact

The Team arranges meetings with key teachers from the school concerned on a monthly basis to discuss the client's progress.

Issues Faced by the Unit 2 Project in 1985

The Team felt that it was important that they reconsider some of the aspects of their approaches if they are to improve the special needs programmes offered to the community. Some of the aspects under discussion included:

1. The Register

The Team wants to present a case to the juvenile court arguing for "pupils'" unit attendance to be recognised as school attendance and recorded in the school register. The Team believes that this is the only way of ensuring that their clients' efforts are presented fairly in the juvenile court. For example, if clients are initially required to attend 80 per cent of the Unit timetable and 20 per cent of school, and they successfully complete that programme, then it is argued by the Team that this achievement should be registered as a 100 per cent attendance at the school concerned. However, at present the court would only be concerned with the 20 per cent school attendance which the Unit believes does not fully reflect the efforts made on the

part of their clients.

2. Relationship with Outside Professions

The Team feels that their relationship with outside professions, particular field social workers, is generally good. However, confrontations have arisen between the Team and some EWOs and Educational Psychologists. The Unit sometimes found it difficult to get referrals from these professional groups. This might be due to the fact that such professions tend to have different training backgrounds to the Team and, therefore, may not agree with the Unit's approach to school-related problems.

3. Sin-Bin

The Unit is constantly striving to avoid becoming a convenient containment where schools can discard their problem pupils. They feel that some schools misunderstand their role and would prefer to pass on their difficult pupils to the Unit rather than deal with the problem themselves. To combat this problem the Unit now sends out circulars to the schools within its catchment area which gives a step-by-step account of the referral criteria.

Case Studies

Although the Unit works with at least five clients at any one time, the Team and the author decided, after some discussion, that she should only work with two of the cases. Other potential cases were excluded for several reasons:

1. Some of the cases had serious delinquency problems and it was expected that they were most likely to be placed into residential care very shortly. Therefore, the author would have been unable make any detailed study of these cases because of expected imminent care orders.
2. At least one non-school attendance case was shortly to leave Leicester to go and live with his father in another county.

3. In at least two cases the children had experienced abuse from their fathers, and the families were now trying to re-establish themselves. The Unit felt that these children appear to exhibit a mistrust of adults and, therefore, felt that it was probably in the best interest of the children to expose them to as few adult strangers as possible. Thus, the author did not carry out any case-studies with these children.

The author will discuss in some details two non-school attendance cases, which she was allowed to observe, in order to demonstrate the Unit's interventive strategies and to also assess the effects of such educational programmes on school attendance behaviour. Demographic information about the two clients was collected from the Unit and school reports, and interviews with the clients themselves, school staff and teachers in the Unit 2 Team. The interviews were collected either by note form, or via a cassette recorder and later transcribed.

Andy

Andy was 14 years old at the time of the study. He was adopted in 1975 at the age of four years. His adopted family includes two adoptive parents, two adoptive brothers, one adoptive sister and one natural sister. Andy's adoptive father runs his own business and his adoptive mother is a social worker.

In 1982 Andy's adoptive parents got divorced and soon after this his school attendance deteriorated. By 1983, the year when Andy's adoptive mother remarried, his persistent absence from school became severe. According to Andy's adoptive mother, Andy had a very poor relationship with his step-father (adoptive mother's second husband). Apparently, Andy felt that the step-father had usurped his adoptive father's role and, therefore, refused to speak or co-operate with his step-father.

In 1984 the home situation worsened, and arguments

between Andy and his step-father became so intense that the step-father ordered him to leave the house. Andy became adamant about finding a flat, however the adoptive mother succeeded in calling a truce.

Fortunately, Andy feels that his relationship with his adoptive father is very good and he (Andy) visits him on most weekends.

Hobbies

Andy enjoys drawing towns, and he is particularly interested in the historical and developmental aspects of buildings. He also enjoys painting imaginary cities.

Problem Behaviour

Andy became an irregular school attender between 1982 and February, 1985.

Andy's Attitudes towards his Family

Andy has a deep resentment towards his natural parents, particularly his father for rejecting him and his natural sister. He has in the past found it very difficult to come to terms with this rejection, and these feelings were heightened when his adoptive parents got divorced.

Out-of-school activities

Andy spent most of his out-of-school time either in bed, or visiting museums and exploring buildings.

Unit 2 Programme

The Unit's intervention commenced on the 4th February, 1985.

Unit Teacher: Terry

Objective: To reintegrate Andy into mainstream education

Short Term

Goals: i) Home: to encourage Andy to co-operate with adoptive mother and

step-father.

- ii) School: to increase gradually his involvement in school.

The programme is described in three stages.

Stage 1: Week 1 and Week 2

During the initial stage of the programme Terry interviewed Andy and his adoptive mother. The aim of the interview was to understand more about Andy's background and establish a programme that would be congenial to all parties concerned. Andy agreed to co-operate with the programme under the conditions that he would not have to become involved with any social workers and Unit 2 evening activities. Andy was particularly adamant about the former condition because his adoptive mother is a social worker and he somehow seems to devalue the role of social work. Terry agreed to these conditions.

It was ascertained that Andy's favourite subjects included English and French. It was, therefore, agreed that Andy should attend these subjects at school with Terry acting as a supporter in the classroom. During the second week at the Unit, Terry accompanied Andy twice to school. At first Andy was not required to attend lessons, he simply had to sit with Terry in the school library to discuss any relevant problems. Andy was introduced to his pastoral tutor (who was also his French teacher), and also to his Mathematics and English teachers.

A contract was not introduced because Terry felt that Andy may have felt that he was not trusted by the Unit and, in any case, he was very co-operative from the start of the programme.

Stage 2: Week 3 to Week 8

Before Andy was required to attend school lessons, his English and French teachers briefed their classes about him and explained that he had not attended school for some time so the class was to make him feel welcome.

During Week 3, Andy was required to attend one session for each subject, that is, English and French, with each session lasting for one hour and ten minutes. Between Week 4 and Week 8, Andy's school attendance was gradually increased to six sessions per week (i.e. 30 per cent).

Terry met Andy's adoptive father on the 11th March, 1985. Terry explained to the adoptive father the aims of the programme and also gave a report on Andy's progress. The adoptive father promised to give Andy as much support as possible. He also promised Andy a five-day trip to London during the Easter vacation as a reward for his good progress.

Stage 3: Weeks 12 to 19

After the Easter vacation, Andy reported that he had thoroughly enjoyed the London trip and was actually looking forward to school. Terry believed that the trip had strengthened Andy's relationship with his adoptive father.

The author volunteered to help Andy with Biology lessons in the school library and his school attendance was increased to eight sessions per week (i.e. 40 per cent). The author found Andy very courteous and co-operative, his work was always neat and well organised.

The author taught Andy for eight weeks and out of a possible 16 sessions, Andy had been absent for only two sessions. The reasons for his absence included one occasion when he had an argument with his step-father and was too upset to attend school and on the second occasion he had to attend hospital.

By the end of May Andy's school attendance had increased to ten sessions per week which is equivalent to 50 per cent of the school timetable.

Discussion

Home

Informal discussion between Andy, Terry and the author highlighted the importance of harmonious relationships at home if intervention is to succeed in improving school attendance.

School Attendance

By the end of June, 1985, Andy was attending 50 per cent of the school timetable and he had only missed five sessions.

Assessment

Home

Andy stated that he was on speaking terms with his step-father and felt a little more comfortable about their relationship.

School

Andy's school teachers found him to have a very enthusiastic attitude towards work, his standard of work was very good (e.g. his English work was considered to be of 'O' level standard) and he was also very co-operative. The teachers also felt that he got on fairly well with his classmates although he is somewhat taciturn.

Unit 2

The Team was very pleased with Andy's progress and the positive way in which he responded to school. The Team stated that they will continue to work with Andy throughout the summer vacation of 1985. Terry hoped fully to reintegrate Andy by the end of June and then gradually withdraw from the case. However, Terry made it clear to Andy that once he is fully reintegrated he (Terry) will still be available to give him any support and counselling. Terry also made arrangements with the school staff to allow Andy to leave school whenever he felt anxious and, if such an occasion arose, then he was expected to go straight to Terry.

In the second case-study the author will discuss a non-school attender who was also attending the Unit's programme.

Lyn

Lyn was 12 years old at the time of the study and comes from a family of eight which consists of six children and a mother and father. Lyn is the youngest in her family. Her father is a lorry driver and her mother a housewife. The family has a long history of non-school attendance: all five of the older children were persistent absentees.

Lyn was six years old when she first became an absentee and remained a persistent absentee for the following six years (i.e. between 1979 and 1984). The parents had managed to avoid several prosecutions by various LEAs by simply moving their family from city to city. However, in 1984, when the parent was prosecuted by Leicester LEA for Lyn's illegal absence, the family situation had changed as at that time four of the children were married and living in Leicester. Therefore, with most of the family settled in Leicester, the mother was now unwilling to move from the city and leave her children behind in order to avoid prosecution. The Unit believes that it is probably because of this family situation, that the parents (especially the mother) accepted the Unit's intervention.

Hobbies

Lyn is very enthusiastic about music and cookery.

General Behaviour

Lyn is very co-operative with the adults at the Unit. She is always willing to communicate and particularly enjoys making cups of tea for the Team.

Problem Behaviour

Lyn was a persistent absentee for six years. The root cause of her severe school attendance behaviour may lie in

the fact that neither of her parents accepted the importance of education. One social worker mentioned the fact that the father believes that education is imposed on the working class people in order to 'brainwash' them. A Unit teacher stated that the mother has complained of loneliness, and it was therefore suggested, that it is also quite possible that Lyn was kept at home because she provided companionship for her mother.

Programme

Key Workers:

Teacher: Ron

Social Worker: Keith

Keith's role is mainly to give support to the family. He is also responsible for ensuring that Lyn maintains school attendance.

Project Worker: Sue

Sue's role is to organise various activities for Lyn such as finding a volunteer cookery tutor and purchasing the various sundries for art and baking.

Intervention

The project's intervention programme commenced on the 8th October, 1984, which initially involved Lyn spending the morning with various team members. The next step was to organise a meeting between Lyn, her parents and her school. At the meeting various methods of introducing Lyn to school were discussed. All the various parties concerned had to sign a contract. The contract instructed Lyn to attend school and it was made clear that she was bound by it by her signature. The contract also stated that the school must make every effort to make Lyn feel welcome and to keep the Unit informed of her school attendance. A school teacher also agreed to attend the monthly meetings concerning Lyn's progress. The mother signed the contract with the agreement that she will ensure that Lyn attends both the Unit and

school. Finally, the contract stated that Lyn would gain access to various activities, such as day trips, camping and a visit to a potato crisp factory, under the condition that she increases her school attendance.

Objectives

To return Lyn to mainstream school.

Short Term

Goals: (i) Gradually to reintegrate Lyn into school.

(ii) To encourage Lyn by rewarding her for increased school attendance. These rewards would include a visit to a food factory and several day trips.

Phased Reintegration Strategy

This interventive strategy is described in the following four stages.

Stage 1

Between October and December, 1984, Lyn was required to attend 90 per cent of the Unit's timetable. She spent most of her time with Ron with whom she received counselling on school attendance behaviour. The main aim during this period was to help Lyn come to terms with the prospect of school attendance. During November, Ron, the school, Lyn and her mother decided that Lyn was ready for school reintegration. In December, Lyn's pastoral tutor sent her some magazines about the school, its timetable and organization. Later that month Lyn received a welcome card from all the members of her prospective tutor set stating that they were looking forward to her attending their school. Lyn had apparently told Ron that she was very pleased to have received the card and was looking forward to school.

Stage 2

Lyn first attended school on the 7th January, 1985, she was escorted by Ron and it was arranged so that she

could attend school for a minimum of one morning per week which is equivalent to 10 per cent of the school timetable. By the end of January, Lyn was attending 20 per cent of the Unit's programme. During this stage a problem concerning Ron escorting Lyn to school arose. Lyn said that many of the pupils were curious as to why she needed an escort and apparently she found their curiosity quite embarrassing. Consequently, Ron eventually stopped escorting Lyn to school and, instead, she was allowed to catch the bus and Ron would periodically contact the school to check on her attendance.

After some discussion with Lyn, Ron decided to build up a chart to show her school attendance patterns. Lyn showed great enthusiasm towards the idea. The chart was displayed on the Unit's notice board and it was plotted every fortnight. Whenever Lyn successfully increased her school attendance behaviour the Team would make a point of praising her success.

Stage 3

Between March and April, 1985, Lyn's school attendance was increased to 40 per cent and her unit attendance was decreased to 60 per cent. This gave Lyn a full timetable.

The author became involved in Lyn's case on the 19th April, 1985. During the introductory meeting we discussed some of Lyn's favourite activities. Later Lyn and the author made arrangements, through Ron, to meet every Friday morning to do some art, craft, or school homework.

The author also worked with Ron on the modification and improvement the display chart so that Lyn's performance could be more visually appealing than it was at the time. This chart was particularly important because Lyn perceived it as part of her reward programme.

Lyn and the author spent much of Friday mornings either making soft puppets or reading about her favourite 'pop' group.

Stage 4

On the 9th May, 1985, Lyn's case was reviewed by the juvenile court. The court was pleased with her progress. She was by then attending 60 per cent of the school timetable and 40 per cent of the Unit's timetable.

A review meeting between the Unit, school, Lyn and her parents was arranged on the 13th May, 1985, to discuss the possibility of increasing Lyn's school timetable and the prospect of full reintegration. All the parties concerned agreed that Lyn had performed well. Her school attendance was increased to 80 per cent.

On the 10th June, 1985, Lyn was fully reintegrated into mainstream schooling. The follow-up study over the last two weeks in June showed that Lyn was successfully maintaining a 100 per cent school attendance. The Unit intended to withdraw completely from Lyn's case on the 28th June, 1985. Sue, however, would continue to visit Lyn at school to give her some extra tuition in French.

Problems During Intervention

The main problem was that Lyn would sometimes attend the Unit when she should have been at school. Lyn did this on at least four occasions. Ron suggested that Lyn was probably using the Unit as an excuse for avoiding school. He tackled the problem by immediately taking her to school. Ron believed that his prompt action was successful. He also asked the school teachers to make comments on Lyn's behaviour in the classroom. It soon became evident that Lyn was having some communication problems with her peers. It was established that she would only communicate with other pupils in monosyllables which consisted of little more than 'Yes' or 'No'. Ron then arranged for Lyn to attend social skills training sessions with Keith as her instructor.

Follow-Up Study

In September, 1985, at the beginning of Lyn's second year of comprehensive schooling, the author briefly followed

up Lyn's case. According to the Unit her school attendance was on average 95 per cent and her communication with other pupils had improved to the extent that she would actually converse with order girls in the classroom.

Case Discussion

The author studied Lyn's and Andy's cases in order to determine some of the important aspects of the intervention programmes which the Unit 2 project, the schools concerned and the pupils themselves believe may have facilitated the reintegration process. Some of the important aspects include:

1. Education

The Unit and the schools concerned argue that it is imperative that clients receive extra teaching to help them catch up with school work. This extra support may also help to alleviate some of the clients' fears of being seen as backward by their peer groups. Therefore, special education is usually included in the programme to help meet the needs of absentees, particularly, as they tend to have learning difficulties (Fogelman et al., 1980; Fogelman & Richardson, 1974; Jardine, 1987; Reid, 1982, 1984a).

2. School

Some of the important aspects in the school which may facilitate reintegration include:

a) A 'Flexible' Timetable

In a 'flexible' timetable the school arranges for some 'problem' pupils to attend certain blocks of lessons and be excused from others. This 'flexible' timetable provides the opportunity for such pupils to work with teachers who they feel most comfortable with and who can also recognise their ('problem' pupils) needs. This timetable also ensures that the pupils avoid those lessons where most of the problems occur. This is important because such problems may lead to persistent absenteeism (Buist, 1980; Galloway, 1985a;

Jardine, 1987; Reid, 1985; Schostak, 1982).

The Unit believes that it is important for schools to allow clients to work within a 'flexible' timetable where their needs are more likely to be catered for by those teachers who are willing to help. This opinion has developed from the Team's past experience where they found that non-school attenders would not respond to a relatively 'rigid' timetable, probably because the schools concerned may have unwittingly requested such pupils to attend lessons where there might be some anxiety due to, for example, poor pupil-teacher relationship. Consequently, the Team found that such pupils' school attendance rates would further deteriorate.

b) Volunteers

Volunteers seem to play an important role in the 'flexible' timetable. Pupils can work with them instead of attending lessons where the teacher-pupil relationship may be poor. Volunteers can also provide tuition in those subjects that clash with the 'flexible' timetable. Andy, for example, received volunteer teaching in mathematics and biology because these subjects clashed with some of the arrangements on his 'flexible' timetable.

c) Peer Groups

When Lyn and Andy first attended their schools, after Unit 2 intervention, their peers made the effort to welcome them. The peers positive interactions with the clients may have contributed to their (clients') readjustment.

3. The Home

The clients' parents are encouraged to participate in the programmes. Their main role is to motivate school attendance behaviour by giving some form of reward.

4. Home-School Link

During the Unit's programmes teachers and parents meet monthly to discuss the child concerned. This link is seen as a very important avenue to improving the teacher-pupil relationship (Craft, Raynor & Cohen, 1980).

5. Rewards

The clients receive rewards for increased school attendance behaviour. The types of rewards include praise and day trips.

6. The Unit 2 Project Teachers' 'Political' Views

Ron

Ron decided to work at the Unit mainly because he wanted a change from mainstream school. He also feels that working at the Unit is a much more interesting experience than teaching in the mainstream sector. He particularly enjoys being able to work in some depth with a relatively small number of pupils. His views on the management of persistent absenteeism concur closely with the system analysis theory (e.g. Burden, 1978). Ron argues that the nature of the education system may be an active 'factor' in the generation of pupil deviance and this argument is supported by some empirical studies (Clarke et al., 1981; Hargreaves Report, 1984; Mortimore et al., 1988; Reynolds & Murgatroyd, 1977; Siann et al., 1982). Ron stresses that changes in the school system itself must first occur before problem children are able to respond more positively towards education. He further argues that children may become school absentees because the curriculum does not meet their needs. In such cases, Ron believes that rewards alone may not motivate school attendance and learning. The main school changes which he sees as essential are smaller teacher-pupil ratios, more autonomy should be given to pupils concerning decisions related to the school curriculum and there should also be more trained counsellors working within the curricular structure.

Ron's Approach to Casework

Ron stated that he always aims to reintegrate clients into classes where the teachers are willing to address their special needs through individual teaching methods and counselling. Ron believes that rewards can play a valuable role in motivating school attendance, but we must also strive to reappraise and improve the school curriculum.

Terry

Terry chose to work at the Unit because he felt that the work would be challenging in terms of the opportunities it offers for creating innovative approaches and the post was a promotion from his last job. Terry's views concur closely with social learning theory which emphasizes the importance of considering the child's personality and home background as a factor in the generation of deviance (Blagg & Yule, 1987; Cooper, 1986; Farrington, 1980; Fogelman et al., 1980; Jardine, 1987; May, 1975; Reid, 1984a, 1984b, 1986a, 1986b; Tibbenham, 1977 Tyerman, 1968;). Terry argues that the most efficacious programmes are those where the pupils know that their efforts will be rewarded. Such programmes maintain the children's interest and motivation.

Terry's Approach to Casework

Terry believes that the school must offer a variety of rewards to motivate children's learning and interest in education. Terry's main concern is to reintegrate clients into class situations where they are likely to receive some extra care and attention, greater encouragement, and more positive peer interaction.

Terry believes that the best way to change the system is by helping teachers to recognise those characteristics within the environment which motivate pupils to learn. He argues that by using such an approach pupils may respond positively towards education.

The Implications from this Study for the Present Action Research Project

1. The author's experience with the two cases suggests that at least two theories are pertinent to the management of non-school attendance, that is, the social learning and systems analysis theories. The studies, therefore, suggest that the author should consider a multidisciplinary approach, and she was also to ask several questions about the relationship between the mainstream school and the projects, such questions including:

- (i) How far can projects influence mainstream in terms of their understanding of rewards?
- (ii) How frequent is the contact between special needs projects and mainstream schools?
- (iii) What type of strategies are used by the mainstream schools to prepare for the return of 'project' pupils and how effective are such strategies on helping 'project' pupils to readjust?
- (iv) How far would mainstream school be prepared to change in order to address the needs of non-school attenders?

Summary

The Unit attempts to cater for the many faceted problems faced by their clients through using a multi-disciplinary approach which encompasses the home, school and community. The Team strives to achieve changes within both the children and their environments which may be of benefit to the children's future.

Limitations of the Case-Studies

1. Because of circumstances the author was only allowed to study two cases. Thus, it is quite possible that the

success of these two cases cannot necessarily be generalised to other non-school attenders and, in fact, there was one client who did not respond to the programme. After one week at the Unit the client 'disappeared'. Neither the Unit nor the field social workers could find him. It was, however, believed that he was hiding at his grandmother's house.

2. The author was unable to carry out a follow-up study on Andy because at the beginning of his 5th year in secondary school he move out of Leicester to live with his adoptive father.
3. The study consists of a very small population and the follow-up duration was very brief. Thus, any conclusions drawn from this study should be viewed with caution.

The Influence of the Special Units on the Present Action Research Project

1. The Unit 2 project, in particular, emphasizes the importance of parental involvement in the children's programmes. Therefore, the author will study parents' attitudes toward school and assess how best to involve them in their children's education. This data will be collected via questionnaires because the author believes that this method might be more economical, in terms of time, than other methods such as audio-cassette recording which would involve the additional task of transcription.
2. The units used various assessment procedures to enable them to develop relevant programmes to meet the needs of their pupils. Among the main assessment procedures included the Pupil Record Sheet (Galton et al., 1980), school registers and reading tests. The author will also assess her study sample via the Pupil Record Sheet, school attendance and academic performance.
3. The units believe that it is essential to maintain

regular contact with mainstream school if they (units) are successfully to reintegrate special needs project pupils. Thus, to gain a better understanding on how best to encourage mainstream teacher involvement in special needs programmes, the author will administer a teacher questionnaire to ascertain various data including mainstream teachers' attitudes towards special needs projects, and how far have the projects and mainstream schools influenced each other. The author will also develop a chart where she can record the frequency of contacts between the two sub-units, that is, the project and the mainstream school.

4. Because the projects and mainstream schools differ in their curricular organization, such as the teacher-pupil ratio, they may also differ in their teaching approaches. To examine this premise the author will use the Flanders Interaction Analysis Category ((FIAC) Amidon & Flanders, 1967) to compare the teaching styles of the two establishments.
5. The special units believe that it is important that their pupils are allowed to participate in the decision-making process of the unit. They also believe that such participation may give the unit some feedback from the pupils. This may encourage pupils to develop a more positive attitude towards the units and, in turn, may also help the pupils develop strategies to overcome some of their problems. The author will, therefore, administer a questionnaire to project pupils to ascertain their attitudes towards their special needs programmes.

The Differences between the Unit 1 (School-Based) and Unit 2 (Off-Site) Projects

The two units differ on several aspects including:

1. Rewards

The Unit 1 project bases its rewards mainly on praise, point systems, acknowledgments from teachers and self-satisfaction. Unit 2, however, bases its reward

system mainly on edibles (primary rewards), gifts, and activities such as holidays and day trips. One Unit 2 teacher suggested that such rewards may 'enrich' their clients' environment and also provide some 'extras' which the clients may not normally receive at home.

2. Sanctions

The teachers in Unit 1 tend to 'ignore' pupils when they are exhibiting disruptive behaviour. At the Unit 2 project clients are usually not allowed to engage in their favoured activities and/or their parents are asked to a meeting at the unit to discuss the clients' behaviour.

3. Parent-Unit Contact

Unit 2, in particular, emphasizes the importance of parent contact. The Unit 2 Team sees their clients' parents about once a month at either the home or the Unit. However, the Unit 1 project usually meets parents once per term at the Parents' Evenings.

4. Programme Timetable

The Unit 2 educational programmes are extended to the evenings, whereas the Unit 1 timetable mainly operates between 0900 and 1530.

5. Inter-Disciplinary Approach

The Unit 2 Team consists of workers from several professional backgrounds including teachers and social workers. However, the Unit 1 Team consists mainly of teachers.

6. Outside Resources

The Unit 2 programmes involves the use of local resources such as voluntary agencies. This provides a greater opportunity for clients to interact with adults as well as widening the range of skills which the clients can learn. Unit 1, however, uses only a few volunteers from the sixth-form group in the school.

7. Referral Criteria

Unit 1 will accept pupils with learning and behavioural problems, whereas Unit 2 will only consider pupils who are in danger of being taken into care under Section 1 (2)d and 1 (2)e of the CYPA (1969).

Similarities between the Unit 1 and Unit 2 Projects

The two units are similar in several approaches including:

1. They are constantly striving to find the most conducive methods of reintegrating their pupils into mainstream school.
2. They both use very detailed assessment procedures in order to create relevant programmes to meet the needs of their pupils.
3. The two projects have to clearly state their referral criteria in order to avoid becoming sin-bins for difficult pupils.
4. Both units emphasize the importance of behaviour therapy and a structured pastoral care system in the management of disaffection.

In the following chapter the author shall discuss her school-based pilot studies where she developed and examined the instruments mentioned above.

Chapter 9a

The Pilot Study

During this study the author developed the Parent and Teacher Questionnaires, and Questionnaire A (this questionnaire evaluated special needs pupils attitudes towards the projects and mainstream school). Through training sessions the author learnt how to use the Pupil Record Sheet and the FIAC schedule. Most of these training sessions took place at two schools based in Leicester, they are, School X and School Y. Terry (the teacher from the Unit 2 project) assisted the author during her observation training schedule.

Questionnaire A

The main purpose of Questionnaire A (see Appendix A9a.1) was to ascertain project pupils' attitudes toward their special needs programmes and assess their experiences in the mainstream school. The data from this questionnaire may also reveal how well project pupils understand their problems and how far they believe that the projects have adequately catered for their needs. The main hypotheses tested by Questionnaire A are: (i) that project pupils will show more positive attitudes toward the special needs programmes than toward mainstream school; (ii) that project pupils will favour an increase in social interactions between the project and mainstream school in order to help them (pupils) feel more comfortable in the school environment.

In September, 1985, the author had an informal discussion with one project teacher and five project pupils to ascertain what type of issues they felt should be tackled by Questionnaire A in relation to the pupils' experiences in both the project and mainstream school. The information from this discussion was collected via note form and later

incorporated into the design of Questionnaire A. The questionnaire consists of 22 open-ended questions to give project pupils the opportunity to express their opinions more freely than would be possible with structured questions.

The author piloted Questionnaire A with the five project pupils who were aged between 13 and 14 years. The author issued the questionnaires personally to each pupil. After questionnaire completion the author then discussed each item with the pupil to assess the difficulties which he or she may have experienced with the questionnaire. The aim of the pilot study was to:

- a) test the practicality of the questionnaire and assess the intelligibility of the questions in order to avoid distorting the pupils' responses;
- b) avoid any ambiguous questions which may generate random responses;
- c) develop other pertinent questions from post-pilot discussions with the pupils.

Difficulties Experienced by the Pupils

1. All of the pupils have reading difficulties and this meant that the author had to read out the questions to the pupils and write down their responses.
2. The term 'mainstream', which was used in the pilot study on Questionnaire A (e.g. questions 8, 9 and 10), was later replaced by the term 'normal lessons' because none of the pupils understood the original term.
3. Three of the pupils found it difficult to describe their feelings about the project (e.g. item 7). The author, therefore, included examples of feelings (e.g. happy or sad) to assist the respondents.

The Development of Other Question Items

A post-pilot discussion with the project teacher

about Questionnaire A revealed that she was very concerned about the effects that the teachers' industrial action (which was in progress at the time) might have on her pupils. The author, therefore, included several questions (i.e. items 20 to 22) relating to the teachers' industrial strike to ascertain the project pupils' opinions on whether such actions may have affected their behaviour and attitudes towards school.

The Teacher Questionnaire

The author developed this instrument which is referred to as Teacher Questionnaire T2a (see Appendix A9a.2). This questionnaire consists of 19 items and its main purpose is to ascertain teachers' attitudes toward various issues relating to special needs projects. Some of these issues to be assessed by the questionnaire include: (i) the efficacy of such projects on 'problem' behaviours; (ii) what type of children will benefit from attending special educational projects; and (iii) the level of interaction that takes place between the project and mainstream school. The main hypotheses tested by the teacher questionnaire include:

1. Mainstream teachers responses will suggest that project pupils' behaviour has improved over the course of the intervention programme.
2. That the frequency of contacts between the educational project and other school departments will be affected by their physical proximity to each other. Thus, the closer a department is situated to the project, the greater will be the interactions between the two subunits. This hypothesis will be tested to substantiate or refute the premise that special needs projects should be centrally based inside school buildings in order to develop better communication and accessibility between the projects and the mainstream school.
3. That mainstream teachers will favour an increase in the level of interaction between themselves and the projects.

4. Where management strategies from the project have filtered through to mainstream classes there will be a marked improvement in the project pupils' behaviour in those particular classes.

The Development of the Teacher Questionnaire

Before compiling the teacher questionnaire, the author briefly interviewed one project teacher and three senior teachers. The four interviews consisted of unstructured questions and the data were collected via notes. The main purpose of the interviews was to ascertain the sort of pertinent issues which the teachers believe should be dealt with by the teacher questionnaire. Some of the issues raised by the interviews include: (i) what are teachers' opinions on the referral systems used by the special educational projects; (ii) how should one evaluate the success of these projects; and (iii) is it possible to 'treat' pupils who exhibit behavioural 'problems'. The author then developed a pilot version of Questionnaire T2a based on a combination of the ideas put forward during the four interviews and on ideas from her own experiences.

The author carried out a pilot study of the teacher questionnaire with a sample consisting of eight teachers. The questionnaires were administered during a monthly general meeting of all the staff connected with the project's timetable. The author asked the pilot sample to complete the questionnaires, as soon as possible, and informed them that she will collect the questionnaires the following week. The author successfully collected five completed questionnaires over the following four weeks. She experienced several difficulties when trying to collect completed questionnaires and some of these difficulties included:

1. Some teachers had either misplaced their questionnaires or had left them at home.
2. Other teachers said they had no time and that the author

should follow-up at a later date.

3. One teacher went 'on sick' for at least two weeks.
4. The author had to make at least four follow-ups on three teachers of which only two returned their completed questionnaires.

To negate some of these problems faced while collecting completed questionnaires, the author asked four of the teachers if it was possible for her to conduct interviews with them based on Questionnaire T2a, at their convenience, and note their responses. Two of the teachers accepted the interviews and the other two declined the offer stating that it was not necessary as they intended to return the completed questionnaires - they were never received them. One senior teacher, however, returned his completed questionnaire two days after it was administered. Therefore, the overall return rate was five (i.e. 62.50 per cent) completed questionnaires out of a possible of eight questionnaires.

The author developed some strategies to deal with some of the problems faced when collecting completed questionnaires including:

1. Whenever possible and with time permitting, administer the questionnaire via an interview and record the responses in the appropriate sections of the questionnaire. However, there are some disadvantages to this approach including: (i) the researcher's presence may affect the respondents' behaviour; and (ii) any respondents who would have preferred to remain anonymous may not appreciate such an interview.
2. Send out written reminders to the respondents, reiterating the importance of their responses and politely asking them to return their completed questionnaires as soon as possible.

3. Carry out regular follow-ups, but always trying to be sensitive about the fact that most respondents have to deal with 'real' live issues (e.g. organising the next years curriculum for 'O' level courses) which are usually considered to be paramount to research.
4. To replace any of the questionnaires that have been misplaced by the respondents.

The Results of the Pilot Study

The author studied the completed questionnaires and noted the comments and issues raised by the respondents. Some of the comments included:

1. To include a line at the top of the questionnaire asking members of staff to indicate their names (optional) and state their teaching posts.
2. To provide appropriate spacing or 'empty boxes' for teachers' responses.
3. To state at the top of the questionnaire stating the date by which the questionnaire should be completed and returned.
4. To include more structured questions and fewer open-ended questions in order to make the questionnaire easier to complete.
5. All of the respondents felt that most of the questions were very clear and easily understood.

Post-Pilot Study Comments from the Project's General Meeting in Relation to the Teacher Questionnaire

Four weeks after the pilot study the project's monthly general meeting was held by the staff involved in its timetable. The author carried several examples of the teacher questionnaire to this meeting. During the meeting the author was permitted to ask the group if they would like to make any comments about the questionnaire: she also

distributed examples of this questionnaire among the group to help them remember the various items. The group made some valuable suggestions in relation to the questionnaire including:

1. As most of the mainstream teachers do not actually have any pupils attending the project, it was considered more parsimonious, in terms of time, if all questions relating to direct experiences with project pupils (e.g. 'Do you teach any pupils who are/have attended the project?') were grouped consecutively. That way, the author can direct those teachers, for whom such questions are irrelevant, to 'go straight to' the more general questions. This would avoid the respondents from having to read unrelated questions. For an example, see question 5 of Questionnaire T2a (Appendix A9a.2).
2. To rearrange the order of the items so that the questionnaire is not introduced by questions relating to direct experiences with project pupils. Instead, the questionnaire should be introduced by items that are relevant to most of the teachers. Thus, avoid causing some teachers to lose interest simply because the questionnaire is introduced by specific items that are irrelevant to most of the staff.
3. The teachers at the meeting felt that the teacher questionnaire had reasonably covered a sufficiently wide range of pertinent issues.

Consequently, as a result of the pilot study the author redesigned the teacher questionnaire which was later administered to the whole staff (see the next Chapter).

The Parent Questionnaire

The author designed two parent questionnaires which include Questionnaire CP2 and Questionnaire PP2(b) (see Appendices A9a.3 and A9a.4 respectively). Questionnaire CP2 consists of 30 questions and is designed for parents whose children are attending mainstream school. Questionnaire

PP2(b) consists of 36 questions and is designed for parents whose children are attending special educational programmes. The purpose of the parent questionnaires is to assess the attitudes of the parents toward their children's education. The questionnaires deal with several issues including: (i) assessing parents' attitudes toward 'problem' pupils; (ii) examining parents' views on home-school interactions; and (iii) to evaluate parents' opinions on their children's educational progress. The main hypotheses tested by these questionnaires include:

1. Pupils attending special educational programmes will show greater improvement in their behaviour (as assessed by their parents' responses) than pupils of similar academic ability who are attending mainstream school (as assessed by their parents' responses).
2. Project group parents will feel more comfortable about visiting the project than the mainstream group parents will feel about visiting the school. The project group parents will show greater satisfaction with their children's school work than the mainstream group parents whose children are of similar academic ability.

Questionnaire PP2(b) will test other hypotheses including:

1. The project group parents will feel that their children have shown greater improvement during the intervention programme than during the pre-intervention stage (i.e. the mainstream school curriculum).
2. The project group parents will feel that both their children and themselves have received more support from the project than from the mainstream school.

The Development of the Parent Questionnaire

During the early stages of development, the author interviewed two project teachers, one EWO and three senior teachers to ascertain what pertinent issues they believe should be included in the parent questionnaires. The

interviews consisted of mainly unstructured questions and the information was collected via notes. Some of the suggestions raised during these interviews included: (i) parents' opinions on the management approaches in dealing with 'problem' children; (ii) what should be the adequate duration for 'treatment'; and (iii) how can schools improve contact between themselves and their pupils' parents.

Once the author had developed the pilot parent questionnaire, she then carried out her pilot study in Leeds. One of the first steps was to contact a Leeds middle school (called School D) and ask permission to include some of its parents in the pilot study. The author chose this Leeds school for several reasons:

1. School D has a special needs project which is very similar to the projects based at the author's research schools in Leicester.
2. The author knows both the school staff and some of its parents from her days as a Detached Youth Worker and Saturday School teacher.
3. Because the pilot study was carried out during the vacations when the author spends most of her time in Leeds, it therefore, seemed only prudent to capitalise on the wealth of experience which the Leeds communities have to offer.

During the initial stages, the author interviewed five parents - three parents whose children had attended School D's project and two parents whose children attended mainstream school. All the interviews took place at the parents' homes and the information was collected via notes. The purpose of these interviews was to ascertain the type of issues which the parents believed should be dealt with by the questionnaire. Before each interview the author would explain her research interests to the parents and also state that their responses were of the utmost importance. Some of the issues raised by these interviews include: (i) were

parents satisfied with the reasons given for their children's placement on special needs projects? (ii) Are parents satisfied with the amount of feedback they receive from the schools about their children's progress? and (iii) How relevant are the school courses to future employment?

The author then developed the parent questionnaires based on a combination of ideas from the school staff, the parents and her own experiences. The questionnaires were then piloted on a sample of 14 parents (including the five parents already mentioned above) in Leeds whose children attended School D. The sample came from two groups, with Group 1 consisting of nine parents whose children attended mainstream school and Group 2 consisted of five parents whose children attended the project based at School D. The purpose of the pilot study was to assess several aspects of the questionnaires including:

1. Assess the practicability of the questionnaires in terms of their intelligibility in order to avoid any misunderstanding.
2. To avoid any ambiguous questions which may generate random responses.

Difficulties Experienced by the Parents when Completing the Questionnaires

1. Only six parents volunteered to complete the questionnaires. The author timed the duration of the parents' responses and found that it took the parents between 34 and 54 minutes to complete the questionnaire.
2. Four of the parents stated that the questionnaire was too long and some of the questions seemed repetitive which caused confusion.
3. The term 'special needs' caused some misunderstanding because it covers a wide range of children including those who are physically and/or mentally handicapped.

4. Two parents suggested that some of the wording of the questionnaires might be too academic, for example, 'via' and 'rank'.
5. All six parents experienced some difficulties with the 'rank order' questions, with many of them simply ticking one item of most preference without realising that all the items in these questions should be ranked in order of preference.

The parents offered several suggestions on how to alleviate some of the problems relating to the parent questionnaires. Their suggestions include:

1. All the questions related to a specific issue (e.g. home-school contact) should be grouped together so that the respondents can recognise the subtle differences in the questions which, in turn, may negate any feelings of repetitiveness and frustration.
2. To use a minimal number of 'rank order' questions because some respondents may have problems with answering such questions.
3. To be more specific when using certain terminologies, for example, the term 'special needs' could be replaced with the term 'behavioural problem children'.
4. Four of the parents suggested that it is probably best if the author was prepared to assist parents with the questionnaires by reading out the questions and writing their replies in the appropriate places on the questionnaires.

The author asked the following eight parents if they would like her to assist them with the questionnaires; all the parents accepted the author's assistance. The author also found that she had to explain briefly the 'rank order' questions to all the respondents concerned. Therefore, the overall rate of return was 14 (i.e. 100 per cent) completed questionnaires.

All the parents who participated in the pilot study stated that the questions for the most part were generally clearly understood and that the author had covered a fairly wide range of issues in relation to 'problem' pupils and school management. The parent questionnaires were then re-designed to incorporate the suggestions raised by the pilot study.

The Interaction Chart

One special needs project teacher suggested that it might be useful to count the number of people who visit the project. Subsequently, the author devised a wall chart (see Appendix A9a.5) listing the various types of possible visitors, such as parents, mainstream school teachers and EWOs. The main purpose of the interaction chart was primarily to assess the frequency of interactions between the project, mainstream school and home. The author placed several of these charts on the walls of two projects and asked the project teachers to plot the charts for one week on a trial basis. The trial period revealed that both the teachers had difficulties in remembering to plot the chart whenever the project received visitors. The author, therefore, suggested that the project pupils could participate in either helping to plot the chart or simply remind the teacher to complete the chart whenever a visitor arrives. Both teachers decided that they would allow the 'better' behaved pupils to plot the chart. After several days the teachers reported that the chart was completed more accurately with the assistance of their pupils.

The Flanders Interaction Analysis Category (FIAC)

The FIAC is classified as a 'low inference' measure because it focuses on specific, objectively describable activities, such as teacher asks a question (Bennett, 1976). This questionnaire was developed by Flanders (1965) and it is concerned with classifying teacher-pupil interactions in the classroom. The FIAC consists of ten categories and each describes a specific type of verbal interaction between the teachers and their pupils (e.g. praise and lecture). The

FIAC only analyses verbal behaviour because it is argued by some researchers that such behaviour is more reliable than nonverbal behaviour (Amidon & Flanders, 1967). However, others have argued that an analysis of both verbal and non-verbal behaviour (e.g. making physical contact) may provide a wider range of data from which more consistent interpretations might be obtained (Galton et al., 1980; Jasman, 1980). The author has included this instrument in her research in order to conduct some comparative studies between the special needs projects and the mainstream schools with regards to teaching styles. The main hypotheses to be tested by the FIAC include:

1. Project teachers will tend to allow their pupils a greater degree of freedom of expression (i.e. indirect teaching) than mainstream school teachers.
2. Mainstream school teachers will exhibit more control on their pupils expressions of feelings (i.e. direct teaching) than project pupils.
3. Project teachers will exhibit more verbal rewards (e.g. praise) than mainstream school teachers.
4. Project teachers are more likely to accept pupils' feelings, especially negative feelings (e.g. anger), than the mainstream school teachers.

Observer Training Schedule

Terry, the teacher at the Unit 2 project, audio-cassette recorded two hours of project classroom interactions. The tapes were then used as part of the training procedure which lasted for eleven hours and spanned over one week. The training procedure consisted of three stages:

1. The ten categories in the FIAC were memorised.
2. The tape recordings of the classroom interactions were classified via the FIAC and the appropriate codes were written on plain paper on a three-second timing. This

procedure gave the observers the opportunity to familiarise themselves with the instrument.

3. After each training session, Terry and the author would discuss their 'observations' and any problems experienced.
4. After each observation the scores for each category were tallied and discussed.

Difficulties Experienced by the Trainees

Both Terry and the author experienced several problems including:

1. They found disagreements in their codings of classroom behaviour. For example, the author may classify a teacher's statement, such as "Fine, go on", as 'praise' (i.e. category 2), whereas Terry might classify the same statement as 'accepting pupil's feelings' (i.e. category 1).
2. Initially the observers found it difficult to distinguish between teachers' statements that expanded pupils ideas (i.e. category 3) and teachers' lectures which simply repeated the pupils' ideas (i.e. category 5).
3. In one of the tape recordings the ambient noises of the class (e.g. pupils coughing or the movement of chairs) frequently interfered with the taped interactions.

Dealing with some of the Problems

Terry and the author decided to develop several strategies in order to negate some of the problems they experienced with the FIAC. The strategies included:

1. When there were problems in distinguishing the classroom interactions from the ambient noises, the observers used code 10 (i.e. silence or confusion) to indicate the type of activity.

2. There was always a detailed discussion of the general social context of the lesson in order to develop some form of consistency between the two observers. Thus, it was decided that if a teacher's statement, for example, "Fine, go on", was preceded by the pupils communicating their ideas, then the teacher's statement is coded as 'praise' (i.e. category 2); if, however, this teacher statement was preceded by pupils communicating their feelings towards an issue then the teacher's behaviour is coded as 'acceptance of feelings' (i.e. category 1).

'Live' Classroom Observations with the FIAC Schedule

After the training period, the author then progressed to 'live' classroom observations.

Apparatus

Clip-board, pen, plain paper and the FIAC categories.

Observation Classes

The author observed six hours of classroom activity including three hours of project lessons and three hours of mainstream school lessons. Whenever possible, the author would sit at the back of the classroom to avoid distracting the pupils and to also gain a 'global' view of the classroom activities. Once the author had achieved a consistent level of competence in the coding of classroom interactions via the FIAC she then progressed to observing the research population - this shall be discussed in the next Chapter.

The Pupil Record Sheet

The Pupil Record Sheet (Galton et al., 1980), also classified as a 'low inference' measure (Jasman, 1980), consists of 55 categories which describe specific pupil activities and location in the classroom (see Appendix A9a.6). This observation schedule reveals data on both verbal and non-verbal behaviour and is coded on a 25-second interval. The author introduced this schedule into her methodology in order to compare project pupil's behaviour with matched control groups in mainstream classes. The main hypotheses tested by the Pupil Record Sheet include:

1. Project pupils will display more co-operative behaviour than the control group of similar academic achievement.
2. Project pupils will receive significantly more individual attention from their project teachers than the control groups in mainstream school.
3. Project pupils will receive significantly more rewards (e.g. praise) than the control groups in mainstream.
4. Project pupils will interact more a greater number of times with each other than the control groups.

Observer Training Procedure

Terry had worked with the Pupil Record for at least one year and kindly offered to train the author on the use of the schedule. The training period consisted of three stages.

Stage 1: The Manual

The author read the instruction manual on the schedule (Jasman, 1980). Once she understood the definitions of each item, she then coded written examples of classroom situations cited in the manual. This exercise enabled the author to become familiar with the Pupil Record.

Stage 2: The Stimulus Tape

The technicians in the Psychology Department, at the University of Leicester, developed a stimulus tape which consisted of a 'bleep' that occurred at a 25-second interval. The tape is 60 minutes in duration.

Stage 3: 'Live' Classroom Observations

The author observed at least two classes daily over a period of two weeks. Each observation lasted for one hour, and no more than eight target pupils were observed per session as suggested by Jasman (1980), all target pupils were randomly chosen. All the training sessions occurred in mainstream and project classes at School X.

Apparatus

Portable cassette tape recorder, stimulus tape, earpiece, Pupil Record Sheets, Clip-board, pen and paper.

Procedure

Terry and the author usually sat at the back of the classroom during observations. Equipped with the cassette recorder which feeds the signal to the author via the earpiece every 25 seconds, she codes the pupils' behaviour at that specific moment in time. If, for example, the target pupil is interacting with a teacher, then several sub-categories which identify the relationship are coded, these include: (i) the nature of the interaction (e.g. discussion on task work); (ii) the randomly selected target pupils' activities (e.g. working or distracted); (iii) whether the pupil is receiving individual attention or is part of the interacting group; and (iv) the location of the teacher and target pupil in the classroom (e.g. in the room or sat in base).

The author observed only four project lessons with Terry because of difficulties in matching their timetables. However, during the author's training period, Terry was usually available for advice on the use of the Pupil Record.

Difficulties Experienced by the Author with the Pupil Record

The author experienced several problems relating to the schedule including:

1. The author sometimes found it difficult to distinguish between the target pupils task work behaviour (e.g. writing an essay) and 'scribbling' activity.
2. The author did not always have an experienced observer present with her during her training sessions.
3. Difficulty in building one's confidence in the instrument. Initially, the author found it difficult to accept that the schedule could reliably reveal any

relevant aspects of classroom events because of the relatively low number of instances of observations (i.e. two observations per minute).

Negating some of the Problems

1. The author would always take the opportunity to discuss her observations with the teachers concerned. These discussions helped the author to assess the consistency of her codings.
2. The author would also discuss her data with Terry. It was through these discussions that she learnt to appreciate the wide variety of data revealed by the instrument despite the low number of instances of observations.

Combination of the Pupil Record Sheet and the FIAC

Because the author is interested in two main aspects of the classroom, which includes the teaching style and pupil behaviour, she decided to use the two instruments during each observation session. That way, she hoped to collect information, in any one particular lesson, that may reveal data relating to two theories, and they are the systems analysis theory (via the FIAC) and the social learning theory (via the Pupil Record Sheet).

Observation Training Period

The author observed eleven project lessons (each lasting one hour and ten minutes) at School X via the combined procedure which consisted of the FIAC and the Pupil Record.

Apparatus

Clip-board, FIAC categories, Pupil Record Sheets, stopwatch, pen, paper, stimulus tape, earpiece and a portable cassette tape recorder.

Procedure

The author decided to organise each observation session into three 'blocks', that is, the 'beginning', 'middle' and 'end' blocks as suggested by Jasman (1980).

Each block lasted 20 minutes, with 9.5 minutes for the FIAC schedule, 9.5 minutes for the Pupil Record and one minute leeway to allow the author some time to reorientate from one schedule to the other. During this procedure a teacher and one target pupil are seen at the beginning, middle and ending of each observation session. The author decided to study only one target pupil per block in order to avoid too many changes which may have increased the probability of errors and inconsistencies. She also decided to begin each observation with the FIAC because her experience, as both a teacher and observer, indicated that teachers tend to show the greatest number of interactions during the beginning of their classes as they have to give lectures and instructions to their pupils.

Method

During each observation session the author would sit at the back of the classroom. During the first five minutes of the lesson she would set up her apparatus, and also try to gain a 'feel' of the classroom atmosphere which may help her further to understand the interactive processes of the lesson being observed. During the first block (i.e. the beginning) the author would observe the teacher's behaviour via the FIAC for 9.5 minutes, followed by a half a minute leeway to reorientate to the Pupil Record which was then used to observe the target pupil behaviour also for 9.5 minutes and then, in turn, followed by half a minute leeway to allow the author to reorientate to the next block. The author followed the same routine, as in the first block, for both the second (i.e. middle) and third (i.e. end) blocks. The last 5.5 minutes of the lesson were used to note the teaching subject, date, time, and the number of pupils, teachers and volunteers present in the classroom. Sometime later, usually during the same day, the author would make notes of any interesting aspects of the lesson and also note any problems with the method.

Difficulties Experienced During this Combined Observation Schedule

Some of the problems faced by the author include:

1. Initially, the author found it difficult to change from one time interval to another. However, the fact that the Pupil Record has a pre-recorded cue did help to alleviate some of the problems which the author experienced during schedule change.

2. The author found it rather confusing when changing the paper on the clip-board to correspond with the schedule concerned. To overcome this problem, the author decided to use two clip-boards with one holding the Pupil Record Sheets and the other holding the plain paper for writing the FIAC codes on the style of the teacher interactions.

Once the author felt confident with the combined procedure, she then introduced it to her action research project which is discussed in the next chapter.

Target Behaviour

During the early stages of classroom observation the author attempted to record the target pupils' target behaviours as they occur by using a separate sheet to the Pupil Record. The author designed this 'target behaviour sheet' (see Appendix A9a.7) to include five categories. The intension was to record the target pupils' target behaviour, followed by a record of one of two types of teacher reactions (i.e. reward or punishment), and in the last category to record the target pupils' response. The target pupils selected for this pilot study were selected from a group of pupils who were regarded by the teaching staff at School X to exhibit disruptive behaviours. The author observed three of these pupils on several occasions. However, none of them were included in the Subject Group because the Project X teacher believed that they appear to show 'average' learning abilities and she wanted to focus her attention on the more urgent needs of pupils whose disruptive behaviours are compounded with reading

difficulties.

After several pilot observations of the 'target behaviour sheet' and the development of the combined observation sheet (i.e. FIAC and Pupil Record), the author realised that her observation sessions would become too complicated and therefore it would increase the risk of errors. Consequently, a 'target behaviour' category was incorporated into the Pupil Record Sheet (see Appendix A9a.6) and recorded every 25 seconds with the sheet. All the other details of the target behaviour sheet (e.g. teacher reaction) were not included. Therefore, this style of recording made the observation schedules much easier to use.

Summary

The author conducted several pilot studies which include the project pupil questionnaire (i.e. Questionnaire A), the FIAC, Pupil Record Sheet, interaction chart, and the parent and teacher questionnaires. These pilot studies provided the author with the opportunity to assess the practicability of the instruments through discussions with pupils, teachers and parents. The pilot studies also helped the author develop various strategies which she could use to negate some of the problems that she might face during her action research project.

In the following chapter the author will discuss her present action research project which is based on data collected from two special educational projects which are based at two secondary schools in Leicester.

Chapter 9b

Methodology I: Demographic Data

The Scope of the Investigation

The author studied a cross-section of secondary school children aged between 11 and 16 years. Fifty-five children were selected from two secondary schools in Leicester. The schools are referred to as School X and School Y in order to protect their identity. Seven of the children attend School X and the remaining 48 pupils attend School Y. The author conducted a longitudinal study on the population which lasted between one and three years. The children were assessed and compared on several instruments including questionnaires, academic performance, observation schedules and school attendance registers.

The Purpose of the Investigation

This study has three main objectives:

1. The first aim is to study the demographic backgrounds of the children. This will include examining several aspects of the home, such as parents' attitudes towards their children's education; the conditions of the home in terms of hygiene and general appearance; parents' occupation; family history of non-school attendance; and parent records of criminal behaviour. The author will also study the children themselves through assessing their behaviour disorders (e.g. delinquency), reward preferences, attitude towards the home and school, self-concept, and academic attainment. The author believes that this demographic study of the population may provide an insight into the children's needs and therefore enable both her and the schools to establish relevant educational programmes to meet the academic needs and interests of the pupils concerned.
2. The second aim is to evaluate the effects of two types of

school curricula on the behaviour of pupils described as persistent absentees. The first curriculum (at School X and School Y) is described by the school staff in this study as the mainstream curriculum which is taught to pupils using relatively 'traditional' teaching methods (e.g. inculcating discipline, regular tests and examinations, and lessons dominated by in-classroom activities). The second type of curriculum (at School X and School Y) is described by the school staff in this study as a special educational programme designed for pupils with learning and attendance problems. This programme is considered to have a greater emphasis on child-centred approaches which use methods of behaviour therapy, counselling, greater individual attention for pupils, greater pupil participation in decision-making, stresses the importance of outdoor activities (e.g. visits to local businesses), and also stresses the use of remedial education. The efficacy of the two curricula is assessed on several variables including school attendance rates, pupils' and parents' attitudes towards the curricula, rates of target behaviours, and pupil classroom activities.

3. The third objective is to analyse the interactional processes between the mainstream schools, the special educational projects and the homes. The aim here is to assess the extent to which the pupils' home and learning environments have attempted to communicate with each other, and also the extent to which they offer each other support and advice in order to facilitate 'successful' achievement among the pupils concerned. The communicative processes between the home, school and special project will be assessed via the frequency of contact made between the three sub-units, such as the number of visits and letters, and the number of meetings. There will also be a study on the type of school-community contact through assessing the number of community volunteers assisting in classroom activities, and by examining the extent to which 'outside' professions are involved in the curricular activities (e.g. experts on mountain climbing,

and representatives from industry and local businesses).

The Aim of the Study

The aim of the action research project is: (i) to assess the effects of the special educational programmes on the school attendance rates, classroom activities (e.g. working on task) and target behaviours (e.g. fighting) of persistent absentees; and (ii) to assess methods of improving communication between the home, the school and the special projects.

The Selection of the Schools

As already mentioned School X and School Y are secondary schools based in Leicester. Their catchment areas consist of families who are described as predominantly working class. The author chose these two particular schools mainly because: (a) they both have established school-based projects with the primary concern of combating school disaffection and learning difficulties; and (b) both of the schools' special projects emphasize similar conceptual models (i.e. behaviour therapy) which allows the author to make some comparative studies and to also assess the consistency of her evaluation techniques, such as the FIAC and the Pupil Record Sheet (see Chapter 9a).

The School Panels

The members of the panels for the two schools consisted of professional people who worked closely with the special projects and therefore have some insight into the organizational aspects of the special educational programmes and the needs of the study samples. At School X its panel (i.e. Panel X) consists of five members including the special project teacher, the Head of Special Needs, one Head of Year, one Deputy Principal and one EWO. At School Y its panel (i.e. Panel Y) consists of six members including the Deputy Headteacher, one Head of Year, the special project teacher, two EWOs and one school matron. The main roles of the two panels were to select the subject pupils and the matched control pupils, and to also give the author any advice on her research methodology.

School X: The Selection of the Subject Group

Seven pupils who attended School X were selected by Panel X for the present research project. All the pupils come from the indigenous working-class population. These pupils were selected because they possess similar characteristics to the School Y sample (e.g. social class and ethnic background) which allows the author to make a comparative study. The seven pupils were referred to the school-based project (i.e. Project X) because Panel X believe that they were in need of special education to help them cope with their behavioural and cognitive difficulties. These seven pupils became the Subject Group, and consisted of six males with three aged 14 years, two aged 13 years and one aged 12 years, and one female pupil aged 11 years. The criteria for referral were: (a) the pupil exhibits school attendance problems; (b) frequently displays conduct disorders, such as stealing, when compared with most children of their age group; (c) experiencing problems with other pupils, such as being frequently bullied; (d) experiencing domestic problems, such as parents separating or mother prosecuted for soliciting; (e) experiencing difficulties with school work, such as problems with reading.

Panel X did not select any matching control pupils for the Subject pupils. This decision was based on the fact that Project X has a regular pupil turnover (pupils normally attend the project for about a month) which meant that the children who may have been considered as possible controls had already been referred to the project. As a consequence the author was unable to make a between-subjects design simply because any potential control pupils may be affected by their brief special programme and thus it may be difficult to assess any possible differences between the mainstream curriculum and Project X on the behaviours of the two groups. The seven Subject pupils were studied for one academic year.

School Y: The Selection of the Subject and Control Groups

Forty-eight pupils who attend School Y were selected by members of Panel Y for the present study. All the pupils come from the indigenous working-class population which reflects the predominant characteristics of the school's catchment area. The School Y sample were aged 14 years at the start of the research project, and were studied and followed up over a period of three years.

The Subject Adolescents

The Subject adolescent group consists of 16 pupils who are persistent absentees. The Subject group includes nine male and seven female pupils. At the end of their third year (i.e. aged 14 years) of secondary schooling the Subject adolescents were selected by members of Panel Y for referral to the school-based project (i.e. Project Y) because it was believed that these absentees were in need of special attention to help them overcome some of their learning and attendance problems. Thus, the criteria for referral included: (a) the adolescents who have poor attendance rates; (b) they tend to exhibit behavioural problems, such as stealing or bullying; (c) they fall within the 20 per cent category of pupils who are considered to experience significantly greater learning difficulties than other pupils of their own age group (Warnock Report, 1978).

Control Group A

Control Group A consists of 16 adolescent school absentees who 'attended' the mainstream school curriculum. The Control A adolescents were matched with the Subject adolescents for age, sex, social class, delinquency records, academic attainment and third year secondary school attendance record.

Control Group B

Control Group B consists of 16 adolescent good school attenders who attend the mainstream curriculum. This group was considered by members of Panel Y to be academically brighter than both the Subject and Control A absentees. The Panel argued that the school experienced particularly high

absenteeism rates among the lower bands in the 4th year group (pupils aged 14 years plus) and, therefore, they found it difficult to find enough good attenders among the lower streams to match the Subject adolescents. Thus, the Panel selected pupils from the brighter group because this group tended to contain a relatively high number of good attenders. However, the Control B adolescents were matched with the Subject pupils for age, sex, social class, and, wherever possible, for records of delinquency.

Research Design

The research study was designed to enable the author to assess the effects of the curricular programme (i.e. independent variable) on school attendance rates, target behaviours and classroom activity (i.e. three dependent variables). This one-factor design consists of two levels of the curricular programme: the mainstream school curriculum and the special educational curriculum.

The action research project is divided into three phases: (i) the baseline or pre-intervention stage where all the pupils in the population receive the mainstream curriculum; (ii) the intervention stage where only the Subject pupils receive the special educational programme, while the Control pupils remain in mainstream school; (iii) the follow-up stage where the intervention programme is terminated, and the Subject pupils are returned to either mainstream schooling or enter the job market because they have completed compulsory schooling (i.e. at the age of 16 years). Note, however, that the Subject pupils at School X did not have any matching control groups, but nonetheless followed the three phases of the research study.

Duration of the Three Study Phases

In the case of School X, the pre-intervention stage lasted for four months, the intervention programme lasted for four months and the follow-up stage lasted for a duration of four months. The School X sample was studied for one year between March 1985 and May 1986. In the case of School Y, the pre-intervention stage was assessed via the

official school register during the academic year of September 1984 to June 1985 when the School Y population was aged between 13 and 14 years. The author simply collected the school attendance data from this 1984-1985 school register. The intervention stage lasted for two academic years between September 1985 and April 1987 (i.e. when the School Y sample was aged between 14+ and 16 years). The follow-up phase, which took place during March 1988, occurred one year after the School Y sample had completed compulsory schooling (i.e. the sample aged 17 years). Thus, the School Y sample behaviour was studied for just over a three-year period.

Comparative Design

The evaluation of any possible changes in the behaviours (i.e. school attendance, classroom activities and target behaviours) of the School X population were assessed using within-subjects design (i.e. intra-subject comparison) where the baseline measures are compared against measured changes, if any, which may occur during the intervention and follow-up stages. For the School Y sample, the evaluation of changes, if any, in behaviours (school attendance, classroom activities and target behaviours) were assessed using both a within-subjects design and a between-subjects design. In the within-subject design each group's school attendance behaviour will be compared with its own measures during baseline and intervention phases in order to assess any possible differences between the phases which might be due to the intervention programme. In the between-subjects design the three groups are compared with each other, on their measured behaviours during the baseline and intervention phases in order to assess any possible differences between the Subject adolescents and the two Control adolescent groups which might be due to the intervention programme.

Selection of the Term 'Non-School Attendance'

In order to negate any disparities that might occur between the school panels and the author which may otherwise jeopardize the consistency of this study, the author

conducted a survey to ascertain which terms are most preferred by Panel X and Panel Y (i.e. 11 respondents) when referring to children in the study population who frequently exhibit unauthorised absence from school as a result of the actions of pupil, parent or both (SED, 1977). Therefore, the author administered Questionnaire N (see Appendix A9b.1) to the two panels. This questionnaire consists of four items, each describing a particular type of illegal school absence (e.g. truancy and school refusal), which were selected from the literature (Galloway, 1985a). The respondents were required to rank each term in order of preference and to indicate their reasons for preferring particular terms. The author received all 11 completed questionnaires. She believes that some of the reasons for this high return may include: (a) the questionnaire is very short and, therefore, is not time consuming; (b) the author administered the questionnaires to the respondents during their 'free' time and they all volunteered to immediately complete the questionnaire while she waited.

Parental Permission to Include Pupils in the Study

The prescribed ethical guidelines for dealing with human participants in research studies states that participants' (and in this case their parents or guardians) consent should first be obtained prior to the investigation, they should receive information on all aspects of the research and they should also be given a guarantee of confidentiality in advance of the study APA (1982). Thus, in order to abide by these ethical principles, the author sent out letters (see Appendix A9b.2) to 12 School X pupils' parents and to 69 School Y pupils' parents, that is 23 parents from each of the groups (i.e. Subject, Control A and Control B adolescents). The letters were delivered by several means including the postal system, by the pupils themselves, or by EWOs or teachers making home visits. The letter states the author's educational interests and she asks for parental consent to include their children in her study. For School X, the author received seven (i.e. 58.33 per cent) returns in which all the parents granted permission for their children to be included in the study.

In the case of School Y, the author received 61 (i.e. 88.41 per cent) returns of which 18 (i.e. 78.26 per cent) Subject pupils' parents gave consent, and 16 (i.e. 69.57 per cent) Control A and 22 (i.e. 95.65 per cent) Control B pupils' parents also gave consent to include their children in the present study. Of the remaining eight parents, three did not reply, and the other five stated that they did not want their children to be included in the study, their wishes were respected. When assessing the reasons for the high returns, the author believes that there may be several contributory factors including: (i) the high returns from the Subject and Control pupils' parents might be due to the hard work of two EWOs and several teachers who kindly assisted in directly delivering letters to parents during their regular home visits to see truant pupils; (ii) in the case of Control B adolescents, all the pupils were given the letters to deliver to their parents, this group showed the highest returns probably because the parents may have felt relatively confident in their children's relatively good educational progress or they may simply tend to trust the school staff.

Therefore, in order to abide by the ethical guidelines (APA, 1982), the author included in her study the seven pupils from School X, and for School Y, she included 16 pupils from each group to ensure that each participant had a matched partner so that comparative studies could be conducted.

Collection of the Data

The author collected her data by using a variety of techniques including structured and unstructured questionnaires, inventories, interviews, classroom schedules, charts, diaries, school documents, school reports, staff and parent handbooks, school pamphlets, school registers and attending staff meetings. The author believes that by using such a wide range of methods she was able to double-check the extent to which any particular data reflected reality and, thus, confirm the consistency of the information given. This use of a wide range of resources for

data collection may have also negated any possible biases of any one particular source of information. Thus, the author was able to enhance the sensitivity of her investigative design and, therefore, heighten her appreciation of the data.

The author collected two types of information including: (i) demographic information (e.g. home conditions and history of behaviour disorders) in order to gain some insight into the population's educational and home backgrounds which may enable her to appreciate further the population's behaviours towards their schooling environment; (ii) evaluation techniques (e.g. the Pupil Record Sheet, the Interactive Chart and the FIAC), this data were collected for the purpose of monitoring any behavioural changes among the pupils that might be attributed to the type of curricular instructions and to also assess the interactive processes of the classroom. The demographic information will be discussed in this chapter and the evaluative techniques will be discussed in the following chapter.

Demographic Data

The author collected data on the population's academic and home backgrounds, as well as information on how the population perceive themselves and their environments. Through collecting this data the author hoped to assess the experiences of the various groups (e.g. the Subject adolescents and the two Control Groups). She also hopes to gain some insight into the type of pupils who are most at risk of becoming disaffected from school.

Interview with a Senior Official at the Leicestershire Education Welfare Service

With the assistance of her supervisors, the author was able to arrange a formal interview with a senior official at the Education Welfare Service (EWS). The interview took place during November 1988. The main purpose of this interview was to gain some insight into how the EWS manages school attendance problems. The interview consisted mainly of unstructured questions (see Appendix A9b.3), and

the main items include what are the general intervention approaches taken by the EWS and whether EWOs have close liaisons with other professions, such as the social workers. All the senior official responses were recorded via note form.

Local Survey on School Attendance in Leicestershire

During the above interview, the senior official also revealed that the EWS had conducted a survey on all the middle, secondary and comprehensive schools in Leicestershire in order to ascertain the attendance rates for each school and each year group for that particular school. The survey was conducted for one week in February 1988 and the data collected by the county's EWOs from the official school registers. All the school attendance data from the survey was computed to reflect the total average attendance rate for the whole county, the average attendance for each school in the county and also for each year group (i.e. 1st to 5th years) of each school in the county. All the data are filed in an unpublished document. The author was given access to the EWS findings with the understanding that the names of the schools will remain anonymous. The senior official presented the author with data for five of the schools which included School X and School Y. The other three schools (i.e. School A, B and C) were presented to the author because the official believes that they reflect the 'typical' school attendance patterns for Leicestershire County. She was also presented with data which revealed the total average school attendance figure for the County during the one-week survey.

Home Background

The author collected information on the population's family background from a variety of sources including reports compiled by EWOs and social workers, and interviews with members of Panel X and Panel Y. The author examined several aspects of the family history including: (a) the number of adults and siblings in the nuclear family; (b) the home conditions in terms of the general up-keep of the house, the conditions of the furniture and the standard of

cleanliness (i.e. poor, satisfactory or good), these data are collected because the literature suggests that poor housing conditions can lead to poor sleeping habits which may adversely affect children's education (Galloway, 1985a; ISTD, 1974; Tibbenham, 1977); (c) whether the family had a history of non-school attendance; (d) the family's attitude towards their child's truantiing behaviour (i.e. concerned or condoned); (e) whether professional agencies (e.g. social workers) are involved with the family; (f) did the parents have any special problems? (e.g. agoraphobia or alcoholism); (g) did the pupil concerned have any special problems? (e.g. drug addiction or neglect); (h) the number of court appearances made by the parents for their child's truantiing.

With respect to School X, the main hypotheses tested by this repertory information include:

1. The Subject pupils will tend to come from homes where there are family problems (e.g. criminal records).
2. The Subject pupils will tend to suffer from poor home conditions.
3. The Subject pupils will tend to come from single-parent families.
4. The Subject pupils will tend to have special problems (e.g. delinquency) and will also tend to be involved with 'outside' professions (e.g. educational psychologist or social worker).
5. The Subject pupils' parents will tend to have made several court appearances for their children's truancy and they will also tend to exhibit little concern for children's school absenteeism.

With respect to School Y, the main hypotheses tested by this repertory information include:

1. The Subject and Control A adolescents are more likely to come from home backgrounds which exhibit social problems

(e.g. alcoholism) than the Control B adolescents.

2. The Subject and Control A adolescents are more likely to suffer poor home conditions and are also more likely to have a family history of truancy than the Control B adolescents.
3. Subject and Control A adolescents are more likely to come from large single-parent families than the Control B adolescents.
4. Subject and Control A adolescents are more likely to have special problems (e.g. suffer neglect) and are also more likely to be involved with professional agencies (e.g. Social worker) than the Control B adolescents.
5. A significant proportion of both the Subject and Control A adolescents' parents will have appeared in court for their children's truancy and will also exhibit little concern for their children's school absenteeism.

In the case of School X, the author collected this background information for all seven Subject pupils. For School Y, the author collected this demographic information on 13 (i.e. 81.25 per cent) Subject adolescents, 15 (i.e. 93.75 per cent) Control A adolescents and 13 (i.e. 81.25 per cent) Control B adolescents. The author was unable to collect background data on the remainder of the School Y population due to several reasons including: (i) the school staff knew very little about the families concerned mainly because the families and School Y have had very limited contact with each other; (ii) in some cases due to the pupil's extremely poor attendance (some of these pupils had an attendance rate of 0 per cent per term), the school staff were consequently very unfamiliar with either the pupils or their families.

Academic Attainment and Follow-Up

The author collected information about the population's academic attainment from school documents which

indicated the numbers of examination entrances for each pupil and also the number of passes attained by each pupil. Such data were collected to test the main hypothesis that Control B adolescents will tend to achieve more examination passes than either of the Subject and Control A adolescents.

The author collected data on the academic performance for three (i.e. 42.86 per cent) Subject pupils who attend School X. She was unable to collect any attainment data on the other four (i.e. 57.14 per cent) Subject pupils because they were, at the time, too young to be considered as potential public examination candidates. In the Case of School Y, the author collected academic data for 14 (i.e. 87.50 per cent) Subject adolescents, 16 (i.e. 100 per cent) Control A adolescents and 16 (i.e. 100 per cent) Control B adolescents. The author was unable to collect any attainment data for two (i.e. 12.50 per cent) Subject adolescents because they were transferred to other schools at the end of their 4th year and, therefore, were not included in the examination lists. This school transfer occurred because the two Subject adolescents and their families had moved to other catchment areas.

The Number of Teachers Involved in the Pupils' Weekly School Timetable

The information about the number of teachers involved in each pupil's school curriculum timetable was collected from the school timetable records. This information was collected because the author is interested in testing the hypothesis that the mainstream timetable has significantly more teachers than the special project timetables. This hypothesis may then suggest that the organization of the special educational projects is, at least with respect to the number of teachers on the timetable, similar to those of the primary school timetables where attempts are made to allow a class to develop close relationships with mainly one teacher in order to foster a sense of stability and security among the primary school pupils (Plowden Report, 1967).

In the case of School X, the author collected

information for all seven (i.e. 100 per cent) Subject pupils. She will compare the number of teachers on the Subject pupils' mainstream timetables with the number of teachers on their special project timetables. In the case of School Y, the author collected information on the samples fourth and fifth year timetables. This information was collected for 14 (i.e. 87.50 per cent) Subject adolescents, 16 (i.e. 100 per cent) Control A adolescents and 16 (i.e. 100 per cent) Control B adolescents. The author was unable to collect any school time information for two (i.e. 12.50 per cent) Subject adolescents because they had been transferred to other schools. With respect to the School Y population, the author is interested in comparing the number of teachers on the Subject adolescents' 4th and 5th year special education timetables with the corresponding mainstream school timetables of the Control A and Control B adolescents.

The Follow-Up Data

The follow-up data focus on the population's activities since leaving mainstream school or the special projects. In the case of School X, the author examined the extent to which the Subject pupils were successfully reintegrated into mainstream school. This information was collected from the school registers, and interviews with the project teacher and the Head of Pastoral Care. The hypothesis tested for the School X sample is that most of the Subject pupils will show greater improvement in behaviour (e.g. school attendance) during the follow-up stage when compared with their behaviour during the pre-intervention stage. In the case of School Y, information was collected on the sample's vocational activities since completing compulsory schooling. This information was collected from interviewing the project teacher and one Head of Year, and also from forms completed by the then ex-pupil sample during a School Y coffee evening held in March 1988. These forms requested the ex-pupils to state their names, job occupations and the names of their employers. The purpose of the coffee evening was to give the staff and ex-pupils the opportunity to socialise, and to also give the

teachers the opportunity to find out how the ex-pupils had progressed since leaving school. The main hypothesis tested here is that the Subject and Control B adolescents will show greater progress in terms of obtaining jobs than the Control A adolescents. This hypothesis is tested to assess whether the emphasis of the work experience, among other things, on the special project may be more efficacious for non-school attenders than the approaches of the mainstream school. A second hypothesis also tested is that the Control B adolescents are more likely to continue their education (e.g. in further education colleges) than both the Subject and Control A adolescents.

Follow-up information was collected for all seven (i.e. 100 per cent) Subject pupils at School X. In the case of School Y, the author collected follow-up data on 10 (i.e. 62.50 per cent) Subject adolescents, 13 (i.e. 81.25 per cent) Control A adolescents and 10 (i.e. 62.50 per cent) Control B adolescents. The author was unable to collect any follow-up data on the remainder of the School Y sample either because they had not completed any forms related to their vocational activities, or because the school staff had very little information about their adult lives because of lack of contact between such ex-pupils and the school.

The Self-Concept Scale

The author assessed the population's self-conception via an inventory called the Piers-Harris Self-Concept Scale (Chapman, 1981). The scale consists of 80 items and requires the pupils to respond to statements with a yes/no response. Examples of the statements include: 'I am clever', 'I am unpopular', 'I hate school', and 'I have many friends'. The author hopes that this inventory may give her some insight into the population's attitudes towards their educational abilities which may also help her to appreciate their attendance behaviour. With respect to School X, the main hypothesis tested is that the Subject pupils will tend to attain below average scores (i.e. below 46 points). With respect to School Y, the main hypothesis tested is that the Control B adolescents are more likely to attain higher

self-concept scores than either of the Subject or Control A adolescents.

The inventory was administered to the population in school during tutorials or free periods in order to avoid disrupting their education. In the case of School X, the author administered the scale to five (i.e. 71.43 per cent) Subject pupils. Two (i.e. 28.57 per cent) Subject pupils refused to complete the questionnaire because they believed it had too many questions. The questionnaire was administered to the School Y sample with the assistance of the project teacher and the mainstream form tutors. Of this School Y population, 12 (75.00 per cent) Subject adolescents completed the questionnaire, 7 (i.e. 43.75 per cent) Control A adolescents and 13 (i.e. 81.25 per cent) Control B adolescents also completed the questionnaires. The author was unable to collect data for the remainder of the School Y population because either: (a) pupils' poor school attendance made it difficult to administer the scale; (b) three respondents had returned incomplete questionnaires which the author discarded in order to avoid distorting the data.

The Reward Preference Questionnaire

Because the special educational programmes of Project X and Project Y operate within the concept of behaviour therapy, both the author and the school teachers considered it important to administer the Reward Preference Scale (Dunn-Rankin, Shimizu & King, 1969) in order to gain some insight into the population's reward preference patterns. The author believes that such data may help the projects and mainstream to improve pupil motivation to participate in curricular activities by their attempts to accommodate for the population's interests as revealed by the questionnaire. The scale was administered to the population while at school during their tutorial period or free lessons in order to avoid disrupting their education. The questionnaire consists of 40 items and each item contains one pair of statements (i.e. 80 statements altogether). For example, item 25 consists of two statements, 'Be free to play outside' and

'An ice cream cone'. The pupils are required to choose which one of the pairs of statements they most prefer as a reward. The 80 statements are divided into five main categories of rewards: adult approval (e.g. teacher writing 'excellent' for good work); competitive approval (e.g. coming first in a class test); peer approval (e.g. classmates want you to be their leader); independence reward (free to do something you like); and consumable reward (e.g. ice cream). The maximum score for any one category of rewards is 16 points. With respect to School X, the main hypothesis tested is that the Subject pupils will tend to show a preference towards one particular category of reward. With respect to School Y, the main hypothesis tested is that there will be a significant difference between the three groups in their reward preferences.

At School X the scale was administered to seven (i.e. 100 per cent) Subject pupils. The reason for this high return of completed reward questionnaires from the School X sample might be partly due to the fact that the project teacher drew the Subject pupils' attention to the possibility of the reward scale helping the project to provide a wider variety of rewards. In the case of School Y, the scale was administered, with the assistance of the project teacher and form tutors, to 13 (i.e. 81.25 per cent) Subject adolescents, 7 (i.e. 43.75 per cent) Control A adolescents and 9 (i.e. 56.25 per cent) Control B adolescents. The author was unable to obtain data from the remainder of the School Y population because: (i) the pupils' poor attendance made administration difficult; (ii) one questionnaire was discarded because the pupil returned an incomplete questionnaire which may have otherwise distorted the data; (iii) some of the tutors had misplaced the questionnaires which the author immediately replaced, however, after sending out reminders on three occasions, the author was unable to obtain any more returns.

The Home-School Questionnaire

The purpose of the Home-School Questionnaire (see Appendix A9b.4) is to ascertain whether the population

exhibit any significant differences in their attitudes towards their home and school lives. The author obtained this questionnaire from School X who had been using it for a number of years as part of the counselling process with problem pupils. The questionnaire consists of 20 items and in most cases requires the pupils to respond to statements with a yes/no response. This questionnaire was administered to the population while at school during free lessons or tutorial periods again in order to avoid disrupting their education. In the case of School X, the questionnaire was administered for two reasons: (i) as part of a counselling session to give both the project teacher and author some insight into the Subject pupils' attitudes towards their environment; (ii) to test the hypothesis that the Subject pupils will tend to feel uncomfortable at school. With respect to School Y, the main hypothesis tested is that the Subject, Control A and Control B groups will differ from each other in their attitudes towards their homes and school.

In the case of School X, the author administered the questionnaire to six (i.e. 85.71 per cent) Subject pupils. Only one (i.e. 14.29 per cent) Subject pupil did not complete the questionnaire due to bouts of absenteeism. In order to assess whether the pupils' responses reflected the realities of their home and school lives, the author discussed their responses with the project teacher who is familiar with their home backgrounds. For example, when the Subject pupils were asked to indicate the amount of pocket money that they receive weekly, their responses ranged from £2.00 to £12.00. Such responses were discussed with the project teacher who confirmed that the Subject pupils' statements were in fact in accordance with the amount of money that she has regularly seen them spend when they go out on shopping trips.

In the case of School Y, the author administered the questionnaire to the population with the assistance of the project teacher and the form tutors. She received completed questionnaires from 13 (i.e. 81.25 per cent) Subject

adolescents, 8 (i.e. 50.00 per cent) Control A adolescents and 8 (i.e. 50.00 per cent) Control B adolescents. The author was unable to obtain completed questionnaires from the remainder of the School Y population due to several reasons including: (i) the poor attendance of some pupils made administration difficult; (ii) some form tutors had misplaced the questionnaires, which the author immediately replaced, but she was still unable to gain any more returns; (iii) some form tutors claimed that they did not have the time to administer another questionnaire (they had already assisted with the reward preference and self-concept scales); (iv) some tutors had failed to remember to administer the questionnaires, however, after sending out reminders to the staff on three occasions the author only received one completed questionnaire from a Control B adolescent which brought the total to 8 (i.e. 50.00 per cent) returns for that group.

Once the School Y sample had returned their completed questionnaires, the author would discuss their responses with members of Panel Y in order to assess the extent to which the data correctly reflect the pupils' lives. The Panel stated that it believed that in the vast majority of the responses appear to correspond with the pupils' experiences. However, there were two cases where the Panel strongly doubted the pupils' responses. According to the Panel the pupils had greatly exaggerated the amount of weekly pocket money which they receive (both stated that they receive over £25.00 as weekly pocket money from parents). In this situation the author felt compelled to discard such responses in order to mitigate against any possible corruption of the data.

Difficulties Experienced by the Pupils with Home-School Questionnaire

Some of the poor attenders in the population experienced difficulties with writing sentences as responses to the unstructured items in the questionnaire. Therefore, the teachers and the author assisted such pupils when completing their responses to such items. However, the

disadvantage of this assistance is that the presence of the author and the teachers may have affected the pupils' behaviour with the consequence that some of their responses may not have always reflected their real opinions or feelings. However, when calculating such risks, the teachers and the author believe that they had developed fairly trusting relationships with the pupils which may have minimized such risks.

The Children's Behaviour Questionnaire

The purpose of the Children's Behaviour Questionnaire Scale B (Rutter, 1967) is to assess children's behaviour disorders. This inventory consists of 26 statements (e.g. 'Truants from school') which are completed by teachers. The teacher has to decide the degree to which each statement is relevant to the child's behaviour, and then grade accordingly by placing an X next to either "Doesn't Apply", "Apply Somewhat", and "Certainly Applies". The scores are then calculated as zero, one or two points respectively. Children are designated as displaying behaviour disorders if their total score is nine points or more. For those children who are designated as having behaviour disorders, a 'neurotic' or 'anti-social' sub-score can also be calculated by the summing of the scores for specified items. For instance, the 'neurotic' sub-score is calculated by summing the scores of four specified items (e.g. 'Often worries...') and the 'anti-social' sub-score is calculated by summing the scores of six specified items (e.g. 'Bullies other children'). If the 'anti-social' scores exceed those of the 'neurotic' scores then the child is designated as anti-social and if the 'neurotic' scores exceed those of the 'anti-social' scores then the child is designated as neurotic. However, the child with equally 'anti-social' and 'neurotic' sub-scores remains undifferentiated.

With respect to School X, the main hypothesis tested is that a significant proportion of the Subject pupils are likely to be designated as having behaviour disorders. With respect to School Y, is that the Subject and Control A adolescents will exhibit more behaviour disorders than the

Control B adolescents.

For School X, the project teacher was required to complete the inventory on the Subject pupils' behaviours. The author received seven (i.e. 100 per cent) completed questionnaires from the project teacher. In the case of School Y, the members of Panel Y were required to complete the inventory on the behaviours of the Subject, Control A and Control B adolescents. The author obtained completed questionnaires for 16 (i.e. 100 per cent) Subject adolescents, 16 (i.e. 100 per cent) Control A adolescents and for 16 (i.e. 100 per cent) Control B adolescents.

Fortunately, the author experienced very little difficulty in obtaining the completed questionnaires from the Panel. She obtained 45 returns within two weeks of administration and only had to issue one verbal reminder in order to obtain the remaining three returns. The author believes that this high return is probably due to the inventory being relatively short and structured which made it fairly easy to complete.

The Pupil Sex Ratio in the Special Educational Projects

The author collected this information for the purpose of comparing the male-female student ratios in the special projects with the male-female student ratios in mainstream school. In the case of School X, the information was collected from the project register. In the case of School Y, the information was collected from registers for the whole year group when the study sample was aged 13 years (i.e. 1984-85 third year school registers), 14 years (i.e. 1985-86 fourth year school registers) and 15 years plus (i.e. 1986-87 fifth year school registers). This procedure allowed the author to compare the sex ratio of the Project Y sample as they progressed through school.

In the case of School X, the main hypothesis tested is that most of the Subject pupils attending the special projects are male students. With respect to School Y, the main hypotheses tested are: (i) most of the Subject

adolescents attending the special project are male students; (ii) there is a higher proportion of male students attending the project than the proportion of the male students in the mainstream year group; (iii) the proportion of female students attending the special project is relatively small when compared with the proportion of female students in the mainstream year group. These hypotheses may confirm the premise that significantly more male pupils than female pupils tend to be considered by teachers as showing conduct disorders, such as fighting, (Farrington, 1980).

Parent Questionnaire

The author designed two parent questionnaires: Questionnaire CP2 and Questionnaire PP2(b) (see Appendices A9a.3 and A9a.4 respectively). These questionnaires were designed for the parents of the School Y population. Questionnaire PP2(b) is designed for the parents of the Subject adolescents, and Questionnaire CP2 is designed for the parents of the Control A and Control B adolescents. The purpose of the parent questionnaires is to assess the attitudes of the parents towards their children's education. The main hypotheses tested by both the questionnaires include:

1. The Subject and Control B adolescents will show greater improvement in their behaviour (as indicated by their parents' responses) than the Control A adolescents (as indicated by their parents).
2. The Subject Group parents will feel more comfortable about visiting the special project than the Control A and Control B Groups' parents will feel about visiting the mainstream school.
3. The Subject and Control B Groups' parents will show greater satisfaction with their children's school work than the Control A Groups' parents will feel about their children's school work.

Questionnaire PP2(b) also test other hypotheses

including:

1. The Subject Group parents will tend to feel that both themselves and their children have received greater support from the project than from the mainstream school.
2. The Subject Group parents will feel that their children have shown greater improvement during their placement on the special educational project than during the pre-intervention phase (i.e. the mainstream school curriculum).

Administration of the Parent Questionnaires

In order to concur with the ethical guidelines that advise researchers to first explain their investigation to potential participants, then seek their consent, and give a guarantee of confidentiality (APA, 1982), the author issued letters to the parents of the School Y population explaining her interests in relation to education (see Appendix A9b.5). Attached to the letter is a return slip which the parents were required to complete indicating whether they would permit the author or her volunteer assistants to visit their homes. The author issued 48 letters of which she received four (i.e. 8.33 per cent) return slips. In all four returns the parents gave their consent for a visit to their homes. The author believes that this poor return is probably partly due to the timing of when the letters were issued which occurred during May 1987 at a time when most of the School Y sample were sitting their public examinations. The author therefore assumes that the parents were probably pre-occupied with, among other things, their children's examinations and any associated anxieties. Thus, as a consequence the author's letters may have received a very low priority from the parents concerned. However, despite the low returns, the author decided that she would still attempt to administer the parent questionnaire, but first ask their permission on their door-steps, literally.

Because the parent questionnaires were to be completed in their homes, this meant that home visits would

involve many miles of 'trekking' throughout the City of Leicester. Therefore, in order to effectively surmount this rather arduous job, the author acquired the assistance of six undergraduate students including two from Leicester University and four from higher education colleges. The students were recruited through the authors contact with university colleagues. Some of the main advantages of recruiting these students are that: (a) they have attained educational levels which enable them to understand the requirements of the questionnaire; (b) they are relatively competent in communication skills which may enable them to convey the necessary information to the parents in a coherent manner.

Questionnaires:

Thirty-five CP2 Questionnaires, 20 PP2(b) Questionnaires, three Leicester A-to-Z street atlases, several lists containing the names and addresses of the parents headed with the appropriate questionnaire titles, pens, and paper.

Instructions to the Assistants

The author briefly explained the background of her research to the six assistants and she also briefed them on the two questionnaires. The author then gave them some written instructions stating:

1. Introduce yourself and explain to the parents that you are carrying out some research on education as part of a Leicester University project.
2. Ask the parents if they could answer some questions. Tell them it is related to their fifth year children.
3. Explain to the CP2 Questionnaire parents that the special educational programme (locally known as 'AC') is a project established for children with special needs (e.g. extra for reading or help with problem behaviours).

(NB)

4. Please note any difficulties encountered with the questionnaires.

The administration of the parent questionnaire occurred between July and September 1987.

The Returns

The author received 8 (i.e. 50.00 per cent) completed PP2(b) Questionnaires from the Subject Group parents, 9 (i.e. 56.25 per cent) completed CP2 Questionnaires from the Control A Group parents and 11 (i.e. 68.75 per cent) completed CP2 Questionnaires from the Control B Group parents.

The author was unable to obtain any more completed questionnaires because one house had been demolished and the family moved elsewhere; six families were not at home; two parents stated that they did not have the time to answer any questions; one family appeared to be at home, but would not answer the door; and one house was empty, the family had moved. The remaining nine families could not be contacted at all.

Difficulties Encountered During the Administration of the Parent Questionnaires

1. Because most of the administration was conducted during the summer holidays, at a time when most families go away on holidays, this made it difficult to contact parents.
2. Two assistants believe that some of the issues in the questionnaires caused some 'political' antagonism between at least two couples. For instance, items 28 and 29 of the CP2 Questionnaire deals with the issues of the teachers' industrial actions. When a couple was questioned about whether the industrial action had affected their child's behaviour, the mother stated that it had adversely affected her child. Her husband immediately perceived this as being anti-strike action and it flared into an argument with him asserting that

teachers have the right to strike for a decent living. The two assistants said that they quickly intercepted and resolved the argument by explaining that although one may feel that the industrial action may have affected one's child, that does not necessarily mean that one is also unsympathetic to the teachers' actions. Apparently, the husband then conceded and accepted that the teachers' actions may have affected his child, but, nevertheless, he sympathised with them.

3. The assistants stated that they found some of the parents to be rather reticent, and in a few cases the parents appeared to know very little about their children's school experiences. For example, one Control A Group parent was unaware of whether her child had taken any public examinations. Thus, as a consequence of parent reticence some of the open-ended questions were left either unanswered or complete with very sparse responses.

The author did not administer any questionnaires to the parents of the Subject pupils at School X. The members of Panel X believed that it would be unwise to issue the questionnaires because most of the Subject pupils had left the special project under unfortunate circumstances, such as being expelled from the school. Consequently, the Panel felt that the parents may feel resentful and may not be willing to co-operate with the study. Thus, because of this seemingly uncondusive situation, the author was not permitted by the school to contact any of the Subject pupils' parents.

The Teacher Questionnaire

The author designed Teacher Questionnaire T2a (see Appendix A9a.2) for administration to the School X staff. The School Y staff received a modified version of this questionnaire which is called Teacher Questionnaire T2b (see Appendix A9b.6). The Teacher Questionnaire T2b consists of 15 items and it was modified to suit the School Y environment by: (i) excluding items 6 to 9 of the T2a Questionnaire, which deals with the reintegration of project

pupils into full-time education, because Panel Y believed that such questions are largely irrelevant as the Subject adolescents received a mixed timetable (i.e. the pupils attend both project and some mainstream classes) throughout their final two years of compulsory schooling; (ii) the term 'project' in the T2a Questionnaire was replaced by the term 'Alternative Curriculum' (AC) in the T2b Questionnaire because the term 'AC' was more familiar to the School Y staff. However, despite the cosmetic differences between the two questionnaires, their main theme is the same and that is to ascertain the teachers' attitudes towards their schools' special educational projects. The main hypotheses tested by these questionnaires include:

1. Mainstream school teachers' responses will suggest that the School X and School Y Subject pupils' behaviours have improved over the course of the intervention programme.
2. That the frequency of contacts between the special programme and mainstream school departments will be affected by their physical proximity to each other. Thus, the closer a department is situated to the special project, the greater will be the interaction between the two sub-units. This hypothesis will test the premise that special needs projects need should, in physical terms, be centrally based inside school buildings in order to improve communication between the special projects and mainstream school, and also possibly to negate some of the feelings of isolation which might be experienced by the members of special projects.
3. Mainstream teachers will favour an increase in the level of interaction between themselves and the projects.
4. Where management strategies from the projects have filtered through to mainstream classes, there will be a marked improvement in the Subject pupils' behaviour.

Administration of the Teacher Questionnaires

In the case of School X, the author requested

permission to administer the T2a Teacher Questionnaire in November, 1987. Her request was not granted and she had to endure a delay of over three months before permission was finally granted by the Panel. The questionnaire was then administered in February, 1988, to 75 members of the School X staff. The author eventually obtained 15 (i.e. 20.00 per cent) completed T2a Teacher Questionnaires.

Difficulties Experienced with the T2a Teacher Questionnaire

1. As already mentioned, the author had to endure a delay of over three months. She was informed by a senior teacher that one of the reasons for the delay included the fact that the Project X teacher had become extremely anxious about the prospect of the school staff making negative comments about the project which she may then interpret as a personal criticism of her own professional skills. Consequently, the project teacher became very self-conscious and hyper-sensitive about the prospect of issuing the questionnaire. The members of Panel X had several meetings (in the author's absence) to discuss this unfortunate situation. Apparently, the project teacher did not want the teacher questionnaire to be administered, but her request was over-ruled by the Panel because they felt that it was in the best interest of all concerned for the questionnaire to be issued in order to receive feedback about the progress of the project. The Panel also offered to give the project teacher some extra support through discussions to help her accept that the questionnaire is not a personal judgment of her teaching skills.
2. The school was experiencing an HMI inspection which occurred between October 1987 and January 1988. This meant that the staff had to write up reports on their curriculum organization which may have added pressure on the teachers, and thus made it difficult for them to complete the questionnaires. Furthermore, this inspection may also partly account for the School X project teacher's initial reluctance to co-operate with the administration of the questionnaire.

3. Some teachers misplaced their questionnaires which the author promptly replaced.
4. The author had to make four follow-ups in which she requested the respondents to return their questionnaires completed.
5. At least two teachers refused to complete a questionnaire because they expressed disinterest in the special needs project.

In the case of School Y, the author administered the Teacher Questionnaire T2b, in November 1987, to 70 members of the school staff. After a number of reminders and several follow-ups the author received 11 (i.e. 15.71 per cent) completed questionnaires. In January, 1988, Panel Y kindly administered the teacher questionnaire to the entire school staff for the second time. This second issue produced a return of 9 (i.e. 12.86 per cent) completed questionnaires. The author issued two reminders on the staff notice board and made several follow-ups, but she fail to obtain any more completed questionnaires. Thus, the total returns for School Y is 20 (i.e. 28.57 per cent) completed questionnaires.

Questionnaire A

The author designed Questionnaire A (see Appendix A9a.1) for administration to the Subject pupils attending Project X and Project Y. The main purpose of this questionnaire is to ascertain the Subject Groups' attitudes towards their special needs programmes and to also assess their experiences of mainstream schooling. The data from this questionnaire may also reveal how well the Subject Groups' understand their problems and whether they believe that the special programmes have adequately catered for their needs. The main hypothesis tested by Questionnaire A are: (i) the Subject Groups will show more positive attitudes towards their special educational programmes than towards mainstream school; (ii) the Subject Groups will favour an increase in social interactions between the

projects and mainstream school.

In the case of School X, the author personally administered the questionnaire to the seven (i.e. 100 per cent) Subject pupils. This personal approach was deemed necessary in order to assist the Subject pupils because they tended to experience writing difficulties. In the case of School Y, both the author and project teacher personally administered the questionnaire to each of the 13 (i.e. 81.25 per cent) Subject adolescents because they also tended to have writing difficulties.

Difficulties Experienced During the Administration of Questionnaire A

1. The administration of the questionnaire was very time consuming because the Subject Groups' needed assistance in writing their responses.
2. The presence of the teacher and the author may have affected the respondents' behaviour with the consequence that some responds may not have always reflected their real opinions. However, when considering the risks, the teacher and author believe that they had developed a fairly trusting relationship with the Subject Groups which may have negated such risks.

Questionnaire R

The main purposes of Questionnaire R (see Appendix A9b.7) are to: (a) collect background information about the development of special educational projects; (b) gain an insight into the project teachers' experiences of teaching in both the special projects and the mainstream curriculum; (c) examine the project teachers' pedagogical approaches to managing special needs pupils; (d) ascertain the project teachers' attitudes towards the level of social interaction between the projects and mainstream school. The questionnaire consists of 40 open-ended questions which was administered to the Project X and Project Y teachers. The open-ended questionnaire design was use in order to give the project teachers a greater opportunity to express their

opinions than might have been possible with a more structured approach. The questionnaire was presented during a two-hour interview, and the teachers' responses were cassette tape recorded and later transcribed. Both interviews took place in quiet rooms in the School X and School Y buildings in order to avoid ambient noises, such as pupils shouting in the corridors, which may otherwise make transcribing difficult.

Difficulties Experienced During the Questionnaire R Interviews

1. On at least two occasions one of the interviews was interrupted by other teachers who had queries to discuss with the project teacher. This meant that the author had to stop the interviews temporarily in order to avoid unwanted conversations being recorded.
2. In a small part of one of the recorded interviews the teacher's voice is fairly faint probably due to her moving to and fro from the microphone. This made transcribing somewhat arduous.

In summary, the author attempted to examine the demographic aspects of the population in terms of their home experiences and the ethos of their learning environments. In order to achieve this, she studied home conditions, self-concept scales, academic performances, the population's attitudes towards their homes and schools, and interviewed teachers and parents to gain some insight into their opinions on how to make schools more effective. As a further development to this study, the author will discuss, in the following chapter, the organizations of School X and School Y and their respective special needs projects. She will also discuss the evaluative techniques used continuously to assess and monitor the progress of population.

Chapter 9c

Methodology II: The Schools, Intervention Programmes and Evaluation Techniques

In this chapter the author will discuss the ethos of School X and School Y, and their respective projects in order to examine the population's educational environment. The author will also discuss her evaluative techniques which she used to assess the possible influences of the schools' intervention programmes on the behaviour of the Subject Groups.

The Organization of the Schools and their Special Educational Programmes

Both School X and School Y are divided into two main sub-units: the mainstream sub-unit and the special education sub-unit. The schools and their special projects will be discussed in terms of their aims, plans and objectives. The data were collected from a variety of resources including school booklets on procedures, Vice Principle reports, pupil timetables, school and project brochures, staff reports, staff's and parents' handbooks, and diary notes.

School X

School X is an inner city secondary school whose catchment area reflects a multicultural community, including the Asian and Afro-Caribbean families. The school is a modern building built in the early 1980s and has a community approach with a creche, a dance studio, a fitness gymnasium, and adult class facilities which are all available to the community at large. The school maintains regular contact with its catchment area through issuing magazines to the community on a fortnightly basis to inform people of what is being offered at the school, such as plays. The magazine also informs about other events in the community, such as women's group activities or church concerts. The school is closely affiliated with other societies, such as churches,

youth groups, community radio, mountaineering clubs and sports councils.

Plan

School X caters for an average of 1190 pupils aged between 11 and 16 years. There are 69 members of the teaching staff which makes a calculated teacher-pupil ratio of 1:17.

Ethos

The school's code of conduct procedure was established by a committee consisting of pupils, teachers and parents. The school claims that the purpose of this code of conduct is to provide a conducive atmosphere for learning. The code of conduct procedure includes:

- a) Members of the school will respect others whatever their sex, religion, language, custom, or colour.
- b) School resources and personal property should be respected.
- c) To exhibit courtesy and self-discipline which the school considers to be essential to provide a good working environment.
- d) To listen and respect the opinion of others.
- e) to encourage and develop democratic school councils.

Both teachers and pupils are expected to abide by the school rules which include no smoking, walking on the left side of the corridors and stairs, dress appropriately (the wearing of a uniform is voluntary), do not drop litter, and do not bring valuables to school.

Sanctions

Pupils who break the rules may receive sanctions such as detentions, berating, made to repeat work, or in serious cases (e.g. attacking a teacher) the pupil may be suspended

from school.

Rewards

Pupils are usually rewarded by the staff if they are considered to have made good progress in their academic work and/or social interactions. Rewards may include praise, merits and exhibition of pupils' work.

School Policy on Absenteeism

If pupils are absent from school they should bring a letter from their parents explaining their absence. If the explanation is satisfactory, such as the pupil was ill, then usually no further investigations are followed. However, if the form teachers do not feel that they have received a satisfactory explanation from the parents then they (form teachers) are required to complete an Absence Record form with details of the pupils' names, addresses and absences. These forms are given to the EWO who may contact the home to investigate the reasons for the pupils' absence and to also remind the parents of their legal obligation to send their children to school.

The Mainstream School Timetable

The school day consists of four lessons or 'blocks' with each lasting for 1 hour and 10 minutes. The mainstream curriculum includes 20 lessons per week with one tutorial period per week lasting for 0.5 lesson (i.e. 35 minutes) and the remaining 19.5 lessons are allocated for pupils' studies in a range of subjects including science, expressive arts, English, mathematics, PE, and drama. A 'typical' mainstream curriculum (e.g. 4th year) is very similar to the following timetable (Table 9c.1):

**Table 9c.1: A 'Typical' 4th Year Mainstream Timetable
for School X**

	Lessons			
	1	2	3	4
M o n	English	History	Humanities	Design
T u e s	English	English	PE	Life Skills
W e d	Biology	Maths	Typing	Science
T h u r s	Design	History	Maths & Science	Typing
F r i	Science	French	Maths	Drama

Table 9c.1 shows that in a 'typical' 4th year timetable the pupils are required to attend a wide range of subjects including English, mathematics, drama and French.

Project X

Project X is school-based special educational unit which is based in School X. The Project was established in September 1985 as a response to the growing concern among the school staff for pupils who appear stressed or show disruptive behaviour which seriously impeded their ability to cope with mainstream school.

Plan

The project is situated in a classroom which consists of a working area (e.g. chairs and tables), individual work areas and a 'lounge' area (e.g. soft chairs and small coffee tables). The project usually caters for about seven pupils at any one time. Such pupils come from a wide age range of children including those aged between 11 and 15 years. The project has one full-time special needs teacher, six teachers who cater for specialist subjects, such as science and computing, and two social workers and one Home-School Liaison Officer who provide counselling and support for the Subject pupils. The teacher pupils ratio is about 1:7.

Aims

The project has several objectives including:

1. To provide a temporary release from mainstream lessons for pupils suffering from emotional stress or conduct disorders (e.g. stealing or truancy) which is seriously impairing their ability to cope with school.
2. To help disruptive pupils (e.g. 'violent' children) to learn ways of managing their social and academic skills, and to also learn to develop self-control in order that they may effectively cope with the demands of normal lessons. Thus, the project pupils' programmes may include counselling, self-awareness work and behaviour therapy.
3. To create a 'positive' image of the project by involving parents and mainstream teachers.
4. To reintegrate gradually the Subject pupils into full-time mainstream schooling.

Referral

The procedure of referral usually involves the form or subject teacher informing the Head of Division about a pupil who they feel is exhibiting serious problems, such as abusive behaviour. The Head of Division then contacts the

members of Panel X to discuss the pupil in question. A case conference is held and a referral form is sent to the teachers concerned. In the referral form the teachers are required to specify the problem behaviours (e.g. swearing), areas in which the pupil has appeared to show success (e.g. computing) and also to specify what realistic changes they expect the project to achieve with the pupil in question (e.g. reduction in school absenteeism).

Intervention Programme

Each Subject pupil has an individual programme which is specifically designed for his or her needs. Thus, such programmes may emphasize literacy for pupils with reading problems or social work counselling for pupils with problems at home. At least 35 per cent of the timetable is devoted to academic work, 10 per cent is devoted to counselling. The remaining 55 per cent of the programme is established in negotiation with the Subject pupils and usually reflect their interests (e.g. art or swimming). It also includes group work with the social workers where the pupils may discuss issues such as careers, and some mainstream lessons which are selected by the Subject pupils themselves.

The Conceptual Framework of Intervention

The intervention programmes is mainly based on the concept of behaviour therapy where the Subject pupils receive individual rewards (e.g. access to computer games) for improved behaviour. The Subject pupils also receive regular feedback about their performances and information about any future plans for their programmes.

A 'Typical' Intervention Programme

A 'typical' intervention programme may include academic work, counselling, feedback sessions, and reward activities. A 'typical' Project X timetable may look similar to the following table (Table 9c.2):

Table 9c.2: A 'Typical' Project X Timetable for the Subject Pupils

	Lessons			
	1	2	3	4
M o n	Free	Literacy	Science	Numeracy
T u e s	Free	Literacy	Art	Craft
W e d	Free	Computers	Art	Literacy
T h u r s	Free	Literacy	Group Work	Craft
F r i	Free	Numeracy	Literacy	Leisure Activities (e.g. sports)

Table 9c.2 shows that the Subject pupils' timetable consists of a variety of activities including computing, literacy, art and groupwork. However, note that the Subject pupils start school at a later time than the mainstream pupils, that is 1015 hours, and, therefore, are not required to attend the first lesson which starts at 0915 hours. The main purpose for this later start is to help ease the pressure of a full-time programme, especially for the non-school attenders.

Rewards

The Subject pupils receive a variety of interactive activities including praise, biscuit and coffee sessions, camping, swimming, expressive arts and computing which those of Panel X believe that pupils might find rewarding.

Sanctions

The Subject pupils may receive detentions, suspensions or berating.

School Y

School Y is a secondary school whose catchment area consists largely of an indigenous working-class population. The school was built during the early part of this century and caters for an average of 1080 pupils aged between 11 and 16 years. There are 66 members of the teaching staff which makes a calculated teacher-pupil ratio of 1:16. The school maintains contact with community through parent evenings, home visits and exhibitions of pupils' school work.

Ethos

Pupils are expected to behave in a courteous, sensible and considerate way in school in order to establish a positive learning environment. The school rules are very similar to those of School X and include: (a) pupils must move around the school in an orderly fashion, and keep to the left side of the corridors and staircase; (b) pupils must not drop litter or leave food around the school; (c) personal items, such as cameras and jewellery, must never be brought to school; (d) pupils must strive to keep their books and folders in good condition; (e) pupils are expected to dress in a tidy, neat fashion.

Sanctions

Pupils who misbehaviour or break the rules may receive sanctions, such as detentions, placed 'on report' which involves pupils having to take home, on a daily basis, a written report on their behaviour which must be signed by the parent and returned to school, and they could also face suspensions.

Rewards

Pupils who are considered by the staff as having made a good effort in their academic work and their social behaviour may receive a variety of rewards including recognition from the staff (e.g. praise), badges and medals, acknowledgments during school assemblies and merits for excellent work.

School Policy on Absenteeism

Pupils are expected to attend school regularly, and any absenteeism must always be explained by the parent via notes sent to the form tutor. Any unexplained absences are reported to the schools EWO who may visit the home to investigate the pupil's school absences.

Mainstream School Timetable

School Y's daily mainstream timetable consists of five lessons with each lasting for one hour. The mainstream curriculum includes a range of subjects, such as mathematics, English, biology, computer studies, PE, and dance. A 'typical' mainstream curriculum (e.g. 4th year) is very similar to the following timetable (Table 9c.3):

Table 9c.3: A 'Typical' 4th Year Mainstream Timetable for School Y.

	Lessons				
	1	2	3	4	5
M o n	English	Maths	Child Care	Computer Studies	Personal and Social Education
T u e s	Maths	History	Child Care	English	History
W e d	Computer Studies	Maths	English	Child Care	Child Care
T h u r s	Computer Studies	Maths	Biology	History	PE
F r i	Graphics	Graphics	Graphics	English	Biology

Table 9c.3 shows that in a 'typical' 4th year mainstream timetable the pupils attend a range of subjects including mathematics, English, biology and graphics. This 'typical' timetable also continues throughout the pupils' 5th year of secondary schooling.

Project Y

Project Y is a school-based special educational programme based at School Y. The Project was established in

September 1985 in response to the staffs' growing concern for pupils with school attendance problems and underachievement.

Plan

The Project constitutes one classroom which consists of a working area, and a reading area with a small library and soft chairs. The Project caters for 23 pupils who were introduced to the programme at the age of 14 years and they usually stay for two years. The Project has 1.5 special needs teachers, with a teacher-pupil ratio of 1:15, and two volunteer helpers. Out of the weekly 25 lessons, the project pupils attend the mainstream school for 9 (i.e. 36.00 per cent) lessons for a variety of subjects, such as child care studies and traffic education, and spend the remaining 16 (i.e. 64.00 per cent) lessons in the Project Y programme.

Referral

At the end of the third year, those pupils who are assessed as showing signs of underachievement and serious school attendance problems are referred to Project Y. This group of pupils is usually considered by the school as constituting the 20 per cent of children who are experiencing greater learning difficulties than most children of similar age (Warnock Report, 1978). This assessment is based on school tests in English and mathematics at the end of the pupils' 3rd year, and also on EWO reports of pupils' school attendance patterns.

Aims

The main aim of the Project is to help the Subject adolescents to: (i) be able to make informed decisions based on discussions and media, such as books; (ii) be able to communicate using a variety of methods, such the telephone or letters; (iii) develop confidence to meet new situations, such as job interviews; (iv) be able to use their leisure time constructively.

Objectives

The Subject adolescents are exposed to a variety of

experiences with the objective of helping them to learn to adapt to the ever changing demands of life. In order to achieve this objective the Project encourages its pupils to: (a) use a variety of resources to extract information (e.g. books, maps and bus timetables); (b) present their experiences in a variety of ways, for example, through poetry or painting; (c) transfer knowledge or skills learnt in familiar surroundings to unfamiliar situations; (d) take the opportunity to meet people from different social, economic and ethnic backgrounds; (e) familiarise themselves with the resources available in the community (e.g. sports centres, libraries and unemployment offices); (f) improve school attendance by the practical nature of the Project.

Organization of the Project

The Project has 1.5 teachers and six other members of staff who are timetabled to teach specific subjects, such as first aid or art. The Project is organised so that the Subject adolescents are able to engage regularly in out-of-classroom activities, such as visiting old peoples' homes or local factories. However, the bulk of the course is devoted to helping the pupils to develop basic skills in reading, writing and mathematics which they are encouraged to apply in out-of-classroom situations, such as reading about future camping activities. Thus, a 'typical' project curriculum is very similar to the following timetable (Table 9c.4):

Table 9c.4: A 'Typical' Project Timetable for the Subject Adolescents

		Lessons				
		1	2	3	4	5
Monday	M	Dance	Traffic	English	Discussion	Activities
	o	(M)	Education	(P)	on	(e.g.
	n		(M)		Canoeing	drama)
					(P)	(P)
Tuesday	T	Maths	Cookery	Writing	First	Personal
	u	(P)	(P)	letters	Aid	and
	e			to local	(P)	Social
	s			business		Education
				(P)		(M)
Wednesday	W	English	Traffic	Dance	City Centre	Map Trail
	e	(P)	Education	(M)	(P)	
	d		(M)			
Thursday	T	Technical	Drawing/	Home	Maths	Dance
	h	Economics			(P)	(M)
	u	(M)				
	r					
Friday	F	Spinning and Weaving			Discussion	Discussion
	r	Factory Visit			on Rock	on
	i	(P)			Climbing	Residential
					(P)	Holiday
						(P)

Note: (M) = Mainstream curricular activity,
(P) = Project Y curricular activity.

Table 9c.4 shows that in a 'typical' 4th year project timetable (the 5th year programme is very similar) the Subject adolescents attend some mainstream lessons for subjects such as home economics, but they spend most of

their time in the Project. The Subject adolescents' break and lunch periods are similar to mainstream school, they occur at the end of the second and third lessons respectively.

The Structure of the Project

The Project is divided broadly into six areas:

1. Basic Core Subjects

The basic core subjects include mathematics and English. Much of the work in mathematics includes computers, calculators and basic mathematics (e.g. percentages). The English work includes reading, and writing stories and letters. The rate of work is negotiated with the Subject adolescents.

2. Community Work

Community work involves the Subject adolescents visiting local handicapped people, toddlers' play groups and local businesses.

3. Personal and Social Development

The Subject adolescents are given the opportunity to take part in canoeing, rock climbing, and residential trips. Some of the main purposes of these activities include helping the Subject adolescents develop life-skills (e.g. managing money and preparing meals), enjoy some leisure activities and exercise their communication abilities.

4. Work Experience

The Subject adolescents spend one morning per week visiting local businesses, training schemes and Further Education colleges. The aim is to give them an insight into the 'world of work'.

5. Recreation

The Subject adolescents visit theatres, libraries and sport centres.

6. Residential Experience

At the beginning of each academic year the Subject adolescents have a three-day residential holiday with their project teacher, the volunteers and other teachers involved in the Project's timetable. The Project staff believes that such holidays gives both the teachers and the Subject adolescents the opportunity to develop more friendly relationships.

Assessment

All Subject adolescents are required to complete self-assessment forms at the end of an activity and place them in their personal log books. Each sheet provides a brief description of the activity, and a series of questions, such as 'Did you enjoy the activity?' or 'What parts of the activity did you find most difficult?'

Every four-week period each Subject adolescent receives counselling and a discussion on their progress. During these consultations the Subject adolescent is encouraged to state any difficulties which may need further work, to state his or her likes or dislikes about the course, and also receive feedback about progress. After such discussions, the Subject adolescent and the project teacher then plan the academic activities for the following four weeks and note any areas that might need some improvement.

Rewards

The Project staff believe that the emphasis on out-door-activities, work experience and practical activities all provide a rewarding learning environment for both the staff and the Subject adolescents. They also state that the Project does offer other rewards in terms of praise and positive feedback during consultation.

Sanctions

If a Subject adolescent displays persistent anti-social behaviour (e.g. fighting other pupils) then he or she is either sent to the Headteacher, given detention, placed on report, or suspended.

The Conceptual Framework of Intervention

The intervention programme is mainly based on the principles of behaviour therapy where the Subject adolescents receive a curriculum which the Project staff believe is aimed at the group's needs, hobbies and vocational interests. Such a curriculum is perceived by the Project staff as a positive reinforcement for the Subject adolescents to attend school and actively participate in the Project activities.

The Evaluative Techniques used to Assess the Efficacy of Project X and Project Y

The author evaluated the intervention approaches of Project X and Project Y by using a variety of instruments, such as the Pupil Record Sheet, the official school register, the FIAC, and the interaction chart. This methodology was developed to assess: (i) the possible effects of intervention on the Subject groups' behaviour; (ii) the level of interaction between the various sub-units including the home, mainstream school and the projects.

The Combined Procedure the FIAC and the Pupil Record Sheet

Here the author developed a method of classroom observation by using a combined schedule which involves the FIAC and the Pupil Record Sheet (see Chapter 9a for details). This combined method was established in order to examine target pupil classroom activities (via the Pupil Record Sheet) and teaching styles (via the FIAC). The target pupil activities may include distraction from work or interaction with other pupils. The teaching styles include two main approaches:

- (a) 'Indirect' teaching where the teacher maximised the freedom of the students to respond, such as accepting their feelings, especially negative ones, without punishing the children (Amidon & Flanders, 1967). Such feelings may include pupils dislike of a teaching subject, or the pupils may state that they are angry with somebody. If the teachers indicate that they

understand how the children feel and that they have the right to these feelings then such approach is considered to be 'indirect' (Amidon & Flanders, 1967). Other aspects of 'indirect' teaching include praise and encouragement; teacher acceptance of pupils' ideas by saying statements such as, "Well, that's any interesting point, I see what you mean"; and asking questions that will give the students the freedom to express their opinions or knowledge of a topic such as, "What is your opinion of the task?"

- (b) 'Direct' teaching style where the teachers tend to minimise the freedoms of the students to respond (Amidon & Flanders, 1967). Such restrictions of pupils responses may include lecturing or giving directions where the teacher tends to carry out most of the talking while the pupils are expected to listen. Teacher criticism is also considered to be part of 'direct' teaching because it is regarded as a method of restricting pupil behaviour, especially unacceptable activities (Amidon & Flanders, 1967).

Apparatus

Pupil Record Sheets, FIAC categories, two clip-boards (one for the FIAC sheets and one for the Pupil Record Sheets), stopwatch, pens, paper, stimulus tape, earpiece and a portable cassette tape recorder.

Procedure for School X

The Subject pupils were observed over three phases: attending the mainstream school (pre-intervention phase), attending the Project X programme (intervention phase) and reintegration into mainstream school (follow-up phase). Out of a total of seven Subject pupils the author observed five (i.e. 71.43 per cent) Subject pupils during the pre-intervention stage, seven (i.e. 100 per cent) Subject pupils during the intervention phase and four (i.e. 57.14 per cent) Subject pupils during the follow-up phase.

The observations of the Subject pupils occurred either in the mainstream classrooms or the Project X classroom. The author observed mainly English and mathematics lessons in both the mainstream school and Project X classes so that she could compare the two sub-units during similar academic activities.

Hypotheses

The main hypotheses tested by the observation schedule include:

1. The Subject pupils will display more co-operative behaviour during both the intervention and follow-up stages than during the pre-intervention stage.
2. The Subject pupils will receive significantly more individual attention during the intervention stage than during both the pre-intervention and follow-up stages.
3. The Subject pupils will exhibit significantly fewer incidents of disruption, distraction and horseplaying during both the intervention and follow-up phases than during the pre-intervention phase.
4. The Subject pupils will receive significantly more rewards (e.g. praise) during the intervention phase than during both the pre-intervention and follow-up phases.
5. The Subject pupils will show a greater number of instances of interactions with other classmates during the intervention phase than during both the pre-intervention and follow-up phases.

The main hypotheses tested by the FIAC instrument includes:

1. The Project X teacher will allow her pupils a greater degree of freedom of expression (i.e. indirect teaching) than the mainstream school teachers.

2. Mainstream school teachers will exhibit more control on their pupils' expressions of feelings (i.e. direct teaching) than the Project X teacher.
3. The Project X teacher will give more verbal rewards (i.e. praise) than the mainstream school teachers.
4. The Project X teacher is more likely to accept pupils' feelings (e.g. anger) than the mainstream school teachers.

Method

Each observation session lasted for one hour and ten minutes, and was divided into three 'blocks', that is the 'beginning', the 'middle' and 'end' blocks as suggested by Jasman (1980). Each block lasted for 20 minutes, with 9.5 minutes for the FIAC, 9.5 minutes for the Pupil Record Sheet, and one minute leeway to allow the author some time to reorientate from one schedule to another or from one block to another. The author began each observation session with the FIAC because her experience, as both a teacher and a classroom observer, suggests that teachers tend to show the greatest number of instances of interactions with their pupils during the beginning of classes as they have to give lectures and instructions to their classes. Therefore, for each observation session the author observed the teacher for a total of 28.5 minutes and the Subject pupil also for a total of 28.5 minutes. These timing schedules comply with the literature which suggest that most classroom investigators tend to observe a teacher for thirty minutes or less per lesson (Rosenshine, 1970) and they also comply with Jasman's (1980) recommendations that a target pupil should be observed for at least 7.5 minutes per lesson with the Pupil Record Sheet.

Before conducting the observations the Subject pupils were discretely pointed out to the author by a senior teacher in order to avoid the Subject pupils and their teachers becoming too aware of her interests which may otherwise affect the classroom interactions during the

observations. During each observation session the author would sit at the back of the classroom in order to gain a 'global' view of the class and to also avoid distracting the pupils. During the first five minutes of the lesson she would set up her apparatus and attempt to gain a 'feel' of the classroom atmosphere which may help her further to appreciate the interactive processes of the lesson being observed. During the first 'block' (i.e. the beginning) the author observed the teacher's behaviour via the FIAC for a duration of 9.5 minutes. This is followed by a half a minute leeway to orientate to the Pupil Record Sheet which was used to observe the Subject pupil's behaviour also for 9.5 minutes. Then, in turn, this is followed by a half a minute leeway to allow the author to orientate to the next block. The author followed this routine for both the second (i.e. middle) and third (i.e. end) blocks. The last 5.5 minutes of the lesson were used to note the teaching subject, the date, time, and the number of teachers, pupils and volunteers present in the classroom. Sometime later, usually during the same day, the author would make notes of any interesting aspects of the lessons and also aspects of her methodology.

Comments on the Methodology

The author found that once she had become familiar with the combined technique it was possible to switch from one schedule to the other. She also found that it was best to observe no more than three target lessons per day in order to avoid fatigue which might otherwise adversely affect the consistency of the classroom observation data.

Procedure for School Y

The observation procedure for the School Y sample lasted for two academic years. The first year of intervention occurred when the sample was 14 years of age (i.e. 4th year of secondary schooling), and the second year occurred when the sample was 15 years of age (i.e. 5th year of secondary schooling). The author commenced her observation procedure during the early stages of the two-year intervention programme. Therefore, there are no pre-intervention observations of the School Y sample via the

combined technique of the Pupil Record Sheet and the FIAC. This lack of pre-intervention observation data is due to the fact that the author was first introduced to School Y in October 1985 when the sample had already completed their pre-intervention schooling phase. During the first year of the intervention programme the author observed 13 (i.e. 81.25 per cent) Subject adolescents only. The total number of observations made during this first stage of intervention is 47 sessions, that is an average of 3.62 observations per Subject adolescents. Unfortunately, the author was unable to observe the Control A and Control B adolescents during the first year of intervention mainly due to delay caused the time taken by the Panel Y members in selecting and organising the two control groups.

During the second year of intervention the author observed 8 (i.e. 50.00 per cent) Subject adolescents, 6 (i.e. 37.50 per cent) Control A adolescents and 16 (i.e. 100 per cent) Control B adolescents.

All the observation sessions for the Subject adolescents were carried out in the Project Y classroom and all of the observations for both the Control A and Control B adolescents were conducted during mainstream school classes. The author observed all three groups mainly in English and mathematics lessons to enable her to make comparisons between the Project X and mainstream school classes during similar academic activities.

Hypotheses

The main hypotheses tested by the Pupil Record Sheet include:

- 1a. The Subject adolescents will display more co-operative behaviour during the second year of intervention than during the first year.
- 1b. Comparisons made during the second year of intervention will indicate that both the Subject and Control B adolescents will tend to display more co-operative

behaviour than the Control A adolescents.

- 2a. The Subject adolescents will receive significantly more individual attention during the first year of intervention than during the second year.
- 2b. Comparisons during the second year of intervention will indicate that the Subject adolescents will receive significantly more individual attention than both the Control A and Control B adolescents.
- 3a. The Subject adolescents will exhibit significantly more incidents of disruption, distraction and horseplaying during the first year of intervention than during the second year.
- 3b. Comparisons during the second year of intervention will show that both the Subject and Control B adolescents will exhibit significantly less incidents of disruption, distraction and horseplay than the Control A adolescents.
- 4a. The Subject adolescents will receive significantly more rewards (e.g. Project Y teacher's praise) during the second year of intervention than during the first year.
- 4b. Comparisons during the second year of intervention will indicate that the Subject adolescents receive significantly more rewards (e.g. praise) than both the Control A and Control B adolescents.
- 5a. The Subject adolescents will interact a greater number of times with their classmates during the second year of intervention than during the first year.
- 5b. Comparisons during the second year of intervention will show that the Subject adolescents will interact a greater number of times with their classmates than will both the Control A and Control B adolescents with their classmates.

The main hypotheses tested by the FIAC instrument include:

- 1a. The Project teacher will allow her pupils a greater degree of freedom of expression (i.e. indirect teaching) during the second year of intervention than during the first year.
- 1b. The Project teacher will tend to exhibit significantly more indirect teaching styles than the mainstream teachers.
- 2a. The Project teacher will tend to exhibit more control on her pupils' expressions of feelings (i.e. direct teaching) during the first year of intervention than during the second year.
- 2b. Comparisons during the second year of intervention will indicate that the mainstream teachers will tend to exhibit significantly more direct teaching styles than the Project teacher.
- 3a. The Project teacher will exhibit more verbal rewards (e.g. praise) during the second year of intervention than during the first year.
- 3b. Comparisons during the second year of intervention will show that the Project teacher will tend to exhibit more verbal rewards than the mainstream teachers.
- 4a. The Project teacher is more likely to accept pupils' feelings (e.g. anger) during the second year of intervention than during the first year.
- 4b. Comparisons during the second year of intervention will show that the Project teacher is more likely to accept pupils' feelings than the mainstream teachers.

Method

Each observation lasted for one hour and was divided into three blocks, that is the 'beginning', the 'middle' and the 'end' blocks. Each block lasted for 16 minutes, with 7.5 minutes for the FIAC, 7.5 minutes for the Pupil Record Sheet and one minute leeway to allow the author some time to orientate from one schedule to another. The author began each observation session with the FIAC because most teacher interactions tend to occur during the initial stages of the lesson. For each session the author observed the teacher for a total of 22.5 minutes and observed the target pupil also for a total of 22.5 minutes. This time schedule complies with the literature on classroom observations (Jasman, 1980; Rosenshine, 1970).

Before conducting her observations the Subject, Control A and Control B adolescents were discretely pointed out to the author by senior teachers in order to avoid the classes becoming aware of the author's interests which might otherwise affect the classroom interactions during the observations. The author followed a similar routine to School X by spending the first five minutes in preparing her apparatus and gaining a 'feel' of the classroom atmosphere. The last seven minutes of the observation sessions were spent making notes about the teaching subject, and noting the number of pupils, teachers and volunteers present in the classroom during observation.

Difficulties Experienced During the Observation Sessions of the School X and School Y Population

1. Because most of the population are persistent absentees, by definition many of them tend to be absent from lessons. Naturally, this made it very difficult for the author to collect classroom data on such absentees, and this was particularly true for the School Y sample in second year of intervention (i.e. 5th year of secondary schooling).

2. The author was not always able to observe the population during English and mathematics lessons because the subject teachers refused to allow her into their classes; or because the teacher was a probationer and panels felt that it would be unfair to observe an inexperienced teacher who may be experiencing a relatively higher level of anxiety than the more experienced teachers; or because such subjects were being taught by a supply teacher who may be unfamiliar with both the school and the pupils. Therefore, in such cases the author observed similar subjects, such as religious education which is similar to English in that the pupils are required to read literature and write essays, or physics which is similar to mathematics in that pupils are required to make numerical calculations.
3. During the second year of the Project Y intervention, the Project teacher was absent from school for three months because of illness. This greatly limited the author's observations of the Project Y pupils because she was unable to observe the Project Y activities with another teacher as this may have jeopardise the consistency of her data.
4. The author had to learn to cope with the different timing observation sessions for School X and School Y. Fortunately, this task did not prove to be too difficult because she never conducted observations of the two schools within the same day. That way she was able to negate possible confusion in her 'block' timing schedules. However, on two occasions the author had to discard classroom observation data because of wrong block timing schedules due to human error. Therefore, she was able to avoid any possible errors due to the wrong counting of instances of behaviour and, thus, further secure the consistency of her data.

Assessment of Non-School Attendance

In both cases of School X and School Y, those pupils who are absent from school without authority for more than

30 per cent of schooling in any one particular term are assessed by the panels as serious persistent absentees. The pupils' attendance is calculated via the figures from the official school register. All pupils' medical records are examined with the assistance of the school matrons and the form tutors in order to check that any poor school attendance patterns among the pupils are due to 'truancy' rather than due to good reasons (e.g. illness or holidays abroad) as stated by the 1944 Education Act. Once it is established that pupils' persistent absences are not due to good reasons, then they are referred by the panels to the to the special educational programmes, or, in the case of School Y, assigned to Control Group A for comparative studies.

School Attendance Patterns as a Possible Dependent Variable

The author monitored the population's school attendance patterns because she considered such patterns as possible indicators of any behavioural changes which might occur during intervention.

School X

The author monitored the school attendance patterns for seven (i.e. 100 per cent) Subject pupils during the pre-intervention and intervention phases, and monitored six (i.e. 85.71 per cent) Subject pupils during the follow-up phase. The author was unable to record the attendance patterns for one (i.e. 14.29 per cent) Subject pupil because he left School X and moved to another city at the end of the intervention phase. The main hypotheses for the School X Subject pupils is:

1. They will show a significantly higher school attendance rate during the intervention phase than during the pre-intervention phase.
2. Their school attendance rate during the follow-up phase will not be significantly different from their school attendance rate during the intervention phase.

3. Their school attendance rate will be significantly higher during the follow-up phase than during the pre-intervention phase.

School Y

The author monitored the School Y population's attendance patterns during the pre-intervention phase (i.e. 3rd year of secondary schooling), the first year of intervention (i.e. 4th year of secondary schooling) and during the second year of intervention (i.e. 5th year of secondary schooling). During the pre-intervention stage the author collected school attendance data for 15 (i.e. 93.75 per cent) Subject adolescents, 16 (i.e. 100 per cent) Control A adolescents, and 16 (i.e. 100 per cent) Control B adolescents. The author was unable to collect any school attendance data for one (i.e. 6.25 per cent) Subject adolescent because this pupil was attending another school during the pre-intervention stage, but was transferred to School Y at the beginning of her 4th year because of poor attendance at her previous school as indicated by her school records.

During the first year of intervention the author collected school attendance data for 16 (i.e. 100 per cent) Subject adolescents, 16 (i.e. 100 per cent) Control A adolescents and 16 (i.e. 100 per cent) Control B adolescents. During the second year of intervention school attendance data were collected for 14 (i.e. 87.50 per cent) Subject adolescents, 16 (i.e. 100 per cent) Control A adolescents, and 16 (i.e. 100 per cent) Control B adolescents. The author was unable to collect school attendance data for two (i.e. 12.50 per cent) Subject adolescents because they were transferred to other schools towards the end of the first year of the intervention phase. The author did not collect any school attendance data for the follow-up phase because the intervention phase continued until the end of the Subject adolescents' compulsory schooling (i.e. at aged 16 years). However, the follow-up stage was assessed via other measurements, such as success in attaining jobs or college placements. The main hypotheses

in relation to school attendance for the School Y population include:

1. The Subject adolescents will show a significant higher rate of school attendance during both the 1st and 2nd years of intervention than during the pre-intervention phase. The Control A adolescents will not show any significant changes in the school attendance patterns during the pre-intervention phase, the 1st year of intervention and during the 2nd year of intervention. The Control B adolescents will not show any significant changes in the school attendance patterns during the pre-intervention phase, the 1st year of intervention and during the 2nd year of intervention.
2. The Subject and Control A adolescents will show similar school attendance patterns during the pre-intervention phase. However, the Control B adolescents will show significantly higher rates of school attendance than the other two groups during the pre-intervention stage.
3. The Subject adolescents will show a significantly higher school attendance rate than the Control A adolescents during the 1st year of intervention. The Subject adolescents will not differ significantly from the Control B adolescents in school attendance patterns during the 1st year of intervention. The Control B adolescents will show a significantly higher rate of school attendance than the Control A adolescents during the 1st year of intervention.
4. The Subject adolescents will show a significantly higher school attendance rate than the Control A adolescents during the 2nd year of intervention. The Subject adolescents will not differ significantly from the Control B adolescents in school attendance patterns during the 2nd year of intervention. The Control B adolescents will show a significantly higher rate of school attendance than the Control A adolescents during the 2nd year of intervention.

Difficulties Experienced with the School Registers

1. Between September and December, 1985, both School X and School Y experienced the teachers' industrial strikes. Therefore, during periods of strike action, when the pupils could not attend school, all students were marked as present. This means that during that particular period the school register may not be accurate in its record of school attendance during the teachers' strike.
2. The register does not indicate 'hidden' truancy where pupils are present school during registration to gain an attendance mark and then truant from classes. This may adversely affect the school attendance data because they may not always be accurately reflecting the pupils' attendance patterns.
3. Sometimes the non-school attendance patterns of the persistent absentee pupils are due to illness and on rare occasions the school absences of good attenders are due to unauthorization. However, details of such data are rarely indicated by the register unless the form teacher has placed in the register a note from the parent explaining the pupil's absence. Other to the notes the school registers provide limited details on the reasons for pupils' non-school attendance patterns.

The Interaction Chart

The author devised a wall chart (see Chapter 9a for details) which contains a list of the various types of possible visitors (e.g. parents, EWO or Head of Year) to Project X and Project Y. The primary purpose of this interaction chart is to assess the frequency of visits made by members of the home, mainstream school, or from the community. The author placed several of these charts on the walls of the two projects and whenever visitors attended the projects the charts were plotted by the project teacher with the assistance of her pupils. In the case of School X, the chart was plotted between October 1986 and June 1987. In the

case of School Y, the chart was plotted between January and June 1986, and between September and December 1986.

Difficulties Experienced with the Interaction Chart

1. The Project teacher and the Subject pupils sometimes failed to remember to plot the interaction charts whenever they received a visitor.
2. The charts reveal a very limited variety of data, for example it records the number of visits but can not indicate the quality of such visits, nor can it reveal their affects on the interactive processes of the projects.

Target Behaviour

The author recorded the Subject Groups' target behaviours as a method of assessing the Groups' progress during intervention. Classroom target behaviours, such as disruption or fighting, were monitored as part of the Pupil Record Sheet (see Chapter 9a for details). For instance, if a pupil's target behaviour is 'horseplaying' then the author would code both the 'horseplaying' category on the Pupil Record Sheet and the 'target behaviour' category at the end of the Sheet every 25-second intervals. By incorporating the target behaviour category into the Pupil Record Sheet, the author was able to reduce the cumbersomeness of having separate sheets, with one for the Pupil Record and one for the target behaviours. This also reduced confusion and the number of possible errors which otherwise might have been experienced by the author if she had used separate sheets. The frequency of other target behaviours, such as glue-sniffing or stealing, were monitored and recorded by the school medical staff or the Head of Year. The author collected these data from their records and reports.

The main hypotheses tested by the monitoring of the target behaviours include:

1. Project X pupils will show a greater reduction in the

frequency of target behaviours during the intervention and follow-up phases than during the pre-intervention phase.

2. Project Y pupils will display a greater frequency of target behaviours during the first year of intervention than during the second year.

Procedure for School X

The author monitored the target behaviours for the School X sample during pre-intervention, intervention and the follow-up stages. The author recorded the target behaviours for six (i.e. 85.71 per cent) Subject pupils during the pre-intervention phase, for six (i.e. 85.71 per cent) Subject pupils during the intervention phase and for six (i.e. 85.71 per cent) Subject pupils during the follow-up phase. The author was unable to monitor constantly the target behaviours for the whole sample during the three phases mainly because their very poor attendance rates made it difficult to keep a regular count of the frequencies of their target behaviours.

Procedure for School Y

The author monitored the Subject adolescents' target behaviours mainly between January and June 1986, and for September 1986 and for January 1987. The author recorded the target behaviours for 9 (i.e. 56.25 per cent) Subject adolescents for the first year of intervention, and for two months during the second year. No target behaviours were observed for the remaining 7 (i.e. 43.75 per cent) Subject adolescents mainly because the members of Panel Y believed that these pupils tended not to exhibit any serious behaviour disorders apart from persistent absenteeism and learning difficulties. The author did not observe any target behaviours for the Control A adolescents mainly because their very poor attendance made the collection of such data rather difficult. Nor did she observe any target behaviours for the Control B adolescents mainly because the Panel believed that this group tended not to exhibit any serious behaviour disorders.

Difficulties Experienced with the Monitoring of the Target Behaviours

The author experienced particular difficulties in gaining accurate data on the frequency of target behaviours, such as glue-sniffing. For instance, the Subject adolescent's glue-sniffing habit was assessed by the appearance of new sores around the mouth. However, occasionally it was difficult to assess the frequency of the pupil's solvent abuse by this method because such injuries were sometimes caused by fights with other male juveniles or accidents due to falling.

Summary

the author developed a methodological procedure which attempts to reflect both qualitative and quantitative data in order to widen her appreciation of the problems associated with non-school attendance and to also help her gain some insight into the possible effects that intervention may have on the Subject Groups' behaviours.

In the following chapter the author will present analyses of the data which may give some indications of any significant trends (if any) in the behaviour patterns of the teachers, the parents and the population studied during the course of this researcher project. These analyses may then enable the author to draw some heuristic implications for the future analytical concepts of non-school attendance and its associated problem behaviours.