

**Original citation:**

Francis, Leslie J. and Village, Andrew (2014) Church schools preparing adolescents for living in a religiously diverse society : an empirical enquiry in England and Wales. *Religious Education*, 109 (3). pp. 264-283. doi:10.1080/00344087.2014.911623

**Permanent WRAP URL:**

<http://wrap.warwick.ac.uk/99852>

**Copyright and reuse:**

The Warwick Research Archive Portal (WRAP) makes this work by researchers of the University of Warwick available open access under the following conditions. Copyright © and all moral rights to the version of the paper presented here belong to the individual author(s) and/or other copyright owners. To the extent reasonable and practicable the material made available in WRAP has been checked for eligibility before being made available.

Copies of full items can be used for personal research or study, educational, or not-for profit purposes without prior permission or charge. Provided that the authors, title and full bibliographic details are credited, a hyperlink and/or URL is given for the original metadata page and the content is not changed in any way.

**Publisher's statement:**

This is an Accepted Manuscript of an article published by Taylor & Francis in *Religious Education* on 28 May 2014, available online:

<http://www.tandfonline.com/10.1080/00344087.2014.911623>

**A note on versions:**

The version presented here may differ from the published version or, version of record, if you wish to cite this item you are advised to consult the publisher's version. Please see the 'permanent WRAP url' above for details on accessing the published version and note that access may require a subscription.

For more information, please contact the WRAP Team at: [wrap@warwick.ac.uk](mailto:wrap@warwick.ac.uk)

Church schools preparing adolescents for living in a religiously diverse society:

An empirical enquiry in England and Wales

Leslie J Francis

University of Warwick, UK

Andrew Village

University of York St John, York, UK

Author note:

\*Corresponding author:

Leslie J Francis

Warwick Religions & Education Research Unit

Institute of Education

The University of Warwick

Coventry CV4 7AL United Kingdom

Tel: +44 (0)24 7652 2539

Fax: +44 (0)24 7657 2638

Email: [leslie.francis@warwick.ac.uk](mailto:leslie.francis@warwick.ac.uk)

**Abstract**

The Young People's Attitudes to Religious Diversity Project was established to compare the attitudes of students (13- to 15-years of age) educated within the state-maintained sector in church schools (Catholic, Anglican, joint Anglican and Catholic) and in schools without a religious foundation. Data provided by 5,402 students recruited from England, Wales *and* London who self-identified as either 'no religion' or as Christian demonstrated that, after controlling for individual differences in personality and in religiosity, students attending church schools hold neither a more positive nor a less positive attitude toward religious diversity, compared with students attending schools without a religious foundation.

*Keywords:* Church schools, religious diversity, school effectiveness, multi-level analysis

### **Introduction**

The state-maintained system of education in England and Wales has its roots in an historical context firmly shaped by the Christian churches. The original initiative to build schools came not from the state, but from voluntary philanthropy stimulated by religious principles. In 1808 a group of Free Churchmen founded the Royal Lancasterian Society from which the British and Foreign Schools Society emerged in 1814. In 1811 a group of Anglicans founded the National Society ‘for the education of the children of the poor in the principles of the established church.’ In 1847 the Roman Catholic Church established the Catholic Poor School Committee. The Education Act of 1870 was not designed to supplant these church schools, but to fill the gaps where church-related initiatives proved to be too slow or less than adequate. The fuller history of these initiatives has been well rehearsed by Cruickshank (1963), Murphy (1971), and Chadwick (1997).

In one sense, these nineteenth-century initiatives acknowledged that England and Wales were religiously diverse communities, diverse in the sense of being shaped by the established Church of England, by the Free Churches that had deliberately broken away from the Church of England, and by the Roman Catholic Church following the restoration of the Catholic hierarchy. The denominational structure of the school system played its part in perpetuating (and at times re-enforcing) denominational identity and denominational rivalry.

The debate about the divisive nature of church schools in England and Wales took a new turn in the early 1980s in light of the changing composition of British society and the transforming effects of immigration. At this point the debate was shaped by discourse about cultural diversity and about ethnic diversity, and behind this a less well-articulated concern about religious diversity. In the early 1980s the debate was informed by the Runnymede Trust, by the Churches themselves and, most of all, by the Government’s Committee of Enquiry.

From the Runnymede Trust, Dummett and McNeal (1981), in their study *Race and church schools*, argued that church schools were having a mixed effect. In some areas, where there was a black Christian community, church schools had the effect of creating multiracial institutions. In other areas, where the black community was not Christian, church schools had the effect of preventing multiracial institutions.

From the Churches there were reports from both the Catholic Church and the Anglican Church. On the Catholic front, the joint working party (set up by the Catholic Commission for Racial Justice, the Department of Catholic Schools and the Laity Commission), in the report *Learning from diversity* (Catholic Commission for Racial Justice, 1984), developed the discussion of the problem of church schools in a multi-racial, multi-cultural society in the following way.

Many Catholic schools have a pupil population which is predominantly white. As a result many Catholic children have an educational experience which is, in this respect, narrow... Moreover the predominantly white Catholic school in a racially mixed area can be seen as a 'white island' and a divisive anomaly in an area which faces the difficult task of struggling to become a cohesive multiracial and multicultural community.

On the Anglican front, the discussion paper produced by the General Synod of the Church of England Board of Education, *Schools and multi-cultural education* (Church of England, 1984), also acknowledged the potential divisiveness of church schools in a multi-cultural context. At the same time, the Anglican report emphasised that church schools can also function as important centres of reconciliation among peoples of different races and creeds.

The Government's Committee of Enquiry into the education of children from ethnic minority groups brought the church school question into central focus in their report

*Education for all* (Swann Report, 1985). After reviewing the arguments for and against separate voluntary schools for other ethnic and religious groups, the majority voice of the committee stressed ‘misgivings about the implications and consequences of “separate” provision of any kind.’ Having come to this view, the majority voice of the committee faced the consequence that:

our conclusions about the desirability of denominational voluntary aided schools for Muslims or other groups, by extension seriously call into question the long established dual system of educational provision in this country and particularly the role of the Churches in the provision of education ... We believe therefore that the time has come for the DES, in consultation with religious and educational bodies, to consider the relevant provisions of the 1944 Act to see whether or not alterations are required in a society that is now radically different. (p. 514)

Six members of the Committee of Enquiry dissented from this conclusion and formulated a completely different minority recommendation, not only supporting the provisions of the 1944 Education Act concerning voluntary schools, but clearly wishing to see other ethnic and religious groups enabled to benefit from these provisions. The minority voices stressed the opposite view.

We believe that it is unjust at the present time not to recommend that positive assistance should be given to ethnic minority communities who wish to establish voluntary aided schools in accordance with the 1944 Education Act. (p. 515)

The clear division of opinion within the committee of inquiry, together with the Education Secretary’s immediate response provided a good indication of the political sensitivities raised by the discussion in the mid-1980s.

In his article ‘Should the state fund faith based schools?’ Jackson (2003) revisited the arguments for and against schools with a religious character. According to Jackson, the

debate about state funding for schools with a religious character in England and Wales intensified at the beginning of the twenty-first century in light of the events of 11 September 2001 in New York and Washington. In his review, Jackson identified four main arguments in favour of state funding for schools with a religious character, namely that they: provide a positive response to racism; promote justice and fairness for children, parents and religious communities; offer education of a high quality; and promote social cohesion and integration of minority communities into the democratic life of the state. Jackson balances these four arguments in favour of state funding for schools with a religious character by five main arguments against state funding for such schools, namely that they: limit the personal autonomy of students; impose on students a restricted view of a religion promoted by sponsoring bodies; use state finance to fund proselytisation or mission; disadvantage other schools through selection procedure that cream off the most able students; and erode social cohesion through separating students of different religious and non-religious backgrounds.

It is the fifth of these arguments that is directly relevant for the concern of the present study regarding the role of schools with a religious character in the preparation of students for life in a religiously diverse society. In this connection Jackson concludes that:

The most convincing argument against faith based schools lies in their potential to create barriers between groups, thereby eroding social harmony... [since] faith based education necessitates the separation of children by religion. There is also a danger, in some cases, that separation by religion could also mean separation by 'ethnicity'.

(Jackson, 2003: 97)

Nearly three decades after their report *Race and church schools* (Dummett & McNeal, 1981), the Runnymede Trust re-entered the debate on the role of schools with a religious character by publishing a second report *Right to divide? Faith schools and community cohesion* (Berkeley, 2008). Here was a research project asking the question 'whether a school

system with faith schools could also promote equality and cohesion' (p. 2). The project took as the starting point the guidance issued to schools as 'their statutory duty to promote community cohesion, introduced in 2007' (p. 3), and consulted with over a thousand people, including 'parents, pupils, professionals, and policy makers from a range of faith backgrounds as well as those who do not subscribe to any religion' (p. 1). The aim of the consultation was 'to assess whether faith schools are well placed to deliver their obligations in this regard in the following areas' (p.4): encouraging students to share a sense of belonging; helping students develop a positive appreciation of diversity; removing barriers to inequality; and building strong partnerships between people from different backgrounds.

The six key recommendations put forward by the Runnymede Trust were, in one sense, very supportive of schools with a religious character. Such schools are supported as affirming government policies committed to increasing choice and diversity in the education sector. In another sense, however, the types of schools with a religious character being supported by the Runnymede Trust are very different from many of those currently supported within the state-maintained system in England and Wales. The first call from the Runnymede Trust is for schools with a religious character to cease to include faith criteria within their admissions policies. The argument is pitched as follows:

Faith schools should be for the benefit of all in society rather than for just a few. If faith schools are convinced of their relevance for society, then that should apply equally for all children. With state funding comes an obligation to be relevant and open to all citizens ... All parents should be given access to what faith schools claim is a distinctive ethos. (Berkeley, 2008: 4)

The recommendation is based on the following evidence:

Our research has found that commitment to the promotion of cohesion is not universal, and for many faith schools not a priority ... Too often, there remains a



resistance to learning about other faiths when faith schools are seen as the spaces in which singular faith identities and traditions are transmitted. (Berkeley, 2008: 4-5)

### **Research aim**

Against this background, the aim of the present study is to address the problem from an empirical perspective by posing the general question as to whether students educated in schools with a religious character in England and Wales hold attitudes that are more or less conducive to life in a religiously diverse society. Four themes need to be considered, however, before this general question can be operationalised. These themes concern: the identification of the effects of religious schooling; the need to take into account personal and psychological differences as control variables; the need to take into account individual differences in aspects of religiosity as control variables; opportunities for addressing such questions about the effects of religious schools provided by the Young People's Attitudes to Religious Diversity Project established within the Warwick Religions and Education Research Unit; and the assessment of attitudes toward religious diversity.

### **Effects of schools with a religious character**

Two recent studies by Village and Francis (in press) among students attending Catholic secondary schools and by Francis, Lankshear, Robbins, Village and a Sîon (in press) among students attending Anglican secondary schools in England and Wales provide a useful model of research for assessing the distinctiveness and effectiveness of schools with a religious character. Both studies employ the same well-defined set of six dependent variables, Likert-type scales (see Likert, 1932) developed to assess self-esteem (four items), rejection of drug use (six items), endorsing illegal behaviours (six items), racism (four items), attitude toward school (six items) and conservative Christian belief (five items). Both studies employ multilevel linear models to allow for the fact that students were nested within schools and to take into account individual differences among the students in terms of personal factors,

contextual factors, psychological factors, and religious factors. Differences between school types that remained after controlling for individual differences among the students were interpreted as effects of schools with a religious character.

The aspect of these two studies of greatest relevance to preparation for life in a religiously diverse society concerns the scale of racism. Simple comparison of the mean scale scores across the three types of school (Catholic schools, Anglican schools, and schools without a religious foundation) found no significant differences between students in Anglican schools and students in schools without a religious foundation; students in Catholic schools recorded significantly lower scores on the scale of racism. However, after controlling for individual differences among the students (taking into account personal factors, contextual factors and psychological factors) no significant effect was attributable to school type in the case either of Anglican schools or of Catholic schools. These findings suggest that schools with a religious character neither foster higher levels of racism among their students, nor reduce levels of racism among their students.

### **Personal and psychological control variables**

Conceptually, attitudes toward religious diversity can be situated within the much larger domain of social attitudes. The long-established research tradition concerned with the exploration and explanation of individual differences in social attitudes has drawn attention to the significant predictive power of both personal factors and psychological factors. For example, in his review of the social scientific literature and new empirical evidence concerning factors shaping adolescent values, Francis (2001) documented the significance of two personal factors in particular (sex and age) across a range of personal and social values. Before testing for school influence, it would be prudent to control for individual differences in sex and age.

In terms of psychological factors, the Eysenckian research tradition in particular has documented the connection between social attitudes and personality. Within this framework conceptualisation has distinguished between the category of tenderminded social attitudes (emphasising, for example, social inclusivity and acceptance) and toughminded social attitudes (including, for example, social exclusion and prejudice). In two now classic brief papers, Eysenck (1975, 1976) formulated the connection between low psychoticism scores and tenderminded social attitudes. The Eysenckian notion of psychoticism as a dimension of personality found expression in the Eysenck Personality Questionnaire (EPQ: Eysenck & Eysenck, 1975) alongside the two other orthogonal dimensions styled extraversion and neuroticism. The on-going relevance of the Eysenckian dimensional model of personality for predicting individual differences in social attitudes, with special reference to prejudice, has been demonstrated by Village (2011).

Before testing for school influence, it would be prudent to control for individual differences in personality.

### **Religious control variables**

The two recent studies by Village and Francis (in press) and by Francis, Lankshear, Robbins, Village, and ap Sîon (in press) concerned with identifying the distinctiveness and effectiveness of Catholic and Anglican secondary schools, identified the way in which the influence of schools with a religious character on student values needs to be disentangled from the direct influence of the students' religiosity. This problem is one which can be addressed by including measures of individual differences in the students' religiosity as control variables within the multilevel model. While the assessment of student religiosity is itself a complex matter, four variables may be routinely introduced to capture key aspects of this multidimensional construct, namely self-assigned religious affiliation, religious attendance, personal prayer, and Bible reading.

Given the possible interaction between school type and student religiosity, these four variables (self-assigned religious affiliation, religious attendance, personal prayer, and bible reading) need to be included in the model as control variables.

### **Young People's Attitudes to Religious Diversity Project**

The Young People's Attitudes to Religious Diversity Project, conceived and directed by Professor Robert Jackson within the Warwick Religions and Education Research Unit, was designed to maximise the research insights of both qualitative and quantitative methods. Within the time constraints of a three year project, it was decided to begin with the qualitative research in order to allow the findings of the qualitative approach to inform aspects of the quantitative approach. The rich and thick data generated by the qualitative study raised a number of key issues both about how students expressed their attitudes toward religious diversity and about the factors that helped to shape those attitudes. Such influences included sociological factors (like family), personal factors (like sex), psychological factors (like personality), and theological factors (like ideas about God). These key issues resonated with work already well established within various quantitative research traditions. Two particularly relevant quantitative research traditions are provided by the psychology of religion (see Hood, Hill, & Spilka, 2009) and by empirical theology (see Francis, Robbins, & Astley, 2009).

### **Assessing attitude toward diversity**

The assessment of attitudes toward religious diversity can be approached in a variety of ways. The approach taken by the quantitative component of the Warwick-based Young People's Attitudes to Religious Diversity project drew on the theoretical framework proposed by the Outgroup Prejudice Project shaped by Adrian Brockett and Andrew Village of York St John University (Brockett, Village, & Francis, 2009, 2010; Village, 2011). The Outgroup Prejudice Project has shaped a series of studies developing and operationalising the concept

of ‘social distance’ to measure discrimination or prejudice (Bogardus 1928, 1959; Ethington 2007). This concept is conceived of as a mixture of physical and spatial proximity and more metaphorical understandings of distance relating to differences in social class or social location. The underlying theory assumes that prejudice is related to how comfortable people feel at different levels of proximity to members of an outgroup. Researchers measure levels of prejudice by creating items that specify different levels of spatial (e.g. living in the same area, eating in the same restaurant, encountering headscarves, etc.) or social (e.g. attending the same school, being related by marriage, etc.) proximity. Summated scales are then created on the assumption that low tolerance of proximity equates with underlying discrimination, prejudice or fear of the outgroup in question.

Social distance has been used in this way to assess prejudice associated with race (Bogardus 1928; Westie 1953), mental illness (Angermeyer & Matschinger 1997; Brockman & D'Arcy 1978; Corrigan *et al.* 2001), and religion (Brinkerhoff & Jacob 1994). Although the concept of ‘distance’ has sometimes been used entirely metaphorically rather than spatially, there are good reasons for including an element of spatial proximity in such scales (Ethington 2007). Spatial distance may be a direct way of examining the extent of irrational fear or prejudice towards a racial or religious outgroup. The assessment of attitudes toward religious diversity building on the concept of ‘social distance’ offers an approach that is less confrontational than the approach advanced, for example, by Lee, Gibbons, Thompson, & Timani (2009) in their development of ‘The Islamophobia Scale’, or as discussed by Jung (2012) in the discussion of ‘Islamophobia’.

Building on the foundation laid by the Outgroup Prejudice Project, Francis, Croft, Pyke and Robbins (2012) developed and tested the 11-item Attitude toward Religious Diversity Index (ARDI) for use in the Young People’s Attitude to Religious Diversity Project. This index combined seven items directly concerned with social distance and four

items that embraced a wider view of an affective response to religious diversity. In a pilot study of 2,578 13- to 15-year-old students this scale generated an alpha coefficient of .89.

### **Research questions**

In light of the foregoing discussion, the present analyses were established to draw on the Young People's Attitude to Religious Diversity Project to address the following three research questions. The first question employs reliability analysis to explore the internal consistency reliability of the Attitude toward Religious Diversity Index (ARDI) among a mixed group of students attending schools with a religious character and schools without a religious character. The second question employs correlational analysis to explore the connection between attitude toward religious diversity and personal factors (age, sex, and personality) and personal religious factors (self-assigned religious affiliation, religious attendance, and prayer frequency). The third question employs multilevel linear analysis to explore the effects of school type on attitudes toward religious diversity, after taking into account individual differences in personal factors and religious factors and after taking into account that students were nested within schools.

## **Method**

### **Procedure**

The Young People's Attitude to Religious Diversity Project set out to obtain responses from at least 2,000 13- to 15-year-old students attending state-maintained schools in each of five parts of the UK: England, Northern Ireland, Scotland, Wales *and* London. In each nation half of the students were recruited from schools with a religious character (Anglican, Catholic, or joint Anglican and Catholic) and half from schools without a religious character. Within the participating schools questionnaire were administered by the religious education teachers within examination-like conditions. Students were assured of anonymity and confidentiality and given the option not to participate in the project.

**Sample**

The present analyses were conducted on a sub-sample from the Young People's Attitude to Religious Diversity Project, drawing on information provided by 5,402 students from schools in England, Wales and London who self-identified as either 'no religion' or as Christian. Of these, 3,197 (59.2%) were attending schools with a religious character and 2,205 (40.8%) were attending schools without a religious foundation; 1,753 (32.5%) were attending schools in Wales, 1,618 (30.0%) in London and 2,031 (37.6%) elsewhere in England. In terms of sex and age, 47.2% were male and 52.8% were female; 50.5% were in year nine and 49.5% were in year ten. In terms of self-assigned religious affiliation, 59.2% identified as Christian and 40.8% as 'no religion'.

**Measures**

*Attitude toward religious diversity* was assessed by the 11-item Attitude toward Religious Diversity Index (ARDI) developed by Francis, Croft, Pyke and Robbins (2012). This instrument combines items concerned with social distance and items that embrace a wider view of an affective response to religious diversity. Two example of social distance items are: 'I would not like to live next door to Sikhs' and 'I would be happy about a close relative marrying someone from a different faith'. Two examples of wider affective items are, 'Learning about different religions in school is interesting,' and 'Having people from different religious backgrounds makes my school/college an interesting place'. Francis, Croft, Pyke, and Robbins (2012) reported on alpha internal consistency reliability of .89 (Cronbach, 1951).

*Personality* was assessed by the abbreviated version of the Junior Eysenk Personality Questionnaire Revised (JEPQR-A) developed by Francis (1996) who reported the following Cronbach alpha coefficients: extraversion = .66; neuroticism = .70; psychoticism = .61; lie scale = .57.

*Religious affiliation* was recorded by a checklist of world faiths and Christian denominations in response to the question, ‘What is your religion?’ For the current analysis all the Christian categories were collapsed into a single group and those affiliated with other world faiths were omitted, producing a dichotomous variable: no religion = 1, and Christian = 2.

*Religious attendance* was assessed by the question, ‘Apart from special occasions (life weddings) how often do you attend a religious worship service (e.g. in a church, mosque or synagogue). Responses were recorded on a seven-point scale: never (1), sometimes (2), at least once a year (3), at least six times a year (4), at least once a month (5), nearly every week (6), and several times a week (7).

*Personal prayer* was assessed by the question, ‘How often do you pray in your home or by yourself?’ Responses were recorded on a five-point scale: never (1), occasionally (2), and at least once a month (3), at least once a week (4), and nearly every day (5).

*Bible reading* was assessed by the question, ‘How often do you read holy scripture (eg The Bible, Qur’an, Torah)?’ Responses were recorded on a five-point scale: never (1), occasionally (2), at least once a month (3), at least once a week (4), and nearly every day (5).

*Sex, age and school type* were recorded as dichotomous variables: male = 1 and female = 2; year nine = 1 and year ten = 2; schools with a religious character = 2 and other schools = 1.

## **Analysis**

A multilevel linear model was employed to allow for the fact that students were nested within schools (Bickel, 2007; Bryk & Raudenbush, 1992; Hox, 2002; Snijders & Bosker, 1999). Each school was given a unique numerical code and this was employed as the subject (grouping) variable using the mixed model procedure of IBM SPSS version 19 (Norusis, 2011).



Three models were fitted to the data. Model 0, the null model, had no predictor variables, and the Intraclass Correlation Coefficient (ICC) indicated what proportion of the variance in the ARDI scores was attributable to variations between schools. In model 1, control variables and school type were added as fixed effects. In model 2, individual-level religious variables were added to test the hypothesis that students in schools with a religious character show differences in attitude toward religious diversity compared with students in schools without a religious foundation, after allowing for the fact that schools with a religious character tend to have a higher proportion of religious students than do schools without a religious foundation. The schools with a religious character included Roman Catholic schools, Anglican schools and joint Roman Catholic and Anglican Schools. Since initial separate analyses indicated similar results for these three types of schools, they were combined into a single category.

### **Results**

Step one of the data analysis explored the scale properties of the Attitude toward Religious Diversity Index (ARDI) in terms of the item-rest of scale correlations (See table 1) and the alpha coefficient (Cronbach, 1951). The alpha coefficient of .89 supports the internal consistency reliability of the instrument (DeVellis, 2003).

-insert table one about here-

Step two of the data analysis explored the bivariate correlations between attitude toward religious diversity, personal variables (sex and school year), psychological variables (extraversion, neuroticism, psychoticism, and lie scale), religious values (affiliation, attendance, prayer, and Bible reading), and school type (see table 2). The key findings from the correlation matrix are that a more positive attitude toward religious diversity is associated with being female; with higher neuroticism scores, higher lie scale scores, lower extraversion scores, and lower psychoticism scores; with self-assigned religious affiliation, and higher

levels of religious attendance, Bible reading frequency and prayer frequency. It was not correlated with school type.

-insert table two about here-

Step three of the data analysis employed the mixed model regression analysis to explore the combined effect on attitude toward religious diversity of the personal characteristics of the students (sex and age), the psychological characteristics of the students (extraversion, neuroticism, psychoticism, and lie scale scores), and of individual differences in student religiosity (self-assigned religious affiliation, religious attendance, Bible reading, and prayer frequency), while also taking into account the nesting of pupils within schools (see table 3).

-insert table three about here-

Model 0 indicated that around 7% of the variance in attitude toward religious diversity (ARDI) was attributed to differences between schools. Model 1 of the mixed model regression analysis indicated that attitude toward diversity was more positive among girls compared with boys, positively correlated with neuroticism scores, and negatively correlated with psychoticism scores. School type remained uncorrelated with attitudes toward religious diversity. Adding individual religious variables as predictors in model 2 significantly improve the model fit, but did not influence the effect of school type, suggesting that the individual religiosity of pupils, rather than a school's religious status *per se*, was more important in shaping attitudes toward diversity.

### **Conclusion**

The present study was established within the context of the debate in England and Wales concerning the contribution of schools with a religious character for preparing students for life in a religiously diverse society. The view taken by the *Swann Report* in 1985 was that schools with a religious character were detrimental in preparation for life in a multicultural

and multi-ethnic nation, and by implication within a religiously diverse society. The view taken by the Runnymede Trust Report in 2008 was that schools with a religious character had a proper part to play in ensuring diversity within educational provision, but only if such schools ceased to include religious criteria within their admissions policies. Both reports reflected the findings of serious enquiry and investigation. Their evidence implies that serious research conducted in England and Wales would reveal that students attending schools with a religious character reported a less positive attitude toward religious diversity than students attending schools without a religious foundation. The present study was constructed to test this hypothesis, and to do so in three steps, addressing three specific research questions. These questions were examined on data provided by 5,402 students between the ages of 13 and 15 years.

The first research question employed reliability analyses to explore the internal consistency reliability of the Attitude toward Religious Diversity Index (ARDI) among a mixed group of students attending schools with a religious character and schools without a religious foundation. The data demonstrated an alpha coefficient of .89, confirming that the instrument achieved a high level of internal consistency reliability among the group of students and that it is appropriate to employ this instrument to address the remaining two research questions.

The second research question employed correlational analysis to explore the connection between attitude toward religious diversity and personal factors (age and sex), psychological factors (extraversion, neuroticism, psychoticism, and the lie scale), personal religious factors (self-assigned religious affiliation, religious attendance, prayer frequency, and bible reading), and school type. The data demonstrated the following main points. In terms of personal factors, sex is a significant predictor of students' attitudes toward diversity. Young women take a more positive view of religious diversity compared with young men.

On the other hand, there is no significant difference in the attitude toward religious diversity recorded by students in year nine and recorded by students in year ten. During this period of secondary education the educational process itself is having no systematic impact on students' attitudes toward religious diversity. In terms of psychological factors, all four of the Eysenckian variables demonstrated significant co-variance with attitudes toward religious diversity. The most powerful of these predictors emerged as psychoticism, confirming the established Eysenckian theory linking low psychoticism scores with tenderminded social attitudes and high psychoticism scores with toughminded social attitudes (Eysenck, 1975, 1976). In terms of religious factors, all four religious variables were significantly and positively correlated with attitude toward religious diversity. Students who self-identify as Christian hold a more positive attitude toward religious diversity than students who self-identify as having no religion. Students who engage in religious attendance hold a more positive attitude toward religious diversity than students who do not engage in religious attendance. Students who pray hold a more positive attitude toward religious diversity than students who do not pray. Students who read the Bible hold a more positive attitude toward religious diversity than students who do not read the Bible. In terms of school type, students attending schools with a religious character record higher levels of religiosity on all four religious variables in comparison with students who attend schools without a religious foundation. Students attending schools with a religious character are more likely to self-identify as Christian, more likely to engage in religious attendance, more likely to pray, and more likely to read the Bible. These findings confirm the importance of controlling for individual differences in religious factors before testing for differences attributable to school type.

The third research question employed multilevel linear analysis to explore the effects of school type on attitude toward religious diversity, after taking into account individual

differences in personal factors, psychological factors, and religious factors, and after taking into account that students were nested within schools. The data demonstrate the following main points. First, within these models sex and psychological factors (psychoticism and neuroticism) continue to function as a significant predictor of attitude toward religious diversity. Second, these multivariate models clarify the role of the religious variables. When all the variables are considered together, both religious attendance and prayer frequency contribute unique predictive power. In other words, the model would be less satisfactory if either religious attendance or prayer frequency were omitted. On the other hand, when religious attendance and prayer frequency are in the model, self-assigned religious affiliation and Bible reading frequency account for no further predictive power. These variable becomes redundant.

Having taken these factors into account, the multilevel linear model demonstrates that none of the variance in student attitudes toward religious diversity can be attributed to attending schools with a religious character. Students attending Catholic, Anglican, or joint Catholic and Anglican secondary schools hold neither a more positive attitude nor a less positive attitude toward religious diversity, compared with comparable students attending schools without a religious foundation. This comes as a surprising finding in light of the implication of the Swann Report and the direct statement of the Runnymede Trust Report that schools with a religious character prepare students less adequately than schools without a religious foundation for life in a religiously diverse society.

Criticisms of the present study could include the size of the sample (only 5,402 students), the limited number of control variables, the conceptualisation of attitude toward religious diversity operationalized by the Attitude toward Religious Diversity Index (ARDI), the lack of attention given to students who belong to faith traditions other than Christianity, and the statistical model employed. Nonetheless, the data provided by this study is

considerably more sophisticated and objective than the data available to the Swann Report or to the Runnymede Trust Report. In view, however, of the contentious nature of the findings from the present study, there is urgent need for this model of research to be replicated and extended, drawing on a wider range of schools, a larger sample of students, a variety of measures of attitudes toward religious diversity, and including a more nuanced range of control variables.

In conclusion two main challenges are posed by the present study, one challenge addressed to the next generation of educational researchers working in this field, and one challenge addressed to the churches that administer church schools within the context of religiously diverse societies. The challenge facing educational researchers is to extend the present model of research sufficiently to capture enough students affiliated with non-Christian faith traditions to allow the effects of church schools on attitudes toward religious diversity to be assessed among this important group of students. The challenge facing the churches is to gain sufficient skill and confidence in handling empirical evidence of this nature within the political debate regarding the hypothesised negative effects of church schools in preparing young people for life in religiously diverse societies and in undermining community coherence.

### **Note**

Young People's Attitudes to Religious Diversity Project (AHRC Reference: AH/G014035/1) is a large scale mixed methods research project investigating the attitudes of 13- to 16-year-old students across the United Kingdom. Students from a variety of socio-economic, cultural, ethnic and religious backgrounds from different parts of England, Wales, Northern Ireland and Scotland, with the addition of London as a special case, took part in the study. Professor Robert Jackson was principal investigator and Professor Leslie J Francis was co-investigator. Together they led a team of qualitative and quantitative researchers based in the Warwick

Religions and Education Research Unit, within the Institute of Education at the University of Warwick. The project was part of the AHRC/ESRC Religion and Society Programme, and ran from 2009-12.

### References

- Angermeyer, M.C., & H. Matschinger. (1997). Social distance towards the mentally ill: Results of representative surveys in the Federal Republic of Germany. *Psychological Medicine* 27 (1), 131-141.
- Berkeley, R. (2008). *Right to divide? Faith schools and community cohesion*. London: Runnymede.
- Bickel, R. (2007). *Multilevel analysis for applied research: It's just regression!* New York: Guildford Press.
- Bogardus, E.S. (1928). *Immigration and race attitudes*. Lexington, MA: Heath.
- Bogardus, E.S. (1959). *Social distance*. Yellow Springs, OH: Antioch Press.
- Brinkerhoff, M.B., & Jacob, J.C. (1994). Racial, ethnic and religious social distance in Surinam: An exploration of the 'Strategic Alliance Hypothesis' in a Caribbean community *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 17 (4), 636-661.
- Brockett, A., Village, A., & Francis, L. J. (2009). Internal consistency reliability and construct validity of the Attitude toward Muslim Proximity Index (AMPI): A measure of social distance. *British Journal of Religious Education*, 31, 241-249.
- Brockett, A., Village, A., & Francis, L. J. (2010). Assessing outgroup prejudice among secondary pupils in Northern England: Introducing the Outgroup Prejudice Index (OPI). *Research in Education*, 86, 67-77.
- Brockman, J., & D'Arcy, C. (1978). Correlates of attitudinal social distance toward the mentally ill: A review and re-survey *Journal Social Psychiatry and Psychiatric Epidemiology*, 13 (2), 69-77.
- Bryk, A. S., & Raudenbush, S. W. (1992). *Hierarchical linear models: Applications and data analysis methods* (Vol. 1). London: Sage.



Catholic Commission for Racial Justice (1984). *Learning from diversity*. London: Catholic Media Office.

Chadwick, P. (1997). *Shifting alliances: Church and state in English education*. London: Cassell.

Church of England Board of Education (1984). *Schools and multi-cultural education*. London: Church House.

Corrigan, P.W., Edwards, A.B., Green, A., Thwart, S.L., & Perm, D.L., (2001). Prejudice, social distance, and familiarity with mental illness. *Schizophrenia Bulletin* 27, 219-225.

Cronbach, L.J. (1951). Coefficient alpha and the internal structure of tests. *Psychometrika*, 16, 297-334.

Cruickshank, M. (1963). *Church and State in English Education*. London: Macmillan.

DeVellis, R. F. (2003). *DeVellis: Theory and applications*. London: Sage.

Dummet, A., & McNeal, J. (1981). *Race and Church Schools*. London: Runnymede Trust.

Ethington, P.J. (2007). The intellectual construction of "Social Distance": Toward a recovery of Georg Simmel's social geometry. *European Journal of Geography*, <http://www.cybergeogeo.eu/index227.html>.

Eysenck, H.J. (1975). The structure of social attitudes. *British Journal of Social and Clinical Psychology*, 14, 323-331.

Eysenck, H.J. (1976). Structure of social attitudes. *Psychological Reports*, 39, 463-466.

Eysenck, H. J., & Eysenck, S. B. G. (1975). *Manual of the Eysenck Personality Questionnaire (adult and junior)*. London: Hodder and Stoughton.

Francis, L. J. (1996). The development of an abbreviated form of the Revised Eysenck Personality Questionnaire (JEPQR-A) among 13- to 15-year-olds. *Personality and Individual Differences*, 21, 835-844.

Francis, L. J. (2001). *The values debate: A voice from the pupils*. London: Woburn Press.

Francis, L.J., Croft, J. Pyke, A., & Robbins, M. (2012). Young people's attitudes to religious diversity: Quantitative approaches from social psychology and empirical theology, *Journal of Beliefs and Values*, 33, 279-292.

Francis, L. J., Lankshear, D. W., Robbins, M., Village, A., & ap Sîon (in press). Measuring the contribution of Anglican secondary schools to students' religious, personal and social values.

Francis, L. J., Robbins, M., & Astley, J. (Eds.). (2009). *Empirical theology in texts and tables: Qualitative, quantitative and comparative perspectives*. Leiden: Brill.

Hood, R. W. Jr., Hill, P. C., & Spilka, B. (2009). *The psychology of religion: An empirical approach, 4<sup>th</sup> edition*. New York: The Guilford Press.

Hox, J. (2002). *Multilevel analysis: Techniques and applications*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Jackson, R. (2003). Should the state fund faith based schools? A review of the arguments. *British Journal of Religious Education*, 25, 29-102.

Jung, J. H. (2012). Islamophobia? Religion, contact with Muslims, and the respect for Islam. *Review of Religious Research*, 54, 113-126.

Lee, S.A., Gibbons, J.A., Thompson, J.M. & Timani, H.S. (2009). The Islamophobia Scale: Instrument development and initial validation. *The International Journal for the Psychology of Religion*, 19, 92-105.

Likert, R. (1932). A technique for the measurement of attitudes. *Archives of Psychology*, 140, 1-55.

Murphy, J. (1971). *Church, state and schools in Britain 1800-1970*. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul.

- Norusis, M. (2011). *IBM SPSS statistics 19: Statistical procedures companion*. Chicago, IL. SPSS.
- Snijders, T. A. B., & Bosker, R. J. (1999). *Multilevel analysis: An introduction to basic and advanced multilevel modelling*. London: Sage.
- Swann Report (1985). *Education for all*. London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office.
- Village, A. (2011). Outgroup prejudice, personality and religiosity: Disentangling a complex web of relationships among adolescents in the UK. *Psychology of Religion and Spirituality*, 3, 269-284.
- Village, A., & Francis, L.J. (in press). Measuring the contribution of Roman Catholic secondary schools to students' religious, personal and social values.
- Westie, F.R. (1953). A technique for the measurement of race attitudes. *American Sociological Review* 18, 73-78.

Table 1

*Attitude toward Religious Diversity Index (ARDI)*

	IRC
I would not like to live next door to Buddhists*	.71
I would not like to live next door to Hindus*	.73
I would not like to live next door to Jews*	.78
I would not like to live next door to Muslims*	.73
I would not like to live next door to Sikhs*	.74
We must respect all religions	.77
Learning about different religions in school is interesting	.55
I would be happy about a close relative marrying someone from a different faith	.40
I would be happy to go out with someone from a different faith	.53
Having people from different religious backgrounds makes my school/college an interesting place	.52
People from different religious backgrounds make where I live an interesting place	.44

Note: IRC = Item-rest of scale correlation. \* These items were reverse coded.

Table 2 *Correlation matrix of dependent and independent variables*

	12	11	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2
1 ARDI	.18***	.16***	.12***	.06***	.10***	-.34***	.08***	-.04**	-.01	.18***	.01
2 School type	.33***	.21***	.21***	.40***	-.04**	.00	.02	-.01	.02	.07***	
3 Sex	.06***	.06***	.02	.05**	.07***	-.25***	.28***	.07***	.01		
4 School year	-.02	-.03*	-.04**	.00	-.08***	.00	.01	.05***			
5 Extraversion	-.06***	-.05***	-.09***	.01	-.16***	.09***	-.13***				
6 Neuroticism	.02	.05***	.00	.01	-.06***	-.02					
7 Psychoticism	-.15***	-.12***	-.10***	-.09***	-.33***						
8 Lie scale	.00	.03*	.03*	.02							
9 Religious affiliation	.50***	.42***	.36***								
10 Bible reading	.63***	.65***									
11 Prayer frequency	.62***										
12 Religious attendance											

Note. \*\*  $p < .01$ ; \*\*\*  $p < .001$ . ARDI = Attitude toward Religious Diversity Index. For sex, 1 = male, 2 = female; for year, 1 = year 9, 2 = year 10; for religious affiliation, 1 = no religion, 2 = Christian; for school type, 2 = schools with a religious foundation, 1 = schools without a religious foundation.

Table 3 *Mixed model regression of Attitude toward Religious Diversity*

		Model 0	Model 1	Model 2
Intercept		40.84***	43.37***	41.19***
Sex (female)	Male		-1.56***	-1.50***
Year (Year 10)	Year 9		0.07	-0.01
Location (Wales)				
	England		-0.01	-0.11
	London		1.42	0.97
Extraversion			-0.07	-0.05
Neuroticism			0.23**	0.21**
Psychoticism			-2.13***	-2.04***
Lie			0.06	0.05
Religious affiliation	Not religious			0.44
Bible reading				-0.18
Prayer				0.50***
Attendance				0.41***
School type	Religious		-0.73	-0.17
Log-2		38878.1	38164.7	38096.7
Deviance			713.3***	68.0***
Residual		77.0***	67.5***	66.6***
Intercept		5.8***	4.3**	3.8**
ICC		7%	6%	5%

Note. Grouping variable: school.. Table gives unstandardized parameter estimates for fixed effects. Reference categories are in parentheses. \*  $p < .05$ ; \*\*\*  $p < .001$ .