

2.1 EVENTS SURROUNDING SEPTEMBER 1990

THE CULTURE OF THE SCHOOL

During this period there was some considerable change in personnel particularly in the appointment of an acting head, acting deputy and key care staff. It was felt by most staff that the change was detrimental to later developments. The culture of the school continued and the changes particularly fostered poor relationships. Poor communication appeared to divide the staff and further exacerbated the problems in a different way between older established staff and the new members who wished to bring about radical change to an institutionalised establishment.

2.2 STAFF COMMENTS

"I would guess it was laissez-faire"
 "handwriting and signatures would indicate who was on duty at the time there was no laid down procedure"
 "full staff meetings were not regular"
 "when I first started there was a very uneasy atmosphere, any information given was to associate me with a particular clique"
 "there were pupils trampolining on the beds, the staff could be seen sitting in the care staff office thinking the pupils were alright".

2.3 THE LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Ideas were forthcoming from various individuals on ways in which practice at Knowl View could be improved there was very great opposition to this in school. The management team was formed on an ad hoc basis. There was no clear role definition. Leadership was lacking in some areas. The very great degree of difference in ideas caused hostility with other members of staff who regarded to the management team as an elite, decision-making group who did not inform or consult on matters which the staff felt they should have known about. Certain high status care staff felt marginalised when they believed they should have had some say in the running of the school. The difficulties arising from unfilled vacancies caused management problems for duty cover. Senior staff were responsible for cover duty though the school keeper was also used to act as cover. There was evidence of a lack of overall plan for the school. Changes were unsupported by training or adequate guidance. The changes were piecemeal and lacked coherence. Different sections of the school organisation had different procedures and level of accepted standards. There was a non-directive leadership, arising from lack of experience and