

THE UNIVERSITY OF HULL

A Question of Balance: Accountability and Autonomy
in Twenty-First-Century English State Schools

Being a Thesis Submitted for the Degree of
Doctor of Education
in the University of Hull

by

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January 2015

ABSTRACT

Accountability has always been important in taxpayer-funded English state schools. This accountability has become more complex over the past 30 years as policymakers have introduced market forces into public education.

The Education Reform Act, (legislation.gov.uk, 1988) and subsequent legislation changed schools from being 'administrative units of their LEA' (Department for Education [DfE], 1992: 7) into autonomous, self-managing institutions. In the former, head teachers were managers ensuring compliance with the implementation of national or local policy directives whilst the leaders of autonomous schools are able to make their own decisions about an increasing range of management functions, including school self-improvement (DfE, 2010a:73).

However, despite these advances, school leaders were not able to make their own decisions about how their school was to be held accountable. The imposition of a rigorous national inspection framework (Education [Schools] Act, 1992) meant that schools were held accountable for the standards required by government. This school and system-focused approach relied on intervention to bring about the rapid improvement needed in underperforming schools. This thesis examines the fitness for purpose of this regime for successful schools that have earned their autonomy.

This research uses a case study of one successful secondary school's attempt to introduce the balanced scorecard (BSC), which is an alternative accountability methodology not commonly used in schools, although, it is popular in the business world. The research identifies that governors with experience of using the balanced scorecard(BSC) in their places of work successfully modified it for use in a school setting. The findings also indicate that training in a wider range of accountability approaches, including those from outside education, would provide school leaders with a wider range of accountability tools from which to select the one best suited to their institution.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This research could not have been carried out without the support of the case study school and I am indebted to the headteacher and chair of governors for agreeing that their school could participate. As well as discussing the documentary evidence, they facilitated arrangements for the semi-structured interviews with governors and staff. As these individual in-depth interviews provided unique, first-hand insights into the school's accountability processes, I am grateful to participants for the time spent preparing for and taking part in the interviews.

I should also like to thank professional colleagues who discussed this research with me. The development of ideas through conversations with head teachers and other senior leaders, with first-hand experience of addressing the challenges of leading the changes that allowed their schools to meet twenty-first-century expectations was valued. Their thoughtful and purposeful guidance, together with that of my academic supervisor, Dr. David Plowright, added depth to the ideas reported in this account of the research.

PERMISSIONS

I am very grateful to Professor Robert Kaplan who gave permission for the use of Figure 7.3 from Kaplan, Robert S. (2010) 'Conceptual Foundations of the Balanced Scorecard' in *Harvard Business School Working Paper 10-074. Boston, Massachusetts: Harvard Business School Press* This support was greatly appreciated.

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Chapter 1

Introduction

This thesis is about the relationship between autonomy and accountability in education. These two complex concepts came together in the latter decades of the twentieth century. The term ‘accountability’ is used to describe a relationship in which one party, the accountee, has actions or activities assigned to them and is obliged to give an account of how well those activities have been carried out (Brundrett and Rhodes, 2011). In education, accountability expectations may require individual schools to provide an account of their performance that identifies how this compares with national expectations. Autonomy refers to innovations that gave school leaders decision-making powers over an increasing range of management functions and allowed schools to become self-governing. School leaders are expected to provide an account of the ways in which they have used these freedoms to help them improve their institutions.

Since Victorian times, schools in the English state system have always been held accountable for ensuring that taxpayers receive value for money for this publically funded service (Department for Education (DfE), 2010a: 11; DfE, 2010a: 66). However, the granting of a substantial level of autonomy to schools is a more recent phenomenon, initiated by the 1988 Education Reform Act (ERA) (legislation.gov.uk, 1988) and developed by subsequent legislation including the current Conservative/Liberal Democrat Coalition Government’s 2011 Education Act (legislation.gov.uk, 2011).

At times, however, these concepts and associated activities often seem to be in conflict with one another. The white paper ‘Choice and Diversity’ (DfE, 1992) identified accountability as the corollary of autonomy. Brundrett and Rhodes (2011: 96) compared these elements to different sides of the same coin. Sahlberg (2010: 10) argued that the relationship was a two-way process, which he referred to as ‘accountability dynamics’. He argued that where more accountability was required, less autonomy remained and any reduction of accountability was dependent on a corresponding increase in autonomy. Gilbert (2012:6) articulated that the use of a highly developed centralised accountability

framework, such as the current national accountability framework, places constraints on school autonomy.

However, leaders of English state schools currently face a significant challenge in resolving the twenty-first-century expectation that their schools should be more autonomous, yet at the same time more accountable (DfE, 2010a). How are they to manage this process since it cannot be ignored? For example a recent investigation into the link between school autonomy and student performance stressed the importance of the relationship between the two concepts, stating that:-

‘autonomy and accountability go together; greater autonomy in decisions relating to curricula, assessments and resource allocation tend to be associated with better student performance, particularly when schools operate within a culture of accountability. (OECD, 2011: 4).

Therefore, managing the growing opportunities and challenges of autonomy alongside the demands of increased accountability will be an important task for school leaders. However, this thesis argues that an imbalance exists between accountability and autonomy in schools, which is a consequence of the implementation of the externally imposed national inspection regime. Since this is not conducive to supporting self-improvement in an autonomous twenty-first century school, one important aim for school leaders is to manage the tension between these seemingly polarised requirements. The thesis further argues that this will require school leaders to develop their understanding of the concept of accountability and its influence on school self-improvement. This will enable school leaders to develop the confidence to use alternative accountability processes that are better suited to leading and managing a successful school that has earned its autonomy.

The purpose of this thesis, therefore, is to make a contribution to the understanding of the ways in which the rebalancing of accountability and autonomy might be achieved. It looks at the concept of accountability in detail and summarises the development of autonomy in an educational context. The thesis seeks to clarify the effects of the interrelationships between these two complex concepts on schools.

The emphasis and dependence on empirical work is less than might be expected in an education studies thesis. This relatively reduced empirical element draws on a single case study of one school's use of the balanced scorecard (BSC). It aims to do this by asking the main research question:

1. *How can increasingly autonomous schools resolve the tension of becoming more accountable?*

The sub-questions are as follows:

2. *What are the main benefits and challenges of the current national accountability system in education?*
3. *To what extent has the use of the balanced scorecard (BSC) as an alternative approach in a case study school, contributed to an accountability that is fit for purpose in a successful autonomous school?*

My interest in the research comes from experience as a school improvement adviser, carrying out a monitoring, supporting, challenging and intervention role in three contrasting English education authorities. Recent roles have included working as a School Improvement Partner (SIP) and a National Challenge Adviser (NCA) in secondary schools in the local authority where the research was carried out. The National Challenge was a major initiative that allocated school improvement experts to schools between 2003 and 2006. NCAs made regular visits to the underperforming schools to monitor progress with their recommendations. The range of school improvement activities was extended by working as a registered inspector for the Office for standards in Education (Ofsted) from the introduction of the new inspection regime in 1993. Leading teams inspecting secondary-phase schools for 12 years provided opportunities to gain a different perspective of school accountability.

First-hand experience of the radical changes that have impacted on state education over the past 30 years, therefore, has been brought to bear on the research reported in this

thesis. Working alongside head teachers and senior leaders in many different schools, including some primary and special schools provided significant insight into leadership and accountability in outstanding and good schools as well as underperforming schools and those requiring improvement (formerly satisfactory).

This wide ranging experience led me to an increasing awareness of the impact that externally imposed inspection had had on more successful schools. It raised concerns about the appropriateness of the one-size-fits-all regime and the lack of alternative accountability approaches. These professional concerns were an important stimulus for the identification of the research reported in this study of twenty-first-century school accountability and autonomy.

Structure of the thesis

The thesis employs a conventional structure with an examination of the concept of accountability in Chapter 2, providing the contextual understanding for the thesis.

Chapter 3 examines some of the ideas that policy makers had to address when planning to meet twenty-first-century expectations of a learner-centred, world-class, public education service.

Chapter 4 sets the policy context by outlining the origins and the development of autonomy in schools together with the development of the current school accountability regime in the English state system.

Discussion of the benefits and challenges of the current national accountability framework in Chapter 5 is used to identify the fitness for purpose of current national accountability.

An account of the investigation into one school's use of the BSC is given in Chapter 6. Details are provided of the empirical research in the case study and the research methodology is justified and critiqued.

Chapter 7 provides information about the BSC and explains how the scorecard was successfully modified for use in a school setting.

The main findings of the empirical research are discussed in Chapters 8 and 9 which identify how the BSC provides school leaders with a means of meeting the requirements of continually self-improving organisations.

Finally Chapter 10 reflects on the process of undertaking the research. It identifies strengths and weaknesses and includes suggestions for further work.

Chapter 2

Understanding the meaning and purpose of accountability

This chapter uses information from the review of accountability literature to examine the concept of accountability and employs a commonly used mechanism to improve understanding of different forms of accountability that occupy different positions on the accountability spectrum.

What is meant by accountability?

Providing a simple, straightforward explanation of accountability is not easy, especially as the concept has been identified as ‘complex and difficult’ (Day and Klein, 1987; Halstead, 1994: 146; Simkins, 2008: 218), ‘elusive’ (Bovens, 2001: 5), ‘multifaceted’ (Bush, 1994: 309), and ‘ever expanding’ (Mulgan, 2000).

The language of accountability

The review of accountability literature also identified some ambiguity about the language of accountability. For example Bovens (2001) and Mulgan (2008) argued that some concepts, such as accountability and responsibility, are sometimes used interchangeably, even though they occupy different positions on the accountability spectrum. Scott (1989) considered responsibility to be a more expansive concept that subsumes accountability. Heim (1995) also maintained that accountability embraces responsibility Hargreaves and Shirley (1999), however, used a reciprocal approach identifying accountability as ‘the remainder left when responsibility has been subtracted (Hargreaves and Shirley 1999:102). This varied use of the terminology has resulted in some lack of clarity about exactly what the term ‘accountability’ means. Originally, accountability referred specifically to the requirement for ‘holding someone to account’ (Sockett, 1980: 10), which involved reporting to a superior. In this thesis, accountability refers to the requirement to explain or justify one’s actions or behaviour when fulfilling an assigned task. This allows the giving of the account to include some form of explanation of what happened and why this occurred (Ranson, 2003: 461).

The constituents of accountability relationships

Identifying ‘who’ holds ‘whom’ accountable ‘for what’ is often used as a means of developing a better understanding of different elements of accountability (Farrell and Law, 1997; Leithwood et.al. 1999; Behn, 2004; Webb, 2005; Ebraihim, 2010). Table 2.1 summarises my understanding of how each question clarifies a different aspect of the accountability relationship.

Table 2.1 Distinguishing between the different constituents of accountability relationships

Accountability question	Constituent
<i>Who is accountable to whom?</i> ’- identifies both the individual or group being held to account and the party holding them to account.	The forum of accountability
<i>For what?</i> ’-clarifies the object of accountability which helps determine its purpose	The purpose of accountability
<i>How?</i> ’- this question develops understanding of the processes involved in the accountability relationship.	The mechanism of accountability
<i>What are the consequences?</i> ’	The impact of accountability

Models of accountability

Farrell and Law (1997) argued that the accountability questions that identify who are accountable to whom and for what aspect of performance were instrumental in the formulation of models of accountability. Kogan (1886), Halstead (1994), Scott (1994) and Ranson (2003) all proposed models of educational accountability as a means of clarifying understanding of the concept. Kogan (1986) proposed one of the earliest models of educational accountability. The three components of his model are summarised in Table 2.2

Table 2.2 Kogan’s models of educational accountability

Public / State Control	Professional Accountability	Consumerist Control
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Based on Kogan (1986)

- Public or state control referred to a hierarchical, managerial relationship (Bush, 1994) such as that of an assistant teacher having a contractual arrangement with more senior staff, including the headteacher.

- Professional accountability was dependent on peer relationships, allowing teachers and professional administrators’ a degree of personal autonomy that provided them with opportunities to make decisions about how best to address the assigned task.
- Although Kogan was writing before ERA (legislation.gov.uk, 1988) was in the public domain he foresaw and acknowledged the shift towards a more consumer-orientated, market-led public education service. Kogan’s model therefore included a consumerist control dimension in which he envisaged both accountability through a market mechanism (free market consumerist control) as well as accountability through non-dependent partnerships between key stakeholders (Partnership Consumerist model).

Halstead (1994) extended Kogan’s models by proposing six models of educational accountability. He made an initial distinction between contractual and responsive accountability, allocating his other models of consumers, employers and professionals within each of these overarching categories, as shown in table 2.3.

Table 2.3 Halsted’s categorisation of models of educational accountability

	Accountability	
	Contractual	Responsive
Consumers	Consumerist model	Partnership model
Employers	Central control model	Chain of responsibility model
Professionals	Self-accounting model	Professional model

Based on Halstead 1994

Further development of these models (Scott, 1989) resulted in a categorisation of five models as shown in table 2.4.

Table 2.4 Scott's model of educational accountability

Central control model
The evaluative state model
Quasi market model
Professional expert model
Partnership model

Based on Scott, 1999

Different modes of accountability

Contractual and responsive accountability (Halstead, 1994) are different dimensions of accountability that have particular relevance for this thesis. Halsted articulated that whilst contractual accountability was primarily concerned with educational outcomes, particularly results, responsive accountability placed more emphasis on educational processes and decision making by participants.

As these two models have particular relevance for this thesis they are discussed in more detail in order that the key differences between them can be established and their impact on schools understood.

Contractual accountability

In this type of accountability there is a hierarchical relationship between the school as an institution and external representatives of local and national governments that have responsibility for maintaining standards in the schools within their jurisdiction. As the accountee is subordinate to the party to whom accountability is due, this top down arrangement allows the superior party to exert control. The accountee's personal autonomy is reduced by prescription and regulation, and the school is held accountable for maintaining the standards set by the national government. Contractual accountability, therefore, emphasises standards of performance, particularly as judged by results in national tests and examinations.

The accountee's contract of employment places them under an obligation to respond to the expectations of the authoritative party. Being accountable, therefore, is a form of liability, requiring acquiescence to ensure compliance (Behn, 2005). In addition, the accountee has an obligation to provide information about the way in which any assigned task has been accomplished. The requirement for the giving of an account includes the right to determine how well accountees met the expectations of the party to whom accountability is owed. This usually involves some form of reporting by the accountee of the actions taken. In addition, the superior party can also initiate the gathering of evidence to inform judgements about performance.

Monitoring throughout the assigned activity provides information about how well or poorly the task was carried out as well as the outcomes achieved. The evidence gathered from such activity informs judgements about the accountee's effectiveness in meeting the expectations, allowing underperformance to be exposed or successful performance to be acknowledged and rewarded.

Caiden (citing Behn, 2005) argues that in instances where performance fails to meet expectations the accountee's liability to respond to the directions of the superior partner meant that there was potential for punishment. According to Mulgan (2000), the accountee, as the subordinate individual, accepts the right of the authoritative party to impose sanctions as a form of punishment where shortcomings are identified. Kogan(1986) emphasised the role of sanctions arguing that this category of accountability was:

a condition in which the individual role holders are liable to review and the application of sanctions if their actions fail to satisfy those with whom they are in the accountability relationship.
(Kogan, 1986: 25)

Although contractual accountability has become associated with sanctions the justification for this is not entirely clear. There is no apparent reason why the notion of incentives and rewards should not be linked with the identification of successful accomplishment of the assigned requirements. However, the negative connotations predominate, with an emphasis on failure and the use of sanctions as a form of punishment. Kogan's emphasis on sanctions has already been noted above.

Responsive accountability

Halstead (1994: 149) identifies that responsive accountability increases the emphasis on educational processes. Responsive accountability will therefore predominantly be a more learner centred process, with a focus on improving classroom practice. Tailoring teaching and learning to address individual learner needs requires professionals; including subject specialists and staff with expertise in numeracy, literacy and specific learning difficulties to work together to diagnose an individual learner's specific learning difficulties. Once a clear diagnosis has been made the professionals can also share their expertise to identify and provide a solution that will enable the learner to overcome the barriers to learning and make better progress in their learning. In this solution-focused approach to the removal of barriers to learning the learning is dependent on accountees having a greater degree of personal autonomy in order that they can make their own decisions about how they will overcome the diagnosed learning difficulty. Edwards (1991) argued that this more flexible arrangement provides opportunities for releasing human potential. Giving participants the right to determine how they would accomplish an assigned activity requires the accountee to take responsibility not just for the conduct of the activity but also for the outcome Kogan (1986) argued that requiring the accountee to make a commitment to achieving the best possible outcome when deciding on the most appropriate course of action introduces a moral dimension because it requires the accountee to make a commitment to achieving the best possible outcome. He made a clear distinction between accountability, which he regarded as a legal or contractual obligation to do things right, and finding better ways of accomplishing the assigned activities by doing the right thing. Kogan argued that this internal obligation to an individual's professional ethics or values added a moral dimension to the accountee's liability by expecting them to behave in a rational, reliable and trustworthy manner.

The involvement of peers, including collaborating with a range of partners or professional colleagues, means that approximate equals are holding one another to account. Also as responsive accountability requires collaboration and the sharing of expertise amongst participants it may not always be possible to identify each individual's contribution to the overall outcome. Consequently as punishment is not conducive to the identification and dissemination of successful practice sanctions are no longer used in the first instance when addressing non-compliance. Responsive accountability develops capacity and

increases the potential for successful completion of future tasks, particularly through bringing about improvements in the educational processes. The consequences of this mode of accountability are more positive, usually involving the identification and provision of appropriate guidance for the accountee (NFER, 2009: 3). This may involve providing training or the modelling of good practice, as well as making support available through coaching or mentoring. This means that failure to meet expectations does not always result directly in the attribution of blame, as penalties for non-compliance are only introduced following several unsuccessful attempts to rectify shortcomings. Using sanctions as a last resort reduces the negative consequences of the more judgemental approach of contractual accountability.

Accountability and trust

Bovens (2005) considered trust to be central to accountability relationships. Contractual accountability is characterised by low levels of trust as the hierarchical arrangement within the accountability relationship establishes a prescriptive top-down management style (Chapman, 2002) that affects accountees' behaviour by suppressing initiative and inhibiting innovation. Hopkins (2007) argued that such control of accountee activity limits their responses to 'proving that something has been achieved' (ibid: 101). It also depresses the culture of the organisation, thereby reducing levels of motivation (McGregor, 1960). Covey (2006) argued that this reduction of trust makes accountees risk-averse thereby increasing their reliance on safe approaches in order to get things right. These negative responses, together with acceptance that underperformance is likely to involve the use of sanctions to punish non-compliance, can create anxiety amongst accountees. This compulsion to avoid risk and do things right to avoid failure is a significant limitation as it reduces creativity. Consequently, any benefit is likely to be relatively superficial, as the focus on consistency in tasks and procedures mainly supports maintenance of existing practice. Wind Cowie (2009: 11) is of the opinion that:-

'working in an organisation where you are not trusted is neither rewarding nor empowering. Work is boring and prescribed. The wasted talent, the wasted ideas and contribution is immeasurable.' (Wind Cowie, 2009: 11)

Contractual accountability is often used to achieve consistency within organisations. For example, improving the consistency of the use of school policies and procedures is often an early focus of intervention and initial monitoring activity in underperforming schools that have been categorised as inadequate and placed in special measures. Table 2.5 compares the differing behavioural responses to contractual and responsive accountability

Table 2.5 Contrasting behaviours in response to contractual and responsive accountability

Contractual Accountability	Responsive Accountability
Low trust culture	High trust culture
Task and procedure orientated	Process and outcome orientated
Doing things right	Doing the right thing's
Meeting the criteria – ticking the boxes	Thinking outside the box
Compliance	Responsiveness
Focus on success or failure	Focus on improvement
Being found out	Finding things out
Uncovering	Discovering
Impact: JUDGEMENTAL	Impact: DEVELOPMENTAL

Based on Yates (2007: 9)

Intelligent accountability

The notion of '*intelligent accountability*' (O'Neill, 2002b; Sahlberg, 2010, chapter 3:20) provided the rationale for some more recent policy developments. This twenty-first-century initiative recognised the need for new approaches to be based on professional autonomy and trust (O'Neill, 2002a; 2002b; Secondary Headteachers' Association [SHA], 2003). In her 2002 Reith Lecture entitled 'A Question of Trust', O'Neill argued that current accountability practice was not only 'distorting the proper aims of professional practice (O'Neill 2002a: 3) but was also 'damaging professional pride and integrity' (ibid.: 3). She proposed 'intelligent accountability' as a means of securing greater accountability without damaging professional performance. This was dependent on restoring trust and mutual accountability between self-governing institutions and professional experts, particularly in public service organisations.

Critics of O'Neill's proposals were concerned that by providing a means of returning control to professional experts this would lead to the restoration of past practice, which had fallen into disrepute. Ranson (2003) argued that this would result in professional specialists simply passing information to parties to whom they were accountable rather than actively engaging them in the formulation and improvements of future developments.

The ideas of intelligent accountability were used in the Labour government's New Relationship with Schools programme (DfES, 2004b). An intelligent accountability framework provided the rationale for this new approach. The aim was to simplify school improvement and accountability processes by reducing the number of external interventions than had previously been the case, as well as improving information systems, including the use of data. This initiative resulted in the appointment of School Improvement Partners (SIPs), who although external to the school were expected to have a longer term partnership with school leaders. This new group of professional experts included serving and recently retired head teachers as well as DfE, national strategies and local authority personnel. Between September 2006 and July 2011, SIPs were charged with supporting head teachers, governors and school leadership teams with their identification of effective school improvement strategies as well as challenging them to improve their self-evaluation processes.

A rather perplexing development was the linking of intelligent accountability with developments in Ofsted inspections. Initially, this was associated with the introduction of school self-evaluation to the inspection procedures (Ofsted 2000a; Ofsted, 2000b; Ofsted, 2003). Subsequent developments, for example, Ofsted's consultation documentation for the 2012 revisions of the inspection framework, shifted the emphasis to inspections contributing to an intelligent accountability framework (Ofsted, 2011). However, it is difficult to discern how the disparity between Ofsted's low-trust contractual form of accountability and the contrasting expectations of intelligent accountability can be reconciled.

Summary

This examination of the concept of accountability is undertaken to develop a better understanding of the concept itself. It has identified that it is important to be clear about the exact meaning of the term ‘accountability’ when it is used in an educational context. The discussion has also shown that accountability is an evolving concept that may require further consideration to accommodate developments such as the granting of substantive autonomy to modern day English state schools.

The next chapter examines the responses policy makers needed to make when responding to the emerging ideas of the users of twenty-first-century public education when shaping policy and planning the future development of this public service.

Chapter 3

The changing landscape of educational accountability

This chapter examines some of the issues that policy makers have to address when planning the landscape of future schools. It includes a discussion of the implications of these reforms for school accountability.

Changing expectations

Creating an education system to meet the expectations of twenty-first-century users presented policy makers with considerable challenges. Draves and Coates (2004) argued that radical change was required to transform the obsolete twentieth-century factory model of schooling into provision that offered customised opportunities for twenty-first-century learners. They believed that a change of mind-set was essential to accommodate the far reaching contextual and societal changes. Table 3.1 summarises my understanding of some of the key factors that were influential in transforming the educational landscape.

Table 3.1 Key factors influencing twentieth and twenty-first-century ways of thinking.

Twentieth Century Thinking <i>'Industrial Age'</i>	Twenty-first Century Thinking <i>'Internet Age'</i>
Manufacturing technology	Internet and web based technology
Urbanisation	Globalisation
Industrialised Society	Knowledge Society
Factory model – one size fits all	Personalisation – individualised provision
Mass production	Mass customisation
Competitiveness	Collaboration
Hierarchical organisation	Networking
Innovation	Entrepreneurism

Based on Zuboff And Maxim (2002); Hargreaves (2003); Draves and Coates (2004); Bottery (2006) and Friedman (2006).

Change agents

The advent of digital technologies initiated global communications (Drucker, 1969) and allowed the instantaneous sharing of information (Friedman, 2006 and Ball, 2008). Zuboff and Maxim (2002) considered this to be ‘the democratisation of information’ which contributed to the development of the concept of the ‘knowledge society’ (Hargreaves, 2003). According to Friedman (2006), the creation of the ‘Internet’ and the ‘World Wide Web’ allowed not only the instantaneous sharing of information but also provided users with new ways of collaborating. Friedman (2006) argued that the uploading of information provided a levelling device by allowing individuals and small organisations a means of disseminating their ideas worldwide without having to belong to a global organisation. The advent of instantaneous world-wide communication established a competitive global environment, in which no individual country could afford to remain isolated from competitive regional and international influences.

The implications of these fundamental changes for twenty-first-century policy design were acknowledged by the then Prime Minister Tony Blair who articulated that:-

‘The technological innovations driving global change have not just opened up ‘new opportunities’ for delivering services, but increased people’s expectations of what they want from those who serve them. To meet these challenges the state must provide the same level of customer service as the public have come to expect in every other aspect of their lives.’ (Blair, 2006: foreword).

Twenty-first-century users of public services have become accustomed to both wide choice and personalised provision.

Choice

Improving parental choice has proved to be a policy intent that was difficult to achieve in practice. Changes initiated by the 1980 Education Act (legislation.gov.uk) altered the arrangements by which parents ‘chose their preferred school for their child’. Maclure (1988) argued that these developments strengthened parents’ influence as consumers of education. Since then a range of strategies have been used to enhance parental choice over the past 40 years, including:-

- Open enrolment (ERA,legislation.gov.uk, 1988), which allowed parents to select any school rather than make their selection from a constrained set of choices;
- Removal of local authority constraints about the efficiency of use of school resources (Maclure, 1988);
- Provision of a mechanism (standard number) for determining the number of pupils a school should admit; and
- Granting schools greater autonomy over admissions procedures.

However, despite these numerous attempts to deliver improved parental choice, the political intent remains elusive, as it is still not a reality for many twenty-first-century parents, and failure to secure a place at a school of choice is not uncommon. For example, it is already clear that there will be a national shortage of primary school places in September 2015. Benn (2011: 168) argued that the notion of parental choice appears to be an illusion. Ball (2008: 126) acknowledged that the complexity of the concept of parental choice makes the translation of policy into practice difficult. However, despite these challenges, Barber (2007: 250) considered that parental choice should continue to be a key driver of school reform.

The political context

Another factor influencing these education reforms was a shift of political philosophy. The last quarter of the twentieth century was characterised by the political logic of neoliberalism. This approach advocates the reduction of the role of the state whilst maximising the part played by the private sector. Throughout the 1980s and 1990s, the adoption of neoliberal principles by successive administrations enabled delivery of the policy intent of allowing market forces to prevail in public services. This involved both the restoration of individual responsibility and the reduction of dependency on the welfare state. Moos (2005) argued that the decentralisation of decision making to both individuals and institutions was integral to these changes. Ward and Eden (2009) argued that giving parents a choice of school in the state system obliged schools to compete with one another to be the parents' preferred school for their child. Since 1992 (DfE, 1992), another strategy to improve parental choice has been to increase school diversity. Many new types of secondary schools were introduced during the early part of the twenty-first

century. Table 3.2 shows that by 2010 parents had a much greater variety of schools from which to make their choice

Table 3.2 School diversity in 1980 and 2010

School diversity in 1980	School diversity in 2010
Private education	Private education
Schools maintained by the local education authority	Schools maintained by the local authority:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grammar schools • Non selective high schools • Comprehensive county schools 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grammar schools: (164 only) • Non selective high schools; • Comprehensive county schools; • Comprehensive community schools
Faith schools: voluntary aided or voluntary controlled	Faith schools: voluntary aided or voluntary controlled
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Catholic • Church of England • Jewish • Quaker 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Catholic • Church of England • Hindu • Jewish • Quaker • Seventh-day Adventist • Muslim (2001) • Sikh
Grant maintained schools (1988-1992)	Foundation schools (1992)
	Trust schools (2005)
City technology colleges (1988)	Academies (2000)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sponsored • Individual • Chains • Federations
	Free schools
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parent-run Schools • Studio schools • University technical schools

Based on Choice and Diversity (DfE, 1992) and the Academies Act, 2010 (legislation.gov.uk, 2010)

Personalisation and its implications for accountability

In education personalisation has been associated with learner centeredness (Leadbeater, 2004:1); MacBeath, 2008). Hargreaves considers personalisation to be a shift from mass production to mass customisation articulating that it is a formative process in which learning is tailored to meet the needs of particular individuals. Darling-Hammond and her colleagues (1993) argued the case for learner-centred accountability, identifying the need for ‘a new conception of accountability’ (ibid.).

In his paper titled ‘Rethinking Accountability for the Knowledge Society’ Sahlberg (2010) takes up this theme. He discusses the limitations of test-based accountability. This attainment-focused form of accountability is dependent on summative performance in national tests and examinations. Sahlberg makes the case for a more formative form of accountability which he identifies as ‘intelligent accountability’ (Sahlberg, 2010:48).

Summary

This chapter has identified some of the factors that reformers had to address when planning twenty-first-century education. It identifies some of the requirements that policy makers have to accommodate.

Chapter 4 discusses in more detail how the legislation of the 1980s and 1990s applied neoliberal ideas to education. The chapter explains how legislation over the past 35 years changed the context in which schools operate by increasing school autonomy and exposing schools to a more rigorous national accountability framework.

Chapter 4

Changing the landscape of school accountability

This chapter examines the profound changes resulting from education legislation, which introduced the principles of marketisation into the public education service.

Since 1980, successive governments have introduced a plethora of education policies that transformed the landscape in which schools operate. Dunleavy (1995) described this rapid succession of policy pronouncements as ‘policy hyperactivism’ Levin (1998) argued that ‘an epidemic of policies’ has shaped the development of state education over this 40-year period (1980 -2010).

Education Reform Act 1988

The 1988 Education Reform Act (ERA) (legislation.gov.uk, 1988) initiated the application of neo liberal ideas to state education. This legislation has been acknowledged as internationally influential, having been recognised by international commentators as ‘a watershed event in educational reform’ (Levin and Fullan, 2008) and one of the hallmarks of large scale educational reform’ (Sahlberg, 2022:174).

Figure 4.1 summarises the key elements of this legislation and shows that both accountability and autonomy were both important consequences of ERA (legislation.gov.uk, 1988). The main purpose of accountability was to ensure that the standards expected by the government were maintained across the whole education system, whilst the intention of autonomy was to allow schools to operate in a more competitive environment.

A new accountability framework

The development of the school accountability framework was one of the consequences of the policy changes resulting from ERA (legislation .gov.uk, 1988). The 1992 Education (Schools) Act (legislation.gov.uk, 1992) provided the national government with a means of taking back control of the national accountability system. Gilbert (2012: 7) articulated that the centralised elements (Figure 4.1),- namely the national curriculum, national tests and the publication of information about a school's performance - provided the key components for this new framework. This externally imposed form of accountability combined inspection with regulation. The Association of School and College Leaders (ASCL, 2014: 1) maintains that accountability implies responsibility for outcomes, whilst regulation is about the management of the accountability processes.

The combined effect of the centralised elements of the legislation has, over time, provided a comprehensive system for holding schools to account for their performance in national tests and examinations. Moller (2009) argued that this arrangement makes schools accountable to the levels of education expected by the national government.

Gilbert (2012), who oversaw the development of the revised national accountability framework, in her role as Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Schools (HMCI) between October 2006 and June 2011, argued the case for changes that will enhance support for school improvement.

National Curriculum

The national curriculum controlled what was to be taught to pupils in all phases of compulsory education (DES, 1989: 1). The introduction of prescription into an area that had previously been regarded as the prerogative of professionals was considered to be the antithesis of the pre-ERA period of professional accountability (Tomlinson, 2005). Regulation of the delivery of the national curriculum was the responsibility of the National Strategies programme. This Department for Children, Schools and Families initiative originally provided direction about how the national curriculum should be taught (Parliament, 2002). However, as National Strategies personnel increasingly stipulated teaching methodology many teachers found that ensuring compliance with requirements such as the literacy and numeracy hours in the primary curriculum was an

unnecessary and over prescriptive intrusion into their classroom practice. Controversy about the impact of the national curriculum on teaching and learning (Hart et. al., 2004) remains, despite the frequent revisions to the national curriculum (Parliament, 2009), including the recent review (DfE, 2011a; DfE, 2011b) and the amendments that were introduced in September 2014.

National Assessment

The creation of a national system of assessment, with annual key stage tests at ages 7, 11 and 14 provided a mechanism for measuring the effectiveness of curriculum delivery. The results of the national tests were used to establish a comprehensive national database that could be used to track the progression of individual pupils throughout their compulsory education. The preparation, administration and marking of these standardised tests were regulated by a series of quangos, including the School's Curriculum and Assessment Authority (SCAA). Consequently these tests provided the means of creating a test based national system that used these outcomes for accountability purposes.

The influence of external regulatory agencies was widespread, for example the National Strategies took on a monitoring remit that extended their role beyond that of teaching and learning. This wider school improvement role included working alongside DfE officials monitoring local authority standards as well as taking responsibility for the oversight of the management of the national School Improvement Partner (SIP) programme and the National Challenge Advisers (NCAs).

Inspection

Following the introduction of the new national accountability framework ERA (legislation.gov.uk, 1988), inspection provided the means of determining judgements about an individual school's performance. The 1992 Education (Schools) Act (legislation.gov.uk, 1992) established and granted authority to Ofsted to deliver the reinvigorated inspection regime. State schools were familiar with inspection which was the earliest and most common form of external accountability. The national inspection service, originally established in 1839, became a bureaucratic, externally imposed accountability regime which Lawton and Gordon (1987: 19) considered to be 'the Victorian version of utilitarianism.' In the early days, the majority of state schools received annual visits from Her Majesty's Inspectors (HMI) who tested pupils' literacy

and numeracy. The results of these tests provided evidence for judgements about the standards of education provided by a school. School managers and teachers were held accountable for the outcomes, and in cases where these failed to meet the prescribed standards sanctions, were imposed. As compliance or underperformance was linked to the level of funding a school received, this had implications for the remuneration of staff. Consequently, this punitive accountability regime commonly referred to as ‘payment by results’ (Maclure, 1969: 79), often created resentment, mistrust and, in some instances, fear amongst teachers and school managers, particularly as the use of sanctions to address non-compliance could affect career prospects.

The origins and development of autonomy in state schools

The granting of decision making powers to schools was an innovation for state schools. The 1980 Education Act (legislation.gov.uk, 1980) initiated autonomy by replacing local education authority (LEA) education committees, which acted as a collective governing body for all schools in an LEA’s jurisdiction (DfE, 1992:7) with individual school governing bodies. The legislation of the 1980s and 1990s implemented the vision of the then secretary of state for education, John Patten, which was outlined in the white paper Choice and Diversity: A New Framework for Schools (DfE, 1992). The Education (number 2) Act, (legislation .gov.uk, 1996) required each school to appoint its own governing body with representation from a range of stakeholders including parents, staff, and members of the local community, in addition to LEA representatives. The core functions of governing bodies have been identified as:

- Ensuring clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction for the school;
- Holding the headteacher to account for the educational performance of the school and its pupils, and the performance management of staff; and
- Overseeing the financial performance of the school and making sure its money is well spent.

(Department for Education, 2013: 7)

Each governing body was able to function as an independent unit in fulfilling these responsibilities (DfE, 1992: 7). The establishment of school governing bodies provided every school with an initial level of autonomy. The incremental development of

autonomy was continued by ERA (legislation.gov.uk, 1988) with subsequent legislation enabling further development.

Administrative and financial autonomy

ERA granted schools a limited degree of administrative and financial autonomy. The introduction of Local Management of Schools (LMS) was a radical development that gave schools much greater responsibility for managing their individual budgets. Allowing schools to make decisions about the management of their own finances was a new experience for school managers. However, the major part (around 85%) of this funding was allocated to the employment of staff, which was still a responsibility retained by the school's local authority at the time. Consequently, school leaders were only able to make decisions about spending of the minor (15%) part of their funding. In the early days of LMS, school leaders were cautious and management activities were predominately low-level accounting functions such as budget control (Chitty, 2009). Most schools were unaware of the far-reaching implications of the wider reforms resulting from ERA (legislation.gov.uk, 1988) and subsequent legislation. Ward and Eden (2009) articulated that:-

It is difficult to convey the magnitude and complexity of the systems that were put in place by the legislation of the late 1980s and the early 1990s... What was going on was not evident to teachers at the time. They thought they were dealing with a National Curriculum and testing. They were really facing a social and economic revolution in education.' (Ward and Eden, 2009: 21)

Increasing school diversity and autonomy

Another element of increasing autonomy was through the creation of both grant maintained school's (GMS) and City Technology Colleges (CTCs) widening parental choice by the creation of these new types of state-funded schools. Glatter et.al (1 997:9) argued that the concept of school diversity '*became* an explicit policy objective within ERA'(legislation.gov.uk, 1988). Opportunities for schools to adopt grant maintained status were optional. These schools were required to opt out of local authority control and received their funding directly from central government. Engagement with this option increased autonomy, as responsibility for managing the school's assets (buildings and land) passed to the governing body, which also directly employed staff and controlled the

school's admissions arrangements. These changes meant that, for example, schools no longer required LEA representation when appointing staff. Consequently, governors experienced an increase in human resource and personnel matters, which had previously been overseen by LEA staff. By assimilating financial and human resource management functions and operating in a more competitive environment, some aspects of school management became more business-like (Wind Cowie and Olliffe Cooper, 2009), changes that Ball (2008) considered to be '*new organisational ecologies*' (ibid. 2008: 81). Gibton (2003) articulated that the embedding of free-market ideology in schools resulted in a mechanism of accountability that emphasised managerial activity. The emphasis on management resulted in hierarchical organisation with managers supervising subordinated workers. In addition, the dependence on compliance and contractual arrangements between participants exemplified Halstead's (1994) contractual form of accountability.

A lower than expected uptake of grant maintained status amongst schools was a limitation on increasing school autonomy. In 1992, just five years after ERA, only 331 secondary schools had taken up GMS status (Chitty, 2009: 57). Five years later, just ten years after the original legislation had been enacted the School Standards and Framework Act (legislation.gov.uk, 1998) reincorporated schools with GMS status, returning them to LA control and designating them as Foundation Schools. Although the schools were allowed to retain many of the managerial freedoms that had been delegated to them, the head teachers of former GMS considered the reduction of independence from LA control as a significant setback that had placed limitations on their independence (Bush et. al., 2000).

ERA (legislation.gov.uk, 1988) also made provision for 15 CTCs which became the precursors of academies. This initiative provided an opportunity for private sector sponsors to take a new role in state education. The sponsors brought expertise from a variety of business backgrounds, including, for example, Sir Harry Djanjogly (textiles), Lord Harris (Carpetright), Macmillan Publishers in conjunction with British Associated Tobacco and Tarmac Holdings. However, the anticipated increase in the number of CTCs was limited by a lack of sponsors as they were reticent about the expectation that they would provide a limited amount of funding towards the cost of establishing a CTC (up to a quarter of the capital costs).

The private sponsors were granted considerable autonomy in return for a commitment to raise standards in underperforming schools. CTCs were exempt from the national curriculum, as they were expected to develop innovative curricula with an increased emphasis on technology and technological developments. The option to make modifications to teachers' pay and conditions of service also extended their autonomy. Many of the CTCs introduced new organisational arrangements, for example, by extending the length of the school days and replacing the traditional three terms per academic year with five terms of equal length.

Academisation - significant autonomy

The CTC principles were realised by the twenty-first-century development of academies. Although twenty-first-century academies were introduced by Tony Blair's Labour administration in 2001, they have become mainstream following the implementation of the 2010 Academies Act (legislation.gov.uk, 2010). By January 2010, over 200 primary, secondary and special schools had become academies, and currently, over half of secondary schools have adopted academy status. These schools have substantive autonomy over their organisation and ways of working which includes not only exemption from the statutory requirement to deliver the national curriculum but also freedom to organise the length of their school day and arrangements for term times. Numerous academies are run by academy trusts with sponsors from businesses, universities, other schools, faith groups or voluntary groups. Sponsors are responsible for improving the performance of their schools.

An autonomous self-improving school system

An important addition to the expectations of autonomous schools was that they should be self-improving. The coalition government's white paper 'The Importance of Teaching' (DfE, 2010a: 73) articulates a new vision for school improvement. Rather than relying on intervention following an unsatisfactory inspection outcome, schools are expected to take greater responsibility for managing their own improvement. This presents a considerable challenge to school leaders who have become accustomed to intervention to support improvement.

In a presentation at The National College for Teaching and Leadership's annual head teachers' conference in 2013, Sir Terry Leahy, a former Chief Executive Officer of Tesco shared with head teachers the core elements he would expect to find in any organisation looking to continuously improve its performance. Table 4.1 provides a summary of these universal requirements.

Table 4.1 Universals for an organisation looking to continuously self-improve

<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Delivers improvements in key processes that enable stakeholder needs to be met2. Engages all stakeholders, but particularly those who will be involved in delivering the improvement.3. Future orientated, with a strategic dimension that ensures future success.4. That the vision, values and culture of the organisation are well articulated and are explicit to everyone in the organisation.5. Establishes a high trust culture that trusts participants and tolerates shortcomings.6. Sets audacious goals that encourage risk taking and innovation and push people through their fear.7. Ensures that robust self-evaluation establishes an accurate baseline and provides a truthful starting point for continuous improvement.8. Gathers appropriate data that allows identification of stakeholder expectations and needs.

Based on Leahy, T. (2013) at the National College of School Leadership's 'Seizing Success' Conference 2013.

This new vision also encourages collaborative arrangements between schools, some of which might have previously been regarded as competitors. Any good or outstanding school interested in becoming an academy was required to identify a less successful, underperforming school to collaborate with and share successful practice. This expectation that schools should become self-improving has important implications for accountability, particularly if leaders of schools that have earned their autonomy are to understand how to prevent accountability limiting their autonomy (Gilbert, 2012).

Summary

Discussion in this chapter has examined the impact of the radical legislation of the later decades of the twentieth century on twenty-first century schools. As well as identifying the main components of the new national framework for accountability, the discussion has also examined the origins and development of autonomy amongst state schools.

The next chapter considers the efficacy of the new accountability framework through discussion of the benefits and challenges of the current national accountability system in education together with an assessment of its fitness for purpose.

Chapter 5

The efficacy of the current accountability framework

This chapter uses information gathered during the research to explore the main benefits and challenges of the new accountability framework and to ascertain how well it works in the new competitive, market driven environment that schools experienced after the implementation of ERA (legislation.gov.uk, 1988).

Benefits of the introduction of the new accountability framework

Many aspects of new accountability framework described in chapter 4 were more systematic and rigorous than the previous inspection system. The key instruments of the new accountability system were national assessments, inspection and the publication of results. (Gilbert, 2012: 7).

More regular and systematic inspection

Ofsted inspections were much more comprehensive than previous ones, as fulfilment of the original intention to inspect every state school every four years has meant that every school has now been inspected on several occasions. This was in marked contrast to the previous regime where inspection of schools was more haphazard. There was no regular time scale for the inspection of any particular school and it was possible for a teacher to complete their service without ever having experienced an inspection.

Greater transparency

A particularly significant development was the publication of inspection documentation which not only increased the rigour of the inspections but also made the process more transparent. The conduct of each inspection was governed by Ofsted's *Handbook for the Inspection of Schools* (Ofsted, 1993b) which provided inspectors with guidance about inspection requirements. Inspectors were also provided with explicit evaluative criteria. The sharing of these criteria with school leaders was another beneficial dimension of the new system. All the Ofsted documents were available to schools which meant that school leaders had some insights into how judgements about aspects of their school had been

reached. Richards (2013) compares these evaluative criteria to an inspectors' tick list and expresses concern that:-

‘Words such as ‘innovation’ or ‘experimentation’ simply don’t appear in the inspection handbook. They aren’t something that inspectors look for; in consequence they aren’t something that they encounter. (Richards, 2013).

Regular updating

The evaluative criteria have been updated on numerous occasions to accommodate developments over time. For example, the early frameworks, before autonomy became widespread, focused on management and administration, making judgements about school policies and their implementation (Ofsted, 1993b). Various revisions of the Ofsted Inspection Framework have increased emphasis on leadership (Ofsted, 1995a; Ofsted, 2003; Ofsted, 2009; Ofsted, 2012a) and pupils’ wellbeing (Ofsted, 2010d). More recently there has been a shift of emphasis which has increased the importance of judgements about teaching and learning (Ofsted 2012). In the academic year 2013-2014, the inspection framework was revised on three different occasions. Many school leaders, especially those anticipating an imminent inspection, were concerned about the frequency of these revisions and the challenge this presented in terms of ensuring that the implication of these changes were fully understood.

Introduction of data and benchmarking

Current inspections have a specific focus on the standards achieved by the school. The school’s performance in national tests and examinations are benchmarked against the national average figures and this information is used to identify if schools are underperforming or are high achieving. Benchmarked data can also be used to inform judgements about attendance, exclusions and pupil progress as well as providing information for comparisons about staffing levels and making judgements about the schools’ use of financial resources. Benchmarking has the potential to increase the objectivity of some of the inspection judgements.

The giving of the account

The National Government stresses the importance of information about a school's performance being readily available in the public domain and uses two approaches for ensuring that parents have access to information when making their choice of school. The first is through the publication of inspection reports.

Inspection reports

The procedures for the publication and dissemination of inspection reports are subject to statutory guidance. The inspection report is sent to the school within five working days of the end of the inspection. The school's governing body is obliged to send a copy of the report to the parents of all pupils who attend the school, again, within five working days. The report must also be available on line, both on the individual school's website as well as on the Ofsted website. It also has to be made available to any member of the public who requests a copy.

Another issue relating to inspection reports is that they have a limited shelf life. When they are read shortly after the inspection they will have greater relevance than if they are read some time after the inspection took place. For example, a school may have changed its headteacher and other senior managers and the new leadership team may have set a new direction for the school.

Ofsted senior managers' quality assure inspection reports, for example to ensure that in the teaching section of the report inspectors do not appear to be promoting a particular style of teaching. However, despite these attempts concerns remain about the reliability and validity of inspections and inspection reports (Waldergrave and Simons, 2014).

School performance tables

One of the most controversial aspects of placing information in the public domain is the publication of every school's results in the annual school performance tables (Education School Act, 1992). These provide parents, and any other interested parties with a comprehensive set of statistics about an individual school's performance in national

tests and examinations and also allows comparison with others schools. Data about the school workforce, together with information about the school's funding sources, are recent additions to these tablets, providing parents with information that enables them to identify how the school uses its finances.

School self-evaluation

One of the most important developments of the current accountability regime was the introduction of school self-evaluation in the late 1990s. Self-evaluation is a topic of interest in its own right and there is insufficient opportunity to explore it fully here. A key benefit of the introduction of self-evaluation was that it offered schools the opportunity to take greater control of their approach to accountability (Davis and Rudd, 2002; MacBeath and McGlynn, 2003; Rogers and Badham, 2004; Coleman, 2005). MacNamara and O'Hara (2008) argued that the increased emphasis on school self-evaluation was a consequence of government policies to achieve the goals of school autonomy and accountability, stating that:

‘One result of these policies has been that virtually every education system in the developed world... has been busy creating, or where they existed before reforming their school evaluation policies and procedures. (MacNamara and O'Hara, 2008: 173).

The introduction of self-evaluation to the inspection process was a significant contributory factor in encouraging schools to have greater involvement in accountability. The distribution of *School Self Evaluation Matters* (Ofsted, 1988) to all schools initiated this attempt to encourage self-evaluation. Ofsted's (1999) *Handbook for the Inspection of Secondary Schools* contained guidance about self-evaluation (ibid.: 4). There was considerable variation amongst schools in responding to this shift of emphasis from the extensive scrutiny and surveillance, which simply gathered evidence to inform an inspector's judgement, to in-school discussion about the analysis and interpretation of the information.

Improvements in monitoring and self-review

An important benefit has been the marked improvement in school management processes particularly the embedding of more robust procedures in the routines for monitoring and

review. Most schools now have clear policies and schedules, which ensure that evidence can be gathered systematically (Leithwood, 2001). However, as the benefits of more rigorous monitoring processes were reliant on contractual accountability, this form of accountability therefore creates tensions for school leaders by emphasising compliance and reducing levels of trust. Sahlberg (2010) argued that:-

Unfortunately, in many schools external policies have replaced responsibility and trust with accountability, which has left many schools caught between reaching out for their moral purpose and material rewards. (Sahlberg, 2010: 54).

The management of monitoring and self-review is now well established in most schools where routine procedures are in place to both gather information about current performance and identify areas where improvements can be made. The requirement that schools should provide inspectors with a summary of their findings in a school self-evaluation form (SEF) at the start of an inspection was an influential contributory factor. Although the production of a SEF was not a statutory requirement, the vast majority of schools complied with the expectation that this document would be available for inspection teams. Plowright and Godfrey (2008) argued that, despite Ofsted's guidance about its completion (Ofsted, (2005), school leaders found the production of the SEF challenging. In many schools, SEF writing has become a time - consuming activity resulting in expansive, over-detailed documents, which inspectors find difficult to assimilate because of the time constraints leading up to an inspection. As the SEF became a precursor to the inspection many SEF authors were circumspect about the information that was included in the document, emphasising strengths whilst being more discrete about the identification of areas needing improvement. In addition, once it became clearer that the accuracy of the SEF would inform judgements about the leadership of the school (Ofsted 1998: 86), the completion of the SEF was more sharply focused on ensuring that the schools were able to accurately predict the inspection findings.

Issues arising from the introduction of the new accountability framework

Internalisation of inspection methodology

One of the detrimental effects of the implementation of the new accountability framework has been the internalisation of inspection methodology into routine monitoring procedures. For example, the inspection criteria for teaching and assessment are commonly used during routine observation of lessons and the outcomes reported

using judgemental descriptors. This dependence on Ofsted criteria has contributed to the internalisation of inspection methodology as its regular use in the routine monitoring processes means that accountability has become embedded in and has permeated everyday practice. Whilst this judgemental form of monitoring ensures that all staff understand inspection requirements, it is detrimental to the development of a high trust culture. Consequently, internalisation has led to low trust accountability becoming pervasive in the day-to-day work of the school.

Another disadvantage is that this self-imposed, prescriptive use of inspection criteria may lead to standardisation (Sahlberg, 2010), as the emphasis on compliance inhibits creativity and innovation. Hargreaves (2009) also argued that a key issue arising from this internalisation of inspection methodology in everyday monitoring procedures is that it contributes to a performative culture that reduces the school's capacity for the developmental activity needed to support continuous and sustained improvement

Limitations on learning

Some commentators argue that the emphasis on compliance leads to the adoption of relatively superficial short-term activities that are detrimental to pupils' learning (MacGilchrist, 1997; Gray et. al. 1999).

The identification of high-profile national performance indicators, such as the proportion of pupils gaining five or more GCSE passes at grade C or above, gave rise to concerns about 'high-stakes accountability' (Jones, 2004; Duffy, 2005; Hargreaves, 2009; and Møller, 2009.) In the competitive environment created by market forces schools focused their resources on these high-profile performance indicators and developed a range of short-term activities to inflate their outcomes. Ryan (2005) argued that these were problematic because, as they were reactive and relatively superficial, the limited capacity of their contribution detracted from proactive approaches to improving the quality of teaching and learning.

These 'tactics', which Michael Gove, the then secretary of state for education, referred to as 'gaming' (DfE, 2012a), included:-

- early and repeated entry for GCSE English and mathematics;

- concentration on borderline C/D learners; and
- the use of vocational qualifications, with study of a single subject providing multiple GCSE passes.

As there was potential to reduce challenge and lower expectations these activities were not always in the best interest of learners and in some cases proved to be detrimental to learning and progress.

Black (2006: 12) linked such approaches to the laws of diminishing returns citing ‘Goodhart’s law’, which states that any valid indicator that is used for high-stakes decisions will therefore become invalid. This proved to be the case with the consequential devaluation of the 5A* to C GCSE grade indicator and its replacement with the revised performance indicator, requiring passes in English and mathematics amongst the five GCSEs from 2006.

Misuse of data

Crossley (2006) expressed concerns about the use of performance data referring to its use as ‘post mortem’. He argued that since the inspection takes place at a specific moment in time, it only offers a snapshot of the work of the school. He also considers it to be retrospective, looking back at past events. Crossley maintains that whilst even the most detailed analysis of the school’s performance data can identify areas requiring improvement any changes that are made will not bring benefit to the learners whose results are being examined as they will have passed on through the system.

A controversial aspect of placing each school’s performance in the public domain was the use of this information to compare schools by simply ranking them by creating national and local league tables. Critics (Popham, 1999; du Sautoy, 2005 and Mansell, 2011) questioned the fitness for purpose of the publication of results in this way. However, controversies about performance tables have not detracted from their continued development and publication. Moreover, the current coalition government has already increased the complexity of the performance tables (DfE, 2010a) by adding a raft of new measures from January, 2012. Whilst parents now have ample information to assist them in choosing their preferred school for their child, the bewildering array of increasingly

complex information available to them raises issues about the ease of interpretation and therefore its usefulness.

Intensity of scrutiny

The continuous gathering of information from a growing range of sources, including the observation of lessons, scrutiny of pupils' work, estimates of pupils' progress and feedback from pupils themselves have raised concerns about the increasing levels of scrutiny. Webb (2005) argued that this continuous surveillance is detrimental, as the consequential lowering of trust and reduced motivation increases the emphasis compliance rather than development. The use of new technologies has exacerbated this with, for example, the installation of closed circuit television (CCTV) in classrooms allowing the recording of lessons for subsequent discussion between the observer and the observed.

These omnipresent mechanisms of scrutiny have led some commentators (Bottery, 2000 and Plowright, 2008) to compare current school accountability mechanisms with Bentham's (1843) proposed design for the ideal prison. As most twenty-first-century citizens are accustomed to continuous surveillance by remotely controlled CCTV cameras with an authoritarian figure continuously scanning the images captured by cameras on a bank of screens, this means that they are familiar with the principle of the panopticon. The expectation is that this form of continuous surveillance will induce self-control amongst the observed to avoid the consequences of punishment. Plowright (2008) expresses concern that:-

There will be no alternative ideology from which to draw, no alternative values on which to base the purposes of the school and its role in the lives of young people. (Plowright, 2008: 121).

More recently, a differentiated inspection programme has been introduced. This has been summarised in Table 5.1(:40), which shows that this arrangement provided more successful schools, graded as outstanding or good in their last inspection with a greater degree of freedom from the routine four yearly inspection cycle. However, this reduction in the frequency of inspection and follow-up monitoring visits provided these schools with an opportunity to evaluate and review their accountability procedures.

In cases where risk assessments or information from local sources, such as an increase in parental complaints, raises Ofsted's concerns about any school, the school could be inspected without any prior notice.

As this arrangement holds schools accountable for their standards of performance and therefore makes them accountable to the levels expected by the national government this is a form of contractual accountability. In addition, it is associated with sanctions since any school identified as underperforming faces being categorised as inadequate or requiring improvement. To bring about the necessary improvement these schools receive additional visits from HMI and Ofsted personnel to monitor their progress with bringing about the necessary improvements (Table 5.1: 40).

Table 5.1 Timing of Ofsted inspections

School categorisation at previous inspection	Frequency of Inspection	Frequency of monitoring	Timing of Ofsted Risk Assessment
Outstanding	Exempt	Not applicable	Third year after inspection and annually thereafter
Good	Within 3-5 years	Not applicable	Third year after inspection and annually thereafter
Requires Improvement (Formerly satisfactory)	Within 2 years	First HMI/ Ofsted monitoring visit 4 - 6 weeks after publication of inspection report, subsequently dependent of evidence of at least satisfactory progress.	Ongoing through monitoring visits
Inadequate (Serious weaknesses and special measures)	Between 18 months and 2 years	Termly monitoring visits (1-50 before full section 5 inspection, dependent on evidence of at least satisfactory progress.	Not applicable

Based on DfEe, 2013:51

Summary

The discussion in this chapter has examined the impact of the introduction of the new accountability framework and identified both benefits and challenges arising from its implementation. Despite the range of benefits the emphasis on contractual accountability for standards together with the application of sanctions are major issues for more successful schools that are reliant on the creation of high trust cultures to foster creativity and innovation to support continuous self-improvement. This suggests that the one-size-fits-all approach of the current accountability framework is not necessarily fit for purpose in more successful schools that have earned their autonomy. However, recent changes,

such as the exemption from inspection, may provide these schools with a window of opportunity to review and modify their accountability procedures so that they are fit for purpose.

The next chapter gives an account of the research methodology. It discusses the selection of research methods and explains how a case study was used to investigate one successful school's attempt to use the BSC for accountability.

Chapter 6

Case study research methodology

The research design and methodology are explained in this chapter which identifies why case study was selected as the main strategy for this research.

This qualitative research (Creswell, 2009) examines whether the use of the BSC in a maintained state secondary school provides the school's leaders with a more responsive form of accountability. This small-scale study, which gathers non-numeric evidence about events in a specific context, did not measure or quantify. Consequently, the positivist scientific model of social research was not appropriate for this research.

The research gathered qualitative evidence from a specific setting to explore the adoption of the BSC by a successful school. The research techniques gathered data from multiple sources, which were synthesised and used to develop understanding of the impact of the adoption of the BSC on various stakeholders and the school's accountability practice.

Previous research

Previous research into use of the BSC in English state schools is scarce. Both Duffy (2005: 2) and Karathanos and Karathanos (2005: 233) identify a 'dearth' of research literature about its use in American schools. Storey (2002) examined the use of the BSC in performance management whilst Jones (2004) argued that it should be used more widely in American school accountability to reduce the emphasis on the outcomes of standards achieved in tests and examinations.

Focus of the case study

This research uses the strategy of case study to learn about the participants' experiences of a particular event in a natural setting. Yin defines case study as:

An empirical enquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon in depth and within its real life context especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident. (Yin, 2009: 18)

This case study examines the contemporary phenomenon of achieving an appropriate system of accountability in schools which are expected to be autonomous and self-improving. It seeks to gather evidence to answer the main research question:

How can increasingly autonomous schools resolve the tension of becoming more accountable?

Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2000) argued that as case study allows participants to convey their feelings about the events being studied, it is especially suitable for gathering first-hand evidence of the participants' experiences. The research looks at the experiences of various case study school stakeholders during their involvement with the changes that occurred when the BSC was introduced as their new accountability mechanism. By gathering first-hand evidence from those who were directly involved in the adoption of the school's new self-evaluative and accountability procedures the intention is to understand 'the complex world of lived experience from the point of view of those who live it' (Schwandt, 1994:118). Therefore, this research seeks to gain an understanding of the participants' feelings about the processes of modifying the BSC for use in a school and the practicalities of implementing the new procedures.

Case study setting

The 'real-life' context for this case study is a local authority-maintained, English state secondary school with well-established managerial autonomy. However, although the case study school had a considerable degree of managerial autonomy, it had not adopted additional freedoms by taking up foundation status as either a grant-maintained or trust school. This larger-than-average, mixed, 11-16, comprehensive school with approximately 1100 pupils enrolled, is the only secondary school situated in a historic county town in the south-east of England. Whilst the majority of its pupils are drawn from relatively advantaged backgrounds the popularity of the school means that pupils also come from surrounding villages and nearby coastal towns.

This successful, high-achieving and consistently over-subscribed school has specialisms in the performing arts, languages and science. The school website described it as 'a leading school in its local authority'. The award of beacon status in 1998 acknowledged

the school's success as beacon status required the school to be proactive in sharing its recognised good practice with other schools. The school has established a track record of improvement with its overall effectiveness judged as 'good and improving' in its 2007 Ofsted inspection (Ofsted 2007:4) and 'outstanding' in the most recent inspection (Ofsted 2010a:4). Consequently, as there was no need for local authority intervention, links were limited mainly to the few statutory requirements which were covered by the small allocated number of SIP visits.

The headteacher at the time of the research took up this post in September 1999, having previously been the school's deputy headteacher. In his former role as a local authority adviser for information technology he had also acted as an Ofsted team inspector. The chair of governors, a senior manager in a national utility company, took office in September 2006. His business role included responsibility for organisational evaluation and accountability which involved him in a research project that evaluated the introduction of the BSC to this national company (Martinez et al 2006: 2)

Sample and time scale

Stake (1995) argued that case studies should have clear boundaries that must be clarified from the outset so that evidence that represents the range of feelings and opinions about the specific location can be gathered without losing the focus of the study. For example, important limiting factors, such as the number of cases to be included in the study and the length of time that will be allocated to it, need early resolution. These factors are particularly important when the aim is to make a detailed examination of a particular context such as the single school in which this case study took place.

There was limited scope for the selection of the setting for this case study as most schools are dependent on Ofsted inspection and have adopted inspection methodology in their routine accountability processes. Since so few schools use alternative accountability approaches the selection of the school could be categorised as both convenience sampling (Bryman, 2004) and purposive sampling (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2000; Robson, 2002). The specific nature of the context matched with Bassey's (1999:47) definition of case study as 'a singularity conducted in depth in a natural setting'. Through in-depth probing of the detail of the setting from a number of different angles this form of

qualitative research makes in-depth examinations that can reveal the complexities of the situation.

This research was carried out over a two-year period, during the third year of the school's use of the BSC. The school had been using this as its tool to monitor its performance since the introduction of the first BSC in the academic year 2007-2008. The launch of the BSC followed a period of familiarisation with the concept and modification of the tool for use in the school. Further development of the school's scorecard has been informed by continuous reflection and review. The intention to complete the research within one academic year was prevented by deferment of the final interview with the headteacher, until his return from an extended period of absence.

Researcher's role in the study

The epistemological assumption underpinning this research meant that the researcher only had relatively limited involvement with some parts of the activity. The researcher brings to this study more than 20 years' practice in the monitoring of school performance, so the impact of this considerable experience on the researcher's own personal values needs to be taken into account, for example, the possibility of bias and consequential lack of objectivity during interpretation of the evidence about the reality of current events could be a potential disadvantage. This was borne in mind at all times to minimise its influence and prevent it from becoming a significant limitation.

The researcher's prior knowledge of the case study school helped in gaining access to the setting for the research. Initial knowledge of the school's intention to use the BSC came at the end of the researcher's three-year formal link with the school between 2006 and 2009. The headteacher and governors shared their early ideas about trialling the BSC during routine discussions about developing the school's monitoring, evaluating and improvement planning processes, with their local authority link adviser. In September 2006, just as the school started to introduce the BSC, the SIP took over responsibility for external support and challenge. As the local authority used the criterion that the SIP should not have detailed prior knowledge of their allocated schools when allocating SIPs to schools, this decision ended the researcher's formal link with the school. Discussions about leadership and management of the school continued with the successor SIP who worked with the school from September 2006 to April 2011. This meant that the

researcher was not linked with the school in any official capacity during the research period.

Those previous connections helped the researcher gain agreement about the school's involvement in this research. Following an informal exploratory discussion with the headteacher, the chair of governors was formally invited to agree to the school's participation, with the headteacher acting as an intermediary. The school's willingness to engage with this research was confirmed by the headteacher signing an institutional informed consent form.

Ethical issues

Ethical guidelines (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2000) were agreed with the headteacher, the chair of governors and other participants. As well as identifying the importance of participant-informed consent, these guidelines included commitments about confidentiality, debriefing arrangements and permissions about reporting the findings. It was agreed that:-

- for interviews:
 - informed consent forms would be discussed, agreed and signed prior to the start of each interview;
 - interviews would be tape recorded and transcribed by the researcher, and the written transcript shared with the interviewees as soon as possible after the events;
 - participant confidentiality was assured by allocating each interviewee a code to be used in the report of findings:- (see Appendix A2);
 - the researcher could cite evidence from interviewees, which had been included in the transcript in a form agreed by them.

- for reporting of the findings:
 - the report of findings of the research will be shared with the headteacher and chair of governors before it is distributed more widely;
 - the findings will be fed back to a meeting of participants and if considered appropriate shared with the school staff and the governing body;
 - the report of the findings will only be published outside the school with the permission of the headteacher and the chair of governors.

Data collection

An important feature of case study is depth or intensity. Collecting data from multiple sources helped meet this expectation with three different research techniques used to collect data for this case study. School documentation about the BSC was scrutinised along with other relevant school records. Analysis of the school's BSC documentation was facilitated by observation of two meetings about the BSC - a parents' forum meeting and a meeting of the governors' school self-evaluation committee (SEC). Semi-structured interviews were conducted with governors, senior leaders, teachers, a parent and the SIP with different experiences of the school's use of its BSC.

Use of a variety of data collection procedures over a sustained period (Stake, 1995) ensured that there was sufficient information for an in-depth examination of the real-life setting that was being studied. Bassey (2002:144) argued that 'the researcher needs to collect sufficient data to allow him/her to explore features, create interpretations and test for trustworthiness'. Such comprehensive data gathering is extremely time-consuming and the large amounts of data generated increased the complexity of analysis and interpretation.

Documentary evidence

The school provided a range of documentation in both electronic form and hard copy, including its BSC (Appendix B). An informative archive of background material included details about developments in school planning and performance monitoring which were the precursors of introduction of the BSC. Other sources of contextual information provided background details about:-

- the school's evaluation of its performance: the school's SEF and minutes of the governors' SEC;
- its planning for improvement: the school strategic plan (Appendix B);
- the impact of these processes on the school's overall performance: SIP reports on school self-evaluation and improvement planning and Ofsted inspection reports (Ofsted, 2007; Ofsted, 2010a).

As key documentation was provided in electronic form this not only gave direct access to current information but also allowed examination of these documents at a distance from the school setting. This low-mediation approach meant that analysis of essential documents was carried out before visits were made to the school. For example examination of the details of the BSC helped identify how the school had modified it for use in its particular setting, which is reported in the next chapter. As sufficient documentation was made available for the scope of this research, incompleteness of documentary material was not an issue.

Observation

Observation of two meetings with a BSC focus provided less structured opportunities for gathering information with low levels of mediation (Plowright, 2011). Both meetings took place in school and generated first-hand evidence from primary sources, which identified different perspectives of the school's modification of the BSC for an educational setting. Whilst the researcher's attendance at both meetings can be categorised as that of a non-participant observer, Junker's (1960) distinction between different degrees of non-participant observation is also applicable.

During the observation of a parents' forum meeting the chair of governors explained the development of the school's BSC to an audience of 24 parents representing approximately 2.5% of the student population. The evidence gathered at this meeting, where the researcher was a full observer (Junker, 1960), provided an insight into the parents' initial responses. Whilst parents were informed of the researcher's presence, she

was not identified. This reduced the impact of the researcher's presence as contact with the participants was minimal.

In the observation of a meeting of the governing body's SEC, the researcher acted not only as an observer (Junker, 1960) but also engaged in brief exchanges with participants when clarification was needed. As only five governors, the headteacher and the administrative assistant clerking the meeting attended, it was more difficult to minimise the impact of the researcher's presence. Because the participants were aware that they were being observed there was some interaction between the observer and research participants, allowing for clarification of points where necessary.

To ensure the accuracy of the information gathered, an audio recording was made during each meeting, with the agreement of all participants. This allowed greater emphasis to be placed on both watching the interactions between the participants and listening closely to what was said. The subsequent transcription, which took place away from the school setting, allowed further reflection. Cross-checking of the transcripts with the school's own public records of the meetings observed provided a means of checking the reliability of the data. Feedback from the school's own scrutiny of their copy of the transcript also confirmed the accuracy of the record.

Semi-structured interviews

One of the data collection strategies involved asking questions in one-to-one interviews (Wragg, 2002) with 11 participants from the school. These sessions provided first-hand evidence of the respondents' experiences of adopting, modifying and using the BSC in the school setting. This participant-focused approach allowed respondents to reflect on their experiences of the changes in the school's accountability practice. The interviews also gave respondents the opportunity to express their own views about what they considered to be the benefits and challenges of using the BSC, which was an important element of the case study (Burgess, Sieminski and Arthur, 2006).

Identification of the 11 interviewees involved discussion and mutual agreement between the researcher, who suggested roles to be represented, and the headteacher, who named individuals who carried out these roles. The sample was judgemental (Hammond, 2008: 13) as those selected were chosen as representatives involved with the school's

accountability processes. The sample was also purposive (Fogelman and Comber, 2007: 135), as it was chosen for a specific purpose: this small-scale study. Participants were selected from particular stakeholder groups within the school to ensure that there was a range of differing perspectives (Drever, 2003). Governors made up one group and senior leaders were distinguished from other assistant staff. Other stakeholders who had integral roles in the school’s accountability processes but were external to the school were also included in the sample. Table 6.1 shows the roles of each participant who received an individual invitation to take part in the interviews.

Table 6.1 Roles and responsibilities of interviewees

Internal to school		External to school
Governors	Staff	
Chair of governors and member of SEC	Headteacher	School Improvement Partner Parent who attended parents’ forum meeting
Vice chair of governors and member of SEC	Deputy headteacher	
Parent governor	Assistant headteacher	
Community governor	Subject leader	
	Administrative assistant	

Whilst the selection of interviewees was more liable to bias than a randomly selected sample it did ensure that all participants had some involvement with the changes in the school’s accountability procedures. This arrangement helped increase the internal validity of the data gathered. For example, some of those interviewed, including the chair of governors and the head teacher, provided historical information about the school’s initial interest in the BSC.

Semi-structured interviews were used, as this gave the researcher a greater degree of control in managing the questioning during the interviews (Mason, 1996). The draft interview questions were piloted with the chair of governors of another school in the same local authority who had prior knowledge of the BSC from his business background and had discussed its use in his school. This provided a formative opportunity for the development of relevant lines of questioning. Using this respondent’s feedback modification of some of the questions in the semi-structured interview schedule helped

improve its reliability. However, as the respondent did not belong to the same research population and his answers were not based on the case study school's BSC, the data from the pilot responses was not used in the main study.

Open-ended questions were also used as it was considered to be more appropriate to allow respondents to have the freedom of answering in their own way when providing explanations or expressing their feelings about the changes in the school's accountability procedures. This method was considered to be more suitable for small-scale research (Sharp, 2008). Cohen, Morrison and Manion (2000:247) argued that this allows the research 'to be responsive to participants' own frames of reference.' To accommodate respondents' differing degrees of confidence in answering the questions, prompts were included in each sub-section of the interview schedule to encourage further contributions. These prompts were used to guide the discussion and follow up any leads provided by the interviewee and probes were used to clarify particular responses in cases where respondents' answers lacked clarity (Drever, 2003).

Appendix A1: 119 contains a copy of the interview schedule showing the five main areas covering the adoption and use of the BSC by the school. These were:

- prior knowledge of the BSC.
- its development.
- its implementation.
- its impact and
- its appropriateness for use in schools, including identification of further development for use in an educational setting.

Covering these five dimensions in each interview ensured some degree of consistency between the interviews.

The schedule of questions was sent to each respondent before the interview took place so that they had time to prepare prior to meeting with the interviewer. Most of the interviews took place in school. Each interview started with a discussion about the conduct of the interview and signing of the informed consent form. The arrangements for feeding back the record of the interview and ensuring anonymity and confidentiality were clarified and agreed.

Data analysis

The researcher collected all the data. This allowed early interaction with the emerging data. The formative stages of data analysis were carried out simultaneously with ongoing data collection (Merriam, 1988). For example, the verbatim transcription of recordings of observations or interviews was completed as soon as possible after the event to ensure timely feedback to participants. Because the researcher transcribed the information gathered from observations and interviews personally, particularly meaningful items of data could be highlighted and a general overview built up quite early on. This early identification and coding of key phrases and frequently recurring themes that emerged across different sources helped reduce researcher bias by allowing the analysis to be data led rather than researcher led.

Analysis of the data from the transcripts of observations and interviews was facilitated by the use of a computer software package, ATLAS.ti. The electronic records of the verbatim transcripts were loaded into the ATLAS.ti programme which provided a repository for the evidence gathered. As all the research data were collected, analysed and interpreted by the researcher, there was no need to bring together data collected by several different individuals. This meant that ATLAS.ti was of limited value.

Once all the data had been collected, two discrete phases of summative analysis were carried out. Firstly, the data was scrutinised to identify evidence of involvement with different stages of the scorecard's development. Additional codes were added manually where there was evidence of the universal's of a self-improving organisation (Chapter 4; 29). Additional codes were added manually where the phrasing of pertinent comments did not include reference to the prompt/marker for automatic coding and would therefore have been overlooked. Manual checking of the data was needed to ensure the coding was as comprehensive as possible. Organising the data in this way helped identify how the school's alternative approach corresponded with the expectations of responsive accountability and meeting the expectations of the universals of self-improving organisations.

Subsequently, the data were examined for evidence of the main benefits and issues associated with use of the BSC by coding for evidence of improvements in the school's accountability processes, strategic developments, monitoring activity and inspection-related activities. This included seeking evidence of the internalisation of inspection methodology. Once the codings had been allocated the computer software enhanced the data analysis by not only helping to ensure that coding was consistently applied across all the data sources from observation and interviews but also enabling the retrieval of quotations.

Interpretation of data

The need to collect and analyse sufficient, appropriate data to ensure that interpretations could be underpinned by pertinent evidence was an important factor because this not only helped reduce bias on the researcher's part but also helped avoid assertions where judgements could not be substantiated by sufficient or appropriate evidence. Even though the data analysis provided information that had been filtered and organised, this information was still in a relatively raw state with only limited intrinsic value. Consequently, without some kind of further examination, this outcome data was not sufficiently reliable to draw conclusions about meanings that might lie behind the data. The data was therefore interrogated to provide appropriate evidence which could be used to support its interpretation.

In this research, the quality of the evidence was improved by combining data from a number of different sources and perspectives. This development of a progressively more detailed picture provided new insights into the research issues in the school. Combining the data collected from the scrutiny of documents, observation and interviews therefore strengthened the evidence base. Cross-referencing between the different sources provided a means of validating subjective evidence as this allowed verification of the accuracy of the evidence used in this case. In addition, the data gathered from the interviews with governors, school leaders, other staff and external stakeholders provided evidence from different perspectives. Each of the sources provided information about a different dimension of the school's changes in its accountability processes. This broadening of the sources of evidence allowed the researcher to be more responsive by focusing on the processes that were occurring rather than just responding to the outcomes. In addition,

new insights could be accommodated more easily with this more flexible evidence base, allowing adjustments to be made to the planned activity.

The importance of using the data inductively to draw conclusions from the information gathered, known as 'interpretive enquiry' (Mason, 1996: 4), was endorsed by Bassey's argument that the data could be used to 'explore significant features of the case and create plausible interpretations of what is found' (Bassey, 2002: 144). The need for careful interpretation of this idiographic data, which has been informed by the responses of individuals in a particular situation, is an essential element in qualitative research, including a case study.

Case studies have been classified as explanatory, descriptive, illustrative and enlightening (Yin, 2009: 19 - 20). This research uses an evaluative approach (Thomas, 2011: 93) as an underlying purpose of the study is to provide the audience of governors, senior leaders and other stakeholders with information that would help them judge the effectiveness of the changes to their school accountability practice.

Verification

Seeking confirmation of the reliability and validity of qualitative research to judge its legitimacy is much harder than for positivist scientific studies. For example, the identification of variables in the experimental approach is a technique that can be used to support replication to ensure that results will be similar. Bassey argued that:

Reliability is an impractical concept for case study since by its nature it is a one off event and is not open to exact replication. (Bassey 2002: 144)

The case study reported here exemplifies this because even if the data gathered about the experiences of the 11 informants was to be repeated with the same individuals there is a considerable chance that their experiences might have altered by the passing of time.

The notion of 'trustworthiness' (Lincoln and Guba, 1985: 218) is preferred and is endorsed by Bassey's list of eight tests of probity for truth (Bassey, 2002: 154), many of

which are about ensuring the quality of the data gathered. The importance of using a greater breadth of data from multiple sources has been highlighted previously (6: 46).

The main source of invalidity in case study is bias (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 1994). The issue of researcher bias has been addressed throughout this account of the research methodology and strategies for its reduction identified. The semi-structured interviews, where the level of researcher engagement was highest, were particularly susceptible to the potential for bias. The importance of respondent verification of the accuracy of the transcripts of audio-recorded interviews has already been discussed as has the opportunity to reduce bias afforded by reflection on complimentary or contradictory evidence from different sources.

Generalisability

Case study is frequently criticised because of concerns about the generalisability of the findings. For example, Gomm et al. (2000) argued that case study researchers cannot dismiss the issue of generalisation as being an irrelevance. As case study is characteristically an in-depth, context specific investigation (Yin, 1994) it is not surprising that there are issues about the application of findings to other situations. This focus on detail inherent in case study led Hammersley (1992) to argue that this was a factor militating against generalisation in other situations. Consequently, there are several aspects of the case study used in this small-scale research that could be regarded as limitations to its generalisability thereby reducing the value of any wider dissemination. For example, restricting the research to a single school that had adopted the BSC meant that the case study was very specific, as use of the BSC in schools, whilst increasing, is still rare and many school leaders will not be familiar with this accountability mechanism. Another constraint is that the selection of the small purposive sample of interviewees might not be fully representative of the wider population of school leaders and governors. Therefore it is understandable that the research findings about the case study school's use of the BSC as an alternative accountability approach might not be regarded as transferable.

Yin (2009) defends the criticism about lack of transferability, which he identifies as a 'prejudice' against case study, by arguing that that they are 'generalisable to theoretical

propositions and not to populations and universes' (Yin 2009: 15). Some commentators have moved away from external validity as a criterion of the transferability of case study findings and proposed the use of other concepts such as 'translatability' (Goetz and Le Compte, 1984). This view that 'relatability' has greater significance than generalisation was endorsed by Bassey, who argued that in the context of educational research:

If case studies are carried out systematically and critically, if they are aimed at the improvement of education, if they are relatable, and if by publication of the findings they extend the boundaries of knowledge, then they are valid forms of educational research. (Bassey 1981: 86)

This perspective was endorsed by Burgess, Sieminski and Arthur (2006), who argued that a more appropriate focus was the relevance of the findings for other professionals and the impact on their practice. As all schools are accountable, the focus of this research will be familiar to school leaders and governors who will have first-hand experience of engaging with the current national accountability regime in their own institution. Whilst this case study explores an alternative approach in a particular context, the familiarity with accountability and the ideas offered in the discussion of responsive accountability to support the development of more purposeful approaches are likely to be of interest to school leaders who are looking to develop their school's self-improvement practice.

Summary

This account of the methodology used in this small-scale research considered the benefits of and issues arising from the case study of a single school. The limitations of sampling in this specific situation were related to the benefit of using an in-depth approach to gathering detailed information. This account included a review of the multiple data collection techniques of document scrutiny, observation and interviewing and included consideration of the steps taken to maintain its manageability and secure good quality. A critical assessment was made of the analysis of the data gathered, which identified the steps taken to ensure it was valid and reliable and discussed issues of generalisability.

This discussion acknowledged that whilst the specificity of the case study was a limitation to transferability, its link with the notion of making school accountability more purposeful provided an example of practice that increased the relevance of its wider dissemination to other schools.

The next chapter examines an alternative accountability device, the BSC which is not commonly used in schools, despite being very popular and highly regarded in business organisations.. The modification of the BSC for use in a school setting is discussed.

Chapter 7

Using the balanced scorecard in a school setting

This chapter identifies the origins, underpinning rationale and the main characteristics of the BSC framework and discusses the case study school's modification of this business-based accountability tool for use in an educational setting.

What is the balanced scorecard?

The BSC is a device that many organisations use to help them realise their future ambitions for continuously improving performance and maintaining competitiveness (Kaplan and Norton, 1993). It is therefore developmental in nature rather than being more narrowly focused on ensuring accountability by checking for compliance and applying sanction in cases of underperformance. An important element of the concept is that its use will improve responsiveness to key stakeholders by achieving a better balance across a range of aspects of the organisation's work. The BSC therefore provides an alternative, more responsive, accountability methodology meriting further investigation to determine its suitability for use in more successful, autonomous schools.

Why the balanced scorecard?

As one of the most popular and widely adopted management and measurement tools in the business world (Nair, 2004: preface xi) the BSC has been used extensively amongst private sector companies throughout the world (Neeley, 2008). Interest in the BSC is growing amongst not-for-profit public sector organisations (Niven 2008) and educational organisations, including the National College of School Leadership, are also beginning to show an interest in its use (NCSL, 2005).

Some similarities are evident between the factors that led to the development of the BSC in business organisations in 1992 and current issues relating to school autonomy and accountability in 2014. Common features of both include the dominance of a particular performance measure together with the need to be accountable to a wider range of audiences.

Before the introduction of the BSC a business organisation's performance had primarily been measured by financial outcomes, particularly the return for shareholders. Kaplan and Norton (1996a) argued that, as financial measures were retrospective measures of past performance, they were not suitable for assessing the current and likely future success of a business. This recognition of the limitations of simply relying on financial measures stimulated interest in use of a wider range of performance indicators (Seddon, 2005). This scenario has some similarities with the current school accountability approach where a school's performance is primarily measured by results in standardised tests and examinations that are also historic outcomes of past performance (Crossley and Corbyn, 2006). Duffy (2005) argued that reliance on a single accountability measure does not provide adequate information about an organisation's overall effectiveness. Concerns about the higher profile of one particular outcome measure have also been raised by other educationalists (Mansell, 2007) as well as by the national government (DfE, 2010a) as this fails to address many less tangible aspects of a school's performance.

The need to accommodate a wider range of audiences was another common factor. The BSC extended the range of business audiences by including customers and employees in addition to shareholders. Parents, pupils and employees are also important audiences for twenty-first century schools where awareness of parental, pupil and employee satisfaction are essential elements of accountability in the market-orientated environment. Another dimension of the broadening of aspects of performance is the increase in the use of less tangible factors such as intellectual assets or the well-being of pupils. Because these 'softer' factors are much more difficult to measure their usefulness was previously considered more limited. This congruence of circumstances makes further examination of the BSC worthwhile and justifies the focus of the case study carried out as part of this research.

Origins and development

The term balanced scorecard was first used by Harvard's Robert Kaplan and David Norton to describe their original performance management and measurement system (Kaplan and Norton, 1992: 71). Their articles in the *Harvard Business Review* (Kaplan and Norton, 1992, 1993; Kaplan, 1994), brought the idea to prominence with subsequent development described in later publications (Kaplan and Norton, 1996a, 1996b; Kaplan, 2012).

The BSC was initially based on a simple measurement framework that the electronics company Analog Devices developed in 1986 to take a broader view of its performance by integrating financial and non-financial aspects of the organisation into a single performance measurement system (Schneiderman, 2001). The early BSC used a more comprehensive set of indicators to identify how well the organisation was performing. The device's scope was broadened by taking account of customers, operations and personnel development.

Strategic dimensions

The extension of the BSC concept to include a strategic element was a significant development (Kaplan and Norton, 1996a, 1996b). Adding the strategy map to the scorecard provided a mechanism for the BSC to accommodate the organisation's strategic goals. Kaplan and Norton argued that:

The Balanced scorecard translates an organisation's mission and strategy into a comprehensive set of performance measures that provides the framework for a strategic measurement and management system. (Kaplan and Norton 1996b: 2)

Critics of the BSC (Norreklit, 2000; Seddon 2005) argued that the development of the strategic dimension was detrimental making the device overly complex and more difficult to use.

Strategic management

Kaplan and Norton (1996a) were insistent that the BSC played no role in the formulation of strategy although they promoted the device as a strategic management tool. They described the BSC as 'a strategic framework for action' (ibid: 11) claiming that it could be used to describe and implement an organisation's strategy. This is achieved by breaking an organisation's strategy down into manageable operational activities through the selection of objectives that allow the organisation to achieve its goals and thereby deliver its strategy. Nair (2004: xi) argued that the balanced scorecard allowed an organisation to 'make its strategy actionable' whilst Niven (2008: 13) referred to an organisation 'translating its strategy into action'. The term 'strategic management'

therefore implies that day-to-day actions have an important role in delivering an organisation's longer term, premeditated planning for the future.

This discussion of the BSC framework and its implementation uses exemplary material from the case study school's BSC documentation and evidence from the observation of a parents' forum meeting where the governors raised parental awareness of the school's BSC. Copies of the school's BSC documentation, including the summary scorecard, are contained in Appendix B. This material included a strategy map, called its 'success map' (Appendix B:1), which provided a clear visual presentation of the school's approach to delivering its strategy by giving a holistic view of its BSC.

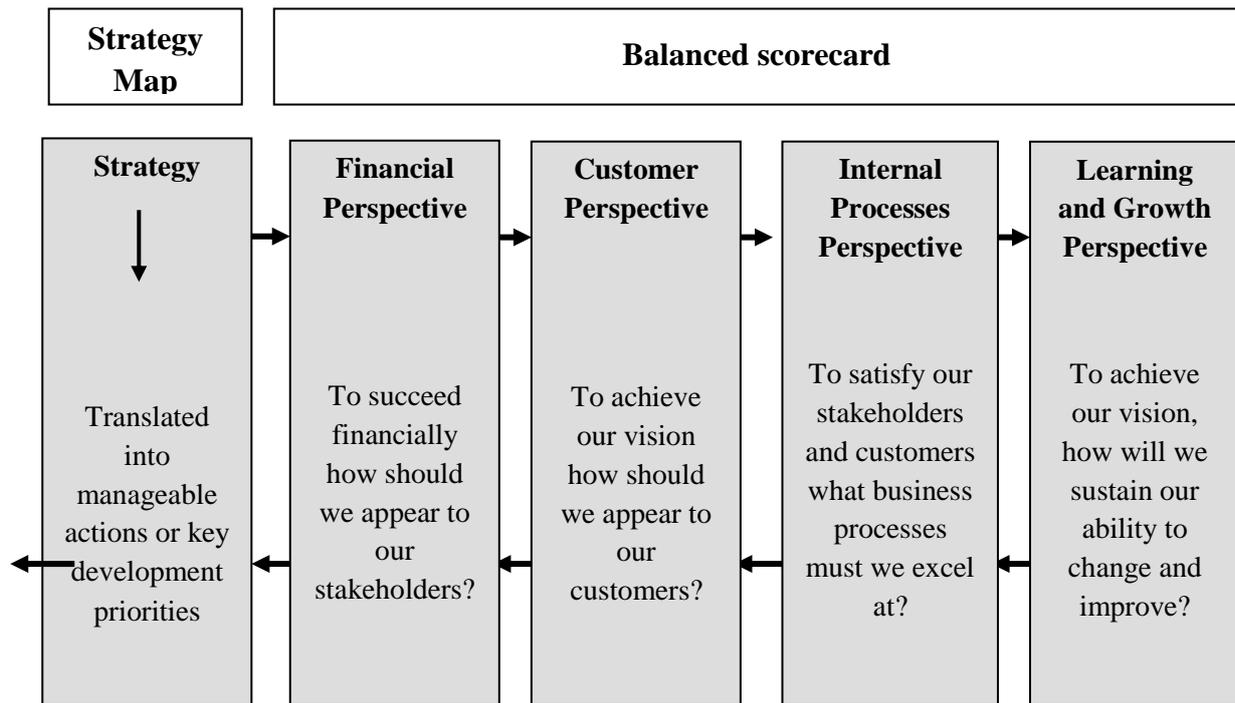
Whilst the BSC is used widely in private sector organisations, its use in schools is rare, although there is increasing interest amongst schools, particularly those with business partners and business sponsors. Examples include the Co-operative Academy in Manchester (TheCo-operativeAcademy@Brownhills) and Ninestiles Academy in Birmingham (Ofsted, 2006: 5).

Balanced scorecard framework

Figure 7.1 shows the main components of the BSC framework and clarifies how the strategic elements, can be brought together with the objectives chosen to deliver the strategy as well as providing the means of monitoring progress with their realisation, although evolution over time extended the concept by including the strategic dimension the original BSC title has been retained.

Figure 7.1 also shows that the BSC groups an organisation's activity into a number of perspectives representing key areas that act as different lenses through which an organisation can view its performance. Kaplan and Norton used four perspectives namely, financial, customer, internal business processes and learning and growth.

Figure 7.1 Main components of the balanced scorecard framework



The use of questions (Figure 7.1) to provide a way of approaching development from the users' perspective rather than from that of the provider was an interesting development. The framing of these questions helped shape each of the perspectives by identifying how well or how badly an organisation was performing.

Scorecard perspectives

The case study school also organised its BSC around four perspectives, but as Figure 7.2 shows there were some important distinctions between the four perspectives of the generic BSC and those selected by the school. The school used the scorecard perspectives to ensure that a wide range of key stakeholders were included in their plans to improve the school.

Figure 7.2 Comparison of the case study school’s scorecard perspectives with original balanced scorecard framework

Scorecard Perspectives					
Kaplan & Norton	<i>Customer</i>	<i>Internal Processes</i>	<i>Learning and growth</i>	<i>Financial</i>	
Case-study School	Customer or Stakeholder	Process	People		Value to the community

Data source: Balanced scorecards of case-study school and Kaplan and Norton (1992:2)

The substitution of the ‘value to the community’ perspective in place of the more traditional ‘financial perspective’ was a beneficial development. The rationale for this was clarified at the parents’ forum where the chair of governors identified the school’s desire to be able to measure its contribution to its local community as a greater priority. He explained that:-

‘We didn’t like the financial bit because we think that schools are bigger than just the financial performance of the organisation. Really the issue here is the value to the community.’ (Parents’ Forum 06: 37)

Critics of the BSC’s framework questioned its basic structure with some believing the four generic perspectives to be insufficiently comprehensive (Brignall, 2002). Many twenty-first century companies, including Tesco, have added a community perspective that acknowledges the organisation’s social responsibilities (Leahy, 2004). Dury (2004) argued that organisations should avoid creating too many perspectives since the added complexity undermines the simplicity of the BSC. By choosing to use the ‘value to the community’ perspective the case study school was able to include the local community stakeholders, thereby avoiding the need to introduce a fifth perspective.

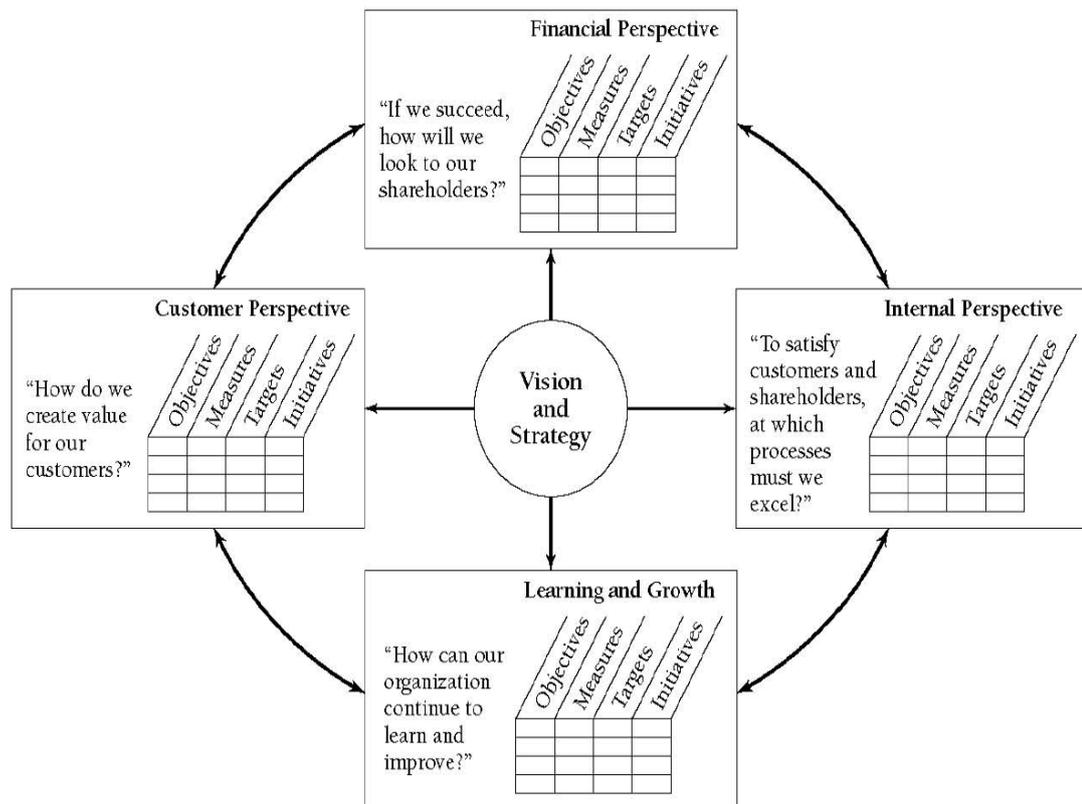
Components of each of the perspectives

Each perspective is developed through use of four components, as shown below:

- Objectives
- Activities
- Measures
- Targets

Figure 7.3 shows that the financial perspective was still placed uppermost in Kaplan and Norton's configuration of the BSC framework. By identifying shareholders as the main external audience in this way, this arrangement still gave greater credence to financial outcomes.

Figure 7.3 Kaplan and Norton's balanced scorecard framework



Kaplan (2010: 074)

In contrast the case study school placed the people perspective at the top of their success map in order to emphasise its importance and indicate that this had major implications for the other perspectives. The people perspective, which replaced the learning and growth perspective, was acknowledged as more significant and was therefore given greater prominence in the school's BSC. The term 'people' was used as an inclusive descriptor for all employees including teaching, non-teaching and administrative support staff. The purpose of this perspective was identified as 'measuring the performance of the people who run the school' (Parents' forum 14; 38: 39)

Students and their parents/carers were identified as the school's two main stakeholders (Parents' forum 14; 39: 07). whilst the priorities of the process perspective focused on securing improvements in teaching and pupils attitudes to learning as well as the monitoring of the schools performance by governors (Parents' forum 14; 38: 50).

This school's strategy or success map (Appendix B1:124) shows how the perspectives are intended to function in an inter-connected and mutually supportive way to encourage collaborative decision making and working to help the organisation achieve its goals. Kaplan and Norton (1993) argued that identifying and exploiting the linkages contributed to balance and increased the chance of success in achieving the desired outcomes. Recognition of the associations between the different elements provided a mechanism for ensuring that success in one aspect does not occur at the expense of the others. The expectation was that this more holistic approach to the management of performance results in better overall performance (Olive et al., 2003).

Kaplan and Norton's explanations of the relationships within and between the different perspectives have been criticised for lacking clarity (Norreklit, 2000; Ittner and Larker, 2003). These commentators question the rationale for the interdependence between components arguing that the cause-and-effect relationship, which this sequential chain of events creates, reduces the scorecard's flexibility.

The integral notion of balance operates at each level of the BSC framework. Kaplan and Norton (1993) emphasised the BSC's capacity to integrate external and internal interests as one of its defining characteristics. By ensuring participation of all stakeholders in the

accountability of the organisation's performance through the customer, people and process perspectives as well as external involvement through the focus on meeting community interests, the school made provision for ensuring that no one group pursued interests detrimental to another.

Objectives

The BSC framework helps leaders select the most pertinent performance goals that make the greatest contribution to their organisation's future success. Kaplan and Norton argued that the selection of BSC objectives forced managers to 'focus on the handful of measures that are the most critical' (Kaplan and Norton, 1992: 73). This makes choosing the vital few indicators that make the greatest difference to the organisation's performance crucial as these objectives are expected to be the key drivers bringing about the required development and improvement. Each objective should be a concise, high-level position statement revealing the organisation's ambitions of what must be done to bring about its desired future improvement.

A limited number of objectives are prioritised for inclusion. These are distributed across the scorecard perspectives. Kaplan and Norton recommended an absolute maximum of 20 performance objectives, arguing that such limitations minimised information overload (Kaplan and Norton, 1992), thereby ensuring that expectations are realistic and manageable. The choice of objectives is therefore critical and the school's decision to have just 14 objectives sharpened the focus on quality rather than quantity. This prioritisation helps ensure that the energies of those involved in delivery are focused on activities that will make the greatest difference to future performance and are not wasted on less productive activities.

The case study school's objectives were generated by a working party of four governors, the headteacher and a deputy headteacher. They used a variety of school documents as reference points including the existing school's mission and vision statements and the school improvement plan. Governors explained that they converted the school's strategy into 'some very clear and simple objectives' (Parents' forum: 39.40). They argued that by selecting only those objectives that were considered to be the most pertinent the success map provided them with a mechanism for supporting the delivery of the school's agreed strategy. The success map showed how the chosen objectives were distributed across the

four perspectives, and whilst it did not identify specific actions for any of the objectives, it did show linkages between them (Appendix B1: 124)

The 14 objectives selected for inclusion in the school's BSC were spread across the four scorecard perspectives, as shown:

PEOPLE PERSPECTIVE

- our people will:-
 - Enjoy well-being
 - Communicate effectively
 - Perform their roles to the highest standards
 - Commit to the vision of a successful school

PROCESS PERSPECTIVE

- our processes will:-
 - Manage students as individuals
 - Ensure that the strategic plan leads to improvement
 - Deliver high-quality teaching
 - Ensure effective governance

CUSTOMER PERSPECTIVE

- our improvements will:-
 - Provide a high-quality experience for all students
 - Students will identify and engage positively with the school
 - Parents will identify and engage positively with the school
 - Students will be safe, healthy and happy

VALUE TO THE COMMUNITY PERSPECTIVE

- our actions will:-
 - Provide value for money
 - Ensure that the school has a high reputation within its community.

Making the co-relationships that existed between objectives explicit at this stage provided a means of identifying how progress in one objective might be influenced by factors operating in other objectives. This not only highlighted opportunities for collaborative working but also contributed to balance by ensuring that the impact of one objective was not detrimental to another. For example, the objective of ensuring that students will be safe, healthy and happy was linked with both the management of students as individuals and effective governance. Consequently, if issues arose about the safety, health or well-being of students contributory factors might be identified in either or both of the linked objectives.

Measures

Measurement is an essential part of the BSC, which is commonly identified as a performance measurement tool (Kaplan and Norton, 1992: 71; Bourne and Bourne, 2007: 60 and Nair, 2004: 2). This interest in using measurement to drive performance was based on the common business tenet that only aspects of performance that can be measured can be improved (Kelvin, 1883; Kaplan, 2010). The British Quality Foundation (BQF, 2005: 13) defines a measure as ‘a quantitative device to monitor progress.’ By allocating one or more measures to each objective the BSC framework generates a set of measures that are distributed across the scorecard and can be used on a regular basis to assess performance (BQF, 2005).

Selecting measures

The case study school’s scorecard (Appendix B: 2) contained 24 measures across the 14 objectives. Some of the measures had been used before others were new to the school (Parents’ forum: 54.50). Five of the objectives had a single measure, eight had two and the student engagement objective had three. These measures had been chosen from more than 60 suggestions that had been generated by the BSC working party (Appendix B: 3: 128). This selection of the preferred measures to populate the school’s BSC fulfilled a key principle in the construction of an organisational scorecard, namely the freedom to choose what will be measured, how it will be measured and the ability to set objective measures for more subjective intangible assets, such as the organisation’s intellectual capital (Olve et al., 1999).

Types of measures

The measures used in the school's scorecard could be categorised in three distinct ways:

- numerical ('hard') data obtained from the school's information management system (SIMS), such as attendance rates and exclusion numbers; many of which were reported in returns to the local authority or the Department for Education.
- perception data gathered from student and parent questionnaires and staff surveys as well as feedback from parent and student forums
- the findings of review and evaluation, particularly where the impact of any action taken needed identification

Table 7.1 shows how the school's scorecard measures were distributed between these categories. Details of the specific data sources for each measure are shown in Appendix B: 4.

Table 7.1 **Categorisation of scorecard measures**

Numerical data	Perception data	Evaluation data	Other
Staff absence rates	Staff perceptions of their working environment	Meeting planned targets in school's strategic plan	How do users of the balanced scorecard subscribe to attitudes and values
Examination results	Staff perceptions of communications	Percentage of positive departmental reviews	Bring something special / extra to the school (discretionary behaviour)
Students meet their expected targets	Supporting each other	Meeting performance management objectives	
Exclusion data	Students' perceptions (<i>used twice</i>)	Tailored curriculum	
Participation in extra-curricular activities	Parents' perceptions	Effect of rewards and sanctions	
Numbers of accidents		Achieve governors' action plan	
Uptake of school meals		Management of the budget	
Number of first preferences			
Environment (buildings): health and Sa Data source: Case-study school's balanced scorecard safety list.			

Data source: Case-study school's balanced scorecard

The requirement to achieve balance across the measures meant that their selection and inclusion needed careful consideration. In addition to using a variety of measurements from different sources (Parent's forum: 45. 24), Kaplan and Norton argued that including both leading and lagging indicators (Bourne and Bourne, 2007) contributed to balance. In the original BSC the financial perspective contained mainly lagging indicators referring to retrospective outcomes. The case study school's scorecard used some lagging measures that only had annual outcomes including examination results and the number of parental first preferences. Whilst investigation of these outcomes might help identify reasons why the results were as they were, they could not be altered. Other measures, such as exclusion data or the number of accidents, could be regularly updated, allowing immediate response to address emerging issues and influence shorter-term action, including intervention where necessary.

Kaplan and Norton's non-financial perspectives were populated mainly with leading indicators that provided a forward-looking dimension, anticipating what might be achieved in the future. The majority of these were expected to become the key drivers of improvement to sustain competitiveness.

Getting the measures right

The school's preference for a pupil progress measure to identify improvement rather than just being dependent on the more easily obtained raw examination results shifted the emphasis away from the high-profile national attainment targets which are characteristic of contractual accountability. As the selection of this measure was based on the premise that standards of attainment rise when students learn well and make good progress, the prioritisation of actions which improved students' learning reduced the need to use short-term tactics to tackle these *high-stakes* performance indicators (Jones, 2004).

It is not always easy to identify the best way of measuring some important outcomes because they are not easily quantifiable. The school had experienced this difficulty with two objectives that did not have measurements allocated. These objectives both came from the people perspective:-

- How do users of the BSC subscribe to attitudes and values?

- Discretionary behaviour:- bring something special/extra to the school
Scrutiny of school documentation showed that in spite of some varied and interesting suggestions being put forward it was clear that the issue remained unresolved.

-

Targets

The identification of a target provides a mechanism for regular tracking of the progress towards achieving each measure. Assigning specific targets to each of the measures sets a threshold of success for each measure and allows judgements to be made about the level of performance achieved. The vast majority of the case study school's targets were expressed as percentages. The four non-percentile targets had clear goals identified as shown in Table 7.2.

Table 7.2 Non-percentile targets used in case-study school's balanced scorecard

Measure	Definitions	Targets	
		Expected performance	Good performance
Exam results	Key Stage 2 to Key Stage 4 contextual value added (CVA) at or above Ofsted level 2 in RAISEonline	Ofsted grade 2	Ofsted grade 1
Management of budget	Expenditure within budget	Expenditure within budget	
Environment: (buildings) and health and safety fault lists	Number of items on premises report fault list (as ratified by health and safety premises committee) unresolved within 3 months during term time.	Less than 15 unresolved items	Less than 10 unresolved items
Number of first choices	First choices for Year 7 intake published by LA after admissions procedure is complete	232	244

Data source: Case-study school's balanced scorecard

Ensuring balance is an important part of the identification of the targets, common criteria being that, as well as being measurable, they are expected to be specific and time related (Doran, 1981). The measure must contain an appropriate level of challenge requiring a suitable balance between realism and achievability whilst also setting the expectation of a demonstrable trend of improvement. Koch (2007) argued that when the target is too low the failure to fulfil potential will constitute underperformance. If the target is too high the failure to meet the expectations created by the demanding measure could also be interpreted as underperformance. Table 7.2 shows how the case study school resolved this issue by identifying targets for both expected performance and good performance.

The school's target-setting methodology was exemplified by the attempts to identify an appropriate target for the 'staff balanced scorecard subscription to the school attitudes and values' objective. School leaders agreed that rather than measuring the output of an individual it was preferable to adhere to the principle of the target being a collective goal by recording the number of individuals below a certain score. The number of individual staff reaching a certain threshold-level score would be recorded as evidence and the target expressed in terms of the percentage of staff achieving that score.

Role of the balanced scorecard in monitoring of school performance

The case study school's BSC played an essential role in enabling governors and school leaders to carry out their statutory monitoring function. The BSC was used to take regular termly 'snapshots' of performance that provided school leaders with a regular source of information about the current state of the school. This regular flow of information that could be used to inform timely intervention was identified as a particular value of the scorecard. The evidence provided for the termly scorecard monitoring helped the governors identify different levels of performance (Table 7.2: 71) and record them on the case study school summary scorecard with a green star for good performance that exceeded the target, a green circle for performance that was on target and a red square for performance below the target (Parents' forum: 43. 45).

Senior leaders believed that the longer term view based on evidence from trends over time was more useful as this showed at a glance where performance for an objective was improving, static or declining, allowing interventions to be put in place. They approached individual numerical outcomes with a degree of caution. Although this could be

particularly useful in identifying a sudden dramatic change in performance, especially where this revealed underperformance, it could also be the consequence of a particular event rather than being part of routine activity.

Benefits of the balanced scorecard

Any organisation seeking to maintain or enhance its success in a competitive environment stands to benefit from the BSC's prime purpose of enabling an organisation to continuously improve its performance. Niven (2008) argued that, in practice this rationale is delivered through the three key elements of strategic management, communication across the organisation and performance measurement.

Adopters of the BSC identified improvement in strategic planning as a benefit, arguing that the balance scorecard framework provides a mechanism for defining and executing strategy (API, 2009b). A particular strength of the BSC is that, throughout its design and implementation, it provides the whole organisation with 'the power of focus' (Eckerson, 2006: 3). For example, widespread distribution of the strategy map helped some organisations to achieve common purpose as this simple mechanism for communicating the strategy throughout the organisation meant that the BSC was used to focus everyone's efforts onto the things that matter most (API, 2008).

Tesco reported that the company used its BSC to engage its employees in performance management by making sure those employees at all levels knew and understood the organisation's main intentions (API, 2009a). Other users identified the requirement for prioritisation of the organisation's strategic objectives as beneficial as this maintained the focus on the most essential drivers of future improvement by providing clear direction for those involved in the delivery of the goals (API, 2010b). The International Baccalaureate argued that their BSC helped them design relevant and meaningful key performance indicators that improved the monitoring and management of the delivery of strategic performance priorities (API, 2010a). This better-quality data, obtained by use of the BSC, provided some managers with insights that helped them bring about real improvements in organisational performance (API, 2009c). The British Quality Foundation argued that this identification of better quality or sharper measures means that monitoring of progress with implementation is 'managed in an effective focused way' (BQF, 2005: 2).

Criticisms of the balanced scorecard

Whilst the BSC has been recognised as one of the most influential business ideas of the twentieth century (Sibbet, 1997) and has been rated amongst the ‘most enduring ideas on management’ (HBR, 2011: 85), in common with other organisational processes it has weaknesses some of which have already been identified in this chapter (Seddon, 2005). These include issues relating to the number of perspectives and the identification of linkages between different scorecard components.

The criticism that the BSC is not well suited to organisations with multiple stakeholders could apply to its use in schools. Norreklit (2000) argued that Kaplan and Norton’s framework omitted some key stakeholders including competitors, public authorities and suppliers. This issue was addressed by Neely et al. (2002), whose performance prism takes a broader view of stakeholders by including communities, employees, regulators and suppliers. Schools face an increasingly complex array of participants who could potentially be regarded as stakeholders, including employees, the local authority, local communities, academy sponsors, regulators and private sector suppliers of outsourced agencies. The challenge will be to ensure that the stakeholder perspective balances responsiveness to the customised requirements of parents and pupils with the demand to meet bureaucratic requirements.

In common with most organisational processes, success or failure with application of the BSC is closely linked to management style. Seddon (2005) argued that if the emphasis on strategy results in top-down implementation, the BSC can be perceived as a mechanism for those in authority to hold others accountable. This is because the apparent imposition of measures and targets becomes a mechanism for ensuring compliance with the possibility of sanctions if the targets are not met. However, as this approach is contrary to the BSC philosophy, it reveals a lack of understanding of the concept, which is based on the principle of a bottom-up approach. As this premise is based on the belief that those who are closest to the consumers have the best understanding of their needs and how these should be addressed, leaders and managers need to ensure that ownership of the BSC is dispersed widely throughout the organisation. Good practice encourages wide distribution of the scorecard. Ninestiles Academy in Birmingham, for example, uses the BSC for its development and improvement planning and publicises it widely. The school’s current scorecard is displayed in the foyer of its building as well as in corridors

and staff rooms. The scorecard is also available to users of the school's intranet (Ninestiles Academy, 2010).

Schneiderman (2001) argued that the scorecard's high visibility means that it resembles the tip of an iceberg because the major parts of the performance management processes are occurring beneath it. Successful implementation is dependent on understanding and developing these less visible but essential components. In some instances, where the actual scorecard becomes the predominant focus of activity, without sufficient understanding of the principles and processes that underpin it, the value of the BSC becomes diminished. This is exemplified by the previous Labour government's proposed School Report Card Initiative (DCSF, 2008, 2009). The intention was that every state school would publish a BSC that summarised their performance against a range of externally imposed measures. This mechanistic approach, which did not envisage any development of the understanding of the BSC principles and processes amongst school leaders, would have been dependent on compliance with statutory requirements.

Another principle of the BSC is that the design of a scorecard should be kept as simple as possible. Consequently, when an organisation's BSC has too many objectives, it can become unmanageable. Also, lack of clarity about the links between different objectives can make the BSC overly complex and difficult to manage. The quality of the actual measures themselves is another aspect of design where failure to keep to the basic premise of simplicity becomes disadvantageous (BQF, 2005). Many of these issues are not unique to the BSC and are common shortcomings affecting a variety of organisational processes.

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development of the understanding of the BSC principles and processes amongst school leaders, would have been dependent on compliance with statutory requirements.

Summary

The BSC is best described as a strategic performance framework that helps an organisation manage and measure progress with the delivery of its strategy. The device enables complex organisations to think holistically when developing their strategy as well as driving an internal process for building up ideas about how to continually develop and improve.

The evidence from this research shows that the leaders of the case study school were able to produce a well-constructed scorecard that made effective use of all the components. The successful modification of this BSC for use in a school setting provides a model of good practice for other school leaders who are planning to introduce a more responsive accountability framework into their institutions.

The summary scorecard is a succinct document recording and displaying headline evidence that provides stakeholders with an instantaneous overview of current performance across a range of key performance indicators. As this simple statement of the current position can be rapidly assimilated this allows informed decisions to be made about any short-term adjustments needed to improve progress. The integral notion of balance operates in a variety of different ways within components at each level and across the framework as a whole with implications for perspectives, objectives and measures.

Norreklit (2000; 2003; Norreklit et al., 2008) was very critical of the BSC, raising a number of issues. She argued that the BSC was not based on sound or logical arguments and concluded that the framework was impressionistic and conceptually unclear. In spite of this negative assessment, the BSC has retained its popularity and is still widely used in the business world.

Although the BSC has not often been used in schools, interest in the device is growing as private sector partners take an increasing role in managing state schools. The examination of one school's BSC has shown how the framework was successfully modified for use in

a school setting. Some of the evidence was particularly pertinent to the focus of accountability which provides the context for this research. By replacing the current reliance on past outcomes with a focus on improved future performance the BSC provides a mechanism for improving responsiveness to employees, parents and pupils and engaging them in contributing to development of the key initiatives. This means that use of the BSC can support the shift from accountability for individual and collective underperformance to an approach that emphasises performance and supports continuous improvement. However, an important consideration for school leaders is how to ensure that the BSC is used purposefully to meet the specific needs of the individual institution.

The next chapter discusses how the evidence from observations and provided evidence that the scorecard provided the school with means of meeting the requirements of a continuously improving organisation.

Chapter 8

Advantages of using the balanced scorecard

This chapter discusses the advantages to autonomous schools of using the BSC to support their continuous improvement.

Any organisation that is seeking to maintain or enhance its success in a competitive environment stands to benefit from use of the BSC. This is because one of the scorecard's prime objectives is that of enabling an organisation to continuously improve its performance. Niven (2008) argued that, in practice, the three elements of strategic management, communication across the organisation and performance measurement are all important factors in securing continuous improvement. The discussion in this chapter examines whether the BSC can help school leaders meet Leahey's universals for a self-improving organisation (Chapter 4: 30)

Delivers improvements in key processes

In his presentation on the BSC at the parents' forum meeting, the chair of governors highlighted the governing body's commitment to securing improvement, when he explained:-

The reason for giving this short chat is really to talk about the passion of your governing body; the thing that makes us come out until late at night to think about the school on your behalf, and that is our passion for improvement. We are very, very keen to see the school not just to be acceptable, but improving, (Parents' forum; Interview 14: 33)

The key objectives identified for securing improvement in the process perspective of the school's scorecard were:-

- Delivering of high-quality teaching,
- Improving the management of individual students,
- Ensuring effective governance, and
- Ensuring that the strategic plan leads to improvement.

Collaborative work on these key processes, together with close monitoring of progress with implementation, provides significant potential to improve learner engagement as well as achieve improvements in pupils' attainment and progress.

Engages all stakeholders

The school's use of the scorecard perspectives broadened the range of stakeholders to whom they were accountable by making direct commitments to all employees, pupils, their parents or carers as well as the local community.

Future orientated

Adopters of the BSC have identified improvements in strategic planning as a benefit, arguing that the BSC's framework provides a mechanism for defining and executing strategy (API, 2009b).

The case study school's governors recognised and emphasised the importance of the strategic perspective. The chair of governors explained that:-

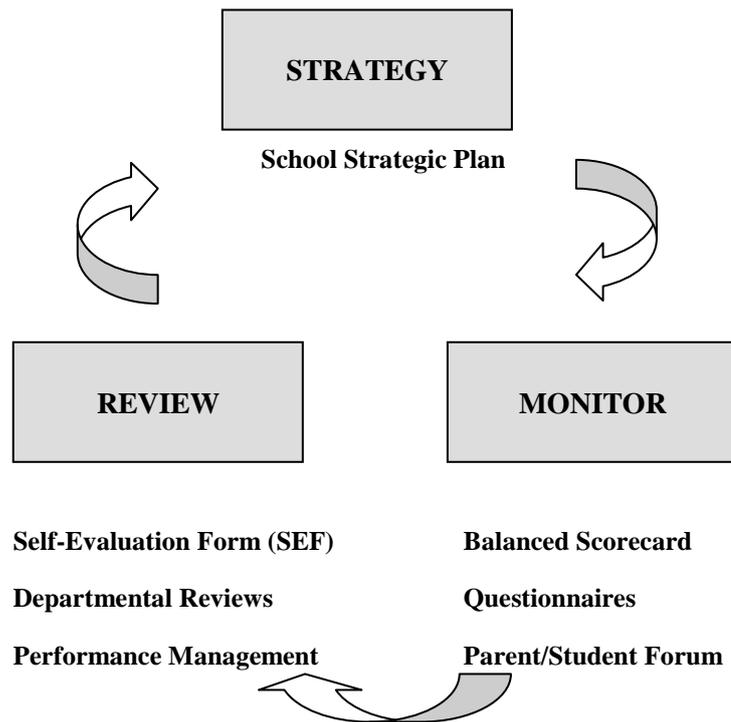
The governing body is continuously involved with strategy ... and is very much focused on looking at strategy all the time. (Parents' forum, Interview 05: 45).

The chair of governors also explained that:-

Use of the balanced scorecard has helped the governing body make a better contribution to longer term planning for the school's future development (Interview 05: 38)

The governors' SEC adopted a well-articulated planning cycle (Figure 8.1) that identified the importance of strategy development in their planning, monitoring and evaluation activity.

Figure 8.1 Case study school planning cycle



Evidence source: Local Authority Governors' Forum: PowerPoint, slide 13.

The governors and school managers used the BSC to increase the focus on forward planning for future improvement. Shortcomings in past practice were described by the head teacher, who identified that the introduction of the BSC had provided the impetus to change the school's strategic planning processes. He explained that:-

I think the problem with the school strategic plans in the past is that they have hit on performance indicators and filled them with things you can causally measure and they are not always the things that are most valuable to measure. (Interview 24: 14).

Although each of the four governors interviewed made some reference to the importance of their strategic roles, the chair of governors was the only interviewee who made reference to the scorecard's strategy map. He stressed its importance in managing strategy:-

Covering strategy in a simple way by fitting objectives to different parts of the scorecard to guide their delivery and using the links between them makes the process more coherent. (Interview 05: 21)

Eckerson (2006:3) argued that a particular strength of the widespread distribution of the strategy map is that this provides the whole organisation with the 'power of focus', thereby helping them achieve common purpose.

Articulates organisational vision, values and culture

The headteacher was of the opinion that use of BSC provided a means of ensuring that the school's vision and values were integral to its planning and the delivery of its intentions. He explained:-

If you start with a values-driven process you arrived at what it is important to try and put some sort of measure and this also becomes a focus of monitoring activity. (Interview 24: 14)

Sets audacious goals

Leahy (2013) argued that the setting of challenging goals encouraged risk taking amongst accountees and enabled them to be innovative in their responses. As well as setting a specific performance target for each improvement objective, the case study school also defined three levels of target achievement, thereby identifying both realistic and challenging targets for performance for each objective. The summary scorecard showed a red square for below- target performance, a green circle for performance that matched the specified target and a green star for good performance which exceeded the target.

Ensures robust self-evaluation

One of the purposes identified by the governing body was to improve the role of governors in monitoring and reviewing of the school's performance. The BSC was the device that governors chose to enable them to achieve this aim. The interview with the SIOP confirmed that the school has established a comprehensive and robust system of monitoring and evaluating the work of the school and governors have a good understanding of the school's strengths and areas needing improvement. The school planning cycle (Figure 8.1) identified performance management, departmental reviews and the completion of the SEF as the three important elements that case study school governors used for accountability purposes. Performance management was beyond the

scope of this research, although the school's most recent inspection report reported that the monitoring of teaching and learning was very secure and provided staff with good levels of feedback on how they can improve their practice (Ofsted, 2010: 7).

The minutes of subcommittee meetings showed that the findings of departmental reviews were reported on a regular basis to the governors' curriculum and careers committee. Collated overall findings were used to monitor progress with the allocated BSC measure about the percentage of positive departmental interviews. The target for the high-quality teaching objective was set at 80% (Appendix B2: School summary -BSC). The scorecard summary showed that during the first two terms of the academic year 2006-2007, the overall performance of those departments that had been reviewed was below target with only 50% having been judged as meeting the expected standard.

Gathers appropriate data

For the BSC to fulfil its function as a performance measurement tool, a reliable flow of data is needed to ensure that the relevant information is available for each of the organisation's preferred measures.

The appointment of an 'administrative manager for monitoring and review' was an important factor for the successful implementation of the case study school's BSC (Interview 06:1.39). This individual was responsible for oversight of the collection, collation and timely distribution of all the scorecard data during regular monitoring and updating of the BSC. This crucial role was filled by a very experienced member of the school's administrative staff who was highly regarded, having previously been the headteacher's personal assistant.

The BSC administrator's role in the gathering of perception data was greater than might be expected. Her knowledge of the timescales and understanding of when the survey findings would be needed allowed her to trigger each survey by alerting the school office to organise distribution of the questionnaires (Interview24: 1.13.37). She also ensured that analysis by respective members of staff was progressing at a rate that would ensure that the findings would be available for the next review of progress with the BSC. The administrator identified the need for the strict application of deadlines with regard to any source of data as critical to her effectiveness stating that 'as soon as one set of deadlines

had been met the time lines of the successive phase comes into focus' (Interview 09: 32). The gathering of information from review and evaluation posed similar challenges of ensuring that there had been sufficient analysis and interpretation of the raw data before its distribution to governing body committee members.

The scheduling of the data flow was determined by the dates of various governing body meetings (Appendix B7:131). These were published annually prior to the start of the academic year. The crucial dates were the termly school SEC meetings at which progress with BSC implementation was monitored. An updated summary scorecard was provided for each of these meetings together with pertinent evidence for any measures that might be the focus of discussion. Another important part of BSC administrator's role was that she clerked the school SEC meetings. The observation of the committee meeting confirmed the importance of her presence at the meeting in responding to governors' requests for clarification or more detailed information about particular issues that emerged. She also frequently initiated any follow-up activity necessitated by decisions made at the school SEC meetings.

These arrangements meant that the school had a good supply of relevant data to inform governors' discussions about the BSC. An important dimension of this well-managed system of data gathering was that the school was able to make arrangements for the gathering of good-quality data, which was relevant for each objective. This system also provided staff and governors with 'real-time data' that allowed the identification of the next steps in terms of the action to be taken in response to the monitoring findings. This meant that it was possible for the impact of actions taken to make a difference to the learners from whom the original data was generated.

The headteacher was of the opinion that:

I think the scorecard here would have died the death had we not made the administrative position outside the senior management team to do the data crunching and the production of the scorecard. We could not have sustained this, I don't think, from the senior management team without administrative support for it. It does need somebody to take responsibility for driving the process and those processes I think need embedding in the school. (Interview 24: 1.12.11).

Summary

This research evidence indicates that the case study school's use of the BSC equipped the school to be a continuously improving organisation.

In the next chapter, the issues of communication across the organisation (Niven, 2008) will be discussed and conclusion drawn from the research reported in this thesis.

Chapter 9

Discussion and conclusion

The discussion in this chapter explores how school leaders can develop their expertise and confidence in the use of alternative accountability approaches that originate from disciplines outside education. Although the BSC has been the focus of this study, other devices are used in the business world to ensure accountability.

The research evidence demonstrates that the case study school was able to successfully modify the BSC for use in a school setting. A major factor in this was the enthusiasm for using this device together with the high level of expertise amongst a core group of governors. Their contributions enabled the school to produce a well-structured, good quality, BSC for use by school leaders. The main purpose of the scorecard was identified as helping the school to continuously improve. The scorecard also made the governors' strategy explicit to all employees' and also provided the means of translating that strategy into a series of manageable activities to bring about the desired improvement. In addition the introduction of the BSC was accompanied by the introduction of an effective system to gather appropriate data for each of the scorecard's objectives. This meant that governors were able to monitor progress towards realisation of the improvement goal through robust monitoring by their sub-committees.

Prior knowledge of the balanced scorecard

Identifying participants' prior knowledge of the BSC was an important initial step in establishing the degree of familiarity with this alternative accountability device. The data in Table 9.1 shows that governors' knowledge of the BSC was much greater than that of both school staff and external participants. This data could not be validated by statistical analysis because of the small number of semi-structured interviews.

Governors' prior knowledge of the balanced scorecard

Table 9.1 Comparison of governor, school staff and external participants' prior knowledge of the balanced scorecard.

	Prior knowledge of BSC	No prior knowledge of BSC	Totals
Governors	4	0	4
School staff	01	4	5
External participants	50	2	2
	5 (45.4%)	6 (54.5%)	11

Data source: responses to contextual question of semi-structured interviews

Key members of the governors' SEC had significant experience of using the BSC in business organisations. The chair of governors had led a project to introduce the BSC into a national utility company and used the device on a regular basis in his workplace. (Martinez et al., 2006: 4). The vice chair of governors was an Institute for Employment Studies training facilitator who worked with companies interested in adopting the BSC (Interview 12 : 09).

Whilst other governors had knowledge of the BSC their experiences of its use were mixed. The parent governor had worked in a company that had used the BSC to measure and monitor its performance but had chosen not to use it in his own business enterprise (Interview 20: 08). The community governor had participated in an unsuccessful attempt to introduce the BSC into the local authority's education department (Interview 19: 11). Governors were therefore well informed about the BSC and were strong advocates of its use in the school. One governor identified that the chair of governors had been particularly influential in the school's decision to adopt the scorecard, explaining that:-

The introduction of the scorecard]was the initiative of the new chair of governors... he introduced the concept of the balanced scorecard because I believe that is his remit in his job... and he is very much involved in all of that, so for him that was the way things were done. So he introduced it to the full committee, he did a presentation and basically got agreement to introduce it. (Interview 20: 05)

Staff's prior knowledge of the balanced scorecard

Members of the school's senior management team had only limited prior knowledge and understanding of the BSC as only the head teacher has any experience of its use. He stated that:-

I knew a lot about scorecards in terms of the end product if you like and had seen some of these and been aware of institutions that used them. What I hadn't seen was the process that generates it and in particular I think that the process is very important. (Interview 24: 05).

One reason why the school leaders were less well informed about the scorecards was that it is not commonly part of the content of leadership professional development. Although training courses for senior managers who are interested in preparing for and managing Ofsted inspections are common, opportunities for school leaders to develop their knowledge of other approaches, including those used by business organisations, are much less common (Hallinger and Snidvongs, 2005). Consequently, head teacher acquisition of knowledge of devices such as the BSC is dependent on contact with other experienced colleagues. In the case of the case study school, the governors were the source of this expertise.

Case study school acquisition of knowledge of the balanced scorecard

Following the governing body's agreement to adopt the BSC senior leaders attended an in-depth training session led by external facilitators selected by the chair of governors. During this session, the rationale underpinning the BSC was explained, and school leaders were introduced to the processes involved in its construction. One session was given over to identifying the school's BSC initiatives (Appendix B6:130), and another was used to reach agreement about measures and targets. Once this initial training had been completed, the facilitators were available to assist school staff and provide advice as necessary during the development of the school's BSC.

Dissemination to other staff

The BSC was introduced to the whole staff during the routine weekly after school staff meeting. This meant that it was perceived as a piece of routine management activity, rather than being a significant part of the school's improvement strategy. The subject leader reported:

I do recall that scorecards were mentioned at a staff meeting. I also vaguely recall seeing something about the scorecard on the back of the weekly green sheet that we have but nothing that really made any impact on me or made me think that it was something really important. (Interview 22: 03).

The assistant headteacher confirmed that the BSC did not have a sufficiently high profile amongst the wider staff. Linking the introduction of the BSC with staff professional development by allocating part of an in-service training day might have provided a better way of engaging the staff.

Transparency issues

The summary scorecard is supposed to be the means of providing transparency in the giving of the account of progress in achieving the school's stated improvement goals. This aspect of ensuring good communication amongst staff who were involved in the use of the BSC which Niven (2008) identified as crucial to its success, was a shortcoming in the case study school's procedures. The SEC governors' intention that the summary scorecards would be in the public domain by being highly visible around the school was not fulfilled. The summary scorecard was not posted at key points around the school as planned. In addition, the information about the BSC was not posted on the school's website. School leaders were aware of difficulties of communicating with staff and the scorecard itself showed that progress with the priority of improving staff perceptions of communications was one of the few measures where performance remained below target.

The scorecard was not displayed in the head teacher's office to provide a point of reference for discussion with staff or external visitors, including the school's link adviser or SIP. The interview with the subject leader identified that:-

It was only really when I was asked about this interview that I started to investigate how and where I could get hold of a copy of the scorecard (Interview 22: 06).

She explained that she was directed to the staffroom notice board, where she eventually located an out of date copy concealed underneath numerous documents that had been posted more recently. Eventually she located a copy on the school's intranet but needed help from the school's information technology support team to download a copy.

Another communication deficit was that discussion of the BSC did not feature as a regular item on agendas of departmental meeting or discussions between staff and their line managers.

A consequence of these shortcomings in communication about BSC was that lack of understanding about its prime purpose amongst staff reduced the level of trust between assistant staff and school managers. For example, the assistant head teacher considered the measures and targets to be '*more* performance management hoops to jump through' (Interview 12: 46). He explained that other staff shared this view. Staff also felt that the priorities, measures and targets had been imposed and expressed concerns about this 'top-down' approach to the school's BSC implementation. Staff considered that the high level of dependence on judgemental evidence increased the emphasis on contractual forms of accountability at the expense of more responsive forms of accountability.

The giving of the account

Although discussion and updating of the scorecard was a regular feature of governing body sub-committees, including the school SEC, there was not distinct process for disseminating the findings of these monitoring activities to other key stakeholders, including pupils and their parents and carers.

The findings from the monitoring and evaluation of the scorecard were diminished by their use for the completion of the school's SEF. As the SEF is routinely used for inspection purposes, it is rarely placed in the public domain. This reduced the level of feedback that staff received about progress with the achievement of the school's key

improvement goals. Neither members of the governors' SEC nor the school's leadership team had given serious consideration about how the information might be made more widely available. Ebrahim (2002) identified a number of possibilities by which an account may be given. One possibility might be for the school to produce an annual report for parents and other stakeholders who could include a summary of the key evidence of progress made in addressing the BSC's key performance goals. A timely opportunity might be to publish the report close to the time when the annual school performance tables are made public. Whilst the performance tables continue to hold the school accountable for the standards expected by the government and place the school in a competitive environment, providing information about the school's progress in securing improvement has considerable potential to reassure parents that issues are being addressed.

An alternative approach might be to consider the incremental dissemination of the school's successes and achievements as these occur. Many schools already send regular newsletters to parents. These could become vehicles for updating pupils, parents and staff by providing current information about the BSC. A twenty-first-century approach might be through the use of social media, which has the potential of providing stakeholders with opportunities for interaction and dialogue with school staff.

Conclusions

There cannot be any doubt that schools in the English state system currently have greater autonomy than ever before. At the same time, they are held accountable for the standards expected by the national government by a rigorous one-size-fits-all national accountability framework. This contractual form of accountability validates school self-evaluation and assesses school capacity but leaves the school to act on its findings. The application of sanctions and intervention by external personnel makes staff risk averse and thereby reduces the school's ability to adopt solution-focused responses that require creativity and innovation.

Hallinger and Snodvings (2005) articulated that they: 'believe that the application of balanced scorecards in education is inevitable'. This research has provided an example of a BSC that was successfully modified for use in a school setting and identified that it provides school leaders with a more responsive accountability methodology that allows

them to identify and manage their own improvement activities. However, a-not insignificant problem is that head teacher professional development does not provide a means of making head teachers aware of accountability devices which are used successfully beyond the sphere of education. School leaders need to use their autonomy to resolve the issues of selecting accountability approach that best suits the needs of their particular institutions.

Chapter 10

Reflections on research

In this chapter the reflection on this research considers some of its limitations and also identifies some possibilities of further research.

Benefits

Carrying out this research into a pertinent dimension of the leadership of contemporary twenty-first century schools has been an extremely fulfilling experience. This included responding to the challenges that are inevitably an integral and essential part of engaging with the high expectations and rigour of academic study. In particular, my own much-improved understanding of this complex area of knowledge has confirmed the aim of engaging in research, which is relevant for school leaders and will inform development of future accountability practice.

One of the challenges of responding to the exactitudes of academic study was avoiding the temptation to widen the scope of the research by introducing too many ideas from a broad professional background. Retaining the tight focus of the research was dependent on having well-planned activities which ensured clarity of purpose for the research and provided clear direction for its execution. Another challenge was ensuring that the use of knowledge gained from the experiences during a comprehensive career in education did not introduce bias.

Limitations

A number of limitations that could reduce the value of the findings of this research can be identified. Several of these are related to the comparatively narrow scope of the samples used to gather evidence. Firstly, the choice of the case study school was limited by the need for the use of an alternative accountability methodology. This meant that whilst the school was not directly self-selecting there were clearly constraints since relatively few schools provided the opportunity to examine an alternative approach to the monitoring and evaluation of their performance. Secondly the fact that only a small number of participants from a single case study school contributed to the evidence base could be

regarded as a shortcoming. This was despite the selection of a range of personnel for interviews, which sought to ensure the widest representation of governors, senior leaders, other staff and appropriate external stakeholders. As the case study school was a successful institution that was well regarded by parents, questions could be raised about the transferability of the findings to other less successful and less popular schools, that might not have earned their autonomy.

Another limitation, which operated at a level beyond that of the individual school, was the constraint that the research took place within a single, medium-sized English local authority (LA). This LA did not have a strong track record of promoting school autonomy. For example, none of its 27 secondary schools took advantage of the option of becoming grant-maintained schools during the 1990s. In addition, take-up of foundation status was slow with just three secondary schools (11% of the LA total) becoming trust schools in 2010. In September 2011, three traditional academies opened in this local authority, replacing previously underperforming schools. This meant that the majority (78%) of the secondary schools, including the case study school, remained within the jurisdiction of the LA. Whilst evidence determining the influence of the LA on school autonomy is beyond the scope of this research it needed to be borne in mind that relatively few of the governors and senior leaders in its secondary schools had direct experience of the autonomy resulting from ‘opting out’ of LA control. This does not, however, detract from the fact that even leaders of schools that remained within the LA have adapted to the freedoms of the LMS that have become integral to the operation of all English state schools.

As this research was carried out by an individual researcher, this introduced both advantageous and disadvantageous factors. A significant advantage was that of greater consistency in terms of selecting and interpreting appropriate data as for example, during the coding of the interview transcripts. As all the data were handled by a single individual, this reduced the potential for variation arising from the input of multiple contributors. A disadvantage was the constraint on the resources available for carrying out this research, particularly in terms of the researcher’s personal capacity. In particular time was an important factor as, for example, the transcription of the records of both the semi-structured interviews and the observations was very time consuming. This was an additional factor in determining the size of the sample of interviewees as it was essential to gather a manageable amount of data which ensured that the validity and reliability of

the evidence was not compromised by an excess of information. This was important in terms of being able to demonstrate flexibility and being responsive in reacting to evidence emerging from the data collection. Another key factor was the ability to deal with significant changes in the national context such as the change of government that occurred whilst the research was being carried out. These changes resulted in a considerable redirection of priorities including significant changes in aspects of policy, such as accountability and school improvement, which were pertinent to the research.

In spite of these limitations it is possible to justify reasons for making the findings of this research more widely available. As the need to be accountable is a pre-requisite of every school there is likely to be some degree of familiarity with this research focus. In addition because of the recent developments that have raised the expectation that schools will become self-improving the research findings may well have additional relevance in the near future.

Opportunities for further research

There is also scope for further development of this research including broadening its reach. An initial area of interest would be to follow up developments in the case study school particularly in the light of recent national policy changes. This is pertinent since as an outstanding school it will no longer be subject to national inspection in the foreseeable future. As the school was planning to progress into its second phase of BSC use, it is therefore well placed to build on its experience of using its alternative accountability approach. Another important aspect where further research could be of value would be to carry out similar research in a school with different characteristics from the case study school, particularly one judged as inadequate and therefore, not providing a satisfactory standard of education. This has the potential to enhance the current findings determining the relevance of the wider application of the research.

A distinctive feature from the researcher's perspective is that this research was carried out towards the end of an extended and varied professional career in education including experience as a teacher, an inspector and a school improvement adviser. This meant that the researcher brought first-hand knowledge of the introduction of the ERA (legislation.gov.uk, 1988), together with personal experience of both the early and subsequent stages of implementation. This reflection on the impact of that

transformational reform legislation more than 20 years after its enactment confirmed that whilst many of the aspirations for changes in school organisation and functioning have become integral to and embedded in current practice some aspects could be identified where development was still relatively limited. The continued dependence on the national inspection regime in schools that had been transformed by adopting the freedoms devolved to them, was particularly striking.

An unexpected and additional benefit that is pertinent to this research is the timeliness in that its completion coincides with a period of significant development in terms of both school accountability and autonomy. These new expectations of ‘making direct accountability more meaningful’ (DfE, 2010a: 66) are a consequence of the current coalition government’s intention to make schools more accountable to their stakeholders whilst adopting the new vision that their schools will be self-improving. This means that school leaders face fresh challenges when responding to these expectations, which require them to be confident that their institution is able to be fully accountable. Although this aspiration that ‘increasingly autonomous schools will be more accountable to their communities’ (DfE, 2010a: 7) had not been declared as explicitly when the research was initiated, the unanticipated convergence between the research focus and current developments increases the relevance of the findings. This intriguing shift in context reinforces the original intention that the findings of this research might provide leaders of state schools with a better understanding of the ‘fitness for purpose’ of accountability in their individual institutions. Having the ability to rebalance their accountability practice should allow school leaders to take greater control of determining the future destiny of their twenty-first-century autonomous schools.

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APPENDIX A

- A1 Schedule for semi-structured interviews
- A2 Codings allocated to audio recordings of semi-structured interviews

APPENDIX A1

Evaluation of school performance

Experiences of the balanced scorecard and its contribution to school improvement

Questions for semi-structured interviews

The balanced scorecard is just one of a range of management tools designed to enable leaders to ‘measure organisational performance’.

1. Knowledge of the balanced scorecard:

- 1.1 Where and when did you first come across the balanced scorecard?
- 1.2 What experience do you have of using the balanced scorecard in an organisation other than the case study school?
- 1.3 What particular features of this management tool appealed to you and led to your selecting the scorecard from the wide range of management tools available?
- 1.4 What do you consider are the advantages and disadvantages of using the balanced scorecard in school?

2. Development in current institution:

- 2.1 What were the stronger / weaker areas of the school’s previous methods of measuring performance?
- 2.2 Kaplan and Norton’s original model was based on four components (i) customers, (ii) learning and growth, (iii) business (organisational) processes and (iv) financial perspectives

How does your school scorecard interpret these domains?

- 2.3 Could you outline common areas/links between the scorecard and other tools which support the management of change including: (i) school self-evaluation processes, (ii) school planning and (iii) performance management?
- 2.4 Can you provide any examples of how use of the scorecard has enhanced strategic perspectives and enabled strategy to be turned into action?
- 2.5 What has been your experience of developing easily measured key performance indicators across the range of dimensions?

3. Implementation in current institution:

- 3.1 Where does the overall responsibility lie for the scorecard’s implementation in school?

- 3.2 How has responsibility for the development of the (first) scorecard been distributed amongst leaders at all levels including: (a) senior leaders and (b) middle-level leaders?
- 3.3 What role have governors played in the introduction, preparation and implementation of the current scorecard?
- 3.4 One of the keys to successful use of the scorecard is the expectation that all staff will be engaged with its preparation and implementation. How is this being realised in school?
- 3.5 What particular skills do you think your staff need to develop an effective balanced scorecard?
- 3.6 How is the quality of the of the school's balanced scorecard assured?

4. Impact of the scorecard:

- 4.1 Do you have any specific examples of particular improvements resulting from the introduction of the scorecard approach?
- 4.2 What barriers have you experienced whilst introducing and implementing the balanced scorecard approach?
- 4.3 Can you clarify ways in which the introduction of the scorecard has simplified the measurement of the school's performance?

5. Accessibility for schools

- 5.1 Hallinger and Snidvongs (NCSL, 2005) state that they 'believe that the application of balanced scorecards in education is inevitable.'

What is your view of this statement?
- 5.2 How would you encourage leaders of other schools to make use of the scorecard in their schools?
- 5.3 Can you suggest any ways in which the balanced scorecard approach can be made more appealing to school leaders?

6. Further development:

- 6.1 The Hay Group (2006) identifies that 'the true power of the balanced scorecard approach ... is fundamentally about creating a learning organisation.' How does this view correspond with your experience of using the tool?

7. Aspects identified by the interviewee:

- 7.1 Are there any additional contributions that you would like to make?

APPENDIX A2

Codings allocated to audio recording of semi-structured interviews

The following codings were allocated to provide anonymity when making reference to evidence from audio recordings in the text of the thesis.

The digital recorder allocated the generic prefix 300 to each recording. The specific code numbers allocated by the researcher were used in the text.

Order of interviews	Content of audio recording	Code allocated
1	Interview with chair of governors	05
2	Interview with administrative assistant	06
3	Interview with deputy headteacher	07
4	Interview with assistant headteacher	09
5		11
6	Interview with vice-chair of governors	12
7	Observation of parents' forum	14
8	Interview with parent	16
9	Observation of governors' self-evaluation committee (SEC)	18
10	Interview with community governor	19
11	Interview with parent governor	20
12	Interview with School Improvement Partner	22
13	Interview with headteacher	23

Note:

- 1 The majority of the interviews and the two observations were recorded on a digital voice recorder.
- 2 These recordings were downloaded and transcribed from the computerised storage site
- 3 Interviews 05 and 06 were recorded on cassette tape and transcribed directly from this source. They were not allocated automatic digital codings (300). Their coding was allocated to sustain the overall rationale for code location which was the order in which the recordings were made.

APPENDIX B

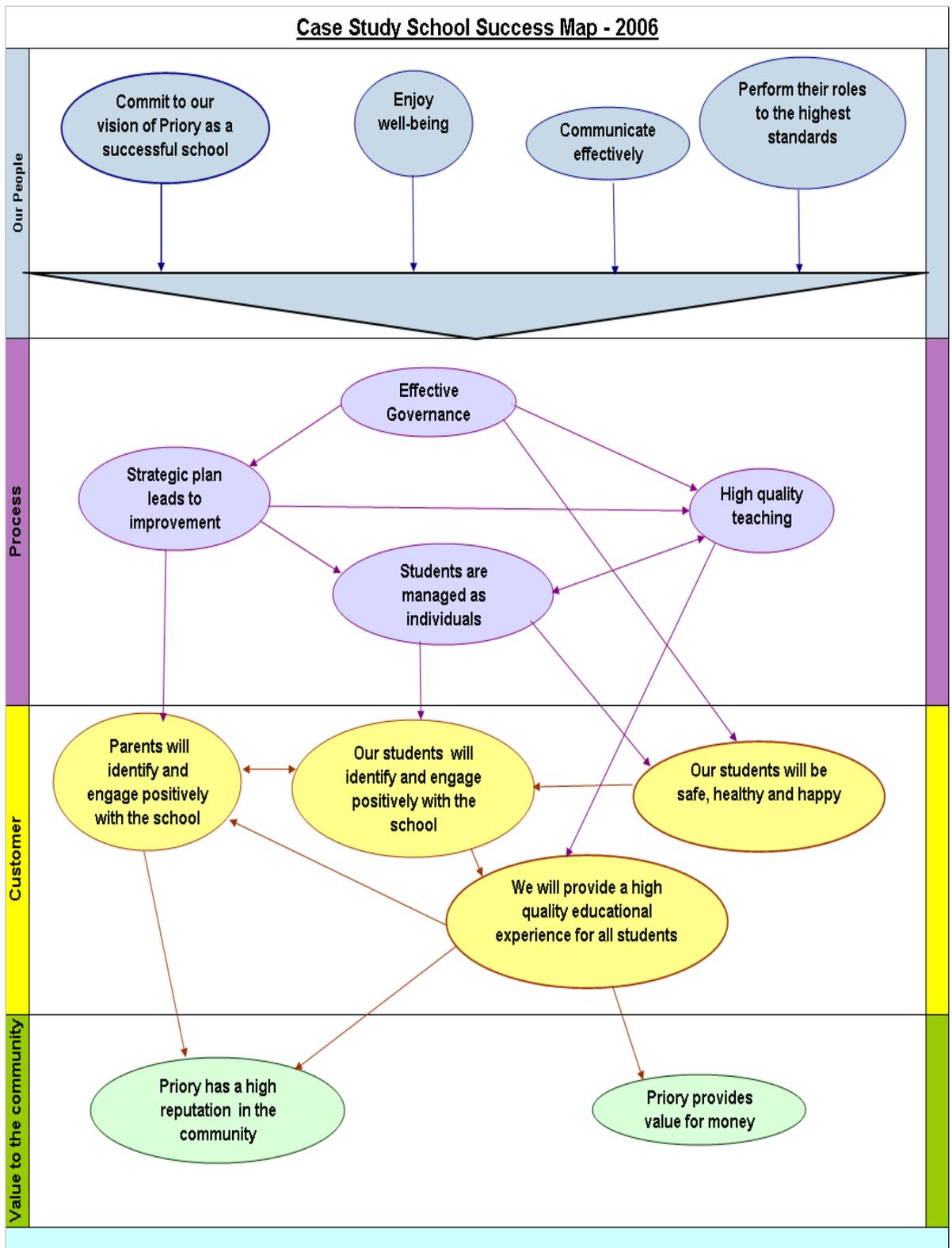
Balanced Scorecard Documentation

This appendix contains the case study school's balanced scorecard

The documentation contained in this section includes:

- B1 Case Study School - Success Map 2006
- B2 Case Study School - Draft Balanced Scorecard 2006-2007
- B3 Case Study School - Balanced Scorecard Definitions
- B4 Case Study School - Balanced Scorecard Measures and Targets
- B5 Data sources for Balanced Scorecard Measures
- B6 Case Study School - Balanced Scorecards Initiatives
- B7 Balanced Scorecard data allocation to governing body sub-committees 2007-2008
- B8 Case Study School - Strategic Plan (key priorities)

APPENDIX B1 Case study school success (strategy) map 2006



APPENDIX B2: Case study school draft balanced scorecard 2006 – 2007

Case Study School - Draft Balanced Scorecard 2006 - 2007									
★ = Good Performance ● = On Target ■ = Below Target Performance									
	Objectives	Measure	2005 / 2006 Target	Terms			Year to Date		
				Terms 1&2	Terms 3&4	Terms 5&6	Actual Icon	Actual	Target
People	Well being	Staff Perception of Working Environment		●	★	★	★	74%	70%
		Absence rates		★	★	★	★	3.1%	Under 6%
	Effective communication	Staff Perception of Communications		■	■	■	■	50%	60%
	Our people will perform their roles to the highest standards	Subscribe to attitudes and values							
		Meeting Performance Management Objectives		n/a	n/a			n/a	85%
	Commit to our vision of Priory as a successful school	Bring something special / extra to the school (discretionary behaviour)							
Supporting each other				■	●	■	■	60%	70%
Process	Manage students as individuals	Tailored Curriculum		n/a	●	n/a	●	93%	90%
		Effectiveness of Rewards / Sanctions		●	●	●	●	93%	90%
	Strategic plan leads to improvement	Meeting School Planned Targets		★	★		★	100%	75%
	High quality teaching	% Positive Departmental Reviews		■	■	★	■	44.4%	80%
		Exam results		★	n/a	n/a	★	OFSTED level 2	OFSTED level 2
Effective Governance	Achieve Governance Action Plan							75%	
Customer/ Stakeholder	We will provide a high quality experience for all students	Students meeting expected targets		★	●	★	★	80%	75%
		Students' Perception		■	■	■	■	60.3%	67%
	Our students will identify and engage positively with the school	Exclusion Data		★	★	★	★	0.36%	Under 3%
		Students' Perception		●	●	●	●	67.3%	67%
		Extracurricular Participation		■	■	■	■	53.4%	75%
	Parents will identify and engage positively with the school	Parents' Perception		●	●	■	●	64.3%	67%
	Our students will be Safe Healthy and Happy	Number of Accidents		★	★	★	★	0.16%	Under 1%
Uptake of Meals			■	■		■	41%	50%	
Value to Community	Priory provides value for money	Management of Budget		★	★	★	★	Yes	expenditure within budget
		Environment (Buildings) Fault List H&S List		★	★	★	★	1	Less than 15 unresolved items
	Priory has a high reputation in the community	Number of First Choice		★	n/a	n/a	★	280	232

Working better together

APPENDIX B3 Case study school balanced scorecard definitions

Case Study School - Balanced Scorecard Definitions								
	Objectives	Measure	Definitions	Icon Definition - on target	Source	Data Available Date	SMT Owner	
People	Well being	PS 1.1	Staff Perception of Working Environment	% aggregate of positive responses to working environment section of staff questionnaire	70%	SMT Stakeholder Perceptions	2 term BSC cycle	JS
		PS 1.2	Absence rates	staff absence as % days absent per term	Under 6%	Cover Administrator	2 term BSC cycle	DB
	Effective communication	PS 1.3	Staff Perception of Communications	% aggregate of positive responses to communication section of staff questionnaire	60%	SMT Stakeholder Perceptions	2 term BSC cycle	JS
		PS 1.4	Subscribe to attitudes and values		0%			
	Our people will perform their roles to the highest standards	PS 1.5	Meeting Performance Management Objectives	% of staff meeting all performance management objectives	85%	SMT Performance Management	annually in July	DB
		PS 1.6	Bring something special / extra to the school (discretionary behaviour)		0%			
	Commit to our vision of Priory as a successful school	PS 1.7	Supporting each other	% aggregate of positive responses to 'supporting one another' section of staff questionnaire	70%	SMT Stakeholder Perceptions	2 term BSC cycle	JS
Process	Manage students as individuals	PS 2.1	Tailored Curriculum	% option choices met	90%	SMT Curriculum	annually in March	JA
		PS 2.2	Effectiveness of Rewards / Sanctions	% students with fewer than 3 nominations in behaviour survey	90%	SMT Pastoral	2 term BSC cycle	PHM
	Strategic plan leads to improvement	PS 2.3	Meeting School Planned Targets	% of SSP targets met by deadline (accumulative over year)	75%	SMT SSP	2 term BSC cycle	MO
	High quality teaching	PS 2.4	% Positive Departmental Reviews	% Department Reviews Graded OFSTED level 2 each term	80%	SMT Evaluation	2 term BSC cycle	KC
		PS 2.5	Exam results	KS2-KS4 contextual added value at or above OFSTED level 2 in Panda	OFSTED level 2	SMT Evaluation	annually in November	KC
	Effective Governance	PS 2.6	Achieve Governance Action Plan	% of Governance plan targets met by deadline (accumulative over year)	75%	SMT Self Evaluation Committee	2 term BSC cycle	MO
Customer/ Stakeholder	We will provide a high quality experience for all students	PS 3.1	Students meeting expected targets	% students on or above target based on latest interim reports	75%	Data Manager (JBS)	2 term BSC cycle	JA
		PS 3.2	Students' Perception	% aggregate of positive responses to quality experience section of student questionnaire	67%	SMT Stakeholder Perceptions	2 term BSC cycle	JS
	Our students will identify and engage positively with the school	PS 3.3	Exclusion Data	% of students with more than 3 instances of fixed term exclusion per term	Under 3%	Exclusions administrator	2 term BSC cycle	DB
		PS 3.4	Students' Perception	% aggregate of positive responses to engagement section of student questionnaire	67%	SMT Stakeholder Perceptions	2 term BSC cycle	JS
		PS 3.5	Extracurricular Participation	% students who have engaged in at least one extra-curricular activity per term. NB Terms 5&6 only Y7-10.	75%	SMT Curriculum	2 term BSC cycle	KC
	Parents will identify and engage positively with the school	PS 3.6	Parents' Perception	% aggregate of positive responses to engagement section of parents' questionnaire	67%	SMT Stakeholder perceptions	2 term BSC cycle	JS
	Our students will be Safe Healthy and Happy	PS 3.7	Number of Accidents	% of accident injuries recorded in medical log per pupil day in the term	Under 1%	Senior Pastoral Assistant	2 term BSC cycle	PHM
		PS 3.8	Uptake of Meals	% student meal transactions each term	50%	Cook	2 term BSC cycle	PHM
Value to the community	Priory provides value for money	PS 4.1	Management of Budget	Expenditure within budget	expenditure within budget	Bursar	2 term BSC cycle	MO
		PS 4.2	Environment (Buildings) Fault List H&S List	Number of items on premises report fault list (as ratified by H&S/Premises Committee) unresolved within 3 months during term	Less than 15 unresolved items	Bursar/H&S Officer	2 term BSC cycle	MO
	Priory has a high reputation in the community	PS 4.3	Number of First Choice	First choices for Y7 intake published by LEA after admissions procedure is complete	232	Admissions Officer	annually in November	DB

Working better together

Case Study School Balanced Scorecard - Measures with Targets

	Objectives	Measure	Definitions	Icon Definition - on target	Good performance +5%	On target -5%	Terms 1&2	Terms 3&4	Terms 5&6	Comment	Source	Data Available Date	SMT Owner	
People	Well being	PS 1.1	Staff Perception of Working Environment	% aggregate of positive responses to working environment section of staff questionnaire	70%	74%	67%	70%	74%	77%	SMT Stakeholder Perceptions	2 term BSC cycle	JS	
		PS 1.2	Absence rates	staff absence as % days absent per term	Under 6%	under 5.7%		2.61%	4.13%	2.48%	Cover Administrator	2 term BSC cycle	DB	
	Effective communication	PS 1.3	Staff Perception of Communications	% aggregate of positive responses to communication section of staff questionnaire	60%	63%	57%	56%	48%	47%	SMT Stakeholder Perceptions	2 term BSC cycle	JS	
	Our people will perform their roles to the highest standards	PS 1.4	Subscribe to attitudes and values		0%	0%	0%						0	0
		PS 1.5	Meeting Performance Management Objectives	% of staff meeting all performance management objectives	85%	89%	81%	n/a	n/a		SMT Performance Management	annually in July	DB	
	Commit to our vision of Priory as a successful school	PS 1.6	Bring something special / extra to the school (discretionary behaviour)		0%	0%	0%						0	0
		PS 1.7	Supporting each other	% aggregate of positive responses to 'supporting one another' section of staff questionnaire	70%	74%	67%	48%	70%	62%	SMT Stakeholder Perceptions	2 term BSC cycle	JS	
Process	Manage students as individuals	PS 2.1	Tailored Curriculum	% option choices met	90%	95%	86%	n/a	93.10%	n/a	SMT Curriculum	annually in March	JA	
		PS 2.2	Effectiveness of Rewards / Sanctions	% students with fewer than 3 nominations in behaviour survey	90%	95%	86%	94%	93.30%	92.7%	SMT Pastoral	2 term BSC cycle	PHM	
	Strategic plan leads to improvement	PS 2.3	Meeting School Planned Targets	% of SSP targets met by deadline (accumulative over year)	75%	79%	71%	100%	100%		SMT SSP	2 term BSC cycle	MO	
	High quality teaching	PS 2.4	% Positive Departmental Reviews	% Department Reviews Graded OFSTED level 2 each term	80%	84%	76%	0%	33.30%	100%		SMT Evaluation	2 term BSC cycle	KC
		PS 2.5	Exam results	KS2-KS4 contextual added value at or above OFSTED level 2 in Panda	OFSTED level 2	OFSTED level 1		OFSTED level 2	n/a	n/a		SMT Evaluation	annually in November	JA
	Effective Governance	PS 2.6	Achieve Governance Action Plan	% of Governance plan targets met by deadline (accumulative over year)	75%	79%	71%					SMT Self Evaluation Committee	2 term BSC cycle	MO
Customer/ Stakeholder	We will provide a high quality experience for all students	PS 3.1	Students meeting expected targets	% students on or above target based on latest interim reports	75%	79%	71%	83%	78%	79%	Data Manager (JBS)	2 term BSC cycle	JA	
		PS 3.2	Students' Perception	% aggregate of positive responses to quality experience section of student questionnaire	67%	70%	64%	61%	60%	60%	SMT Stakeholder Perceptions	2 term BSC cycle	JS	
	Our students will identify and engage positively with the school	PS 3.3	Exclusion Data	% of students with more than 3 instances of fixed term exclusion per term	Under 3%	2.5%		0.35%	0.35%	0.43%		Exclusions administrator	2 term BSC cycle	DB
		PS 3.4	Students' Perception	% aggregate of positive responses to engagement section of student questionnaire	67%	70%	64%	69%	68%	65%		SMT Stakeholder Perceptions	2 term BSC cycle	JS
		PS 3.5	Extracurricular Participation	% students who have engaged in at least one extra-curricular activity per term. NB Terms 5&6 only Y7-10.	75%	79%	71%	60.5%	55.4%	44.4%		SMT Curriculum	2 term BSC cycle	PHM
	Parents will identify and engage positively with the school	PS 3.6	Parents' Perception	% aggregate of positive responses to engagement section of parents' questionnaire	67%	70%	64%	65%	66%	62%		SMT Stakeholder perceptions	2 term BSC cycle	JS
	Our students will be Safe Healthy and Happy	PS 3.7	Number of Accidents	% of accident injuries recorded in medical log per pupil day in the term	Under 1%	under 0.9%		0.1%	0.3%	0.1%		Senior Pastoral Assistant	2 term BSC cycle	PHM
		PS 3.8	Uptake of Meals	% student meal transactions each term	50%	53%	48%	41%	41%			Cook	2 term BSC cycle	PHM
Value to the community	Priory provides value for money	PS 4.1	Management of Budget	Expenditure within budget	expenditure within budget			Yes	Yes	Yes		Bursar	2 term BSC cycle	MO
		PS 4.2	Environment (Buildings) Fault List H&S List	Number of items on premises report fault list (as ratified by H&S/Premises Committee) unresolved within 3 months during term	Less than 15 unresolved items	less than 10		1	1	1		Bursar/H&S Officer	2 term BSC cycle	MO
	Priory has a high reputation in the community	PS 4.3	Number of First Choice	First choices for Y7 intake published by LEA after admissions procedure is complete	232	244	220.4	280	n/a	n/a		Admissions Officer	annually in November	DB

APPENDIX B5

Data sources for scorecard measures

Measure	Data Source	Categorisation of measure
Staff absence rates	SIMS: Core module (Staffing and personnel)	Numerical
Examination results	SIMS: examination and performance module	Numerical
Students meet their targets	SIMS: assessment module	Numerical
Exclusion data	SIMS: core module (students' section)	Numerical
Extra-curricular participation rates	School in-house data base	Numerical
Number of accidents	School accident log	Numerical
Uptake of school meals	School catering company on school in-house database	Numerical
Number of first preferences	SIMS: Registration and admissions module	Numerical
Staff perceptions of their working environment	School in-house data base (responses to staff surveys)	Perception
Staff perceptions of communications	School in-house data base (responses to staff surveys)	Perception
Students' perceptions	School in-house data base (responses to student surveys)	Perception
Parents' perceptions	School in-house data base (responses to parent surveys)	Perception
Meeting targets in school strategic plan	School in-house data base Records of senior leadership reviews & SEC minutes	Evaluation
% of positive departmental reviews	School in-house data base Records of senior leadership reviews & SEC minutes	Evaluation

Meeting performance management objectives	Line managers and senior leaderships records	Evaluation
Effect of rewards and sanctions	School in-house data base Records of senior leadership reviews & SEC minutes	Evaluation
Subscribe to attitudes & values of the school	No measures established so no data sources available at time of the research	Other
Discretionary behaviour (bring something special / extra to the school)		Other

Notes:

- 1 The case study school used SIMS as its school information management system. This system is provided by CAPITA Children's Services an outsourced education support company.

CAPITA Children's Services: SIMS Schools Information Management Systems
Retrieved April 12, 2011 from: <http://www.capita-cs.co.uk/favicon.ico>; [SIMS Core Suite](#); [SIMS Resources Suite](#); [SIMS Assessment & Reporting Suite](#); [SIMS Registration & Admissions](#) (accessed 12.04.2011)

2. The case study school's administrative assistant who had oversight of the balanced scorecard database had access to the school's SIMS system and supplemented this with data from an internal school database.

APPENDIX B6: Case study school's balanced scorecard Initiatives

Balanced Scorecard Initiatives								
Objectives	Measures	Other suggested measures put forward at workshop	Votes	Initiatives	Votes	Timetable		
People								
Well being	Staff Perception of Working Environment Absence rates	Family friendly policies	4					
		Stress levels	3					
		Informal / formal recognition of achievements	1					
		Accidents	1					
		Facilities (car parking) Social						
Effective communication	Staff Perception of Communications	Pastoral/academic link (action plan)	2					
		One-sheet (read & input things)						
		Greenwheel (read & input things) Link management meet						
Our people will perform their roles to the highest standards	Subscribe to attitudes and values Meeting Performance Management Objectives	Duties	4					
		Meeting deadlines	3					
		Attendance	2					
		Achieving individual objectives	1					
		Quality of returns registers						
		Achievement of training plan						
		Quality of environment						
		Punctuality						
		Performance progression						
		Senior management team Cost, time & quality of contractor services Complaints Students out of uniform						
Commit to our vision of Priory as a successful school	Bring something special / extra to the school (discretionary behaviour) Supporting each other	Parental complaints / praise	5					
		Duties	3					
		Punctuality	2					
		Lesson changeovers	1					
		Uniform Behaviour Survey						
Process								
Manage students as individuals	Tailored Curriculum Effectiveness of Rewards / Sanctions	Extra curricular	5					
		Behaviour	4					
		Reports (traffic lights)	2					
		Progress file	1					
		Personalised learning						
		Observations						
		Health & safety						
		G & T register						
		Child protection						
		Dofying Counsellor Uniforms IEPS Attendance PSPs						
Strategic plan leads to improvement	Meeting School Planned Targets	Fit for Ofsted	4					
		Delivery of plan						
		External initiatives drivers						
High quality teaching	% Positive Departmental Reviews Exam results	Parental perception	3					
		Lesson observations	5					
		Recruitment & retention	2					
		Scheme of work differentiated	1					
		Option take-up	1					
		Group composition (input)						
		Training & development (input)						
		Resources (input)						
		Absence - cover teaching (input)						
		Learning support Behaviour/discipline in classroom (SMT call-outs / MOD) Informal observation (mgt perception)						
Effective Governance	Achieve Governance Action Plan							
Customer Stakeholder								
We will provide a high quality experience for all students	Students meeting expected targets Students' Perception	Meeting LEA targets	4					
		Tracking leavers	4					
		Extra curricular activities						
Our students will identify and engage positively with the school	Exclusion Data Students' Perception Extracurricular Participation	Uniform log	5					
			4					
			0					
Parents will identify and engage positively with the school	Parents' Perception	Parental complaints	5					
			0					
Our students will be Safe Healthy and Happy	Number of Accidents Uptake of Meals	Number of children on report	3					
		Number of PSST training advisors	2					
		Counsellor visits	0					
		Cross curricular health and safety in POS and SOWS	0					
		PSST	0					
		Policies and procedures	0					
		Number of incidents	0					
		Number of racist incidents	0					
		Value to the community						
		Priory provides value for money	Management of Budget Environment (Buildings) Fault List H&S List	Good resources	4			
	2							
Priory has a high reputation in the community	Number of First Choice	Complaints from local residents	4					
		Destination (pupil tracking)	0					
		OFSTED / H&SIR	0					
		Primary school links	0					
		Participation in local events / activities eg arts college	0					
			0					

APPENDIX B7

Balanced scorecard data allocation to governor sub-committees 2007- 2008

	OBJECTIVES	DATA	SMT	GOVERNOR COMMITTEE	MEETING DATES
People	Well-being	Staff perception of workingEnvironment (Q)	JS	Personnel & Finance	27 November; 29 April; October 08
		Absence rates	DB	Personnel & Finance	27 November; 5 February; 10 June
	Effective communication	Staff perception of communications (Q)	JS	Personnel & Finance	27 November; 29 April; October 08
	Our people will perform their roles to the highest standards	Subscribe to attitudes and values	N/A	Personnel & Finance	
		Meeting performance management objectives	MO	Personnel & Finance	25 September
	Commit to our vision of named case study school as a successful school	Bring something special / - extra to the school (discretionary behaviour)	N/A	Personnel & Finance	
		Supporting each other (Q)	JS	Personnel & Finance	27 November; 29 April; October 08
Process	Manage students as individuals	Tailored curriculum	JA	Curriculum & Careers	17 June
		Effectiveness of rewards / sanctions	PHM	Well Being	12 February; 20 May; October 08
	Strategic plan leads to improvement	Meeting school planned targets	MO	Self-Evaluation	
	High quality teaching	Percentage of positive departmental reviews	KC	Curriculum & Careers	11 December; 18 March; 17 June
		Exam results	JA	Curriculum & Careers	11 December
	Effective Governance	Achieve governance action plan	(RH)	Self-Evaluation	

	OBJECTIVES	DATA	SMT	GOVERNOR COMMITTEE	MEETING DATES
Customer/Stakeholder	We will provide a high quality experience for all students	Students meeting expected targets	JA	Curriculum & Careers	11 December; 18 March; 17 June
		Students' perception of teaching and Learning (Q)	JS	Curriculum & Careers	11 December; 18 March; October 08
	Our students will identify and engage positively with the school	Exclusion data	MO	Governing Body	22 November; 6 March; 3 July
		Students' perception of engagement (Q)	JS	Well-Being	12 February; 20 May; October 08
		Extracurricular participation	PHM	Well-Being	12 February; 20 May; October 08
	Parents will identify positively with the school	Parents' perception (Q)	JS	Governing Body	17 January; 8 May; September 08
	Our students will be Safe, Healthy and Happy	Number of accidents	DB	Well-Being	30 October; 12 February; 20 May
		Uptake ofmMeals	PHM	Well-Being	30 October; 12 February; 20 May

The governing body will receive the questionnaire analysis in the Headteacher's Report to Governors bi-termly.

APPENDIX B8

Case study school strategic plan – Key priorities

CASE STUDY SCHOOL GOVERNING BODY SELF EVALUATION COMMITTEE: MONDAY 19 NOVEMBER 2007

Plans

Plan No	Start Date	Plan	Staff	Deadline	GB Cttee	Status
000025	01-Jun-05	To rebuild and/or relocate the music block	MO	01-Sep-10	P&F	CUR
000027	01-Jun-05	To provide a shelter outside eating, recreational and performance area with associated landscaping	MO	01-Sep-08	P&F	CUR
000038	01-Sep-06	To implement the 2006-2007 Performing Arts Specialism plan and meet the targets.	JS	01-Sep-07	C&C	CUR
000040	08-Jun-06	To review and enhance the professional development of teaching and support staff and promote an ethos of reflective practice.	PHM	01-Apr-08	P&F	CUR
000042	01-Jun-06	To develop strategies, for implementation 2007-2008, towards ensuring that every student enjoys the 'Every Child Matters' outcomes.	DB	01-Sep-07	WB	CUR
000043	01-Jun-06	To develop further provision to enable students to achieve 'economic well-being'	KC	01-Sep-07	C&C	CUR
000045	09-Jan-07	To develop a more effective collective worship and assembly programme that involves and engages students	PHM	01-Sep-08	C&C	CUR
000046	09-Jan-07	To develop the KS4 curriculum by introducing diploma strands and consortium arrangements	JA	01-Sep-08	C&C	CUR
000047	09-Jan-07	To plan and implement the next phase (2006 - 2008) of administrative and curricular ICT Development	MO	01-Sep-08	P&F	CUR
000051	09-Jan-07	To implement the 2007-2008 Science Specialism plan and meet the targets	PHM	01-Sep-08	C&C	CUR
000054	09-Jan-07	To further develop the healthy school ethos and to complete an application for Healthy Schools Accreditation	PHM	01-Apr-08	WB	CUR
000056	09-Jan-07	To develop an Extended School provision	MO	01-Jan-10	WB	CUR
000057	01-Sep-06	To implement the School Accessibility Plan for 2006 - 2009	MO	31-Jul-07	WB	CUR
000058	01-Sep-07	To improve the quality of teachers' assessments by participating in the year- long CfBT pilot project 'Making Good Progress'.	KC	31-Jul-08	C&C	CUR

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