

# **The impact of Greek ‘all-day’ school on teachers’, students’ and parents’ lives**

**Submitted for the degree of  
Doctor of Philosophy**

**by  
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# DECLARATION

I hereby declare that, except where explicit attribution is made, the work presented in this thesis is entirely my own.

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# ABSTRACT

**Context:** The aim of the proposed research is to investigate the impact of the pilot ‘all-day’ school scheme in Greece on teachers’, students’ and parents’ lives. The ‘all-day’ school is considered to be an innovative pedagogical reform in the Greek primary education. It was legislated and initiated in the period 1997-2002 in response to the apparent need for an increased work force. In addition, the growing number of working mothers meant that children needed to be looked after in a safe environment beyond mainstream school hours. Since then the ‘all-day’ school remains a project in progress facing a lot of obstacles with the most recent being the economic crisis in Greece which has badly affected all the sectors, private and public, of the country, and consequently the public schools of all levels. Despite its importance for educational reform, only a few studies attempted to examine some of the aspects of the ‘all-day’ school. It is this study’s contribution to provide, for first time, the key stakeholders of the ‘all-day’ school, namely teachers, parents and students, with the opportunity to raise their voices and express their experience and opinions about the effect of the ‘all-day’ school on their lives.

**Objective:** The aim of this thesis is to provide insights on the perceptions and feelings of teachers, parents and students involved in the operation and expansion of the institutionalization of the ‘all-day’ school. These key stakeholders are called to express their voices about the effect of the ‘all-day’ school on their lives.

**Methodology:** This study follows the interpretivist perspective. It does not examine pre-existing theories; instead it relies on qualitative findings collected from policy documents, questionnaires and semi-structured interviews with the ‘actors’ of the ‘all-day’ school, teachers, students and parents.

**Findings:** This study revealed the huge gap between policy and practice in the operation of the ‘all-day’ school. The ‘all-day’ school aimed to fulfill certain pedagogical and social aims, as described in the official policy documents of the Greek Ministry of Education. Empirical evidence from this study indicated that in practice only few of these aims, mainly related to the social dimension of the ‘all-day’ school have been achieved. The ‘all-day’ school failed to achieve significant pedagogical aims such as the homework completion at school. A number of contradictions and dilemmas

emerged in the stakeholders' accounts from their daily involvement in the 'all-day' school.

**Implications:** The evaluation of the 'all-day' school as described in this thesis necessitates immediate reforms in relation to teachers' training and collaboration, leadership and quality assurance practices, human and time resources, curriculum development, and parents' and local authorities' involvement. Despite the need for improvements, all teachers', students' and parents' voices call for the 'all-day' school to continue operating provided that the educational authorities will take measures for its reformation.

*To my husband,  
Dionysios Mylonas*

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# Chapter 1- Introduction

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## 1.1 Introduction to the research

My research interest focuses on educational reforms that have taken place in Greece as a result of the country's entrance into the European Union. The Greek "all-day" school is a recent educational reform, legislated and initiated within the period 1997-2002. My research study will be specifically focused on the establishment and operation of the pilot 'all-day' school in primary education. More specifically, I am interested in exploring the implementation of the "all-day" school in Greece in terms of its impact on teachers' professional lives. I am also interested in exploring parents' and students' views about the impact of the 'all-day' school on their lives. Since 2002, the 'all-day' school runs the second phase of its operation, as it is a project in progress, with additional changes in content and practice to have taken place. The official documents that record these changes are presented in a following chapter.

This research will explore teachers' perceptions concerning the "all-day" school. In particular it will examine teachers' understanding of the 'all-day' school policy; their opinions about the impact of the 'all-day' school on pupils and parents; their perceptions about the relationship between morning and afternoon school; their views and feelings about how the 'all-day' school has affected their professional lives; and finally, their perceptions on the possible influence of the all-day" school curriculum on their teaching practices. In addition, the research will explore parents' opinions about the impact of the 'all-day' school on their own and their children's lives. Finally, the research will investigate students' feelings and views about the 'all-day' school.

## **1.2 Aim and outline of this chapter**

This chapter presents relevant information pertaining to the background of this research. It gives a brief outline of the social and cultural context of Greece in relation to its educational system. It briefly discusses the need for educational change in Greece and presents the current educational reforms that have taken place in the country together with the organisation, administration and structure of the Greek educational system. A brief definition and operational framework of primary education is presented with a short description of the ‘all-day’ school. The chapter also puts forward the rationale and significance of the research. Key research questions will be explicated and methods with which the initial research questions will be addressed and be described. Finally, the structure of thesis chapters will be outlined.

## **1.3 Background of the research**

According to the most recent report of the OECD (2012), before any successful education reform can be implemented in Greece or elsewhere, the country’s history, culture and policy context should be taken into consideration.

### **1.3.1 Social and Cultural context**

The most relevant cultural and social factors connected to education reform in Greece are the following (OECD, 2012, p.15-16):

- *A high personal and family commitment to education, reflected in significant household investment in educational services outside regular educational institutions.*
- *A commitment to social equity and egalitarian, which are values enshrined in the Constitution of Greece (Article 4).*
- *The Greek system seeks to avoid privilege and any differentiation or selection among students, teachers, schools or regions on any basis than ‘objective criteria’.*
- *Constitutional commitments to free education. The Greek constitution stipulates (Article 16, section 1): “Art and science, research and teaching shall be free and their development and promotion shall be an obligation of the State”.*

- *A historical agrarian economy and society. This has resulted in a highly local and regional political culture in which despite strong ties to Greece as a nation, loyalty to village and family are paramount- even for the population that may have long-since migrated to the major metropolitan areas of Athens and Thessaloniki (Skolarikou, 2003)*
- *A long tradition of highly centralized government and measures to ensure national cohesion and counter regionalism. Proposals for decentralization and differentiation by region are met with concern and represent sharp departures from the past.*
- *A high percentage of employment in the public sector (40% of GDP), with stronger benefits and employment security than is commonly available in the private sector.*
- *Mistrust of governmental initiatives and concerns about corruption, misuse of public funds or public employment for private purposes. Consequently, the government focuses more on compliance and “preventing bad things from happening” than on providing services or a positive reform agenda.*
- *A limited tradition of reliance upon private entities to serve public purposes. The Greek Constitution stipulates that, “The establishment of university level institutions by private persons is prohibited” (Article 16, section 8).*
- *Strong labour unions and the right to organize, supported by Constitutional provisions (Article 12). Strikes and public demonstrations of perceived threats to employee rights are frequent.*
- *Pride in Greek history and culture, reflected in comparatively traditional views about curriculum and pedagogy.*
- *Active political participation, reflected in extensive participation in political parties and vocal demonstrations on issues facing the country. This is especially evident in the dominant role of student unions in higher education institutions, which are affiliated with national political parties.*

### 1.3.2 Governmental context

Greece is characterized by a highly centralized and fragmented governmental system controlling the Ministry of Education, Religious Affairs, Culture and Sport. According to the last report of the OECD, (2012) Greece should allow and should request from the Greek Ministry of Education to consider being more flexible and focused on accountability for performance. The report highlights a need for a number of fundamental changes within the education system in relation to budgeting and finance, the use of human resources at schools and the structure of national, regional and local levels of administration.

### 1.4 Current reforms

In January 2011, the Minister for Education announced a public discussion on the criteria for bringing together school units for the school year 2011/12, which aim at improving the quality of education and at decreasing waste by effectively utilizing the extant infrastructure to develop and apply innovative education at approaches and methodologies for the benefit of all students (Hellenic Republic, Ministry of Education, 19 January 2011). The Ministry undertook this process under the authority of an existing law (Law 1566/85). Although the legal authority for school consolidation and mergers has existed for some time, the authority had not been used extensively until this year. The intent is to conduct a school mapping exercise every year. The *Kallikratis*<sup>1</sup> changes in the general administrative regional structure gave an additional impetus for changes because the new, bigger municipalities, under the authority of the Ministry of Interior Affairs, have responsibility for school facilities, transportation and certain other non-educational functions of schools and the new, fully self-governed regions have increased responsibilities for their schools.

The Ministry emphasized that it was merging or consolidating schools for pedagogical reasons, not primarily for economic/efficiency reasons. The objectives of these reforms at the primary level were to establish robust schools that will have the possibility, and the required physical infrastructure, to support innovative activities

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<sup>1</sup> From 1 January 2011, in accordance with the *Kallikratis* reform (Law 3852/2010), the administrative system of Greece was drastically overhauled. The former system of 13 regions, 54 prefectures and 1033 municipalities and communities was replaced by 7 decentralized administrations, 13 regions and 325 municipalities which are fully self-governed.

undertaken under the “New School” initiative. At the secondary level the aim was to establish schools with the laboratory infrastructure, adequate teaching staff, and minimum number of students necessary to operate according to the planned specifications and guidelines of the “New Upper Secondary School” to be introduced at the beginning in September 2011. Also, along with the pedagogical reasons, these reforms aimed at consolidating and justifying use of existing educational resources, as well as addressing the problem of unequal availability of educational opportunities.

## **1.5 The general organization and administration of the education system**

The general organization and administration of the education system corresponds to the organization and administrative structure of the State with the following hierarchical structure (Ministry of Education, Religious Affairs, Culture and Sport, 2009/10):

- Ministry of Education, Religious Affairs, Culture and Sport
- Primary and Secondary Education Regional Directorates
- Primary and Secondary Education Prefectoral Directorates
- Local Education Offices
- School units

### **1.5.1 The structure of the Greek educational system**

A detailed description of the Greek Education System is offered in EURYBASE, the EURYDICE database of the European Education Systems, 2012). For an explanatory table please see Chapter 2.

- **Primary education**

Since the beginning of the 19th century, different legislative regulations have defined the operational framework of primary education. Free, compulsory elementary/primary education was constitutionally established in 1911. In 1927, it was specified that attendance in elementary education should be for no less than six years. The system remained untouched until the 1970s, In1976, a nine-year compulsory

education for all Greek children aged six (6) to fifteen (15) as well as the Demotic<sup>2</sup> Greek as the language of instruction at all education grades were introduced (Article 2 of Law 309/1976). In 1985, the Law 1566/1985 that is still in force today, defined the structure and operation of Primary and Secondary Education. This law established the new procedure for drawing up new curricula and for writing the corresponding new textbooks. It has also set out the following principles: every child's school book should be accompanied by a corresponding teacher's book, the establishment of the single-accent system, "*monotoniko system*" in the Modern Greek language, further education for teachers, etc. This legislative framework has been supplemented with new laws and presidential decrees, chief among which are: Presidential Decree 8/10-01-1995 and its supplementary PD 121/18-04-1995 by which the method of assessing the pupils is differentiated; it is now treated as an on-going pedagogical process. In 1997, the 'all-day' primary schools came into operation providing an extended daily schedule and a more holistic curriculum (Law 2525/1997). Around the same time the institutional framework for inter-cultural education was developed. Both of these measures constituted a response to the changing social conditions. Over the last decade, the Primary Education school programmes have been altered with the addition of new subjects, (such as a 2<sup>nd</sup> foreign language), as well as a new, inter-disciplinary approach and the flexible<sup>3</sup> zone (F.12.1/545/858112/G1 FEK 1280/13/09/2005). In the school year 2007, attendance at the Nipiagogeio (pre-primary school) became compulsory at the age of five, thus extending the period of compulsory education to ten years (Law: 3518/2006).

- **'All-day' primary schools**

The Ministry of Education, Lifelong Learning and Religious Affairs implements special programmes and supports alternative primary education structures that aim at meeting the needs of pupils with special educational, social and cultural needs.

In the context of primary education the 'all-day' school operates as a new form of school. The operation of the 'all-day' school is based on an extended basic curriculum

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<sup>2</sup> **Demotic Greek language**, also called Romaic, Greek Demotiki, or Romaiki, a modern vernacular of Greece. In modern times it has been the standard spoken language and, by the 20th century, had become almost the sole language of Greek creative literature (Encyclopedia Britannica)

<sup>3</sup> **Flexible zone** is a specified period of time set aside within the school schedule where cross-thematic activities/projects are carried out linking subjects/disciplines horizontally through shared basic concepts

complemented with alternative teaching approaches and content. These include empirical methods, modern subjects and skills such as ICT and additional hours for foreign language teaching. The ‘all-day’ primary school is a response to both the changing characteristics and needs of the modern family, where often both parents work as well as a respond to upgraded pedagogical methods that have a pupil focus and active education. In the 2008 school year, the all-day school curriculum ran in 90% of primary schools.

## **1.6 Statement of research problem**

The focus of this research is the ‘all-day’ primary school reform in Greece, legislated and implemented in the period 1997-2002. The implementation of the ‘all-day’ school aimed at meeting the needs of teachers, students and parents in a changing social, economical and cultural environment after the country’s entrance in the European Union. A number of studies have been undertaken examining the effect of the ‘all-day’ school on teachers’, students’ and parents’ lives separately. However, my study is the only research in which documents the views of three groups of key stakeholders pertaining to the effect of the ‘all-day’ school on their lives. As such this study makes an original contribution to research.

## **1.6 Research rationale**

Greece has a long history of educational reforms despite its strong and very influential, cultural and social structures, which have sustained a traditional and strictly centralized educational system for years. A review of the major educational reforms will be presented in the Chapter 2 illustrating the changes took place in Greek Education. The focus of this research is the reform of the ‘all-day’ school legislated and initiated in the period between 1997 and 2002 and in response to the apparent need for an increased work force. In addition, the growing number of working mothers meant that children needed to be looked after in a safe environment beyond mainstream school hours. Since then, the ‘all-day’ school remains a project in progress facing a lot of obstacles with the most recent being the economic crisis in Greece, which has badly affected all the sectors, private and public, of the country, and consequently the public schools across all levels.

A number of research studies have previously been undertaken, and presented in the following chapter, examining the effect of the ‘all-day’ school either on the teachers’, students’ or parents’ lives. However, my aim is to give a voice to the teachers, students and parents collectively bringing the opinions and experiences of all under one research. The particular study offers for the first time the opportunity to teachers, students and parents to express their opinions, beliefs and perspectives about the effect of the ‘all-day’ school on their lives. The three groups of participants in this research are the key stakeholders who interact and play a significant role in the school processes. Their active and influential engagement in this new form of school, the ‘all-day’ school, gives each group the right to voice their experiences and opinions from different perspectives, as individuals and as part of a group that is interlinked.

This narrower focus has much value since it will provide insights into teachers’, students’ and parents’ perspectives examining the phenomenon of the reform of the ‘all-day’ school. In addition, the thesis can be used as a resource tool for policy makers and to provide feedback to the Greek Ministry of Education.

## **1.7 Significance of the research**

This research was designed to gain insights into teachers’, parents’ and students’ views on the impact of the ‘all-day’ school on their lives. My research offers a platform to the three key groups of stakeholders to voice their experience and reveal their opinions on the degree to which the aims of the ‘all day’ school have been applied. It is the intention of this research to extend the discourse and address the critical area of examining how the ‘all-day’ primary school in Greece has affected the lives of teachers, students and parents. In the next section the research questions will be outlined.

## **1.8 Research questions**

The main purpose of this research was to investigate “*What is the impact of the institutionalization of the ‘all-day’ school in Greece on teachers’, students’ and parents’ lives*”? This primary focus would be investigated by examining the perceptions of three significant stakeholder groups:



1. To what extent have the theoretical aims of the ‘all-day’ school been put into practice?
2. What is the impact of the ‘all-day’ school on the professional lives of teachers?
3. What are students’ perceptions of the ‘all-day’ school?
4. What are parents’ perceptions of the ‘all-day’ school?

## **1.9 Research methods and design**

The research conducted was an interpretivist, phenomenological study, describing the world as experienced by three groups of key stakeholders - teachers, students and parents, thereby, illuminating key issues concerning their participation in the ‘all-day’ school. One of the principles of phenomenology is to put oneself in the place of the other, as this allows researchers to understand and describe people’s subjective experiences (Crotty, 1998). By conducting a phenomenological study it was attempted to capture first-hand accounts of the participants’ perceptions and experiences, illuminating phenomena, whilst giving the participants a voice. Teachers, students and parents have key insights into the processes of educational practice and they are in a position to offer a perspective different to that of the policy-makers. They work closely with each-other, but nevertheless perceive the school processes differently playing discrete roles as individuals and as a group. Their perspectives, therefore, are important and need to be explored in details

Questionnaires and interviews were the two research methods of data collection. The overall goal was to use the feedback provided and examine if the theoretical aims of the ‘all-day’ school, defined by the governmental documents, have been met for the benefit of the involved stakeholders. Eight ‘all-day’ schools in Athens were chosen as the fieldwork for this study. The governmental documents defining the aims of the ‘all-day’ school, theoretical and pedagogical, were analyzed in the Literature Chapter and this formed the basis of the formation of the questionnaires. The data collected from the questionnaires and interviews have been thematically analyzed. Please see (Figure 3.1) for a summary of the research process.

## **1.10 Conclusion and summary**

The main focus of this research is how the ‘all-day’ primary school in Greece has affected teachers’, students’ and parents’ lives. The primary aim of the thesis is to offer insights into the phenomenon of the ‘all-day’ school, by employing a phenomenological study, to enable the participants to voice their accounts first-hand based on their experiences. Teachers, students and parents are the key stakeholders playing an important role in the education processes and practices. Each stakeholder group plays an important and different role in policy making within the schools. In the case of this reform in the primary education in Greece, the collective experience of those three groups of participants offers valuable insights on the effects of the ‘all-day’ school on teachers’, parents’ and students’ lives.

## **1.11 Thesis outline**

Following this introductory chapter, the thesis consists of a further five chapters: In Chapter 2, a critical review of relevant literature is provided pertaining to the Greek education system with particular reference to primary education. It also presents the major education reforms and focuses on the ‘all-day’ school reform. A critical analysis of the key studies related to the reform of the ‘all-day’ school is also presented in order to contextualize the present research. In Chapter 3, the methodology adopted in this research is explained. The research conducted was an interpretivist, phenomenological study, describing the effect of the ‘all day’ school on the lives of teachers, students and parents, through their experiences. The phenomenological approach provides the researcher with the means to better understand and identify with those participating in the study. It helps to describe people’s subjective experiences (Crotty, 1998). Chapter 4 will present the analysis of the data collected in the research, specifically the data collected from semi-structure interviews with teachers, parents and students and from questionnaires given to teachers and parents. The data collected from the questionnaires and interviews have been thematically analyzed. Chapter 5 will discuss the results of the data analysis in connection with the literature review and focus on the main findings emerging from the data analysis. Chapter 6 will draw conclusions and will suggest recommendations based on the research evidence. In this chapter the entire research project is brought together and summarized.

# Chapter 2- Literature Review

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## 2.1 Introduction

In this chapter a critical review of the pertinent literature is presented in order to explore whether what has been written in the field and the research questions are both relevant and necessary. This critique is intended to reveal significant gaps in knowledge that relate to the research questions. The research questions have been developed to try to generate new knowledge. In addition, it provides the context of the research project and sets the framework for understanding the research.

This chapter reviews the current literature as a basis for examining the effect of the educational reform of the Greek ‘all-day’ primary school on teachers’, students’ and parents’ lives. Given the importance of researching the role that reforms play in improving student learning and teaching, it is useful to highlight the limitations inherent in the current literature of the ‘all-day’ school. It should be noted that since it was first introduced in 1997, a considerable number of studies<sup>4</sup> have been carried out on the ‘all-day’ school with the intention of identifying major issues associated with the effectiveness of the teaching curriculum and regulation of the ‘all-day’ school. The contribution of all these studies to the qualitative improvement of the functioning of the ‘all-day’ school at the time they were written is uncertain. However, the ‘all-day’ school has already undergone substantial changes and is heading for another reform, hence, the pressing need for identifying key issues associated with the current operations of the ‘all-day’ school that have yet to be discussed in the literature.

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<sup>4</sup> Loukeris & Markantonatou, 2004; Loukeris *et al* 2005; Kyrizoglou & Gregoriadis, 2004; Kyridis *et al.* 2006; Androulakis *et al.* 2006; Kyriakopoulou, 2006; Loukeris & Syriou, 2007; Taratori-Tsalkatidon, 2007; Konstantinou, 2007; Thoidis & Chaniotakis, 2008; Loukeris *et al.* 2009; Chaniotakis *et al.* 2009; Grollios & Liabas, 2012.

The review of literature is divided into the following sections:

Section 1: Setting the scene of the present study

- The political, social & economic background of Greece
- The Greek educational system

Section 2: Globalization, pedagogy and reforms in primary education

Section 3: The institutionalization of the ‘all-day’ school

- International perspective on the ‘all-day’ school
- The Greek perspective on the ‘all-day’ school
- Major studies on the Greek ‘all-day’ school: Strengths and limitations

Section 4: The stakeholders of the ‘all-day’ school

- Teachers and ‘all-day’ school
- Parents and ‘all-day’ school
- Students and ‘all-day’ school

Section one serves two purposes. First, it gives a brief overview of the salient issues of the economic situation in Greece and the need to connect education and development. Second, it examines in great detail the Greek context in which the research has been undertaken, thus providing a framework for the research questions. In Section two, the phenomenon of globalization and its impact on reforms in primary education are examined. The third section places emphasis on the reform of the ‘all-day’ primary school. It provides an international analysis of the institutionalization of the ‘all-day’ school followed by the analysis of the Greek ‘all-day’ school model. Major studies on the Greek ‘all-day’ school and their findings are also discussed. In section four, the role of the three main groups of stakeholders – teachers, parents, students – is presented.

## **2.2 Section 1: Setting the scene of the present study**

### **2.2.1 Political, social & economic background of Greece**

In order to contextualize the study it is important to provide a brief overview of the political, social and economic background of Greece, the educational system of Greece and the ‘all-day’ school model- a major reform in Greek primary education. This section will consider the following aspects:

- *Historical overview*
- *Administrative divisions*
- *Peripheries of Greece*
- *Demographic situation*
- *Economic situation*
- *Development strategy for education*

### ***Historical overview***

Greece is a country located in Southeast Europe, officially known as Hellenic Republic (see Figure 2.1). Athens is the capital and the largest city of the country. The population of Greece is slightly less than 11 million according to the 2011 census (Hellenic Statistical Authority-EL.STAT, 2011). Greece is a Presidential Parliamentary Republic the Hellenic Constitution being ratified by Parliament in June 1975. This system has undergone two further revisions in 1986 and in 2001. In 1975, Greece applied to become a member-state of the European Economic Community (EEC) and signed in Athens the Act of Accession on 28 May 1979 which came into force on 1 January 1981. Following this, Greece became a member of the Economic and Monetary Union (EMU) in 1 January 2002. Greece was among the 51 founding members of the UN in 1945 and is also a member of NATO, (North Atlantic Treaty Organization), the Council of Europe, the OSCE (Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe), the OECD (Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development), and the WEU (Western European Union). Greece has concluded a large number of bilateral and multilateral agreements and as a member participates in all European Union cooperation with other organizations and country groupings (EURYDICE-Greece, 2009-10).

**Figure 2. 1 Administrative map of Greece**



The map above illustrates Greece and its surrounding countries indicating international borders, administrative boundaries, the national capital Athens (Athina), administrative capitals, major cities, and the location of Mount Athos (Agion Oros) and Mount Olympus (Oros Olympos, highest peak Mytikas, 2,917 m (9,570 ft) (Administrative Map of Greece /Hellenic Republic, Nations Online Project) .

### ***Administrative divisions***

Greece is divided into 13 peripheries, administrative divisions which are similar to regions. The country consists of the mainland part including the peninsula of Peloponnese and a big number of islands spread on the two main seas of Greece, the Aegean Sea and the Ionian Sea.

### ***Peripheries of Greece (Ministry of Internal Affairs, Greece)***

1. **Attica** with the Greek capital Athens as the region capital.
2. **Crete** which is the largest Greek island with Heraklion the periphery’s capital.

3. **Southern Aegean**, the periphery is consisting of the Cyclades and Dodecanese islands in the Southern Aegean Sea with Ermoupoli on Syros Island, the region's capital.
4. **Northern Aegean**, the region is consisting of many islands west on the Turkish border.
5. **Epirus**, a mountainous periphery situated in the northwest Greek mainland. Ioannina is its largest city and the capital of the region.
6. **Central Greece** with capital city Lamia.
7. **Western Greece** with capital city Patras.
8. **Ionian islands** with capital the city of Corfu.
9. **Central Macedonia** with capital the city of Thessaloniki.
10. **Western Macedonia** with capital the city of Kozani.
11. **Eastern Macedonia and Thrace** with capital of city Komotini
12. **Peloponnese** with Patras the biggest city and capital of the region.
13. **Thessaly** with Larissa the capital of the periphery.

The table below gives relevant data pertaining to the administrative divisions of Greece as represented in 2011.

**Table 2. 1: Administrative divisions of Greece**

	<b>Region</b>	<b>Capital</b>	<b>Area (km<sup>2</sup>)</b>	<b>Area (sq. mi.)</b>	<b>Population</b>	<b>GDP (bn)</b>
1	Attica	Athens	3,808	1,470	3,812,330	€103.334
2	Central Greece	Lamia	15,549	6,004	546,870	€12.530
3	Central Macedonia	Thessaloniki	18,811	7,263	1,874,590	€34.458
4	Crete	Heraklion	8,259	3,189	621,340	€12.854
5	East Macedonia and Thrace	Komotini	14,157	5,466	606,170	€9.054

6 Epirus	Ioannina	9,203	3,553	336,650	€5.827
7 Ionian Islands	Corfu	2,307	891	206,470	€4.464
8 North Aegean	Mytilene	3,836	1,481	197,810	€3.579
9 Peloponnese	Tripoli	15,490	5,981	581,980	€11.230
10 South Aegean	Ermoupoli	5,286	2,041	308,610	€7.816
11 Thessaly	Larissa	14,037	5,420	730,730	€12.905
12 West Greece	Patras	11,350	4,382	680,190	€12.122
13 West Macedonia	Kozani	9,451	3,649	282,120	€5.564

### ***Demographic situation***

Greece is the southernmost end of Europe and the Balkan Peninsula and embraces an area of 131,957 square kilometers. According to the last census of the Hellenic Statistical Authority, in 2011, the permanent population of Greece consists of 10,787,690 residents, with 5,303,690 males, a percentage of 49, 2% and 5,484,000 females a percentage of 50.8%. There has been a decline in the total population of 1.34 % in comparison with the previous census data in 2001 when the Greek population was 10,934,097 residents (Hellenic Statistical Authority-EL.STAT, 2011).

According to the latest national statistics and the census of 2011, a significant proportion of the population of Greece, (36, 3%) is concentrated in Athens and Thessaloniki, the biggest Greek cities. A noted interesting demographic change amongst the population of Greece over the recent years is the increase of economic immigrants, which started at the beginning of the 90's. Most of the total number of 663.297 immigrants has come from the Balkans, the former Soviet Republics and Eastern Europe. (Eurybase, Greece, 2009/10) which has affected the diversity of the country's population. Greece promotes and implements initiatives, actions and measures at the national level, which enhance both the European and international dimensions of education (Eurydice, Greece 2009/10).



Life expectancy is 77.4 years for men and 82.9 years for women according the ESYE population projections. In the last decade, the number of Greeks aged under-14 has declined whilst the population aged over-65 has increased (Hellenic Statistical Authority-EL.STAT, 2011).

### ***Economic situation***

In the decade before 2008 Greece achieved rapid economic growth. The real (GDR) growth rate slowed gradually in 2008 but managed to retain a positive difference of 1.4% against the Euro-zone average. The economic situation in Greece post 2008 has continued to deteriorate with investments significantly falling and the business sector also showing a downward trend. Furthermore, unemployment reached the highest level amongst the European countries, 18, 9% to 26.0% between September 2011 and September 2012, (Eurostat, 4/2013). In recent years, Greece has experienced the deepest economic crises of its history and is one of the most badly affected countries in the world. The country has gradually lost its international cost competitiveness and as a result its international investment position has deteriorated showing the poorest record of foreign direct investment in Europe (OECD, Greece at a Glance Policies for a Sustainable Recovery, 2010).

Greece has proved to be a country with large imbalances. According to the OECD (2010) the fiscal deficit has reached the 13% of GDR in 2009. The foreign debt is more than 70% of GDP in 2008 which affects the gradual loss of competitiveness in relation with the Greece's euro-area partners. Productivity is prevented by slow structural reforms and unemployment remains high.

As a consequence of the economy, Greece has suffered unpredictable losses in all the country's crucial areas and vital functions. Despite the Greek government's ambitious reforms, including its updated Stability and Growth Programme, the economic situation of the country remains uncertain with serious and negative effects on critical areas such as public administration and budgets, health, social policies, pensions and education.

### ***Development strategy for education 2007-13***

The Greek Government recognized the need and the importance of taking urgent measures in order to connect education and development in a country battling with economic, political and social upheaval. The key elements in the education development strategy for the period 2007-2013 were “*Development, Competiveness, Education and Employment*”. These strategic directions are outlined in the National Strategic Reference Framework (NSRF) for the years 2007- 2013. The aims of this development strategy were to modernize the educational system and upgrade the quality of education at all levels. It intends also to strengthen and upgrade the quality of services and systems of initial vocational education and training by improving the connection between education and labour market. It is also aims at strengthening of lifelong education, facilitating access and reducing social exclusion in education. Finally its aim is to accelerate the transition to a society and knowledge economy by strengthening research and innovation and the development of human capital in the country (Ministry of Education, Religious Affairs, Culture and Sports, 2007).

The amount of investment in education, according to the NSRF, would entail 3.3 billion euro of public expenditure through the operational program “Education and Lifelong Learning” and the Regional Operational Program (ROP) for the years 2007-13. More specifically the overall strategy for education for 2007-2013 was to be funded by:

- The *European Social Fund (ESF)* with €1,440 M
- The *European Regional Development Fund (ERDF)* with €1,160 M
- National resources through the *National Public Investment Program* and the *Regular Budget of the State*

### **2.2.2 The Greek educational system**

In Greece, education is compulsory for all children aged between 5 and 15. Compulsory education consists of Primary Education (*Dimotiko*), 6-12 years of age, and Lower Secondary Education (*Gymnasio*), 12-15 years of age (Law 309/1976). However, the school life of a child can start as early as at the age of 2.5 years, in pre-school private and state institutions called ‘*Vrefonipiakoi Paidikoi Stathmoi*’. At the

age of 4 children can attend nursery classes (*Nipiaka Tmimata*), and kindergartens (*Nipiagogeia*), 5-6 years of age (Ministry of Education, F7/559/31548/2009).

In primary schools students attend 6 classes from Year 1 to Year 6. Students start primary school at the age of 6. Except for mainstream (public/private) kindergartens and the primary schools, which will be presented in detail in a subsequent section, recent years have seen the establishment of ‘all-day’ primary schools with longer hours of attendance and an enhanced curriculum which aimed to fulfil students’ pedagogical and social needs in a rapidly changing world (Law 1566/1984, F.6/53/G1/2000, Ministry of Education, 2012).

After completing primary school students, at the age of 12, are enrolled in the lower secondary school (*Gymnasio*). Their attendance in *Gymnasio* lasts for three years. As a result of the 1977 reform, post-compulsory secondary education in the higher secondary schools (*Lykeia*) consists of two types of schools: The Unified Upper Secondary Schools (*Eniaio Lykeio*) and the Technical Vocational Educational School (TEE). Students study for three years in *Eniaio* and *Technical Vocational Lykeio* (Presidential Decree 201/98, Presidential Decree 121/95, and F.E.K. 1597/2006).

Special kindergartens, primary schools, high schools and *Lykeia* operate for students with special needs (Law 3699/2008). Finally Music, Ecclesiastical and Physical Education Secondary schools are operating with emphasis given on specialist subject education under the supervision of the Ministry of Education, whose degrees become equivalent with those of the Higher Education Institutions (Law 3432/2006). Additionally, there exist vocational Training Institutes (IEK) which are included in post-compulsory secondary education. These provide “*formal but unclassified level of education*” (Ministry of Education, 2012), because they accept students from lower and higher secondary schools (Law3475/2006).

The public higher education is divided into Universities and Technological Education Institutes (TEI). Students take exams at the second and third years of the upper secondary school and according to their performance in national level exams, seek admission to the different schools of Universities and TEI (Law3475/2006). According to Law 3404/2005, Article 13 which was added to Law 2525/1997 from the academic year 2006-2007 the minimum score necessary for entrance to Higher Education Institutes should be at least 50% of the highest possible passing grade. In addition,

students can attend the Hellenic Open University, a public university, absolutely equivalent to the other universities of Greece, which provides graduates with the same qualifications (Law 2552/97). More details of the organisation and operation of the different levels of Greek education will be presented in the following sections.

The main characteristics of formal education in Greece are *'the fixed length of study, the possibility of repetition and the award of formal school certifications'* (Ministry of Education, F. 3/788/95795/G1/2011). It is compulsory for students at each education level to obtain a title (i.e. a school certificate or degree) for progressing to the next level of higher studies.

In the following graph (Source: Ministry of Education, Religious, Culture and Sports, 2011) a general overview of the Greek education system is presented. A detailed description of the educational system of Greece is provided in the sections that follow.

**Table 2. 2 The structure of Greek educational system**

<b>Higher Education</b>	
Postgraduate studies(Universities, TEI- Hellenic Open University) - Hellenic Open University	
Conventional Technological Education Institutes (TEI)	
<b>Secondary Education</b>	
<b>Lykeia:</b> (Upper Secondary Schools) -General - Musical - Ecclesiastical - Physical Education Schools B' grade - Special A' grade	<b>TEE</b> (Vocational Upper Secondary Schools) B and A level vocational education C and B level vocational education
	<b>IEK</b> (Post-Secondary Non-Tertiary Institutes)
<b>Gymnasia</b> (Lower Secondary Schools) - General - Musical - Ecclesiastical - Physical Education - Special	
<b>Primary Education</b> (compulsory education)	
<i>Dimotika</i> (mainstream, special, 'all-day' primary schools)	
<b>Pre-Primary Education</b>	
<i>Nipiagogeia</i> (mainstream, special, 'all-day' nursery schools)	
<i>Nipiaka tmimata</i> (child centres)	
<i>Paidikoi stathmoi</i> (infant centres)	

### **2.2.2.1 Education population and language of instruction**

According to the latest available data from the Hellenic Statistical Authority, at the beginning of the 2009/10 school year 1,051,297 and 75,828 pupils were enrolled respectively in public and in private compulsory education (primary and lower-secondary school levels). On 1st January 2009, the estimated population aged 0 to 29

years numbered 3,638,200 individuals comprising 32.3 % of the total population. The language of instruction at all levels of education is Greek but there are minority schools in which the teaching of course takes place both in the Greek and the Turkish language.

#### **2.2.2.2 Administrative control and extent of public-sector funded education**

In 2009/10 school year, 93.64 % of pupils enrolled in primary and secondary education attended public schools. Private schools are not grant aided, they are fully self-financed. Private primary and secondary schools are under the supervision and inspection of the Ministry of Education Religious Affairs Culture and Sports (Law 682/1977) but at the university level all institutions are exclusively state owned (Law 2916/2001).

Administrative control remains focused at the central level, whilst measures have been taken in recent years to devolve responsibilities to the regional level (Law 2916/2001). The Ministry of Education, Religious Affairs, Culture and Sports, formulates and implements legislation and administers the budget. It coordinates and supervises its decentralized services, approves primary and secondary school curricula and appoints teaching personnel. There are thirteen Regional Education Directorates under the Minister of Education implementing educational policy and linking local agents to central services and organisations. They are responsible for the administration and supervision of other decentralised services in their area, as well as for the coordination of local School Advisors (Law 3467/2005).

At the next level of the administrative structure, Directorates of Education (in each prefecture) and district Education Offices provide administrative support, supervise operation of area schools and facilitate co-ordination and cooperation between schools. School Heads serve as the administrative and educational heads of their school unit; they coordinate and guide teachers in their work and make provision for in-service training. Teachers' Associations implement program and curricular regulations and monitor students' attendance and discipline (Law 3467/2005). School Committees, which include parent and local representatives, manage budgets for heating, lighting, maintenance, equipment etc (Ministry of Interior, 8440/2011).

The Directorates of Education and Offices are responsible for monitoring the operation of schools within their area. According to the current legislation, the evaluation of schools is to be carried out at the local level with the Teachers' Associations drawing up a self-evaluation report and regional centres conducting an appraisal of school operations in their area (Law 2986/2002). Finally, higher education institutions are funded by the State. They are self-governed under the auspices of the Ministry of Education (Law 3549/2007).

### **2.2.2.3 Policy making and implementation in the Greek education system**

Education in Greece is under the ultimate supervision of the State and it is provided free to all Greek citizens. It is compulsory for at least 9 years for all students (Constitution of Greece, 1975, Article 16, amended in 1986).

The Ministry of Education is the State's uppermost body which promotes education to the Greek people and supervises all the educational institutions. It is also responsible for the formation and effective application of the national education policy which is under the complete control of the Greek State. In other words, the Ministry of Education initiates educational policies according the lines of the political party in power every time. These policies are transformed into laws and submitted to Parliament for further discussion which, at the end, and after the agreed adjustments, they are approved. Subsequent to their approval, these policies have to be implemented and put into practice through decrees, directives and circulates addressed to the regional and local education authorities (Saiti, 2003b).

Among the responsibilities of the Greek Ministry of Education, as they are defined in precise detail in the relevant sections of the Constitution, are issues such as curriculum, textbooks, evaluation, school attendance, school programme, schools' establishment, allocation of funds, teachers' appointment and in general policies concerning teachers, pupils schools and universities. Inevitably, the Greek Ministry of Education exercises control over the majority of operations connecting to the State's educational system which operations and responsibilities executed by the Minister of Education, who is a member of the Cabinet council. The Minister of Education is appointed by the President of Democracy under the recommendation of the Prime Minister and is accountable to Parliament, to government and to public for their

decisions within the Ministry of Education. The leadership of the Ministry of Education is consisted of the Minister of education, the two Deputy Ministers, and the Special Secretaries who are assisting the Minister of Education and are political appointments (Saiti, 2000b).

The administration of the Greek educational system falls under the hierarchical government model and it is characterised by centralization and uniformity dominant in all its aspects (Persianis, 2003, p.45). Decision making in Greek education system seems to be an individual rather than a collective procedure based on personal and political perceptions (Gerou, 1996; Papadimitropoulos, 2003; Saiti & Eliophotou-Menon, 2009). In addition, every time the government changes, the Minister of Education alongside the political administrators change which has resulted an over-flexible education policy (Saiti & Eliophotou-Menon, 2009) and a vast number of Education Acts and Laws which create a huge centralised and bureaucratic education administrative system (Persianis, 2003, p.45). As a result, the State fails to implement and put into practice efficiently and of time any education planning and decision (Saiti & Eliophotou-Menon, 2009). The situation becomes more complicating as the majority of decisions necessitate the Minister's signature.

Following the hierarchical model of administration each executive receives orders from their directors which prevent any kind of freedom and flexibility in decision making and implementation in the different ranks of administration (Saiti & Eliophotou-Menon, 2009). As a result, centralization in Greek education allows no room for local initiative (OECD, 2011). In addition, the concentration of power in central administration, the lack of any flexibility and ability of adaptation in changing situations leads to complicating and bureaucratic performances. Given that any change in the Greek Government entails in contradicting reforms in education with devastating results for all its stakeholders (Saiti & Eliophotou-Menon, 2009; Andreou, 2000, Persianis, 2003).

The Greek educational system is that of a highly centralised, highly bureaucratized politico-administrative system within which education operates. Overall, it makes education a closed system, not easily amenable to change and innovation (OECD, 2011). The same report highlights that, in Greece, central policy making depends on the passing of laws. This leads to administrative practises that are ill adapted to the



creation of a dynamic and responsive educational system. The same report blames the rapidly changing policies of the parties in power for the negative effects on the changing economic and social environment caused by technological change and Greece's participation in the European Union. Unlike other important political issues, in education there is not a commonly national agreed strategy among the Greek political parties, as a result, any change in power means the implementation of a new educational policy, generally in conflict with the previous one (OECD, 2011).

However, Greece has begun to move towards decentralisation through the introduction of elected prefects. Funds, functions in respect of school buildings, of school maintenance and the capacity to provide for certain educational and cultural services to the municipalities are delegated to these prefects. The creation also of district education committees and school committees are some other significant measures providing more stable school administration at local level (Reform Law, 1566/1985). But all these efforts seem to be more like devolution of power to another layer of elected officials rather than decentralisation, leaving the curriculum a centrally prescribed, and teachers with no margin for creative interpretation or development but instead still dependent on centrally prescribed texts (OECD, 2011). Prescribed curricula, syllabi and textbooks are characterised by a formalistic and theoretical mode of teaching encouraging memorizing and prohibiting experimental work or development of individual talent (Persianis, 2003, p.46). However, in 2003 the writing of new textbooks announced for the primary and secondary schools of the country with revised syllabus. The traditional teaching methods were replaced by the interdisciplinary approach which emphasises on students' holistic learning connecting the different subjects of the curriculum than learning from each subject solely (Pedagogical Institute, 2003). Although the introduction of the new textbooks was an important step of reforming the content of syllabus and the teaching practices, the evaluation of students' performance remains a controversial issue. The students' performance is evaluated exclusively by their teachers. There is no external or independent examination except the national examination carried out at the end of the school year for admission to universities. In addition, any effort made for teachers' self-evaluation, schools' evaluation or the overall educational system's evaluation has failed (Persianis, 2003, p.46).

Teachers are asked to teach in a strict bureaucratic environment, which allows them limited flexibility, autonomy and professional accountability. In the same way, head-teachers are given typical management authority, while they are accountable to school counsellors who have replaced the school inspectors since 1982. Nowadays, the post of head-teachers is awarded on a basis of promotion and holds a prestigious and authority status for those selected to administer the schools (Persianis, 2003, p.46). However, this authority is been defined by a large set of governmental rules and regulations even for issues of small importance. The Ministry of Education undertakes any responsibility of high-level educational planning and policy-making applying strong central control and bureaucratic practices. For example, the Ministry departments are responsible to provide any financial resources to schools and decide on teachers' appointment at schools. This mean that the role of educational administrators is diminished limited to bureaucratic duties such as the '*interpretation*' and '*implementation*' of the laws and regulations (Menon & Saitis, 2006, p.2). In other words, school based administrators appointed with the roles of head-teachers and deputy head-teachers are accountable to solely deliver the decisions of the authorities and make certain that the implementation of the regulations are according with the directions of the Government and the Ministry of Education. As a result, school principals have limited flexibility and freedom in organizing and running the schools according the real needs and particularities' of each school. The head-teachers may hold a prestigious and authority status as administrators and leaders of the schools in Greece but in reality they lack the autonomy that their colleagues enjoy in other western countries (Menon & Saitis, 2006).

At this point, issues concerning the hierarchical and administrative structure of the Greek educational system have been presented. In the following sections matters associated with leadership in Greek education will be presented with extra mention made on the primary education leadership.

## **2.3 Section 2: Globalization, pedagogy and reform in primary education**

Since the 1990's education reform has emerged as a top-priority political issue in both developed and developing countries. Corrales (1999) points out that the quality of education is increasingly seen as a source of international economic competitiveness:

‘In a global economy, countries compete with one another for markets, foreign investment, technological development and hosting of multinationals. A highly educated workforce is deemed to confer an edge in economic competition’ (p.8).

High quality education is seen as a key factor of economic prosperity and development (World Bank, 1996) and for this reason there is great pressure for the initiation and implementation of educational reforms. According to Hargreaves and Goodson (2006), education reform has gone through three consecutive phases. The first, up to the late 1970s, was the age of optimism and innovation, where student population witnessed growth along with economic growth. Optimism about individual liberation and technological enhancement through education also developed. Education reforms were based on large-scale curriculum reforms, which resulted in increased professional autonomy of teachers and school-driven improvement through innovations. The second phase, late 1970s to mid-1990s, was the age of complexity and contradiction. Any education reforms implemented in this period had as result the increase of external control of schools, teachers and students by means of inspections, evaluations and assessments. The consequences of these reforms were the implementation of increased regulations in schools and a decrease in teachers' autonomy. However, at this phase, the movement of neo-liberalism increased the freedom of choice in education. Student populations became more diverse creating a need for inclusive approaches and shifting the emphasis to learning for all. The third phase, mid-1990s to date, is the age of standardization and marketization. Education reforms have been designed based on centrally prescribed curricular, learning and assessment standards monitored through intensive assessment and testing and on increased competition between schools. As a result, teachers are losing their professional autonomy and learning is being focused on successful performance in standardized tests.

According to OECD, 2011 the developed countries are forced to reform their education systems in order to equip their citizens with skills and knowledge which is necessary to help them participating actively in democratic societies and dynamic economies. It is obvious that this can be feasible if the nowadays citizens of the globalising world has adequate knowledge and skills in literacy, numeracy and information and communication technologies (ICTs).

As a result, many educational systems, nowadays, instead of emphasising on standardized knowledge and helping students to achieve certain skills, their main aim is to provide students with flexibility, creativity and problem solving with the use of modern methods of teaching, such as co-operative and creative learning, and most importantly helping them with the use of the ICT in teaching. However, there is a huge gap between educational change intention and successful implementation of education reforms as many of the ongoing education development efforts have not brought the improvements expected (Sahlberg, 2006). It has proved that the increasing and constant pressure putting on teachers and students in order the quality and effectiveness of education to be improved has not been maintained steady and secure (Fullan, 2005; Hargreaves & Fink, 2005). Countries such as China, Japan, Singapore and in the European Union have reacted to the overemphasis on knowledge-based teaching and learning, demanding by their ministries of education to reform and create a more flexible form of curriculum with the introduction of authentic forms of assessment and accountability, and encouraging teachers to work together to find alternative teaching approaches that promote learning of essential knowledge and skills required in the societies of knowledge (Sahlberg, 2006).

### **2.3.1 The global education reform movement**

According to Sahlberg (2006) globalization is a cultural paradox which at the same time unifies and diversifies people and cultures. It unifies national education policies by integrating them together in a global setting. One of the best examples of this is that of the European Union which through its educational policies and reforms aim to unify the educational systems of its countries-members allowing them at the same time to have a relevant autonomy in their education systems (OECD, 2012, Eurydice, 2011). From one education system to another, it seems that problems and challenges are similar as well as solutions and education reform agendas are becoming the same

similar. Another example is this of the OECD's Program for International Student Assessment (PISA) which has mobilized scores of education experts to visit other countries in order to learn how to redefine their own education policies (PISA, 2009)

One of the positive effects of globalization is the fact that has increased international collaboration, exchange of ideas and interaction of education policies between the different education systems (World Bank, 2005, OECD, 2012). It is a common practice for the ministries of education of countries throughout the world to analyze global policy developments and education reforms. As a result the world's education systems without doubt share some key values, functions and structures (Sahlberg, 2006). However, while an increased global interaction among policy-makers and educators is a fact the question which occurs is if the borrowing and lending educational policies, has encouraged the application of common approaches to education reform throughout the world (Riley & Torrance, 2003).

There is no doubt that the improvement of education systems is a global phenomenon. However, there is no reliable recent comparative analysis of how education reforms in different countries have been designed and implemented (Sahlberg, 2006). Nevertheless, there is evidence by the professional literature that the focus on educational development has change from structural reforms to improving of quality and relevance of education (Hargreaves & Goodson, 2006; Sahlberg, 2004). According to the 'Millennium Development Goals' and 'Education for All' movements (United Nations, 2006), emphasis should be played and increased efforts should be made for achieving universal primary education to all children and expanding access to secondary education (World Bank, 2005). As a result, education policies concerning curriculum development, student assessment and teacher evaluation, integration of information and communication technologies into teaching and learning and proficiency of basic competences have become common priorities in education reforms around the world (Hargreaves et al., 2001; Sahlberg, 2006). In addition, most countries, nowadays, attempt to adjust their education systems to the challenges arise by the new globalizing economic and social particularities under 'a new educational reform orthodoxy' (Hargreaves et al., 2001).

The today's knowledge-based economies need more than ever education reforms in developed countries (Hargreaves, 2003; Sahlberg, 2004). Schools and teachers need to

reconsider their teaching methods and approaches and at the same time, under the pressure of globalization demands teachers are asked to do more and differently (Sahlberg, 2006).

The entrance of Greece into the European Union has resulted in a number of education reforms, evoked by the pressure put upon the country to achieve European standards in terms of education productivity and competitiveness. Improving economic competitiveness requires well educated and trained people, technological and network literacy and knowledge and skills to work in an innovation-rich world (Sahlberg 2006).

### **2.3.2 A brief historical review of education reform in Greece**

During the 19th century, many reforms in the education field, in relation to the structure of the system, the national curriculum and the language used in education have been implemented in Greece. In 1975 the Constitution established the new paradigm of education legislation that was introduced through the reform of the education system, one year later, in 1976. The 1976 reform (Law 309/1976) established a common language for education, reformed the education division between primary, secondary and tertiary education and emphasized the modernization of curricula and the improvement of the administration and monitoring of education.

The second period of reforms of the education system began in the mid-nineties and the third period in early 21 century, between 2004 and 2006. These reforms introduced important changes, like the creation of the Foundation of the International University of Greece, the reform of secondary vocational training, the introduction of a new law for the assessment of education and legislative actions in relation to lifelong learning area (Law 2525/97, Law 3255/2004).

In the Greek Constitution, education is identified as a responsibility of the state (FEK 84A/17.4.2001). The majority of Greek citizens attend public schools, in fact, there are few private schools that are supervised by the Ministry of Education (Hellenic Statistical Authority-EL.STAT, 2011). The Minister has a centralized control on state schools, sets the educational curricula, manages the staff and monitors the funds (Law 1566/1985). At regional level, the Regional Councils for Primary and Secondary

Education that operate in every prefecture (Law 2986/2002). The tertiary institutions are almost totally autonomous, even if the Minister is responsible for funding (Law 3549/2007). In accordance with Article 16 of the Greek constitution, education, both moral, intellectual, occupational and physical, is a basic mission for the state, with the aim of developing a national and religion conscience and provide adequate training to the future citizens (FEK 84A/17.4.2001).

The basic legislation Constitution 2001 (Article16) concerning important reforms in the Greek educational system is as follows:

Law 682/1977: “Provision for private primary and secondary schools”.

Law 1566/1985: “Structure and Operation of Primary and Secondary Education”.

Law 2817/2000: “Regional Directorates of Education”.

Law 2916/2001: “Structure of Higher Education and settlement of issues in the Technological Sector”.

Law 2986/2002: “Organization of Regional Services of Primary and Secondary Education, assessment of teaching task and staff, teachers’ in service training and other stipulations”.

Law 3027/2002: “Regulations concerning the Organization of School Buildings for Higher Education”.

Ministerial Decisions 21072α/Γ2/ Official Journal 303 v. B’/13-3-2003 and 21072β/Γ2/ Official Journal 304v.B’/13-3-2003, “Cross-Curricular Thematic Framework and Curricula of Primary and Secondary Education”.

Law 3255/2004: “Regulations for Issues of all Educational Levels”.

Law 3369/2005: “Systematization of Lifelong Learning and other stipulations”.

Law 3467/2005: “Selection of primary and secondary education teachers, regulations for Administration and Education issues and other stipulations”.

Law 3475/2006: “Organization of secondary vocational education and other provisions”.

Law 3549/2007: “Reform of the institutional framework concerning the structure and function of the higher education institutes”.

More recent legislation interventions, in the period 2000-2001, include the following:

- Improvements have been made to the 1997/98 reform, regarding the access system to Higher Education and the hiring of educators. In the case of the access system to Higher Education, one notes a less rigid textbook based assessment system which exhibits features of analysis, association, critical thinking etc. in this regard one it can be claimed that attempts are made to reach congruency between the curriculum and its contents and the assessment for access to higher education system (Law 2916/2001).
- Legislation regarding the special education, decentralization of education, training and evaluation of educators has been reformed (Law 2986/2002).
- Technological Education Institutes have been upgraded by being incorporated in Higher Education which now consists of two parallel sectors namely: the University and the Technological ones. (Law 2916/2001).

The specific changes introduced into the education system with the Greek Reform of 2007 include (Law 3549/2007):

- The establishment of Unified Upper Secondary School (*Eniaio Lykeio*) which is gradually replacing all other existing types of upper secondary school (*Lykeio*);
- The procedure for admission to higher education has been changed, with emphasis on the assessment of pupils in the second and third degree of *Lykeio*;
- The school hours of kindergartens and primary schools has been extended;
- Second Chance Schools have been created specifically for teens who have reached the age of 18 years and have not yet completed the compulsory school;
- The design of a common curriculum for both primary and secondary education

In 1981 Greece entered the European Union as its twelfth member. The governments that followed the fall of dictatorship in 1974, worked towards the socio-economic ‘modernisation’ of Greece (Persianis, 1978:52). Their effort was clearly evident in the educational reforms that they applied. During the period from 1975 to 1977 Greek society witnessed the most extensive educational reforms in modern times. The reforms aimed at covering the “intellectual needs of the people” and were presented as ‘a necessary intellectual and technological preparation of the country joining the European Economic Community’ (Persianis, 1978:53). At this period, the county’s educational system needed urgently to be reformed and consequently the 1976 reform



put emphasis on the expansion of the educational system, the reorganization and administration of secondary education and especially its Technical-Vocational sector (Georgiadis, 2007).

The major regulations of the 1976 reform were the increase of school-leaving age (from 13 to 16 years), the introduction of technical-vocational upper secondary schools and strict upper secondary school entrance examinations at national level. The core objectives of the 1976 reform were the adaptation of the educational system to the new social and economic conditions and the restriction of the number of candidates for higher education (Kassotakis 1981). According the Law (309/1976) a common and compulsory education of nine years implemented in 1976 with the extension of ten years in 2007. The 1976 educational reform emphasised on changes for the country's education which aim to increase productivity, economic development and prosperity (Frangoudakis, 1981, Kazamias, 1995).

The objectives and goals of the 1975-77 reforms have established the base of the educational system for the last nineteen years. From 1981, when a socialist party, for the first time in the political history of the country, came into power, reforms focused more on internal changes to the education system, aiming more on democratisation than on major structural issues. The OECD report (1997) highlights the most important changes that were established during the 1980s:

- Automatic movement of students throughout the primary education.
- Abandonment of entrance examinations from the lower secondary to the upper secondary school.
- Postponement of stream selection to the final year of general lyceum, where students now had four curricular areas to choose from rather than the two, as it was previously
- At the upper-secondary level, a new type of comprehensive lyceum was established in 1984: the experimental *Eniaio Polykladiko Lykeio* (EPL), or Integrated Lyceum, which sought to bridge the gap between general and technical education. The EPL continues today to enrol a relatively small proportion of student population in spite of social demand and pressure

- Various measures to increase participation in school decision-making processes such as the establishment of student councils and the further development of the responsibilities of the teachers' councils. It should be noted, however, that while Law 1566/85 made broad provision for decentralised decision-making, few of these measures were ever implemented through accompanying decrees.

During the late 1980s, education departments for pre-school and primary level teachers were set up in most universities and the Teacher Training Academies were gradually phased out (Law 1566/1985). This is very important as emphasis was given to the length and the quality of teachers' studies with the extension of study from two to four years. About a decade later, in the late 1990s, another important innovation was introduced, that of the abolition of 'epeterida' (seniority list), that was the legal provision for the appointment of primary and secondary school teachers from a waiting list of names of graduates drafted mainly on the criterion of the date of graduation, irrespective of merit or fitness for the particular job. Since the abolition of the seniority list, teachers have been recruited after taking examinations through ASEP<sup>5</sup> (Law 2834/2000). In addition, in 1984 free reviewed and redesigned text books were provided to all students at all levels in public schools. It was also the first time that textbooks were provided to teachers with additional pedagogical support. The Greek written language was simplified in order the spelling to become easier (Law 1566/1985).

In the same period, new educational policies introduced with the aim inequalities within the school to be decreased. The high school entrance exams were eliminated and it is the first time students received extra tutoring and remedial support in the first two years of the secondary school (Law 1304/1982, Article 27). Extra tutoring and support was provided to students of Greek emigrant parents or political refugee (Law 1404/1983, Article 45). This policy of tutoring and remedial support was extended and provided to all secondary school students regardless their origin (Law 1824/1988, Article 4). It was an education measure taken with the aim to reduce illiteracy in

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<sup>5</sup> An official examination system that evaluates teachers' appropriateness for their appointment to primary and secondary schools

accordance with a unanimous decision by the Council of Ministers of Education of the European Economic Union (EEU) in 1984.

In the period of 1990s, the Greek Ministry of Education realised the need of taking urgent educational measures to reduce the number of the secondary students who had failed in their exams and the increasing drop-out rates (Vergidis, 1995a). Following a number of policies and according a research carried out by the Pedagogical Institute, a division of the Ministry of Education, the situation was improved with a decrease in the drop-out rates in the first years of the secondary school (Lariou-Drettaki, 1993; Vergidis, 1995a; Palaiokrassas et al., 2001; Greece: Ministry of Education and Religious Affairs, 2006a).

In 1997 a number of significant educational reforms took place in Greece, with the most important the 'all-day' primary school reform, the national curriculum reform, the introduction of the new approaches to school knowledge. In addition, significant education changes were introduced concerning the access system to higher education. All the above reforms were carried out after the recommendations of the European Union and in an attempt Greece to co-ordinate and conform to the common educational policies of the European Union states members. The country had to modernise its educational system as an autonomous European state within the European Union. This has been proven not an easy task. Unfortunately, there are no official studies carried out by the Ministry of Education concerning the students learning. There is an absence of national standards, objective criteria and assessment tests which could provide a clear evaluation of students' skills and learning throughout their academic attendance (Varnava-Skoura, Vergidis, Kassimi, 2012).

The education reforms in Greece in recent decades have been focused mainly on secondary and higher education. Despite this fact, today the government remains interested in implementing changes in the pre-primary and primary education as well. This is only possible if Greece reviews its educational system from the early stages of education, which are pre-primary and primary schools. One of the most recent reforms in the pre secondary sector is that of the 'all day' school.

## **2.3.3 Pedagogical approaches about teaching and learning**

### **2.3.3.1 Pedagogy: Learning and teaching theories**

The ‘all-day’ school in Greece intends to fulfil specific pedagogical and social aims, as they have been presented in Chapter 2. With regards the social aims, the ‘all-day’ school attempts to cover specific needs of the working parents and their children. Students have the opportunity to stay for longer at school and get involved in extra creative activities which otherwise could enjoy in the afternoon only if their parents could afford to pay for them. At the same time, an effort is made by the school to minimize any kind of educational imparity with the induction of new learning subjects in order the low-ability students to be more supported. Similarly, regarding the pedagogical aims, the ‘all-day’ school tries for students to learn more easily and happily with the enrichment of the curriculum with new subjects and activities and the application of new teaching methods. Emphasis, also, is paid for students to be able to finish their homework at school. It is important, in other words, the learning procedures to start and be completed at school. In the following section, theories connected to pedagogy, learning and teaching theories will be presented in an effort to understand better why the ‘all-day’ school emphases on its pedagogical aims.

- **Pedagogy**

The word comes from the Greek παιδαγωγώ (paidagogo) in which παῖς – παιδί means ‘child’ and ἄγω (ágō) means ‘lead’, literally translated ‘to lead the child’ and with the broader meaning of educating a child. Pedagogy is the science and art of education which defines the theories an educator – teacher should be informed about in order to apply them in teaching the learners –students. Pedagogy is the discipline which connects teaching with learning theories (Hughes, 2011).

- **Learning theories**

Learning is the process that defines humans from their first years of existence. It can have a formal and non formal character and can take place in different settings (e.g. in a school classroom, at home, at work, in the country side, anywhere). Although learning is closely connected with education provided at school, it can start long

before going to school and it can continue after school studies have ended. The process of learning can occur in many different ways and have been described by a number of researches over the years. Learning can be described as (Pritchard, 2009, p.2):

- A change in behaviour as a result of experience or practice.
- The acquisition of knowledge. Knowledge gained through study.
- To gain knowledge of, or skill in, something through study, teaching, instruction or experience.
- The process of gaining knowledge.
- A process, by which behaviour is changed, shaped or controlled.
- The individual process of constructing understanding based on experience from a wide range of sources.

One of the first philosophical elements of learning can be traced back to Ancient Greece where a question-answer approach had been adopted. Greek philosophers, such as Socrates and Plato, would ask questions and afterwards teach the answers to their followers who would then transmit the acquired knowledge similarly (Cahn, 2009). In modern times the study of learning dates back to the beginning of the twentieth century. Famous educators of that era such as Montessori, Froebel and Steiner emphasised children's learning declaring that failures in learning are not their fault but other factors should be examined. These factors can be identified as differences between learners regarding their motivation, self-discipline and individual development (Hughes, 2011). Learning, nowadays, is viewed as a holistic procedure being constantly under review. Traditional question-answer learning approaches have been replaced by stimulating and more innovative learning approaches in an effort to provide opportunities for all learners to achieve their potential (DoE, 2011).

In 1890, William James, an American philosopher and physician, was the first to examine learning as a mental and behavioural process. However, the theories and work of three main psychologists and educationalists, Vygotsky, Piaget and Bruner, significantly influenced the thinking about children's learning development at school. There are countless educational texts and websites referring to their work. More specifically and briefly:

**Vygotsky:** Vygotsky (1978, 1986) examined the role of language and social interaction in children’s development. He was a strong believer in the influential role of adults in children’s learning.

**Piaget:** Piaget (1972) emphasised children’s active role in their own learning and the significance of mental activity. He tried to alert and make educators notice the significance of the children interaction with their physical environment. He developed the age-related stages through which children have specific body and cognitive progress. According to Piaget, teachers need to facilitate and organise teaching methods and approaches which are suitable for the students’ age-related stages.

Both Piaget and Vygotsky believed that learners participate actively in constructing their own knowledge and understanding. Vygotsky emphasised the social interaction in which a learner participates, whilst Piaget stressed learner’s esoteric motivation to balance the new knowledge with existing knowledge and understanding. Table 2.3 summarises their main beliefs (Pritchard, 2009, p. 105).

**Table 2.3 A comparison between Vygotsky and Piaget’s theories**

<b>Vygotsky</b>	<b>Piaget</b>
Social constructivism	Cognitive constructivism
Children learn through being active	Children learn through being active
Learning is a socially mediated activity	Children behave as ‘lone scientists’
Emphasis is played on the role of teacher	If a child is shown how to do something rather than being to discovered it, understanding may be inhibited
The teacher is the facilitator who provides the challenges that the children need to achieve more	The teacher is the provider of ‘artefacts’ that the children need to work with and learn
Development is fostered by collaboration and not strictly age related	Cognitive progress has a biological, age related, development basis
Children can be taught concepts beyond the level of their development with the appropriate support	Children are unable to extend their cognitive capabilities beyond their stage of development

**Bruner:** Bruner (1960) examined the relationship between language and thought. He supported the view that giving children the opportunity to live in a ‘rich’ linguistic environment can improve their cognitive skills. He emphasised the importance of using relevant and appropriate vocabulary which could enhance children’s thinking, talking and exploration of ideas. He invented the term ‘spiral curriculum’ and placed emphasis on revisiting and re-examining topics at different levels of learning. His contribution was significant in understanding how a school curriculum could be designed and applied in a way where the knowledge is acquired stage by stage. He also stressed the significance of encouraging children to search for understanding . Bruner and Vygotsky both emphasised the influential role of language and the stance of an adult in teaching whereby the teacher ‘scaffolds’ children’s learning The guided reading and writing parts of the Literacy Strategy within UK policy, as well as the ‘thinking aloud’ factor within mathematic lessons is based on Bruner’s ‘scaffolding’ metaphor (Hughes, 2011).

While the contribution of Vygotsky, Piaget and Bruner, in the development of learning theories is beyond argument, in recent years, other important factors influencing children’s learning have been identified. Maslow’s (2013) hierarchical pyramid of human needs present all these factors vividly.



**Figure 2. 2 Maslow’s hierarchy of needs**

According to Maslow’s pyramid (see Figure 2.2) the most successful learners are those at the top of the pyramid. It is obvious, that people who need to satisfy basic needs, as they are illustrated at the base of the pyramid, they will emphasise on thinking only

how to fulfil their need for food and water, for example. In considering the different human need, what is important to realise is that basic physical and emotional needs may be fulfilled in a hierarchical way. The increase of prioritising and satisfying basic needs of children at school with the provision of lunch time, psychological support, learning guidance and help shows the changes made in school policies around the world to address children's needs more successfully. For example the 'Social and Emotional Aspects Programme' in the UK was designed and applied to help children to better understand their emotional and physical needs (Hughes, 2011). In the next sections the main learning theories will be presented briefly:

- **Behaviourism**

Behaviourism is based on the relationship between stimulus and response. As a learning theory behaviourism places emphasis on behaviours which can be observed and discounts any learning activity (see Skinner 1978). Learning is deemed the acquisition of new behaviour. According to behaviourists, this learning method is called 'conditioning'. There are two different types of conditioning, the classical conditioning and the operant conditioning, which demonstrate and explain the way in which animals and humans alike can learn how to do certain things (Pritchard, 2009). All the interactions between learners and teachers are behaviours and behaviourism, as the first major learning theory, explains the different types of stimulus, response and strengthening in the structuring of learning and teaching activities. Although behaviourism as a learning theory has contributed a lot to instructional design and educational technology, it has also received a lot of criticism. It is associated with animal training and de-humanising. The learner follows the instructions of the teacher with minimum input in the learning process. The teacher or the curriculum designer is powerful in deciding and putting into practice the teaching methods (Carlile and Jordan, 2012).

- **Cognitivism**

Cognitivism as a learning theory emphasises the significance of mental activity in human learning. Cognitive science is an expansive area which has its roots in the half of the twentieth century when academics from different disciplines such as psychology, philosophy, anthropology, neurology realised that they were all



attempting to solve problems concerning the mind and the brain. Cognitive scientists are interested in studying how people learn, remember, and interact with emphasis given of the mental processes. Contrasting with behaviourism, cognitivism provides insights for the learners and teachers regarding the self-regulation of learning. There are different cognitive learning styles such as shallow encoding, based on repetition and deep encoding based on connections and patterns. It has been shown that material not suitable to a learner's cognitive style can be more difficult to learn. For this reason teachers should conduct formative assessment of students learning styles and apply different teaching methods (Carlile and Jordan, 2012).

- **Constructivism**

Constructivism perceives learning as the result of mental construction. People learn when they are able to build and add the new information to their existing knowledge, understanding and skill. Learning is more effective when learners participate actively in constructing their own knowledge (Hughes, 2011). Constructivism as a learning theory encourages learners to participate in the learning processes using active learning methods such as experiments, real world problem solving in order for the new knowledge to become the product of their own effort. The role of teacher is to consider the students' pre-existing knowledge and guide them by using appropriate learning activities for the acquisition and building of new knowledge. Constructivist teachers also encourage students to constantly assess the learning activities which are chosen to help them understanding and learning more easily and effectively. In the constructivist classroom students are transformed to expert learners becoming gradually able to learn how to learn. Contrary to the criticism, that constructivism dismisses the active role and the expertise of the teacher, the truth is that the role of teachers in the learning process remains vital. The teachers' role becomes extremely important as they should enable their students to construct their own knowledge rather than to provide the knowledge for them. Students in a constructive classroom are transformed from passive listeners of information to active participants in a collaborative and creative school environment. Constructivism as a learning theory engages students using their existing knowledge and real-world experience enabling them to hypothesise and to test their theories and draw conclusions from their findings. The following table (see Table 2.4) illustrates the differences between a traditional classroom and a

constructive classroom. It is based on a chart comparing traditional and constructive learning (Educational Broadcasting Corporation, 2004).

**Table 2. 4 A comparison between traditional and constructive learning**

<b>Traditional classroom</b>	<b>Constructive classroom</b>
Curriculum is formulating on the basis starting from the parts of the whole involving basic skills of the learners	Curriculum is emphasising on big concepts, stimulating students to explore the parts of the whole
Pre-decided and fixed curriculum is highly valued	Flexible curriculum depended on students learning interests is valued
Specific text-books and work-books are the source of knowledge	New technologies and a variety of information sources are provided for students to discover and build their knowledge.
Students learn by repeating and memorising new information	Students learn with their active participation, acquisition and building of the new knowledge
Teachers are the main source of information putting themselves in the centre of the learning process (teacher-centred learning)	Teachers guide students in discovering and constructing the new knowledge and skills (student-centred learning)
Teachers enjoy a specific degree of authority	Teachers interact and equally participate in helping students to discover the knowledge
Students progress is assessed through testing correct answers	Students progress is assessed by their work as a progressive and continuing development
Knowledge is perceived as a fact	Knowledge is not static
Students work on their own	Students work together in groups

In conclusion it can be said that learning is a process of interaction between what is known and what is to be learnt; it is a social process; it is situated (culture, values, beliefs and commonly agreed standards); it is a meta-cognitive process; it depends on the individual's preferable learning style; and it depends on certain conditions concerning the brain.

### **2.3.3.2 From learning theories to teaching practices**

Students attend school to learn. The teachers' role is crucial in determining how students can learn more effectively (Cohen et al, 2004). Having compared how the role of teachers is perceived in a traditional school environment and in a constructive one (see Table 2.6) what becomes certain is that teachers should be well informed about the ways in which learning can be effective at school (Hughes, 2011). In other words, teachers should constantly update their knowledge about any current development in learning theories and be able to put these theories into practice. Teachers need to understand the differences in learning styles and keep themselves informed about any new neuro-physiological findings relating to effective learning. As such they are enabled to adopt their teaching according to the needs of the individual students.

For many years, the main elements of teaching were considered to be 'informing, describing, explaining and demonstrating' to a student. This was the first stage of the teaching process. Then it was expected that students should demonstrate to their teachers what they have learnt and finally teachers should evaluate students progress and continue with the teaching. These three teaching stages are the basic elements of the didactic teaching procedure, a teacher-centred teaching. Didactic teaching is very effective if the students are wholly motivated by a very skilful teacher (Kyriacou, 2012, p.107). However, in didactic teaching the teacher holds a prominent place in the learning procedure and enjoys the role of expert whilst the student simply listens and practises what they have learnt. The students' role in didactic teaching is passive having to receive and repeat ready-given knowledge (see table...). Despite the negative aspects of the didactic teaching, there are some academics who consider that using this kind of teaching skilfully can have the best result for the students (Good and Brophy, 2007).

Nowadays, much discussion surrounds the crucial role of students in participating in their own learning. Emphasis is placed on the active role of students in discovering the knowledge with the guidance of their teachers (see table..????). Teachers encourage students to take part in stimulating activities and to learn how to learn. Participating in projects, investigations, small group discussions, collaborative activities supported by the use of modern technologies (ICT) students can learn differently in a more enjoyable and effective ways (Kyriacou, 2012). Such teaching methods, student-centred teaching, according to its supporters can make a huge difference in students'

learning development. There are recent examples of innovative applications of student-centred teaching with the use of ICT (Daly and Pachler, 2010) and learning through dialogue (Mercer and Hodgkinson, 2008) which have significantly developed teaching approaches and methods at schools (Kyriacou, 2012).

According to the OECD (2009) report the teaching style which dominates in most countries is didactic teaching, particularly amongst the developing countries. In the West, a mixed teaching model may be applied with characteristics from didactic and student-centred teaching approaches. Teachers or schools can emphasise and choose which teaching method they consider may have the best potential for their students. However, studying different educational systems and classroom practices has shown that teaching cannot be seen as just an interactive process between teachers and students. Teaching is also connected with the socio-cultural setting and needs of each country (Hattie, 2008; Muijs and Reynolds, 2010; Anderson, 2009; Leach and Moon, 2008).

Teaching should be seen at a macro-level within the context of the educational aims as a whole and at a micro-level in terms of how these aims can be put into practice during a particular lesson by addressing specific learning outcomes (Kyriacou, 2012). In addition, all these aims should be fulfilled in a specific social framework where contradicting expectations and demands may be raised, from students, parents, teachers, school managers, examinations boards, educationalists and governmental authorities (Cullingford, 2009; Skinner, 2010). The fulfilment of educational aims can be assessed by teachers examining to what degree their specific learning outcomes have been achieved. According to Kyriakou (2012), there are four main types of learning outcomes that teaching should address: knowledge, understanding, skills and attitudes.

In conclusion, teaching is a complex procedure. Fortunately, there is a lot of academic work published that informs our understanding of the main aspects that can transform teaching into an effective procedure for students (Cullingford, 2009; Skinner, 2010; Hattie, 2008; Muijs and Reynolds, 2010; Anderson, 2009; Leach and Moon, 2008; Kyriakou, 2009). What is interesting, however, is the challenges that teachers and policy-makers are facing in initiating changes to improve learning procedures for

students. There is need to develop teaching practices which meet the needs of all students. and enable them to succeed .

## **2.4 Section 3: The institutionalization of the ‘all-day’ school**

### **2.4.1 International perspective on the ‘all-day’ school**

One of the most recent reforms in the Greek primary sector is that of the ‘all-day’ school. The ‘all day’ school was legislated and initiated in the period 1997-2002 in response to the apparent need for a more highly educated work force. Also, the growing number of working mothers means children need to be looked after in a safe environment. Greece is one of the latest European countries that decided at the end of the 90s to establish the ‘all-day’ school due to social changes in both Greek and international societies. The reforms promoted in the 1990s were affected and inspired by the European educational reforms and developments. With the Parliamentary Act 2525/97 the Greek government aimed to bridge the gap between the education and the market (Gouvias, 2007, p. 29). Greece introduced a number of educational reforms in order to provide students with the skills needed to live and act in an international setting. There is a clear influence for educational transformation in the Greek educational system, such as the reform of the ‘all-day’ school in the primary education. Basic beliefs and decisions relating to educational change introduced and applied by international organisations such as the European Union, OECD and the World Bank have clearly affected the decision to focus on educational reform planning and making in Greece (Kazamias & Roussakis, 2003, p. 27).

The thesaurus Education Systems in Europe recorded the descriptor ‘all-day’ school in 11 languages. In English, for example, the term *‘full-day school’* is used, in French the term *‘enseignement à temps plein’*, in Polish it is called *‘szkoła dzienna’* while in Greek its name is *‘Ολοήμερο Σχολείο’* (TESE 2009). One important feature of the ‘all-day’ school is the long hours spent by the students at school. However, the exact number of hours per week a school should operate at in order to be described as an ‘all-day’ school is not explicitly defined in the publications of Eurydice European countries. In most countries, the total number of hours in primary education is different to that in lower secondary education. In many countries, the official timetable

is less intensive at the beginning of primary education (generally for the first two years), then steadily increases through compulsory education, with a significant increase in hours at lower secondary level. Taught time is generally spread over five days a week, except in Italy, where it is six. The amount of time spent by pupils in the classroom and the length of their lessons also vary according to the country and the years of education. Other countries have a uniform amount of annual taught time within each of these levels. In Belgium (French and German-speaking Communities), Spain, Italy, Cyprus and Portugal, the annual amount is constant throughout primary and lower secondary education. Nevertheless, the workload does increase from one level to the next. In Belgium for example, it increases from about 850 hours a year in primary education to 971 a year in lower secondary education. In Spain, the increase is from 875 to 1 050 hours a year. Finally, the total annual workload is identical at primary and lower secondary levels (ISCED 1 and 2) in Belgium (Flemish Community), Luxembourg and Turkey. In Estonia, the Netherlands, Poland, Sweden and Norway, the number of hours for all levels of compulsory education is set by the educational authorities, which are responsible for allocating them to the different years. (Eurydice, 2009)

Overall, it appears from the available data on the daily structure that the ‘all-day’ school model is common in Western and Eastern Europe, but has many variations. The range includes different types and mixed-forms of ‘all-day’ school education with or without lunch at school. Different types of lunch care, homework completion and extra-curriculum activities are either under the state responsibility and supervision or are the responsibility of local authorities (Horns 2008; Tomlinson 2008; Lundahl, 2008). The definition of the ‘all-day’ school is not exactly the same internationally as there are differences in organising and applying the ‘all-day’ school scheme not only between countries but also within the same country. What can be perceived as common among countries with ‘all-day’ education is that the school day lasts longer until late in the afternoon with the addition of extracurricular subjects and activities which are connected closely with the subjects of the morning zone. Homework is supposed to be completed at school and emphasis is given on the pedagogical and social needs of students who are called to live in globalising societies. For example, the criteria for classification as an ‘all-day’ school as they were defined by the Standing Conference of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs in the Federal

Republic of Germany seem to be very similar to those defined by the Greek Ministry of Education. In Germany ‘all-day’ schools are *“primary and secondary schools which, in addition to timetabled lessons in the morning, offer an ‘all-day’ programme comprising at least seven hours per day on at least three days per week. Activities offered in the afternoon are to be organised under the supervision and responsibility of the head staff and to be carried out in cooperation with the head staff. The activities are to have a conceptual relationship with the lessons in the morning. ‘All-day’ schools, which are far less common in Germany than the traditional “Halbtagschule”, provide a midday meal on the days on which they offer ‘all-day’ supervision”* (Secretariat of the Standing Conference of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs of the Laender in the Federal Republic of Germany, 2008, p. 356). In Greece the principle idea of the ‘all-day’ school reform is the expansion of school hours from six hours to eight-ten hours daily. The additional hours are supposed to complement the student’s normal programme. The expansion of school hours is considered essential for the operation of the ‘all-day’ school as new activities and subjects are added to the morning curriculum. Homework is supposed to be completed at school and a lot of emphasis is given to the development of interpersonal relationships among students and between students and teachers (Law 2525/97).

In the next paragraphs, the development and expansion of the model of the ‘all-day’ school in Europe initially and worldwide will be presented in order to better understand the social and educational factors that necessitated the establishment of the ‘all-day’ school in Greece.

#### **2.4.1.1. The development of the ‘all-day’ school in Europe and worldwide**

The institutionalisation of the ‘all-day’ school is not a new phenomenon in education (Coelen, 2004). Countries such as the United Kingdom, France, Spain, Holland and Belgium have a long tradition of ‘all-day’ school education while the education system of Germany, Italy, Denmark, Portugal, Greece and Cyprus is characterized by a ‘half-day’ school education (Thoidis & Haniotakis, 2007). However, such a division in countries with ‘all-day’ school education and countries with ‘half-day’ school education is only a schematic division as in each country the education system has its

particularities depending on the specific social, economic and cultural structures of the country. There are variations and differences in the type of education provided not only between countries but also within them (OECD, 2012).

In most European countries, the educational systems were built and organized during the nineteenth century. In the 70s and 80s the expansion of the ‘all-day’ school in European countries gained ground as a new form of school which aimed to fulfil the pedagogical and social aims of the students in a rapidly changing world (Eurydice, 1997). France is considered the country with the longest tradition in the ‘all-day’ school education. Since 1882 the students in France attend ‘all-day’ schools without realizing it as it is the norm in their education (Allemann-Ghionda, 2005, Veil, 2002:29).

The education systems in almost all European countries provide formal and non-formal education from early morning until late afternoon. ‘Half-day’ school models are rare in international comparison with the exception of Germany and German-speaking countries having traditionally almost exclusively half-day schools (Allemann-Ghionda 2009: 194-196). All Anglo-American countries and also France have full-time school systems. Since the educational reforms of the 1960s and 1970s, Scandinavian schools have also been organized as full-time models. In Southern and Eastern European states, part-time and full-time patterns coexist, so that parents can choose. Recently, the German education system, alongside the education systems of Austria, Switzerland, Greece and Finland have started providing ‘all-day’ school education (Coelen, 2004a). Further, Portugal, Greece and Cyprus are the latest EU countries to have legislated and initiated education reforms for the establishment of the ‘all-day’ school (OECD, 2012).

#### **2.4.1.2 Countries with a long tradition in ‘all-day’ school education**

**France:** France is the country with the longest tradition in ‘all-day’ school education, this having been implemented since 1882. The French education system is highly centralized with a unified hierarchical structure. However, the local authorities play an important role in appointing teachers. The majority of schools are public with only 14% being private (Alix, 2003; Coelen, 2004:4). Four days a week students attend an



‘all-day’ school education, one day is free of lessons for sports activities and religious education. On Saturdays schools operate half-day (Coelen, 2004; Vidon, 1990). The school day starts at 8.00 – 8.30 am and ends at 4.00 - 5.00 pm with a two-hour lunch break (OECD, 2013).

**England:** In the UK, governing bodies have the responsibility to maintain schools in England and decide on the start and finish of the school day. No legal requirements exist as to the length of the school day (DfE, 2013). Therefore, each school enjoys a significant autonomy in management with the freedom to appoint its own teaching staff and heads. According to the England Regulations 1999, the school day has to be divided into two half-days with the lessons starting at 9 am and ending between 3 - 4 pm, with an hour’s break at lunchtime. Extra-curricular activities can be provided (Education Act 2002) outside school hours and for some of them parents pay fees. Children can arrive at school earlier (at 8 am) and stay up to 6 pm (OECD, 2013).

**Finland:** Students attend an ‘all-day’ school in Finland. The school day starts between 8.00-10.00 am and finishes at 4.00 pm with a lunch break during which both teachers and students eat together. In the afternoon zone, extra-curricular activities such as foreign languages, technology and sports are offered depending on the school funds available. Homework is completed at school. Recent studies show (PISA) that the educational system in Finland is one of the best in the world (OECD, 2013).

**The Netherlands:** Similar to the UK, schools enjoy a great amount of autonomy as school management is decentralised. Each school decides on the organization of the school day. The day starts at 8:30 am and ends between 3 - 4 pm with a midday break at lunchtime for students to eat at school. The school day is longer in secondary school. The length of the school day is at the moment under debate; government plans to shorten the summer holidays to six weeks and make imperative the Christmas and May holidays (OECD, 2013).

**Spain:** Schools in Spain enjoy a relevant autonomy. The organization of the school day is decided by the school with the approval of the local community. The state has the responsibility to ensure that all children have the same rights in education. Schools operate as ‘all-day’ schools with lessons starting between 9.00-10.00 am and finishing

at 4.00-5.00 pm with a lunch break. Recently, the main subjects are taught in the morning zone (e.g., maths, language) and extra-curricular activities take place in the afternoon (OECD, 2013).

**Italy:** The Italian education system is decentralized. The Ministry of Education defines the major educational principles while local authorities determine organizational and managerial school issues. In primary schools it is possible for students to have morning and afternoon lessons. The school day begins at 8.30 am and ends at 4.30 pm with a lunch break. Some schools operate six days a week with shorter school hours per day (OECD, 2013).

**Russia:** The model of the ‘all-day’ school operates in Russia. Recruitment of the teachers is made by the head teacher of each school. The school day starts at 8.00 am and finishes at 6.00 pm the latest. In the afternoon zone, students have a lunch break and complete their homework. Between 4.00-6.00 pm creative group activities take place (OECD, 2013).

Other European countries present a mixed model of ‘all-day’ and ‘half-day school (OECD, PISA, 2013). For example, the educational system in Germany is centralized under the control and supervision of the Ministry of Education. Students go to school five or six days per week with the school day lasting between 7.30 am and 1.30pm. In 2003, the ‘all-day’ school was introduced to the German educational system as a means to provide better education for all students accommodating the needs of a globalized society and to allow women to re-enter the workforce. By the end of 2009, more than 7000 schools adopted the ‘all-day’ school programme (Holtappels, 2004; Wahler, 2005). Similarly, schools in Denmark operate as ‘half-day’ schools. The Danish government is taking action to transform the traditional character of its schools by introducing an ‘all-day’ school scheme which at the moment is optional. Parents’ participation in school life plays an important role as it resulted in the organization of afternoon school clubs (Coelen, 2004).

In summary, the French and English model of school organization with the form of an ‘all-day’ school education has played a considerably influential role worldwide. It is known from the available data that a number of national educational systems in Western Europe have been designed to be provided as compulsory ‘all-day’ school education (Horns, 2008; Allemann-Ghionda, 2005). Other European countries have

introduced and established the ‘all-day’ school model in the course of the twentieth century, for example in Sweden (Allemann-Ghionda 2009: 194-196). However, in countries such as in Germany, Portugal, Spain, Italy and Greece the ‘all-day’ school education has been introduced from the 1960s as an optional form of education and coexists with the ‘half-day’ school model (Dittmann, 2010).

Overall, the debate around the benefits from the implementation of the ‘all-day’ school is still ongoing. The argument is whether longer school hours or less-extended well-organised lessons contribute to students’ better performance. There are examples of countries such as Japan that have extended classroom time with the aim of improving students’ performance. However, there is no evidence supporting a relationship between long school hours and better academic outcomes. For example, in Finland, teaching hours are less compared to Japan suggesting that the key to success is not the actual time spent on teaching but the different teaching approaches by well-qualified teachers (Lavy, 2010). Similarly, in America, the ‘all-day’ school is a debatable issue. President Obama has recently argued that longer school hours could be beneficial for creating a future workforce of young people who can compete in a constantly changing globalised market (Barack Obama speech to the U.S. Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, 2009). The argument is further elaborated to consider for the place of students’ different educational needs as Vignoles (2009) assumes the less able students and those from poorer backgrounds are most likely to gain from extended hours. On the contrary, however, higher achievers seem to be unhappy by spending longer hours in the classroom without an obvious gain.

## **2.4.2 The Greek ‘all-day’ school**

### **2.4.2.1 Social changes and establishment of the ‘all-day’ school in Greece**

From 1981 with the entrance of Greece in the European Union a number of socio-political and economical changes took place in the country. The country had to overcome new challenges and become an active and competitive member of the European and international community. The main changes in Greek society are related to the new family structures with an increasing number of women having entered the country’s workforce (Ministry of Education, 1985). Thus the traditional nature of the

Greek family belongs to the past. Such a change led the Ministry of Education with the Law 1566/85 to recognize and accept the need of reformation of the educational system prioritizing the needs of working parents.

During the school year 1985-86, according a survey conducted by the Pedagogical Institute on behalf of the Ministry of Education 34,000 students of 16,094 families from year 1, year 2 and year 3 stayed at home without any supervision until their parents come back from their work (Arvaniti, 2006). At the same time, the advantages of technology, with the media revolution, played a significant role in children's lonely lives when staying unsupervised at home. A further concern has been that children are for the most part unable to interpret and appropriately process the plethora of information and pictures of the world the media provides (Holtappels, Heinz Günter, 1994). Under the pressure of new social structures and changes the school has to redefine its role helping the students to interact creatively with each other and discover the authentic relationships in their everyday school environment. In addition, the demand for more specialized knowledge in the modern and hypercompetitive societies where the students are called to live and progress puts extra pressure on schools to rethink and reform their traditional role in order to help their students to overcome the challenges they are going to face in the future. There is an increasing need for the students to learn more languages than only their native one if they want to become citizens of a globalized world (Holtappels & Heinz Günter, 1994).

At this point, it is worth mentioning that the last ten years the demographic situation in Greece has rapidly changed with an uncontrolled number of political and illegal immigrants accumulating in the country. It is a new and problematic situation with serious consequences for the Greek society (OECD, 2010). Greek society is characterized by strict traditional norms and presents minimum flexibility and openness in accepting and coping with immigration issues. The problem becomes even worse as the country suffers from a lack of immigration policies and shows weakness in tackling with the problem of the illegal immigration which intensifies the existing social problems. A study conducted by UNESCO (2001) showed that Greece finds difficult to accept in the schools children with different ethnic or minority background.

Finally, it is a fact that, nowadays, children, especially in the developed countries, live in an advanced social and family environment (World Bank, 2010). However, in

Greece the social inequalities especially after the economic crisis are greater than ever. There is an increasing and urgent need for school to balance those disparities more than ever. School needs to take all these measure in order to prevent the disadvantaging of working –class children providing encouragement and a range of support including help with homework (OECD, 2010).

#### **2.4.2.2 Creative zone schools**

For those reasons and in the same period, 1985-86, the Ministry of Education took the decision to piloting the operation of 10 ‘all-day’ schools in the periphery of Attica (Thoidis, Haniotakis, 2007). The initiative was expanded with the parents’ participation in the establishment of the afternoon ‘*Creative Zone*’ after the completion of the school programme within the primary schools. The ‘*Creative Zone*’ was funded and supported solely by the parents’ board of each school and the local authorities in the big Greek cities (Pyrgiotakis, 2001). It could be claimed that the operation of the ‘*Creative Zone*’ received significant criticism as it was deemed a ‘babysitting’ centre with the only aim to keep the students together in a ‘safe’ environment without any pedagogical impact (Ministry of Education, F. 1F 13.1/897/Γ1/694/2000, F.12.1/648/104935/Γ1/2005. However, the ‘*Creative Zone*’ project was the beginning of a new era in the primary education and it prepared the ground for the establishment of the ‘all-day’ school.

The next years and during the academic year 1994-95, the ministry of Education piloted afternoon ‘*Creative Zone Programmes*’ for the children of working parents. The students could stay for long hours, until their parents finished work, and got involved with the completion of their homework or with other activities such as sports, drama and dance. The Ministry of Education appointed permanent teachers or under contract in order the students to receive the help they needed (Ministry of Education, 1994). At the same time in almost all the primary schools of the country, especially in the big cities, the institutionalization of the afternoon zone had begun.

#### **2.4.2.3 Pilot ‘all-day’ schools**

The situation in primary education changed officially after the passing of the Law 2525/97. This was when the reform of the ‘all-day’ school, examined in this research,

was introduced by the Ministry of Education. The Ministry of Education decided under the Law 2525/97: a) to introduce and apply the operation of *Creative Activities Classes* during the extended afternoon zone, called *Creative Zone Programme*, in the open and flexible ‘all-day’ schools and b) to introduce the institutionalisation of the 28 pilot ‘all-day’ school, with a compulsory character and attendance, as a reformed educational model of school with specific pedagogical and social aims. The reform of the ‘all-day’ school was organised and supervised at the beginning of its establishment by the Pedagogical Institute, an advisory body of the Ministry of Education regarding primary and secondary education (Law 2525/97).

The initial aim and ambition of the Ministry of Education was the expansion of the 28 pilot ‘all-day’ schools with compulsory attendance in primary education. However, in 2002, there was a change in policy making from the Ministry of Education and a lot of emphasis put only on the expansion and improvement of the open and flexible zone primary school with the enrichment and enhancement of the curriculum with new subject and activities (Φ.50./343/85329/Γ1, 31-8-2005). There was not any anticipation or policy intention for the expansion of the 28 pilot ‘all-day’ schools (Haniotakis, 2004; Loukeris, 2005).

At this point, and for the purposes of this study, there is a need to clarify the two different types of ‘all-day’ schools operating in Greece:

a) The Pilot ‘all-day’ schools

- with a compulsory attendance for all students
- with an extended two zone, morning and afternoon, programme until late in the afternoon
- with the incorporation and connectivity between the two different zones
- with an enhanced curriculum of extra subjects and activities taught by specialist teachers appointed by the Ministry of Education
- With students’ homework completion at school

b) The *open or flexible* ‘all-day’ schools (*Creative Zone* schools)

- with an optional attendance for their students
- with an extended two zone, morning and afternoon, programme until late in the afternoon
- with the afternoon zone operating independently from the morning zone

- with an enriched afternoon zone of extra but optional activities of a creative character
- with the students attending the afternoon zone to be provided with homework-completion help

For the purposes of this research the institutionalization of the 28 pilot ‘all-day’ schools in Greece is examined. In the following sections the establishment and operation of the ‘all-day’ school in Greece will be presented according to the official documents of the Ministry of Education, F.3/655/9930/Γ1 /2012 and the integrated reformed educational program (ΕΑΕΡ- *Ενιαίο Αναμορφωμένο Εκπαιδευτικό Πρόγραμμα*).

#### **2.4.2.4 The ‘all-day’ school in Greece**

The primary ‘all-day’ school in Greece operates with an extended timetable of 8-10 hours and it is compulsory for all of its students. The government (under Law N.2525/97) dictates the ways in which the ‘all-day’ school will operate.

The principle idea of the reform is the expansion of school hours from six hours to eight-ten hours daily. The additional hours are supposed to complement the student’s normal programme. The expansion of school hours is considered essential for the operation of the ‘all-day’ school as new activities and subjects such as foreign languages, information technology, sports, dance, drama, music, are added to the morning curriculum. Homework is supposed to be completed at school and a lot of emphasis to be given to the development of interpersonal relationships among students and between students and teachers.

One revolutionary possibility offered by the ‘all-day’ school is that it could facilitate an independent and optional curriculum decided by the teachers’, and parents’ board of every school. The activities and subjects that are taught during the two or three additional hours are decided by the policy of the individual school. This is a very important innovation since the school curriculum in Greece has traditionally been unified and government controlled.

It is certain that the innovations of the ‘all-day’ school not only affect the students who might be considered its main priority but it also influences two other groups: the

teachers and the parents. The ‘all-day’ school has a double role to play, a pedagogical and a social role, defined by the aims that it has to cover (Law N.2525/97).

- **The aims of the ‘all-day’ school**

The aims of the ‘all-day’ school reform are defined by the official governmental documents in two official settings:

- Firstly, by the Law 2525/97 and the ministerial documents published in the Government Gazette Φ.13.1/767/Γ1/884/3-9-1998, which is the most significant official setting
- Secondly, by the updated ministerial documents published in the Government Gazette Φ.Ε.Κ. 1471/22.11.2002 and by the official documents of the Ministry of Education Φ.13.1/885/88609/Γ1/3.09.2002 and Φ.50/57/26650/Γ1/17.03.2003

More specifically, the ‘all day’ school aims:

- To contribute in the reinforcement and redefinition of school knowledge and the upgrading of teaching methods and practices, connecting school learning with the demands of the modern societies, preparing the today’s’ students for being ready to cope with the challenges of living and working in the *knowledge society* and in a unified European society.
- To contribute in the expansion of the social role of the school with the ‘*openness of the school to the local society*’ and to encourage the participation of educational, social, scientific, cultural and economic boards in order the work and mission of the school to be improved and expanded (Law 2525/97)

According the official documents of the Ministry of Education (1998), the enrichment of the curriculum with *Creative Activities* integrated in the curriculum of the ‘all-day’ school aim to fulfil the following aims:

- To help the school and the family to fulfil the educational and social needs of the students providing a safe and creative school environment
- To expand the social horizon of school and to create the circumstances needed for connecting school with society and culture
- To provide equal opportunities for education to all students



More specifically the aims of the ‘all-day’ school are epitomized and divided in pedagogical and social aims (Ministry of Education, 1998):

a) *Pedagogical aims of the ‘all-day’ school*

- Enrichment of the curriculum with teaching additional learning subjects and activities with emphasis given to those connected to culture.
- Redefinition of teaching with the renewal of teaching practices in order teaching methods to become collaborative and explorative.
- Better co-operation between teacher and student.
- Inter-scientific approach of the taught subjects.
- Completion of learning procedure and schooling preparation at school.

b) *Social aims of the ‘all-day’ school*

- Limitation of ‘*para-paideia*’<sup>6</sup> and financial relief especially of those of the working class.
- Limitation of educational imparity with the induction of new learning subjects in order the low-ability students to be more supported.
- Cover of the need of the working parents.
- Responsible and affective supervision of the students.
- Creation of an essential interaction among students in order to be supported to accept the variation of others through a better understanding of their culture differences.
- Fight of inequality and social discrimination.
- Limitation of negative forms of child behaviours.
- Parental and local authorities’ activation in order the school to be the heart of the local community life.

**Table 2. 5 Revised time table of ‘all-day’ school**

Hours	Duration	
07.00 – 07.15	15’	Students’ reception
07.15 - 08.00	45’	Optional morning zone
08.00 – 08.10	10’	Students’ reception

<sup>6</sup> The term ‘*para-paideia*’ is referred to the private tutorial of the taught learning subjects in school that take place outside school and the students are made to attend them if they want to pass the exams.

Hours	Duration	
08:10 – 09:40	90´	1st teaching period (2 hours)
09:40 – 10:00	20´	Break
10:00 – 11:30	90´	2 <sup>nd</sup> teaching period (2hours)
11:30– 11:45	15´	Break
11:45 – 12:25	40´	5 <sup>th</sup> teaching hour
12:25 – 12:35	10´	Break
12:35– 13:15	40´	6 <sup>th</sup> teaching hour
13:15– 13:25	10´	Break
13:25 -14:00	35´	7 <sup>th</sup> teaching hour (End of compulsory programme)
14:00 – 14:05	5´	Break – end of lessons for compulsory programme
14:05 – 14:40	35´	Lunch-resting
14:40 – 14:50	10´	Break
14:50 – 15:30	40´	8 <sup>th</sup> teaching hour
15:30 – 15:40	10´	Break
15:40 – 16:15	35´	9 <sup>η</sup> διδακτική ώρα (End of the ‘all-day’ school)
<b>Afternoon Optional Zone</b>		
16:15 – 16:25	10´	Break
16:25 – 17:00	35´	10th teaching hour

The application of the programme is compulsory for all the students starting at 8.10 and finishing at 2.00pm. However, a revised timetable per each teaching subject has been announced and sent to the schools defining the exact subjects and teaching hours per each subject (Ministry of Education, F.12/520/61575/Γ1/30-5-2011)

**Table 2. 6 Revised timetable: Allocation of time (teaching hours) per each teaching subject**

		Classes (Years)					
		1	2	3	4	5	6
N/A	Lessons						
1.	Religious Education	-	-	2	2	2	2

		Classes (Years)					
2.	Greek Language	10	10	8	8	7	7
3.	Maths	5	5	4	4	4	4
4.	History	-	-	2	2	2	2
5.	Study of Environment	4	4	3	3	-	-
6.	Geography	-	-	-	-	2	2
7.	Physics	-	-	-	-	3	3
8.	Citizenship	-	-	-	-	1	1
9.	Fine Arts	(5)	(5)	(3)	(3)	(3)	(3)
	-Art	2	2	1	1	1	1
	-Music	2	2	1	1	1	1
	-Drama	1	1	1	1	1	1
10.	Physical Education	4	4	4	4	2	2
11.	English	2	2	4	4	4	4
12.	Flexible zone	3	3	3	3	1	1
13.	2nd Foreign Language					2	2
14.	ICT	2	2	2	2	2	2
	Total	35	35	35	35	35	35

The timetable of the ‘all-day’ schools with a unified and revised education programme is defined by the Legal acts and official ministerial documents which are the following: F.12/620/61531/G1/2010 (FEK 804/2010, t. B’) as it has been revised by F. 12/620/61531/G1/2011 (FEK 1327/2011t. B’) ministerial official document under the title: “Change-redefinition and completion of F.12/773/77094/G1/2006 (FEK 1139, t. B’) and F.12//620/61531/G1/2010 (FEK 804, t. B’) Time Tables of Primary Schools with Unified and Revised Educational Programs with EAEP”. According the above official documents the Ministry of Education decides and concludes that the teaching subjects in the ‘all-day’ schools will be decided by the teachers association after the

head-teacher's proposal, who will co-estimate the needs and capabilities of the specific school units (students' interests, students' learning levels, parents' preferences, school's facilities and equipment and extra available school time); The parents can suggest up to two teaching subjects; Taking in consideration all the above the teachers' board concludes and submits the timetable of the 'all-day' school choosing for each day two-hours lessons for each class (in total 10 teaching hours per week). The extra activities and subjects which are offered are the following:

#### **2.4.2.5 Extra activities and subjects of the 'all-day' school**

- *Homework preparation*

For 'all-day' schools consisting of five (5) classes, ten (10) teaching hours per week should be offered in total for homework completion. These hours are spent mainly for helping the students of year 1 and year 2. If the students of year 1 and year 2 are studying together then they are offered 5 teaching hours for their homework preparation and the remaining five hours are given to the rest classes depending on the needs of the students and after a common decision of the teachers association. For 'all-day' schools consist of five (6) classes, ten (15) teaching hours per week are offered in total for homework completion. These teaching hours are divided and given to year 1 (five hours), to year 2 (5 hours) and the remaining five hours to the rest classes after the anonymous decision of the teachers association.

- *Sports*

From 1 to 5 hours are spent for athletic activities and sports. These teaching hours are offered mainly to the students of year 4, 5 and 6, since these classes are taught less hours of physical education compared to the classes of year 1 and 2.

- *Theatre Education*

The same hours as for sports are spent, from 1 to 5 hours, for theatre education. The teaching hours for theatre education are offered to students of year 4, 5 and 6 depending on the facilities and capabilities of each 'all-day' school.

- *ICT*

From 1 to 5 hours are added to the school programme and the teachers association again decides which classes can be taught receiving extra help on new technologies.

- *English*

From 1 to 5 hours are recommended for all the classes of the ‘all-day’ school program, as an extra hour lesson in the English language.

- *Music*

From 1 to 5 hours are proposed mainly for the students of years 3, 4, 5 and 6.

- *Second foreign language*

From 1 to 5 hours are recommended only for parts of the day program and for the students of years 5 and 6.

- *Art*

From 1 to 5 hours are proposed mainly for parts of the day program and for years 4, 5 and 6.

- *Cultural group activities*

Creative and cultural activities from 1 to 5 hours are proposed for all the classes. It is possible these activities to take place with the participation of students of different classes, mixed groups, in order a creative and cultural interaction to be achieved. Within these activities the students of all classes can prepare school events such as choir performances, theater plays and other creative activities with extra emphasis given on the aesthetic and artistic character of learning and education promoting elements of culture such as literature, art, photography and music. These activities require the collaboration of teachers, specialist teachers and local authorities.

The daily program is formed according the ‘all-day’ school’s needs, upon the recommendation of the head-teacher of each school and in collaboration with the school directors, who assist and advice in the best possible in the formation and organization of the school program. However, what is considered revolutionary and innovatory is the autonomy and choice of decision making, in the formation and planning of the school programme, given for first time to students and teachers and parents (F.12/520/61575/Γ1/30-5-2011).

The aim of the ‘all-day’ school is to enhance learning and development of both students and teachers. There was a clear need for the Greek education system to

redefine school knowledge and upgrade teaching methods and practices, connecting school learning with the demands of modern society, preparing today's students for the challenges of living and working in a *knowledgeable society* and in a unified European society (Law 2525/97). The 'all-day' school encourages engagement and values opinions from local society and participation from the educational, social, scientific, cultural and economic boards to enable improvement and expansion of the school (Law 2525/97).

Some of the critical aims of the 'all-day' school are the enrichment of the curriculum by teaching additional learning subjects and activities; redefining and renewing teaching methods and practices; seeking a more collaborative and explorative teaching; aiming for an inter-scientific approach of the taught subjects and completing learning within school hours. Inevitably all these changes have affected the teacher's professional lives (Law 2525/97).

#### **2.4.2.6 Curriculum and 'all-day' school**

The introduction and establishment of the primary 'all-day' school in the Greek education had promised a revised and a renewed curriculum in order to fulfil the needs of students having to spend long hours at school. The curriculum of the 'all-day' school has been enhanced with new subjects and activities as they presented in details in the relevant section of the literature review Chapter 2. The curriculum of the 'all-day' school offered for first time the possibility for the teachers to have a relative flexibility in choosing the subjects or activities, especially in the afternoon zone, considered as the most important to fulfil their students' needs in the specific setting of school each time and having previously asked parents' opinions (Ministry of Education, Φ.50/492/108832 /Γ1/ 22/ 8/2008, FEK 804, Vol. B /09/06/2010). This initiative is of high importance as the primary and secondary education curricula in Greece still remains the result of the government's decision with a predefined content which is assessed and regulated by the Greek Ministry of Education (Law 1566/ FEK 167, Vol. A/ 30/09/1985).

The form of the Greek school curriculum is national and compulsory with standard number of teaching hours, content and textbooks dictated by the Ministry of Education. The involvement of teachers in the formation of the curriculum and the

writing of textbooks is minimal, since they are solely supervised and constructed by the Pedagogical Institute, which is the government's official body responsible for writing and revision of curricula and textbooks. It seems that the slow and minimal change in the curriculum over the years does not challenge teachers to assume new roles or develop new teaching practices. The academic orientation of the primary school curriculum forces teachers to present themselves as the authority or the expert in the field, and to apply teacher-centred approaches in teaching, leaving little room for student active learning (OECD, 2012).

However, since 1981 when the socialist party came to power and until nowadays under the influence of different governments, significant education changes took place in an effort to reform the Greek school curriculum. In the following section curriculum change in Greece will be briefly examined trying to identify the factors that have led to these changes and any improvements occurred in curriculum development in Greece.

#### **2.4.2.7 Greek curriculum changes and reforms in primary education**

The Greek primary school curriculum has been entirely revised since 1981. During the 1980s new subjects (e.g. environmental studies, health education and civics education) were introduced into the primary school curriculum. New text books were written and, for the first time, for each subject a teachers' guide book and an additional exercise book for each subject were introduced. The Institute of Education had the responsibility of supervising the academic panel assigned with the task of writing the new books. Since 1987-88, the teaching of foreign languages has also been available in a great number of primary schools. In the same year specialist secondary school teachers of arts and crafts and physical education undertook teaching in primary schools. The methodology evaluation of teaching changed as well. A numerical marking system has been supplemented by a descriptive form of evaluation based on the student's holistic performance (Flouris & Pasiadis, 2003). However, these changes characterised as *'limited'*, *'fragmented'* and *'inadequate'* without being accompanied by a *'structural'* educational reform at all levels of Greek general education (Flouris & Pasiadis, 2003, p. 76). Trying to identify the reasons led to another failed curriculum reform, centralism, bureaucracy and control as well as disagreement amongst political parties and mainly the lack of educational policy continuity are some of the main factors that can be considered (Ifanti, 2007).

The 1996-2002 educational reform is considered one of the most important with regards to curriculum reform. This curriculum reform was designed and implemented into two consecutive periods (1997-2000 and 2000-2002) under the supervision of the Institute of Education, under different Institute presidents, scientific teams and with different philosophies, goals and funding (Flouris & Pasiás, 2003). The main element of this curriculum reform was the development of the Single Unified Frame of Curriculum Studies (EPPS), *Ενιαίο Πλαίσιο Προγραμμάτων Σπουδών*. The new form of curriculum was a multidisciplinary curriculum emphasising on a better coordination between the different levels of compulsory education, introducing new subjects and identifying more concrete educational goals (Law 2525/1997, article 7). Regarding the primary education and within the context of the Single Unified Frame of Curriculum Studies Interdisciplinary (DEPPS), *Διαθεματικό Ενιαίο Πλαίσιο Προγραμμάτων Σπουδών* the ‘flexible zone’ was integrated at the primary school for enhancing the curriculum interdisciplinary and with creative activities concerning health education, environmental education, cultural and social education (Alahiotis, 2001, p.5). However, according to Flouris & Pasiás (2007), the philosophy and the character of the flexible zone do not constitute something new in the school programme. The flexible zone can be seen as an attempt to organize and integrate in the curriculum all the innovative subjects introduced during the last twenty years.

At the same period and between 1997 and 2002 the ‘all-day’ school reform initiated and implemented in the primary education. The establishment of the ‘all-day’ school was very promising emphasized on an enhanced curriculum aiming to enable students with creative activities and subjects during their long stay at school. The curriculum changed content should be adapted to the changing needs of the Greek society. The ‘all-day’ school reform was an effort for proving to European partners that Greece is moving forward aiming to educational modernization, decentralization, openness, flexibility and quality through an innovative, revised and enhanced curriculum. It was an ambitious educational piloting project trying to help its students from an early level of their school studies to face the new challenges occurring with the entrance of Greece in the European Union. However, after fifteen years of its establishment, the ‘all-day’ school remains a project in process. Whether it is going to be proved another failed effort of educational reform in Greece or not, it is to be found in the short future.



In conclusion, Greece has a long tradition of repeated failure of education reforms. Although a European Union member for the last thirty-two years, Greece has shown limited progress in introducing the changes in its education system demanded by economic, political and social pressures which affect almost all the advanced countries constantly competing each other in a globalizing world (Persianis, 2003). Having presented the main education reform for curriculum change taken place in the Greek primary education the last three decades, in the following sections an attempt is made to study the decision-making process and the political influences and control on the Greek educational system.

The following section discusses some of the most important studies undertaken on the 'all-day' school to date. A thorough search of the published literature conducted in order to identify academic articles and papers as these appeared on major databases such as ERIC, EBSCO, ESC related to the 'all-day' school published after 1997 (the year since the establishment of 'all-day' school). The majority of the studies evaluate the effectiveness of the 'all-day' school model through the perceptions of teachers, as teachers play a very important role in the creation and implementation of educational policies. However, while teachers' roles are important their quality of teaching is reflected on student performance and parent satisfaction. Taking into account the views of all three parameters will help us understand how important the 'all-day' school is and how efficient will become in the future.

### **2.4.3 Major studies on the Greek 'all-day' school: Strengths and limitations**

The 'all-day' primary school has completed almost fifteen years of its establishment and operation (1997/2013). However, it is still considered as a project in progress. A number of studies have attempted to clarify issues concerning the 'all-day' school's operation, to evaluate its effectiveness, to examine if it fulfills its aim, to analyze the perceptions, mainly, of teachers and parents about the institutionalization of this new form of school and its effect on students. They conclude that the above issues have not been studied in depth that a significant number of questions remain unanswered (INEE/GSEE/ADEDY, 2007).

One of the first studies conducted by Pashali and Tsiagki (2000) examines 18 *open and flexible* 'all-day' schools in the city of Ioannina in Western Greece. Questionnaires were used, as a method and instrument for data collection, and were distributed to teachers, students and parents. From 391 questionnaires answered by students, 246 by teachers and 18 by teachers the main findings concern the operation of the 'all-day' school concluding that as an educational innovation in the primary school received initially the acceptance and approval of the teachers, parents and students. Other important findings were that the 'all-day' school provides students with a safe environment while their parents are at work, that there is a satisfactory preparation for the homework but there is a limited possibility for extra help to those students with learning difficulties. Furthermore it was found that a limited number of activities take place. The study concludes that any failure of the 'all-day' school to fulfill its aims was mainly because of organization problems concerning the schools' facilities and the shortage of teachers.

In 2003 the Institute of Labour (IN.E-Γ.Σ.ΕΕ) conducted a research concerning the social aspects of the 'all-day' school and its potential scope examining the social characteristics of the parents whose children study in 'all-day' schools. The same study aimed to examine parents' opinions about the operation of the 'all-day' school. The results of the study show that the majority of parents (93, 9%) have expressed positively about the role of the 'all-day' school and have also expressed their satisfaction (71, 2%) about its operation. A new aspect of this study was that parents (40, 9%) believe that the 'all-day' school could be improved with the active involvement of the parents.

Papapetrou and Sousamidou (2004) examined which subjects and activities offered by the 'all-day' school were preferred by teachers, students and parents. The research showed that students prefer activities and subjects which encourage the creativity, emotions and movement. In the same research, differences were revealed in students' preferences concerning the new subjects and activities are depending on their gender. Girls preferred and chose subject such as Music and Art, while boys were more motivated by learning computers. The older children expressed the opinion that more relaxation time is needed during their long-hours stay at school or they ask to have a say in choosing activities of their preference. In relation to the parents, they expressed the view that they expected the 'all-day' school to help their children with the

completion of the homework at school, especially for Language and Mathematics. Parents were also dissatisfied with inappropriate facilities and conditions in the schools.

Another study ( Mousiou-Mylona, 2004) conducted in northern Greece, Florina, amongst 17 *open and flexible* 'all-day' schools showed that the 'all-day' schools have inadequate and poor facilities, suffer from organizational problems and inexistent collaboration between teachers. Another key finding was that parents emphasized the importance of subjects such as English and Computers and underestimate the importance of other 'creative' activities such as dance, sports and art.

Lamnias and Ntakoumis (2003) undertook research into the social characteristics of students in the *open and flexible* 'all-day' school in central Greece. The main findings show that one the most important reason that children attend these schools is because their mothers are working. The study concludes that the 'all-day' school provides students with a safe environment while their parents work until late in the afternoon.

A study conducted by Arvaniti (2004) among 53 teachers (27 class teachers and 26 specialist teachers) working in 'all-day' schools in Thessaloniki, the second biggest city of Greece, showed that teachers recognized the importance of the role of the 'all-day' school. According to teachers the 'all-day' school provides better education for primary students and helps working parents offer their children a safe place to be participating at the same time in creative and useful activities. However, at the same time teachers expressed their dissatisfaction for the poor facilities and other problematic organizational issues concerning the operation of the 'all-day' school.

In the same city, Thessaloniki, a further study was conducted, (Kyrizoglou, Grigoriadis, 2003), examining how parents, teachers and head-teachers perceived the operation and role of the 'all-day' school. This study took place in 20 schools with the participation of 405 parents, 40 teachers and 17 head-teachers. The teachers believed that because of the plethora of activities that students are called to participate in during the afternoon zone they have limited time for the preparation of their homework. Head-teachers of the schools claimed that they were not satisfied by the support and cooperation given by the directors of the educational offices and thus they are loaded with extra responsibilities. The parents seem to choose the 'all-day' school just because they can feel reassured that their children can stay for longer in a safe

environment. However, parents have not been persuaded by the pedagogical aims of the ‘all-day’ school as they have to provide privately the extra activities they believe necessary for their children progress.

In 2007, a study was conducted in 202 ‘all-day’ schools with the participation of 198 teachers and 2044 parents from the whole country. The aim of the study was to evaluate the institutionalization and operation of the ‘all-day’ school in Greece. The study was conducted in collaboration with the Institute of Labour (INE) and the Institute of Pedagogical Studies of the Teaching Association of Greece ΓΣΕΕ-ΑΔΕΔΥ). Some of the findings show that the ‘all-day’ school fulfils some of its social aims, such as the provision of a safe environment for the students having to stay until late in the afternoon at school because their parents work long hours. However, it fails to fulfill its pedagogical aims according to parents. Apart from helping students with the completion of their homework, parents claim that the ‘all-day’ school does not provide any other pedagogical benefit to their children. Parents’ views are contradicted by those of teachers who disagree and believe that the ‘all-day’ school helps a lot its students to meet their social and pedagogical needs. The study concludes that half the numbers of the teachers ask for reformation of the ‘all-day’ school.

One important factor usually considered in the literature of the ‘all-day’ school is that it offers a long, but flexible, learning programme which contributes substantially to students’ overall subject performance. This is due to the teaching of a number of specialist subjects (music, drama, athletics etc) in addition to the traditional schooling programme which covers only the compulsory subjects such as History, Mathematics, Religion Studies etc (Ministry of Education, 2012, §4).

Chaniotakis (2009) in evaluating the ‘all-day’ school through an examination of teachers’ perceptions argues that the extended teaching programme of the ‘all-day’ school allows students to learn and perform better in class especially in specialist subjects. Specialist subjects usually offer students the opportunity to work in groups, experience high levels of enjoyment, and learn and benefit from each other and the activities. A similar view is put forward by Loukeris *et al.* (2009, p. 162) in their study of the effectiveness of the ‘all-day’ school on student performance through extensive research of teachers’ perceptions. As they argue, one significant indicator that enhances students’ knowledge and performance is the open-extended and flexible

curricula promoted by the ‘all-day school’ in which students can prepare their homework for the next day’s classes and study subjects of social and cultural nature. The schooling programme offers students the opportunity to study and get involved in activities that help them learn through practice. As a consequence, the revised and extended flexible syllabus deems the preparation of homework on school premises as an important criterion for the effective operation of the all-day school.

Thoidis & Chaniotakis (2008) in their study on parents’ perceptions about homework in ‘all-day’ schools make an interesting evaluation of the pedagogical impact of homework and the importance of the extra time allocated to students for preparation. Homework is one important indicator for the successful functioning of a school especially when students are involved in different activities.

Effective preparation for homework presupposes the presence of specialized equipment and learning resources in classrooms often recognized as pivotal to a successful learning environment. The current literature (Androulakis, 2006; Konstantinou, 2007; Loukeris *et al.* 2009) shows that inadequate equipment and resources, and funding issues have a negative impact on the smooth running of the ‘all-day’ school with increasing student drop-out rates from the school programme and indications of parental dissatisfaction with the school environment

Another criterion acknowledged in the school effectiveness literature is that the ‘all-day’ school encourages collaboration between teachers working in different sessions and develops a more attractive learning environment. (Loukeris *et al.* 2009, p. 172) Indeed, teacher collaboration is an important and crucial component for the effective operation of schools. In this case, the all-day curriculum allows teachers to liaise regularly with other teachers about classroom resources and the smooth running of the syllabus, make corrective interventions, when they deem possible, exchange views, and follow different teaching methods, such as group work and interdisciplinary learning (Ministry of Education, 2012, §12).

It is interesting to note that the findings of the current literature on the effectiveness of the ‘all-day’ school are very positive and encouraging for considering a potential reform of the current functioning of the all day school. However, the main studies reviewed provide a fragmented view of the ‘all-day’ school by placing more emphasis on the teachers’ views.

Although there are a number of studies examining the views and perceptions of parents and students of the ‘all-day’ school, these studies partially and very generally examine the overall role of the ‘all-day’ school and how it affects teachers’, students and parents’ lives. Reviewing the studies concerning the establishment and operation of the ‘all-day’ school in Greece, a lot of emphasis is given mainly on the teachers’ view. They omit important information pertaining to the perceptions of two additional parameters: the perceptions of students and parents. Students can play a very important role when it comes to creating an attractive learning environment in which they can fulfill their homework commitments. The role of parents is also very crucial as they are invited to express their views and propose changes through parental associations which are considered ‘partners’ in school management (Ministry of Education, 2012, §14).

## **2.5 Section 4: The stakeholders of the ‘all-day’ school**

### **2.5.1 Teachers’ voices**

#### **2.5.1.1 Teachers’ professional lives**

According to Merriam-Webster (2002), the term professionalism refers to the conduct, aims and qualities that characterize a profession or a professional person. In the same dictionary, emphasis is placed on the positive consequences of being a professional and the importance of professionalism as an act connected to livelihood. In the Random House (2001) dictionary professionalism is defined as a term that includes the character, spirit and methods of the profession.

More specifically, within education teacher professionalism is closely connected with ‘*what makes a good teacher and how teaching might be enhanced*’ (Gewirtz, Mahony, Hextall & Cribb, 2009, p.4). Teaching has always been a demanding profession, but has become increasingly more complex in recent years requiring the highest standards and skills to best perform and achieve school targets (Goodson, Hargreaves, 2006). However, it is worth mentioning some of the factors that determine the formation of teachers’ professional identity.

### 2.5.1.2 The process of teachers' self-building

The development of teachers' identity is a 'dynamic' process occurring through a continuous interaction with others. It is the result of the interaction between teachers' personal experiences and the social, cultural and institutional environment in which they act and perform on a daily basis (Day et al. 2007, p.103). According to Goodson (2003) the perceptions that we have of ourselves and how we develop as individuals through our life and experiences affect how we gather and share knowledge within our working-class communities. Goodson (2003) firmly believes that story telling, for example, has great influence formulating self-building in the community you live in. Knowledge acquired through family allows a community to sustain its cultural commentaries and theories. Our personal experience and the way we receive our knowledge defines the people we are. Similarly, the knowledge and experiences teachers gain throughout their lives influences the kind of teachers they become (Goodson, 2003). Teachers' personal lives are closely connected with their professional lives and performances. According to Hargreaves (1993):

“Teachers don't just have jobs. They have professional and personal lives as well...Understanding the teacher means understanding the person the teacher is” (Hargreaves, 1993:8)

In the study of Day et al. (2007) a critical analysis of teachers' professional life phases reveals how importantly these phases affect teachers' work, lives and effectiveness. Teachers may be grouped into one of the following six professional life/ experience phases: a) Professional life (phase 0-3) *Commitment: support and challenge*; b) Professional life (phase 4-7) *Identity and efficacy in classroom*; c) Professional life (phase 8-15) *Managing changes in role and identity: Growing tensions and transitions*; d) Professional life (phase 16-23) *Work –life tensions and commitment*; e) Professional life (phase 24-30) *Challenges to sustaining motivation*; f) Professional life (phase 31+) *Sustaining/ declining motivation ability to cope with change, looking to retire*. According to Day et al. (2007), in each phase teachers have similar concerns, influences and positive or negative paths of effective professional development. However, chronological age alone does not sufficiently explain teachers' development and the possible influences on their professional development. The key elements that influence teachers' professional development during the different professional phases in their career are: a) *their personal life experiences/events*; b) *the school* (roles,

responsibilities, classroom settings, leadership and colleagues); c) *the pupils* (relationships and behaviour); and d) *their professional values and policies*. Finally, there is a distinctive difference between ‘*career*’ and ‘*professional life*’ phase. The term ‘*career*’ refers to out of classroom responsibilities and promotion while ‘*professional life*’ refers to professional characteristics, concerns and needs (Day et al. 2007, p.122).

Teachers’ work today has intensified and significantly restructured with roles broadened to include school management, career progression, prescribed curricula, policy and resources. As a result teachers’ work has affected their professionalism moving from a culture of classroom autonomy, individualism and expertise to a culture of goals, standardized criteria and accountability (Hargreaves & Goodson, 2004). Moreover, teachers and school leaders are called to transform educational outcomes under difficult conditions. They have been assigned with the hard task of providing students with those skills needed to become competitive and active citizens and workers in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. At the same time, there is a need for teachers to enhance students’ ability to succeed into classrooms with cultural heterogeneity and diversity by differentiating their teaching styles, methods and approaches. Finally, teachers need to keep themselves constantly informed about curricula and pedagogic innovations as well as about new developments in digital resources (OECD, 2011). In considering the significance of teachers’ new roles in new societies of our century, it is understandable why in many high-performing education systems teachers have a double role to play: to improve educational outcomes and to improve themselves (OECD, 2011). According to OECD’s Teaching and Learning International Survey (TALIS)<sup>7</sup>, the large majority of teachers declare to be satisfied with their jobs and believe that they make a real difference in education. They also make significant investments in their professional development, both in terms of their time and often also in terms of money, an investment that goes hand-in-hand with teachers’ reporting

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<sup>7</sup> OECD’s Teaching and Learning International Survey (TALIS) surveyed around 90,00 teachers in 2008 based on random samples in Australia, Austria, Belgium (Flemish Community), Brazil, Bulgaria, Denmark, Estonia, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Korea, Lithuania, Malaysia, Malta, Mexico, Norway, Poland, Portugal, the Slovak Republic, Slovenia, Spain and Turkey. The results derived from TALIS are based on self-reports from teachers and principals and therefore represent their views, perceptions, beliefs and accounts of their activities. This is important information, as it gives insight into how teachers perceive the learning environments in which they work, what motivates them, and how policies and practices that are put in place are carried out in practice (OECD, 2011).



that they use a wider range of pedagogic strategies in the classroom. The TALIS survey highlights the importance of teachers' role in educational changes. In successful countries with high-performing education systems, teaching profession which characterized of responsibility and it is well rewarded can attract some of the best graduates into teaching career. In the same report (TALIS) it is recognized that an increase into the quality and prestige of a country's teaching personnel is not an easy task. However, some measures to achieve this ambitious aim are reported which mainly relate to the recruitment stage and more importantly to transforming the teaching profession from within. The report also highlights that professional development can be only effectively achieved with teachers' individual career improvement and school change. At the same time, collaboration between teachers sharing teaching practices, methods and ideas is essential for reforming teachers' professional identities. Strong professional relationships between teachers enhance school improvement (Southworth et al, 2000). These relationships can be sustained by continuous formal and informal interaction, social peace and professional discourse (Southworth 2000, p.281). Finally, educational reform most of the time is derived by political motives and considerations, so it is essential for teachers to be part of the education reform with a significant say and sharing the same goals with politicians and administrators. Nowadays collaborative forms of educational reform have been proved highly effective (OECD, 2011).

While it is obvious that around the world a lot of emphasis is played on teachers' professional development in changing educational settings, in the following section the focus will be narrowed to teachers' professional development in Greek primary education.

### **2.5.1.3 Teachers' professional lives in Greek primary education**

In the case of Greece and according to the OECD (2012) report there was a need for fundamental changes in the knowledge, skills and competencies at every level of the education system. These changes should be linked with an all-inclusive professional development programme for school directors, teachers and other educational administrators. Unfortunately and according to the same report these initiatives were not implemented and the process of change is very slow (OECD, 2012). The professional development of teachers in Greece has for years been governed and

directed by a highly centralised educational system. For instance the Primary Education curricula and timetables are drawn up by the Pedagogical Institute which, in turn, submits them to the Ministry of Education for approval. They are implemented in all schools country-wide and teachers have to adhere strictly to predefined curriculum. Teachers have limited input on the curricula which imposes restrictions on any autonomous development. However the current Primary Education Curricula fall under the integrated philosophy of the Interdisciplinary Single Curriculum Framework for Compulsory Education. Interdisciplinary approaches define the structure of autonomous subjects' teaching on the basis of a balanced horizontal and vertical distribution of the teaching material and promotes interconnection between subjects as well as a broadened approach. In addition, the innovative 'Flexible Zone of Interdisciplinary and Creative Activities' is also part of an improved curriculum. Curricula specify the aims of each subject, the thematic units, and recommend interdisciplinary projects to be applied (Ministry of Education, FEK.12.1/545/858112/G1 FEK 1280, B 09/13/2005).

According to the official documents of the Ministry of Education and the integrated reformed educational program (ΕΑΕΠ - Ενιαίο Αναμορφωμένο Εκπαιδευτικό Πρόγραμμα), the 'all-day' school enhances the role of teachers allowing them for the first time flexibility to decide on curriculum issues and the formation of the school timetable. The 'all-day' school is expected to operate within a reformed, flexible timetable, adjustable to student needs enabling a longer school day. It aims to fulfill the pedagogical and social needs of the students and the needs of the Greek families and Greek society as a whole. The same official documents emphasize the enhancement of the curriculum with new subjects and activities, with the use of new interdisciplinary teaching methods and approaches which aim to improve the school life of its participants. The same documents highlight the duty of the educational community (educationalist and teachers) to encourage and persistently improve the 'all-day' school (Ministry of Education, Φ. 50/376/99825/Γ1/2011).

As a result, the 'all-day' school reform, as any education reform, has dramatically affected teachers' professional lives. Teachers for the first time face new challenges experiencing a degree of flexibility in practicing their profession. Consequently teachers have to work together and cooperate with specialist teachers to deliver the enhanced curriculum of the 'all-day' school with its new subjects and activities (Law

2525/97). The ‘all-day’ school, therefore, forms a setting where the professional lives of teachers are truly tested with its new challenges.

Greek teachers have, for the first time, been given the opportunity to form and apply the curriculum of the afternoon school in a more flexible way prioritizing the needs of their students in relation with the needs of their parents and the teachers themselves (Ministry of Education and Culture of Greece, 2003). It is the first time that teachers have seen themselves moving from traditionalism and centralism to a kind of personal and professional autonomy and freedom having the chance to affect the curriculum implementation (Pyrgiotakis, 2001). In the Greek primary ‘all-day’ school, teachers seem to enjoy the relevant freedom and autonomy that the new curriculum of the ‘all-day’ school is supposed to offer them. It could, however, be argued that Greek teachers because they were not used to such freedom, as they had always to follow a centralised designing and deciding curriculum, could run the risk of acting arbitrarily when implementing the curriculum.

The ‘all-day’ school reform seems to affect teachers’ professional lives without, however, teachers themselves having the chance to be prepared for such a change. This is not a new phenomenon relating to teachers’ professional development in Greece. Any initiative aiming in their professional development is characterized by inconsistency and lack of well designed action by the Greek Ministry of Education (OECD, 2012). The initiation of training programmes aiming at teachers’ professional development is inconsistent with the actual needs of teachers. Another problem is that teachers’ participation in these programmes is voluntary and not broadly attended by all teachers. In addition, the content of the programmes is randomly selected, instead of looking systematically at teachers’ needs. As a result they cannot have a positive impact on teaching practices and help teachers improve their professional lives. Finally, there is not available to Greek teachers a continuous professional development scheme enabling them to improve their professional status. Any training provision offered to them is decided and carried out through conventional practices without any form of flexibility (Papastamatis et al, 2009).

In the next section, issues around the curriculum development of the ‘all-day’ school will be presented.

#### 2.5.1.4 Leadership in Greek primary education

The term '*leadership*' has received significant attention by scholars and practitioners trying to understand and define the factors that make a good leader. For some, leadership is the '*ability*' needed to inspire a group to achieve their goals (Robbins, 2003). For others leadership is the '*process*' of inspiring people's activities achieving predefined goals by an organisation (Mosley et al., 2001). There is an interesting debate around leadership especially between supporters of 'trait' and 'behaviour' theories. 'Trait' theories of leadership emphasise the personal qualities and characteristics which define a good leader. On the other hand, 'behaviour' theories of leadership highlight the importance of adopting specific behaviour tactics in order to become a good leader (Brinia, 2012).

More specifically, research on school effectiveness has shown that school leadership and school effectiveness are closely associated. The effectiveness of schools and more specifically, the improvement of pupils' school lives has been an issue of international concern, as evidenced by a combination of established political, social, cultural and economic imperatives in different parts of the world. For many years, research on school effectiveness aimed at identifying those school characteristics that can make a difference in pupils' lives irrespective of their background (Muijs, 2006). Although the family, community and cultural perspectives of school effectiveness and pupil achievement vary from country to country, what is commonplace in many parts of the world is the recognition of the importance of continuously improving teaching and learning and the improvement of the quality of leadership and management in schools (Rhodes and Bisschoff in Arthur and Peterson, 2012). The importance of school leadership has been repeatedly recognized as a key element in school improvement and change. It is impossible to find a school completely effective in all of its effort. However, what has been established by a significant number of studies is that good leadership has a great impact on school effectiveness (Teddie & Reynolds, 2000; Hallinger & Snidvongs, 2005).

Recent research has shown that good school leaders can really make the difference and effectively transform a school (Hargreaves, 2009; Hargreaves and Fink, 2008; Leithwood et al., 2004; Middlewood, 2010). It is the quality of leadership which can help a school to achieve its targets, to inspire teachers' work, to encourage their performance and to manage building a harmonious school environment where

teachers, students and parents work together sharing common goals and values. Realising the importance of the school leader's role in improving school effectiveness, emphasis should be placed on each country's educational policy on school leaders' recruitment and selection. The appointment of a school leader can be considered one of the most significant events in the life of a school as it may help school improvement and sustain a successful future for the school (Hargreaves and Fink, 2006). However, this is not an easy task since the role of today's school leader becomes increasingly demanding and complex due to greater responsibilities (Harris, 2010; Hargreaves, 2009; Hargreaves and Fink, 2006). There is an increasing concern around the world that the role of school principals is not compatible with the complex challenges that schools are trying to prepare children for (OECD, 2009). The expectations of what school leaders should achieve, change as rapidly as the definition and distribution of school leadership roles. Researchers emphasise that successful school principals ought to be equipped with personal qualities and skills such as effective communication, motivation, innovation and creativity alongside the charisma involved in promoting school vision and values (Bush, 2008; Harris, 2005). At the same time, appropriate and continuous training should be provided to school leaders by the school in order to be inspired by strong commitment and to be able to adjust to the complex and highly demanding school environments of modern societies (Harris, 2005; Leithwood et al. 2004; Southworth, 2002). There is a considerable international interest in the professional development of school staff and in the development of school leaders (Bush, 2008). As Crow (2006) points out, in the US, much emphasis is placed on the good preparation of school leaders since it is widely acknowledged that the better equipped they are to lead their school improvement journey, the better they can identify and serve the needs of their students.

#### **2.5.1.5 The recruitment of school leaders**

Nowadays, the recruitment and appointment of quality school leaders is a major challenge concerning most of the developed countries. There are reports of school leader shortages in different parts of the world such as in Australia (Barty et al, 2005), Canada (Williams, 2003) and the United States (Thompson et al, 2003). In the UK also an inadequate supply of school leaders is often reported in the educational press (Ward, 2006; Shaw, 2006) and by the National College for School Leadership

(NCSL), 2007). Moreover, in the UK a number of studies have shown that high workload levels and bureaucracy prevent individuals from applying for leadership posts (Bedford, 2006; Hargraves & Fink, 2006; Fink and Brayman, 2006; Hargraves & Goodson, 2006). On the contrary, such a leadership shortage is not evident in most of Asia-Pacific countries as there is a leadership succession planning with an early identification of those with leadership talents and a continuous effort on their systematic leadership development (MacBeath, 2006a).

In Greece, school leaders' recruitment in primary and secondary education is the state's responsibility. Law 3467/2006 defines the criteria used in the candidates' assessment. These are used as a basis to award applicants with a mark out of 100. The basic criteria are: a) the service experience; b) the scientific and pedagogical knowledge; c) the candidate's personality and d) educational work. According to the most recent law, 3848/2010 (article 16, paragraph 2) concerning school leaders recruitment, selection criteria remain the same with the only difference being that candidates are awarded with a mark out of 65 instead of out of 100. More specifically, the head-teachers are selected from the Periphery Service Councils (Περιφερειακά Υπηρεσιακά Συμβούλια, Π.Υ.Σ.Π.Ε.), consisted of a school counsellor and a head-teacher of the same educational periphery. These members are decided upon and selected by a Ministerial Decision of the Ministry of Education. The selection criteria of the primary school head-teachers are defined by Article 11, paragraph 4 of the Law 3848/10. The candidates should have an eight years educational experience from which at least five years in teaching and three years in primary schools. According Article 21, Law 3848/10, the final selection of the primary school head-teachers is based upon the candidates' qualifications and degrees, years of service, management and administrative experience. Emphasis is placed also on the candidates' personalities. They are required to demonstrate to a selection panel their ability to take initiative, to solve administrative problems, to encourage and create the circumstances of a cooperative and harmonious school environment where teachers and students are enabled to work effectively. Moreover, in the final assessment the candidates' seniority regarding their years of service in public education is highly considered.

There is significant controversy relating to the selection of school leaders in Greece. Emphasis is mainly placed on candidates' seniority rather than considering the important skills necessary for high quality leadership such as innovation and creativity

(Saitis & Menon, 2004; Saiti, 2012). While teaching experience may be an important element in the selection of school leaders, it should not be considered the most significant criterion in determining successful leadership. Research conducted by Bright and Ware (2003) showed that primary and secondary head teachers had admitted that previous teaching practices and experience do not help and do not provide school leaders with the abilities necessary for their new role.

Critics in recent literature point out that in the selection procedures of school leaders in Greece, there is undue emphasis placed on candidates' typical qualifications, mainly based on their seniority, and little attention to the traits necessary for quality of leadership (Eliophotou-Menon and Saitis, 2006; Fintzou, 2005; Pyrgiotakis et al., 2001; Saitis & Menon, 2004; Saitis & Gournaropoulos, 2001; Saitis, 2008; Saiti, 2012). However, in addition to the problematic selection procedure of school leaders in Greece, their training and development is equally problematic. There is no systematic policy and planning of school leaders' training except of some optional programmes with limited impact on their professional development and school's effectiveness (Saiti, 2012).

By contrast, in other countries such as in the UK, emphasis is placed on teachers and leadership training as 'the quality of teachers and leaders is the most important factor in improving educational standards' (DoE, 2013, p.1). Another important initiative is the freedom and flexibility given to the British schools by the government to take control of their own recruitment and training of teachers through the Schools Direct agency. With the establishment of the National College for Teaching and Leadership (NCTL) a new government agency was created to enable and support the development of a self-improving, school-led system. The agency was formed from the merger, on 2 April 2013, of the National College for School Leadership and the Teaching Agency. The aims of this agency are, firstly, to improve the quality of the education workforce and, secondly, to support schools to help each other to improve. Government and local authorities are working together in order for schools to develop a 0-18 education system, which means teacher and leadership training and CPD and school-to-school support are delivered locally by partnerships led by the best head-teachers. In order to improve the quality of the workforce the NCTL agency promises:

- to make this process as simple as possible in response to feedback from schools.
- their regional team to work with schools to set up partnerships, help schools in their negotiations with teacher training providers over the cost and content of training, and spread examples of successful practice
- where schools wish to go further and become accredited providers of teacher training, to help them through this process
- to work with schools to help them embrace the recruitment of early years teachers (0-5)
- to support school-led licensed providers of leadership development to ensure that this approach is effective in spotting, training and promoting a new generation of outstanding school leaders for the 0-18 education system
- to develop and license provision for school business managers, serving heads and system leaders, ensuring that this draws on the best expertise from education and beyond
- to work with licensees to ensure the model meets the needs of schools, addresses the 0-18 agenda, and is increasingly driven by schools themselves

(DoE, 2013, p.1)

In all, while in other countries, much emphasis is placed on school leaders' recruitment, and training, leadership in Greek schools is an issue of high concern in recent literature. It is necessary for the state to adopt strategic models of leadership which are based on coordinating distribution action (Hargreaves & Fink, 2006; Harris 2004), motivation, commitment, a shared vision (Grant, 2006) and collaboration (Leithwood et al. 2004).

#### **2.5.1.6 Quality assurance procedures**

At the same time, another issue of high concern in the Greek education relating to the leadership and staff appointment is the lack of any quality assurance procedures as there is no inspection or monitoring of head-teachers after their appointment. Head-teachers after their appointment can hold their post for two years without any inspection or monitoring of their work and their appointment may be extended for



other two years without any valuation of their work. Again in other education systems, emphasis is placed on quality assurance procedures, inspection and monitoring of keeping the school standards high. In the UK, for example, robust planning, monitoring and evaluation by leaders were consistent features of the National Support Schools agency. School managers analysed a range of performance data, carefully tracked the progress that pupils made, conducted lesson observations systematically, and routinely scrutinised pupils' work to identify strengths and areas for further development. Staff at all levels were involved in professional dialogue and were therefore very clear about the expectations of them and the pupils (Ofsted, 2010, p. 11). By involving all staff systematically in monitoring and evaluation, leaders were able to demonstrate through their own practice how to use a range of leadership skills effectively. They were also able to identify potential leaders by spotting staff that already had some or all of these skills and those who needed further development. The skills included the ability to evaluate the quality of a lesson accurately, to provide straight feedback and give hard messages, to identify areas of development for the individuals and school, to analyse a range of data, to synthesise information to identify priorities, to triangulate information from a range of sources to evaluate the impact of actions, to present information to a range of audience and to set deadlines and use time effectively to ensure that they were met (Ofsted, 2010, p.12).

Recent research argues that school leaders should be able to collaborate effectively with a wide range of agencies and to integrate their work into the work of school (Rhodes & Bisschoff in Arthur & Peterson, 2012). The emergence of 'Federations', that is, a group of schools in the UK which have formally agreed to work together in order to improve pupil inclusion and to raise achievement is probably an excellent example of addressing school improvement via collaboration and knowledge sharing. 'Federations' are interested not only in sharing ideas but also resources, staff development opportunities, leadership and management (Rhodes & Bisschoff in Arthur & Peterson, 2012). As Chapman et al (2010) points out, the quality of leadership that head teachers exhibit, can be highly influential in the successful collaboration within 'federations' and can better serve the needs of pupils.

Having discussed important issues concerning school leadership and effective schools, we conclude with the need for Greek schools to improve their school management and leadership. It becomes clear, that regarding the establishment and operation of the 'all-

day' primary school, the leadership of this new form of school is a real challenge. When listening to the voices of teachers, students and parents who express their views on the effect of the 'all-day' school on their lives, it is important also to try to understand whether the leadership of the 'all-day' school plays an important role in the school's effectiveness according to their views.

#### **2.5.1.7 Teachers' voices**

Over the years, the role of teachers in education and society has been given the recognition that it deserves. The importance of the teachers' role is epitomised in the following words:

'Teachers matter. They matter to education and achievement of their students and, more and more, to their personal and social well-being. No educational reform has achieved success without teachers committing themselves to it, no school has improved without the commitment of teachers; and although some students learn despite their teachers, most learn because of them-not just because of what and how they teach, but because of who they are as people.'  
(Day, Christopher, ACP, 2007)

The importance of the teachers' role is recognising broadly in the education process. However, education cannot be improved without teachers' participation in dialogue and decision making, without giving them the chance to voice their experience and views (Cohn and Kottkamp, 1993).

Nowadays, it is commonly accepted by teachers, parents, politicians and educators that teachers should have a say on issues related to school processes. This is a result of the teachers empowerment movement which started in the mid 1980s and continues today. According to Allen (2004), schools have given teachers an important role in leadership within the school but their voices are still absent from renewal efforts which aim to improve the educational system. The real empowerment of teachers in a democratic school environment is closely connected with providing teachers with a significant role in decision making (Short and Greer, 2002). One of the key factors for a school environment to become a democratic learning community is to honour its teachers' voices. Four basic types of voice have been identified by Allen (2004): The voting voice, the advisory voice, the delegated voice and the dialogical voice. Expressing a voting voice requires the minimum time, responsibility and risk and has the minimum effect on teachers' beliefs, understanding or thinking about teaching and learning. This type of voice does not allow teachers to improve their professional status sufficiently. Expressing

an advisory voice allows teachers to take more but not enough time to publicly state their opinions. It is more satisfactory as a process than expressing a voting voice but again teachers have little chance to affect and change attitudes, opinions, feeling and actions. In the case where a school allows teachers to express a delegated voice, they are empowered, with their representatives participating amongst the leadership team in making decisions, sharing their thoughts publicly and taking responsibility for final decisions. In cases where teachers express a delegated voice, although this affects the school climate positively and empowers teachers' feelings of ownership towards the school work, it still does not have a transformational power of teachers' beliefs and behaviour. Finally, in schools where teachers have the privilege of expressing a dialogical voice, they have a significant say in decision-making with the acceptance of a high level of commitment and risk. Irrespective of the level of democracy within each school established, where teachers can express all four types of voices, it is important that other stakeholders, including students and parents, should not be excluded from participating in dialogue and decision making. They should have the same opportunities to express the same types of voices.

### **2.5.2 Students' voices**

Students, along with their teachers, play an interactive role in the education process. They are a significant social group, whose perceptions are valuable to school practices because they originate from authentic sources and first hand experiences in classrooms. The notion of listening to students has mostly been overlooked especially in those cases when changes and strategies have been introduced. According to American researcher Soo-Hoo (1993) students' feedback from their school experiences can be vital in evaluating and monitoring renewal efforts. However, what very often happens is children are excluded from the processes of educational decision-making (Franklin 1986; John 2003). Researchers have stressed that student voices have been ignored in policy making, although broadly accepted that their perspectives are decisive to learning and teaching improvement (Cooper and McIntyre, 1996; Rudduck, Chaplain and Wallace, 1996). Findings by Fielding and Bragg (2003) indicate that students can become active and important contributors to school change and not merely be sources of information. In 1989 the United Nations (UN) with the declaration of *Convention on the Rights of the Child* legitimated internationally the children's right to voice their views and experience. In Britain implementation and

legislation of students' right to voice their perceptions and thoughts was slower but it was always an issue of concern for the educationalists (Rudduck and McIntyre, 2007). The '*Every Child Matters*' movements (Her Majesty's Treasury, 2003) emphasizes the right that children should have to an active say in their development (p.11). However, in the UK emphasis has been placed on children rights to express their views and opinions on matters related to social and public policy in recent years (Willow 2002; Stafford et al. 2003 cited in Hopkins 2008). Internationally there are many examples of the importance of students' voices in terms of listening and implementation in schools. For instance, in Denmark the government has emphasized student voice as a vehicle for creating democratic schools Flutter, (2007). In the US emphasis has been placed on the power of student voice to promote diversity and break down racial and class barriers (Mitra, 2004). In New Zealand students' voice has been used as a strategy to encourage active and broad participation of students within schools and communities (Ministry of Youth Affairs, 2003).

By contrast in Greece students' voices are not valued although *the New School* policy of the Ministry of Education places the *student first* as the main and most important factor of the school process (Ministry of Education, 2010, p.2). With students participating in decision making, students empower their position in the school process and play an important role in affecting their own learning with extra choices and responsibilities. Schools can be improved where students alongside teachers are encouraged and supported in expressing their perceptions of learning and teaching (Fullan, 2002).

### **2.5.3 Parents' voices**

Parents' involvement in school processes is of the same importance as teachers' and students. They hold a key role as educational stakeholders. Parents' involvement in schooling as advisors, advocators, supporters, tutors or audiences is crucial. Parental participation is translated as parental involvement in decision making in their children's education programs, administration or school management. For instance, the Australian *Family- School Partnerships Framework* (DEEWR, 2008) defines this partnership between parents and school as:

‘Collaborative relationships and activities involving school staff, parents and other family members of students at a school. Effective partnerships are based

on mutual trust and respect, and shared responsibility for the education of the children and young people at the school.’ (p. 2)

However, over the last four decades educators have shown an increasing concern about the degree of parents’ involvement in their children’s education (Ferrara, 2009; Gibson & Jefferson, 2006; Mapp, Johnson, Strickland, & Meza, 2008). Some hold that the main reasons behind the obvious decline of parental involvement in their children’s education are the constantly increasing number of parents in the work force, the declining role of family and the rapid changes occurred by the turn of the traditional societies to the modern ones (Jeynes, 2006, 2010; Mapp et al., 2008). Researchers also argue that the new realities of the today’s modern societies have affected the children of the urban areas more than any other social group (Jasis & Ordonez-Jasis, 2012; Lightfoot, 2007; Mapp et al., 2008).

- **Parent involvement in diverse educational systems**

Despite the fact that parents should have the same opportunities as teachers and students to voice their views and experience from their participation in the school life, the review of different educational systems reveals that their role is not equally perceived in diverse educational contexts. In the United States parental involvement is defined by the United Code of Law as ‘parents’ participation in regular, two-way, and meaningful communication, involving student learning and other school activities’ (USCS 7801, p.32). The school encourages parents’ involvement in school-sponsored programmes designed to enhance students’ academic achievement (Jeynes, 2012). Parents’ involvement can take the form of parenting, communicating, volunteering, learning at home, decision making and collaborating with the community (Epstein, 2001). Regardless of the form of parents’ involvement in their children education the main purpose of this involvement is for their children to do well in school (Ferrara, 2009; Gibson & Jefferson, 2006; Mapp et al. 2008). Recent research has shown that parental involvement enhances student educational outcomes (Jeynes, 2012).

In the United Kingdom, a country where parents play a crucial role in school life, school governors shape one of the largest volunteer groups in the country with active and influential involvement in the English schools (Ofsted, 2011). Specifically, every school’s governing body is comprised of various groups of governors such as parent governors, school staff governors, authority governors and community governors with

the responsibility of raising schools standards. The number of the different categories of governors depends on the form and size of the school. According to an Ofsted (2011) report, since 1988, school governing boards have been given more responsibilities and their role has become more important than ever before with the increasing autonomy gained by the schools. Amongst these responsibilities, the enhancement of school leadership by providing support and ensuring the statutory duties are met alongside with the appointment of the head-teacher are considered the most important for school governing bodies (Ofsted, 2011).

Her Majesty's Chief Inspector's Annual Report for 2009/10 identifies that:

‘Governors are most effective when they are fully involved in the school’s self-evaluation and use the knowledge gained to challenge the school, understand its strengths and weaknesses and contribute to shaping its strategic direction. In contrast, weak governance is likely to fail to ensure statutory requirements are met, for example those related to safeguarding. In addition, where governance is weak the involvement of governors in monitoring the quality of provision is not well enough defined or sufficiently rigorous and challenging.’ (Ofsted, 2011, p. 4)

According to the Children’s Plan published by the Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF) in 2007 parental involvement in children’s education from an early age and throughout school make a positive difference to pupils’ achievement. The partnership between parents and school in order to support children in their learning is highlighted by the DCSE report with emphasis placed on the importance of schools to encourage parents to participate in their children education (DCSF, 2007). Parents as educational stakeholders provide schools with valuable help. Their involvement and cooperation with the school can enhance student achievement (Koshy, Brown, Jones &Portman - Smith, 2012). Research has shown that effective parental involvement in school leads to considerable benefits for students across all years and it is seen as important in supporting student achievement (Baker & Soden, 2005; World Bank, 2008).

In Greece parents’ involvement is less critical compared to other educational systems around the world. In Greece, each school forms its own parents’ committee according to the Law 2621/98. Parents’ participation takes place with representatives to educational councils and committees and gives them the opportunity to associate with their children’ school and teachers. Parents’ responsibilities start with their children’s

enrolment at the age of 6 years in the school district of their permanent address. Parents have to ensure their children's regular attendance at school during the nine years of their compulsory education. They also have to meet their children's teachers at the end of each school term to get informed about their progress. Sometimes parents ask to meet teachers without any appointment if they feel that they need to communicate about any issue concerning their children. Many schools have fixed days for parents- teachers meetings, which can be once a month. In some schools the teachers association decides and organizes meetings with parents to discuss special educational issues, while, in some others, the parents' association organizes meetings with the teachers. Compared to the UK, the United States and Australia, Greek parents' contribution to school processes is limited and they have no impact on the school function, process of staff selection, curriculum development or student achievement.

Overall, research has clearly shown that strong parent–teacher relationships lead to increased parental involvement in school with an important and lifelong impact on children's academic achievement (Lawson, 2003; Mann, 2006). According to Cotton and Wikelund (2001), parents' involvement in their children's educational process by attending school functions, participating in the decision making process, encouraging students to manage their social and academic time wisely, and modelling desirable behaviour for their children, represent a valuable resource for schools. Students also benefit from their parents' interaction with teachers and their participation in the school life.

- **Parents' role in students' homework**

It is parents' belief that parents should be involved in student homework as their involvement can have a positive impact on their children's school performance and most importantly because they perceive that teachers want their involvement in student homework. Parents' support takes the form of 'establishing structures for homework performance to teaching for understanding and developing student learning strategies (Hoover-Dempsey, Battiato, Walker, Reed, DeJong & Jones, 2001, p. 195). The Effective Provision of Pre-School Education (EPPE) project, a large-scale study carried out in 2007 in the UK with the participation of 3,000 children, whose progress was monitored from the age of three, revealed that parental involvement in a range of homework activities was linked with positive student outcomes. However, there is

mixed evidence on whether or not parental involvement in homework affects pupils' achievement (Goldman, 2005; Desforges & Abouchar, 2003; Peters, Seeds, Goldstein & Coleman, 2008; Duckworth, 2008; Flouri & Buchanan, 2004). A study from the United States reveals that different forms of parent involvement in homework (e.g. support for children's autonomy) may be linked with high test scores, while others (e.g. direct involvement) are linked with lower test scores (Sharp, Keys, & Benefield, 2001). From the students' perspective, parental involvement in homework is perceived as a positive experience which can help them to do well in tests at school.

All the above studies focus on the importance of parental involvement in pupils' homework mainly completed at home. However, in contemporary societies a number of challenges such as work commitments for both parents, single parents, childcare issues of other children, lack of time and difficulties with literacy and numeracy prevent parents from providing their children with their homework support needed (Farrell, 2003; Bynner & Parsons, 2006). In such cases, the school is called to provide parents with the chance for their children to complete their homework at school, and this was one of the aims of the 'all-day' school in Greece (Ministry of Education, 1998). Whether or not this aim has been achieved, it is a matter for the parents to voice their experience throughout their interactions with their children and their school. Overall, international studies reveal that parents should have their own voice expressing any views and opinions concerning their children's education (Epstein, 2001; Epstein and Sanders, 2002; Henderson and Mapp, 2002; Hill and Taylor, 2004; Bacete and Rodriguez, 2004; Hogue et al., 2002; Jeynes, 2005; Sheldon and Epstein, 2005). Their voices are important for a democratic school environment and can be crucial in school renewal efforts.

Overall, in this research, teachers, students and parents are called to express their voices about the operation of the 'all-day' school and the effect of this new form of school on their lives. As Armstrong (2008) has stressed it is important for all members of a school community to be given the respect and recognition needed for the best school practices to be developed



## 2.6 Conclusion and summary

The following graph (see Figure 2.3) illustrates how the review of the literature influenced the formation of research questions and the methodological design of this study. Specifically, global social changes such as the increasing number of women in the workforce as well as the entrance of Greece in the European Union, existing theories on learning and teaching, and the establishment and operation of the ‘all-day’ school in other countries explain the need for reforming primary education and implementing the ‘all-day’ school in Greece. In order to examine the impact of the institutionalization of the ‘all-day’ school in Greece, the pedagogical and social aims of the ‘all-day’ school will be examined to identify whether they have been put into practice. The voices of teachers, students and parents involved in the ‘all-day’ school will be analyzed by adopting a phenomenological approach and by using, as methods of data collection, interviews and questionnaires.

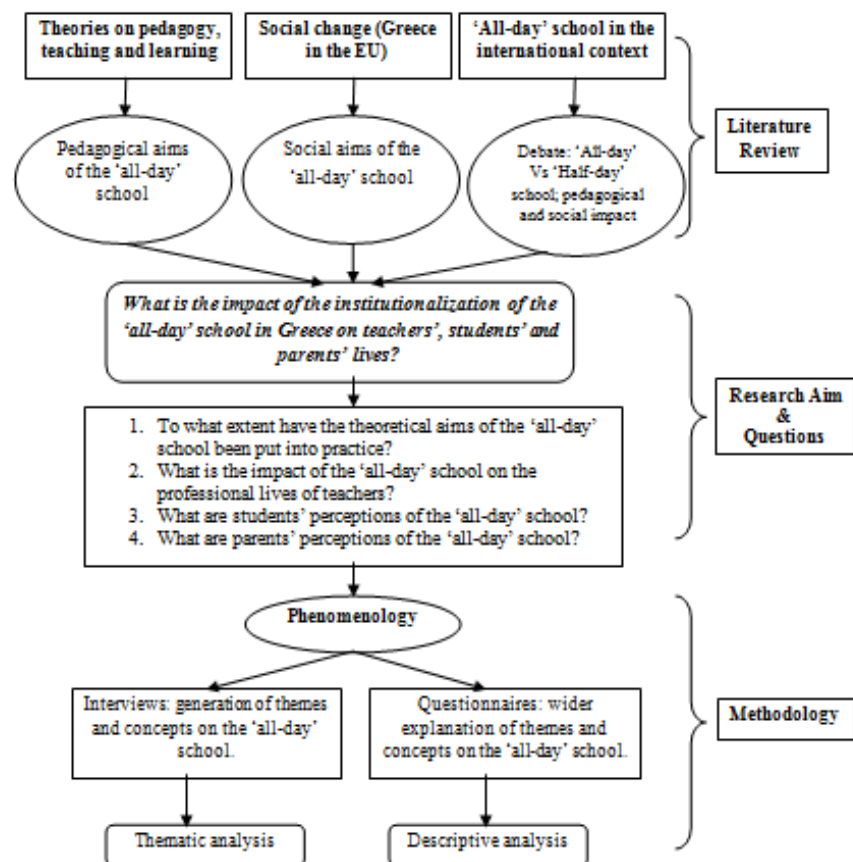


Figure 2. 3 Thesis structure

This thesis gives voice for first time to teachers, students and parents to express their views, beliefs and experience resulting from their participation in the pilot ‘all-day’ schools which are the most organised and well functioned ‘all-day’ schools in Greece. Reviewing the previous studies concerning the institutionalization of the ‘all-day’ school, it is obvious that there is no clear differentiation between different types of schools and this causes confusion as to which type of ‘all-day’ school they are referring to. The review of studies conducted in order to examine the effect of the phenomenon of the ‘all-day’ reform in primary education in Greece have shown many limitations and weaknesses which the present study aspires to overcome.

In light of the foregoing issues coupled with the scarcity of research on the pilot ‘all-day’ primary education in Greece, there is a need to carry out research in this context with a specific focus on the effect of the pilot primary ‘all-day’ schools, with compulsory school attendance for all students. Therefore, the need to investigate the effect of the specific ‘all-day’ school reform on teachers, students and parents is a worthwhile undertaking.

This research is designed to understand how the ‘all-day’ schools are operating in the context of the primary education in Greece. More importantly, this focus was explored by investigating the perceptions of the three main stakeholder groups participating and directly affected by the operation of the ‘all-day’ school: Teachers, parents and pupils are going to voice their experiences and give their accounts about the importance and consequences of this educational reform on their lives. This research seeks to unpack the tensions and dilemmas which existed. The next chapter will explain how this important research was undertaken and how challenges were handled.

## **Chapter 3 - Methodology**

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### **3.1 Introduction**

In Chapter Two the relevant literature related to the research question was explored in appropriate detail. In this chapter the methodology and methods used in this research project are presented and discussed in detail, the research paradigm employed for this thesis is discussed, alongside with an overview of the phenomenological approach and how it applies to this research. The methods used for data collection are discussed in detail, justifying the decision of using them under the criterion that they provide evidence appropriate to elucidation of the research questions. At the same time, any inherent limitations of these methods are also discussed as each research method has its weaknesses and strengths. Ethical considerations alongside the measures taken for verification and authenticity of the data will be explained and critically analyzed.

### **3.2 Problem identification**

Greece has a long history of educational reforms despite its strong and very influential, cultural and social structures which have sustained a traditional and strictly centralized educational system for years. A review of the major educational reforms have been presented in the Literature Chapter trying to illustrate the changes took place in Greek Education. The focus of this research is the reform of the ‘all-day’ school legislated and initiated in the period 1997-2002 in response to the apparent need for an increased work force. In addition, the growing number of working mothers meant that children needed to be looked after in a safe environment beyond mainstream school hours. Since then the ‘all-day’ school remains a project in progress facing a lot of obstacles with the most recent being the economic crisis in Greece which has badly affected all

the sectors, private and public, of the country, and consequently the public schools of all levels. A limited number of studies have been undertaken examining separately the effect of ‘all-day’ school on teachers’, students’ and parents’ lives. However, it is the first time that the three groups of the key stakeholders can voice their experience and opinions about the effect of the ‘all-day’ school on their lives. This is worthy of research efforts.

### **3.3 Research aims and objectives - Research questions**

The aim of this research is to provide the data on the perceptions and feelings of the three key groups of participants, teachers, parents and students, who are playing an important role in the operation and expansion of the ‘all-day’ school and this is the main concern of this dissertation. In this research, teachers, students and parents are called to express their voices about the operation of the ‘all-day’ school and the effect of this new form of school on their lives. Armstrong (2008) has stressed that all members of a school community should be given the respect and recognition needed for the best school practices to be developed.

More specifically, the research question “*What is the impact of the institutionalization of the ‘all-day’ school in Greece on teachers’, students’ and parents’ lives*” has been broken down into the sub-questions:

- To what extent have the theoretical aims of the ‘all-day’ school been put into practice? Have the social and pedagogical aims of the ‘all-day’ school been met into practice?
- How do teachers believe the ‘all-day’ school affects their professional lives? What are their perceptions about the effect of the ‘all-day’ school on teachers’ relationships? What the influence of the ‘all-day’ school’s curriculum on their teaching practices and its effect on students learning?
- How do parents believe the ‘all-day’ school affects their lives? What are their perceptions about the effect of the ‘all-day’ school on their children learning? What are their opinions about the effect of the ‘all-day’ school on their children relationships with their teachers?

- How do students believe that the ‘all-day’ school affects their learning? What are their perceptions and feelings about the effect of the ‘all-day’ school on their relationships with their teachers?

### 3.4 Theoretical perspectives

When research is undertaken, it is important to consider different research paradigms and matters of ontology and epistemology. Ontology (from the Greek words *ov* + *λογος*) means *the science or study of being* (Blaikie, 1993). Ontology is referring to the claims and assumptions that a particular approach to social enquiry makes about the nature of the social reality. *It claims about what exists, what it looks like, what units make it up and how these units interact with each other* (Blaikie, 1993).

Epistemology (from the Greek words *επιστημη* + *λογος*) is *the theory or science of the method or grounds of knowledge*. Epistemology is referring to the claims or assumptions made about the ways in which it is possible to gain knowledge of the reality, whatever it is understood to be. *An epistemology is a theory of knowledge. It presents a view and justification for what can be regarded as knowledge, what can be known and what criteria such knowledge must satisfy in order to be called knowledge rather than beliefs* (Blaikie, 1993).

Epistemology considers views about the most appropriate ways of enquiring into the nature of the world (Easterby-Smith, Thorpe and Jackson, 2008) and ‘what is knowledge and what are the sources and limits of knowledge (Eriksson and Kovalainen, 2008). Ontology considers what constitutes reality. Hach and Cunliffe (2006) summarize epistemology as ‘knowing how you can know’ and are asking how knowledge is generated, what criteria discriminate good knowledge from bad knowledge, and how should reality be represented or described. They conclude that there is an inter-dependent relationship between epistemology and ontology and how, one both informs, and depends upon, the other.

The strong link between epistemology and ontology helps to understand the position of the researcher. Thinking that we all have inherent preferences that are likely to shape our research design (James and Vinnicombe, 2002), these aspects are described

by Blaikie (2000) as part of a series of choices that the researcher should consider and must connect them back to the original research problem. If this is not achieved, then methods which are incompatible with the researcher's stance may be adopted and as a result the final work will be undermined through lack of coherence.

To conclude, basic ontological and related epistemological positions shape the 'research philosophy' (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2007) what in other words Blaikie (2000) describes as 'research paradigm'. Denzin and Lincoln (2003) describe a research paradigm as 'an interpretive framework' and in the words of Guba as 'a basic set of beliefs that guides action'.

### **3.5 Research paradigm and approach**

In educational and social research, several major paradigms may be considered, each with their particular philosophical presuppositions and methods which the researcher considers regarding the particular research questions under investigation. In this study, a significant usage and respectability of qualitative research has been employed (Dam and Volman, 2001). Mainly, the qualitative research approach deemed as the most suitable to the research question, aims and objectives of the research context. Moreover, an emergent research design proved valuable in this research context as it provided flexibility to the research process and changes could be made if any needed (Maykut and Morehouse, 1994), Merriam, 1998). The pilot 'all-day' primary school in Greece is being treated as an educational phenomenon, in this research.

Several critical beliefs dominate in qualitative research. Their main focus is on the experience and processes of self-understanding and that of others. Meaning derivation is also the main element of this research type (Keller and Mohammed, 2003). Qualitative research is closely connected with the effort made by an individual to understand their world by interpreting the human experience in a subjective way, according to Cohen et al (2007). The emphasis is on '*Verstehen*' (understanding), a term attributed to Weber (Crotty, 1998). The interpretive researcher accepts that the observer makes a difference to the observed and that reality is a human construct (Wellington, 2000), therefore research conducted within the interpretive paradigm cannot be separated from the values of the researcher (Mertens, 1998). Interpretivism,

which focuses on the meanings people bring to situations, is associated with qualitative methods (Punch, 2009) of data collection.

In the social world it is argued that individuals and groups make sense of situations based upon their experience, memories and expectations. Meaning, therefore, is constructing and reconstructing constantly through experience and resulting in different interpretations. These multiple interpretations create a social reality in which people act. According to Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill (2007) the focus of the researcher should be on understanding the meaning and interpretations of ‘social actors’ and to understand their world from their point of view. Therefore, understanding what people are thinking, feeling and how they communicate verbally and non-verbally is considered very important (Easterby-Smith, Thorpe and Jackson, 2008). Given also the subjective nature of this paradigm and the emphasis on the language, qualitative approaches of data gathering are associated with this paradigm (Eriksson and Kovalainen, 2008). Concluding and according to Miles and Huberman (1994) the researcher can be seen as the main measurement device of the study in an interpretivist paradigm. However, the close nature of the researcher and the researched in this paradigm and the risk that any interpretation is framed within the mind of the researcher means that it is necessary careful steps to be followed to avoid bias.

According to O’Donoghue (2007) educational research can be informed by one of four important theories, positivism, interpretivism, postmodernism and critical theory, as they are described by Walcott; each of which can be further subdivided into several theoretical perspectives. The specific paradigm being employed in this research is interpretivism.

### **3.6 Approach of this study**

This research study adopts the interpretivist paradigm. The main aim of this study is to explore the thoughts, feelings and perspectives of the teachers, the students and the parents about the establishment and the operation of the ‘all-day’ school in Greece. The study does not set to examine pre-existing theories but relies instead on qualitative data, collected from policy documents as well as questionnaires and semi-structured interviews with the ‘actors’ of this study, teachers, students and parents of eight ‘all-day’ schools.

Two methods of data collection have been utilized in this research. Questionnaires and interviews have been simultaneously conducted in order teachers, students and parents to voice their thoughts and experiences from their every day involvement, in this operation of the ‘all-day’ school.

The study tries to discover and understand the individual and shared sense of meaning regarding the ‘all-day’ school policy. Interpretivism gives emphasis to the meaning people bring to situations and it is more likely to be associated with qualitative methods of data collection (Punch, 2009). The study is also interested in the factors that affect the different interpretations gathered from the informants with emphasis on understanding the individual and shared meaning rather than explaining underlying mechanisms or identifying casual effects. This study is inductive rather than deductive and theory building rather than theory testing (Hartas, 2010). Inductive methods are exploratory, trying to build accounts from what is emerged from the data collection. In this research, qualitative data revealed the teachers’, students’ and parents’ own words, meanings and reality (Punch, 2009). This study gave them the opportunity to describe their own situations, from their own perspectives, it gave them voice.

Examples of theoretical positions within interpretivism are ethnomethodology, hermeneutics, phenomenology and symbolic interactionism (O’Donoghue, 2007). Phenomenology has chosen for this research as the most appropriate qualitative approach and it will be examined in the following section.

### **3.6.1 Phenomenological approach**

Phenomenology (from Greek phainomenon ‘*that which appears*’ and logos ‘*study*’) means ‘the description or study of appearances’. As a philosophical term phenomenology can be traced back as early as 1765 in the work of Kant (Moustakas, 1994) and in the writings of Mach, the philosophical positivist (Spiegelberg and Schuhmann, 1994). However, the mathematician Edmund Husserl (1859-1938) is regarded ‘the fountainhead of phenomenology in the 20<sup>th</sup> century’ (Vandenberg, 1997:11). He was highly interested in discovering the meanings and essences of knowledge claiming ‘*Zu den Sachen*’ which is translated as ‘back to the things themselves’ (Moustakas, 1994:26; Crotty, 1998:78; Cohen et al., 2000:24). To achieve this it is significant to return to the self to discover the meaning and nature of objects



as they appear in their essence (Crotty, 1998). Phenomena should be experienced first-hand ignoring any prejudgments - understandings, judgments and knowing- what Husserl calls 'epoche' (Moustakas, 1994:33).

Phenomenology is an in depth analysis of a phenomenon, a thing known to us through our senses. It deals with the view of a phenomenon (Peim, 2001). It is the research approach focused on how life is experienced from the perspective of an individual. It is concerned with the nature of 'being in the world' (Heidegger, 1962) and the lived experience of human beings within the 'life-world' (Husserl, 1970). This practically is extended and associated with the way people are experienced their lives and how they manage to do the every-day things on which the social life depends (Moustakas, 1992). It is experienced directly rather than conceived in the mind as an abstract concept or theory. Phenomenology aims to picture the 'things themselves' as these are experienced by individuals rather than categorizing and measuring them (Denscombe, 2007).

Within phenomenology, people are creative interpreters of events who, through their actions and interpretations, make sense of their world. The processes of interpreting sights and sounds into meaningful events are not unique to each individual. They must be shared with others who live in the group of community (Berger and Luckmann, 1967). By sharing their interpretations of their experiences with others they interact, communicate and understand the intentions of others. This is how social life is constructed by those participate in it.

The task of a phenomenologist is to present the experience in a way that is faithful to the original. This enables the researcher to consider and listen to the voices of others, to understand things in the way they are understood by them and to adequately describe these things as the group in question experiences the situation. Through the phenomenological approach the researcher is encouraged to provide a detailed description of experiences with the minimum reliance on the researcher's beliefs, expectations and predispositions about the phenomena under investigation. For this purpose and for phenomenologists, to be able to provide a 'pure' description, they should approach things without predispositions based on events in the past, without suppositions drawn from existing theories about the phenomenon under investigation

and without using their every day common sense assumptions. This is feasible for the researcher by ‘bracketing off’ all the predispositions by adopting the stance of ‘the stranger’ (Schutz 1962).

Summarizing and taking into consideration that the ‘all-day’ school is a complex phenomenon and there was the need for authentic accounts to be gathered from teachers, students and parents, the ‘actors’ of this study, phenomenology research was chosen as the most suitable for this study. The phenomenological approach also treats people in a humanistic way interested in investigating closely the lived experiences of people. In the case of this study, the experiences of teachers, students and parents were examined drawing from their active and everyday living in the ‘all-day’ school. This study was a small scale research which deployed qualitative methods of data collection, a research design which employs phenomenology. Finally, phenomenology provides an inherent potential for describing experiences which are immediately accessible and interesting to a wide range of readers. In the case of the ‘all-day’ school, the perspectives of students, teachers and parents in relation to the ‘all-day’ school are detailed thus illuminating their lived experiences. This thorough account is expected to attract the interest of education policy-makers and educators in order to consider possible improvements of this institutionalization.

### **3.7 Participants’ voice in research**

According to Denzin and Lincoln, (2005) traditional research limited the role and autonomy of its participants, denying them ownership of the research process, results and outcomes leaving the participants in a less powerful position comparing to the researcher. In the recent years this positioning has been challenged recognizing a more equal relationship between researcher and participant, which gives the extra validity to the voice of the participants. More importantly, there has been a particular interest in the representation of voices of research participants whose voices are often not heard, such as the young, the old, ethnic minority groups, and vulnerable people (Clough and Nutbrown, 2007). The reasons for this interest could be political and economic reasons for this interest, as these groups can be viewed as consumers or users of certain provisions; for instance children can be seen consumers of educational provision (Tangen, 2008). In qualitative research the use of voice has been valued because it

has been received as the voice which speaks the truth (Jackson and Mazzei, 2009). Moreover, an extra emphasis is given on allowing readers to hear the words of the informers (Guba and Lincoln, 2005). The aim of this research is to give teachers, students and parents a voice to express their thoughts and feelings concerning the ‘all-day’ school reform.

### **3.8 Research sample and sampling strategy**

Having discussed the research theory, and the importance of considering in research the participants voices, in this section the process of sampling and sample’s characteristics will be analyzed and presented. Considering the aims of the present study, parents, teachers and students constitute the population under examination. In order to identify study’s sample, eight (8) amongst 16 ‘all-day’ Greek schools in the District of Athens were contacted (see table 1). The Greek Ministry of Education has a directory of all the public educational institutions in operation ([www.minedu.gr](http://www.minedu.gr)); this was used as the primary sampling frame. In order to identify the population directed by the Research Question, the primary sampling frame used to create a secondary sampling frame listing all 28 pilot ‘all-day’ primary schools operating in Greece. In total, a purposive sample of 8 pilot ‘all-day’ primary schools took part in this research. More specifically, information about the number of schools, related contact details as well as permission to carry out the research (see permission request Appendix x) were derived from the Pedagogical Institute of the Ministry of Education of Greece. The Pedagogical Institute informed in writing the head teachers of the eight chosen schools about their participation in the research process. In this way, the researcher gained official access to their premises (see Appendix 2).

**Table 3. 1The eight (8) ‘all-day’ schools in Athens chosen for this research**

No of schools	Educational Peripheries in Athens	Name of school
1	Office of Primary Education of A´ Athens	50 <sup>th</sup> School of Athens
2	Office of Primary Education of A´ Athens	89 <sup>th</sup> School of Athens
3	Office of Primary Education of Γ´ Athens	4 <sup>th</sup> School of Agion Anarguron - Athens
4	Office of Primary Education of A´ Athens	30 <sup>th</sup> School of Athens
5	Office of Primary Education of A´ Athens	5 <sup>th</sup> School of Galatsiou-Athens
6	Office of Primary Education of A´ Athens	138 <sup>th</sup> School of Athens
7	Office of Primary Education of Piraeus	1 <sup>st</sup> School of Peramatos-Piraeus
8	Office of Primary Education of B´ Athens	2 <sup>nd</sup> School of Mellission-Athens

All of the eight ‘all-day’ schools would be regarded as large schools with around 200-300 pupils. These schools are 1-2 form entry schools with students from year 1 to year 6 and they were chosen to operate as pilot ‘all-day’ schools from the academic year 1999-2000.

### **3.9 ‘All-day’ school sampling**

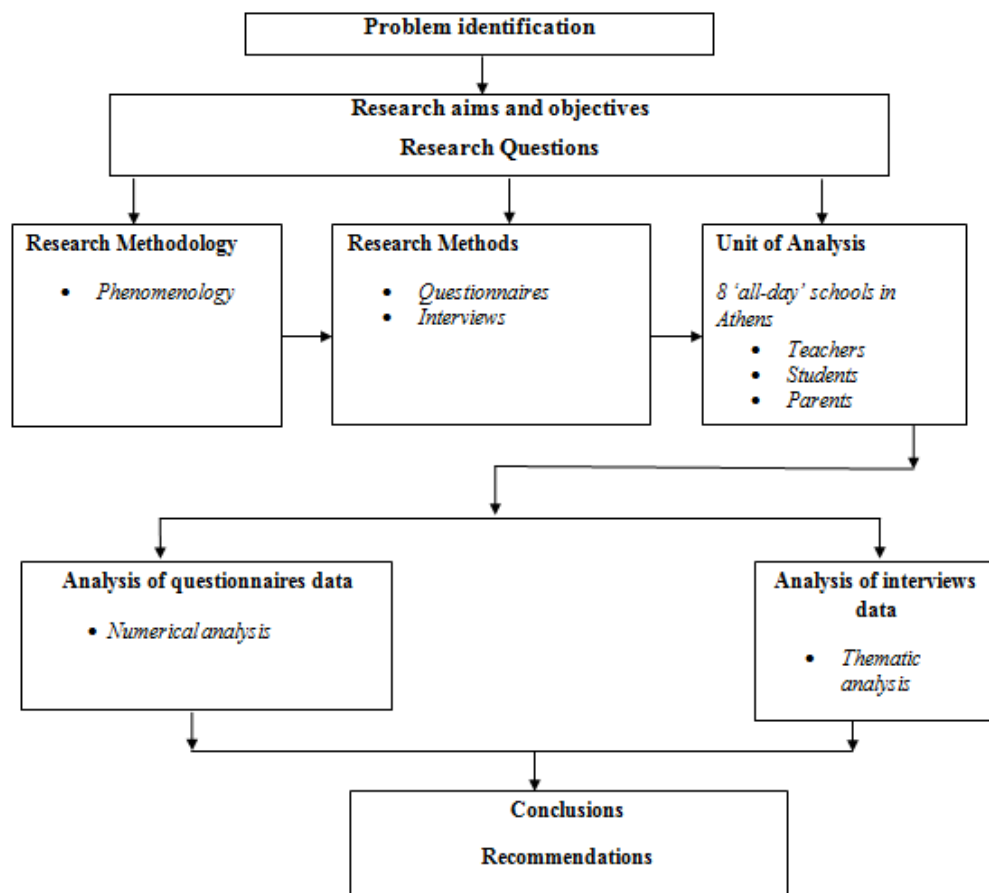
As Denscombe (2007) states while undertaking research it is impossible to access every “element” within a given population. Purposive sampling (Punch, 2009:162) was the method deployed for selecting the eight ‘all-day’ schools. Even though this sampling technique is considered to be selective and non-representative of the wider population (Cohen et al., 2000), it was however deployed, since the focus of the study was not the generalization of findings beyond the sample in question. Instead the study

aimed at acquiring qualitative information about the views, experiences and thoughts of the stakeholders involved in the operation of the ‘all-day’ school. The number of chosen ‘all-day’ schools (8) was determined by the researcher’s aim to gain information by visiting at least one school from each of the educational peripheries of Athens. In the periphery of Attica (Athens) 16 pilot ‘all-day’ schools are operating in total.

### 3. 10 Research design and phases

The methodological design of this study has affected by theoretical orientation and practical issues (McDonnell et al, 2000). The research design and research timeline are reflected in Figures 3.1 and Table 3.2 respectively.

**Figure 3. 1 Research design**



**Table 3. 2 Timeline of data collection**

<b>Research Timeline (years)</b>	
<b>2007-2008</b>	<b>Planning Phase</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Identify research questions</li><li>• Devise questionnaires and interviews</li><li>• Ethical clearance</li><li>• Pilot study</li></ul>
<b>2008-2009</b>	<b>Action Phase</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Send questionnaires</li><li>• Conduct interviews</li></ul>
<b>2009-2011</b>	<b>Reflection Phase</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Data analysis (NB informal analysis begins as soon as data is received)</li></ul>
<b>2010-2013</b>	<b>Writing up Phase</b>

### **3. 11 Research methods**

One of the main concerns while conducting research is to make the right decisions in choosing the most appropriate research methods for the collection of data. As mentioned in the previous sections the chosen methodology affects significantly the final decision of the research methods. Research methods should be closely connected with the research ideology and methodology. In addition the appropriateness of research methods depend on the research question and the purpose of the research (Seidman, 2006). This section will discuss and justify the methods used in this research. The data collection encompassed two methods: Questionnaires and interviews.

#### **3.11.1 Questionnaires**

The first method for data collection was the use of questionnaires distributed to the teachers and parents of the ‘all-day’ schools. Questionnaires are a valid and substantial type of data collection method that is frequently used within educational research. They allow for investigating in percentages (%) opinions, perceptions and views across a larger number of individuals and within groups (Oppenheim, 1992). They can be used for collecting information quickly and relatively inexpensively (Bell, 2010). However, the term ‘quickly’ is highly arguable as the production and

administration of an effective questionnaire requires extra skills especially in the case of its piloting and redrafting phases (Munn and Drever, 1999).

- **Strengths and limitations of questionnaires**

Questionnaires, however, as any method of data collection have both advantages and disadvantages. In summary, the advantages of questionnaires are the following: They are the only way of retrieving information from a large set of people; they are considerably more efficient in both time and money costs; it is easy to resend them back to research participants if required (Denscombe, 2007). The disadvantages of the questionnaires are that the sample may not be representative; participants may misunderstand the questionnaires or their answers might be ambiguous; this can lead to answers which are irrelevant or confusing for the researcher and as a result make analysis difficult, which can affect the reliability (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2007); respondents may ask for help to answer questions so the responses might not represent their knowledge, experience and personalities; the answers may be incomplete or poorly completed (Robson, 2002; Denscombe, 2007).

- **Construction and piloting of questionnaires**

Self-completion structured questionnaires were used to examine the experiences, the perceptions, beliefs and thoughts of teachers and parents. These questionnaires were designed for collecting data about participants' opinions regarding the aims of the 'all-day' school; their perceptions on the effect of the 'all-day' school on teachers, students and parents; their experiences about the relationships (teachers relationships, teachers-parents relationships, teachers-students relationships, students relationships); their opinions about the curriculum of the 'all-day' school; and their perceptions about whether or not the 'all-day' school needs to be expanded or reformed. The formation of the questionnaire was based on the theoretical aims of the 'all-day' school, as defined by the government gazette (law N.2525/97).

The questionnaire schedules were piloted with a small number of head-teachers, class and specialist teachers, parents and students identified in the close environment of the researcher. Piloting is essential when constructing questionnaires since it provides insights to ways of improving the instruments (De Vaus, 2001). It is a critical process in developing the suitable questions (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2007; Denscombe,

2007). The results of the piloting of the instruments improved the formation and clarity of the questions, modified the layout of the questionnaire and enhanced the design of the questionnaire. Appropriate adjustments were made, such as rephrasing questions, replacing unfamiliar terminologies with simpler and clearer phrases and reordering questions.

### **3.11.2 Questionnaire content**

- **Parents' questionnaires (see Appendix 9/10)**

The questionnaire for the parents consisted of twenty six questions; involving five multiple choice questions about the pedagogical aims of the 'all-day' school (i.e. The 'all-day' school has enabled my child to feel happier about his/her learning), nine questions about the social aims of the 'all-day' school (i.e. The 'all-day' school helps my child to co-operate better with their teachers), four questions about the role of the different teachers working in 'all-day' school, five questions about the effect of the 'all-day' school on parents' lives and three questions asking parents whether they believe the 'all-day' school is necessary for the elementary education and if it needs to be reformed.

- **Teachers' questionnaires (see Appendix 7/8)**

The questionnaire for the teachers consisted of twenty eight questions; the aim of the first four questions was to collect demographic data from the participants (i.e. age, years of working experience); six questions were related to pedagogical aims of the 'all-day' school (i.e. The 'all-day' school provides for enrichment of the curriculum by teaching additional academic subjects and activities); there were eight questions concerning the social aims of the 'all-day' school (i.e. The 'all-day' school provides a reduction in 'para-paideia' and financial relief especially of those of the lower class); five more questions concerning the curriculum of the 'all-day' school were included (i.e. To what extent do you think the 'all-day' school has affected the morning and afternoon school); three questions were about the relationship between parents, teachers and students; finally, two questions were included on the necessity of the 'all-day' school for elementary education and if it needs to be reformed.



### **3.11.3 Administration of questionnaires**

It is of common practice the use of self-administered questionnaires in conducting school research (Leeuw and Hox, 2008). While distributing and asking from the participants to complete a self-administered questionnaire there is not any interference of the researcher to oversee the survey, ask questions or record answers. For the purposes of this research, the researcher arranged with the head teacher of each ‘all-day’ school a day and time for allocating the questionnaires.

- **Parents’ questionnaires**

Parents’ questionnaires were given to all students of each school along with a cover letter describing the aims of the study and requesting parents’ cooperation. Students were requested to forward the questionnaires to their parents. Completed questionnaires were returned to school by students. The collected questionnaires were counted and numbered. E-mails were sent to those participants who had provided email addresses to thank them for completing the questionnaires.

- **Teachers’ questionnaires**

Teachers’ questionnaires were allocated to the teachers of each school the day the researcher visited the school to conduct the research. All teachers present at school on the arranged day of allocation completed the questionnaire. The teachers spent approximately 15 minutes completing the questionnaires. At the end of the process, they handed them to the researcher. The number of questionnaires received from teachers was 60, response rate 56% while the number of questionnaires received from parents was 315, response rate 39% (see table 2 )

**Table 3. 3 Questionnaire response rate**

No	Name of school	Participating teachers	No. of responses received	%	Participating parents	No. of responses received	%
1	50 <sup>th</sup> School of Athens	16	10	62	102	34	33
2	89 <sup>th</sup> School of Athens	12	8	67	98	49	50
3	4 <sup>th</sup> School of Agion-Anargyron - Athens	15	9	60	113	66	58
4	30 <sup>th</sup> School of Athens	15	10	67	96	21	21
5	5 <sup>th</sup> School of Galatsiou-Athens	10	7	70	105	48	45
6	138 <sup>th</sup> School of Athens	12	6	50	89	29	33
7	1 <sup>st</sup> School of Peramatos-Piraeus	13	5	38	109	42	38
8	2 <sup>nd</sup> School of Mellision-Athens	14	5	36	103	26	25
Total number of responses		107	60		815	315	
Response rate				56 %			39 %

As a means to increase the response rate of teachers' and parents' participation in the study, a) the researcher ensured the head-teachers' and teachers' support and cooperation by emphasizing the importance of the study, b) the distribution of questionnaires took place the second school term during which the 'all-day' school, as reported by teachers, operates smoothly in terms of human resources, c) the questionnaire was carefully designed and piloted to improve understanding and attract the participants' interest, and d) the researcher travelled to the schools as many times as needed to collect the questionnaires.

### **3.11.4 Questionnaire analysis**

The questionnaires were manually analyzed using the SPSS software package. The demographic data concerning the participant groups, teachers and parents was analyzed and presented in graphs. The data was entered into an Excel spread sheet under identified headings. Response table is double checked for accuracy to maintain high integrity data output. After this phase the responses were calculated. At this stage duplications and faulty categorisation of headings were checked again and finally the necessary adjustments made.

### **3.11.5 Interviews**

The use of semi-structured interviews with the teachers, the parents and the students of the eight 'all-day' schools has been employed as the second method for this research. Through interviews participants are given a voice to discuss their interpretations of the world in which they live and to express how they regard situations from their own point of view (Cohen *et al.*, 2000: 267). These interpretations of the 'all-day' school's main stakeholders, teachers, students and parents were what this study aimed to explore, examining the phenomenon of 'all-day' school reform.

Interviewing is an intentional conversation which informs and helps the researcher to understand how participants make meaning based on their experiences. An interview is mainly suited for studying people's understanding of the meanings of their lived world, describing their experiences and clarifying their own perspectives on their lived world which is particularly important within this research project (Kvale, 1996, p.105). Cohen *et al* (2007) support this view arguing that interview is not just a method of gathering information about life; it is rather a fragment of life itself. Moreover,

interviews in comparison with other methods, for example with questionnaires, allow for the opportunity to clarify responses which are unclear and cause confusion to interviewee. They facilitate a considerably deeper understanding and knowledge of the individuals meaning in their responses (Kvale and Brinkmann, 2008).

- **Strengths and limitations of interviews**

Interviews, as a data collection method, have advantages and disadvantages. One important advantage of the interview is that it allows for greater depth than in the case of other methods of data collection, such as questionnaires for example (Cohen, Manion and Morrison 2007). This is achievable because the gathering of information comes directly from the research objectives. An interview provides access to what it is supposed to be 'inside a person's head', what a person knows (knowledge or information), what a person likes or dislikes (values and preferences) and what a person thinks (attitudes and beliefs) (Tuckaman in Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2007). Secondly, this method could be used to test hypotheses or to suggest new ones; or as an explanatory device to help identify variables and relationships. Thirdly, the interview could be used in connection with other methods in a research undertaking (Cohen and Manion and Morrison, 2007). This connection is needed in the case of unexpected results, or to validate other methods, or to go deeper into the motivations of respondents and their reasons for responding as they do.

Despite the frequent use of interviews in research, limitations have been identified in their use as a research method. One of the most controversial issues concerning the use of interviews is this of the stability of interviewees' perspectives. The question in debate is if they can be treated as reliable informants about situations (Hammersley, 2008; Schrank, 2006). However, the answer to this is that researchers conducting of qualitative research are interesting in knowing the reality as alleged by the participants. As a result, participants' accounts are considered as reliable and valuable as the outcome of their truths. Another disadvantage is that it can be prone to subjectivity and bias on the part of the interviewer. In the case of my study, the use of interviews in connection with the use of questionnaire aimed to confine this kind of disadvantages to minimum.

- **Semi-structured interviews**

Taking into consideration the advantages and disadvantages of interviews and the different types of interviews, a semi-structured interview with open-ended questions was decided. Semi-structured interviews could allow for follow-up questions for clarification, to encourage interviewees to provide more information and examples in order to achieve depth and complexity of data. Semi-structured interviews were considered to be the most suitable type of interview due to context sensitivity. They allow expansion during interviewing, new themes to be included and generally further exploration based on the interviewees' responses (Cohen *et al.*, 2000). Whilst it is possible to ask open-ended questions within a questionnaire, this can give rise to answers which are irrelevant or confusing for the researcher and subsequently make analysis difficult, potentially compromising the reliability (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2007). In contrast, an interview allows for the opportunity to clarify responses which are unclear to the interviewer and likewise, the ability to further explain questions to the interviewee should any doubt or confusion exists. This facilitates a considerably deeper understanding and knowledge of the individuals meaning in their responses (Kvale, 1996).

Alongside this, the questions and theories underpinning the interview questions were personal and specific to an individual's learning (Watts & Ebbutt, 1987). More specifically, the interviews with the teachers and parents of the 'all-day' schools chosen to participate in this research were conducted individually, while the students have been interviewed in groups because of the vast number of them.

- **Focus group interviews**

The criterion of grouping the students was their school year, as such, they were interviewed in classes. By interviewing more than one student at the time, the researcher was able to increase considerably the number and range of students participating in the research and most significantly to encourage them discussing and interacting with each other. This kind of interaction is of high importance for the researcher as it helps to understand the reasoning behind the opinions and views expressed by the participants. According to Morgan (2006) interviewing focus group members gives the researcher the opportunity to listen to their thoughts as they describe and share their experiences. Moreover, the focus groups not only provide data

on what the participants think but also why they think the way they do. Increasing the number of the participants, in the case of this research, the number of students had benefits considering the representativeness of the data. The group discussion can lead to some consensus with the members of the group agreeing and sharing common views on a specific topic. The research can be provided with a kind of collective opinion data. A group discussion can expose important different opinions and feelings amongst the group members (Denscombe, 2007).

Group interviews were used for gathering information from students for a number of reasons. One of the advantages of the focus group method is the fact that data can be provided quickly compared to face to face interviews. In the case of this particular study, students of each year with different backgrounds, gender, learning abilities and needs were interviewed in groups and produced qualitative data on beliefs and attitudes concerning the operation of their school and its effect on their lives. In addition, the group setting provided an opportunity to probe answers, clarify responses, and ask follow-up questions. There was also the advantage of stimulating ideas of participants through the interaction itself (Walden, 2006). The benefits of focus groups for research with young people is that they 'create a safe peer environment and replicate the type of small group settings that children are familiar with' while 'the peer support provided in the small group setting may also help to redress the power imbalance between adult and child that exists in one-to-one interviews' (Hennessy & Heary, 2005. p.207). Disadvantages of group interviewing, such as, the lack of privacy, the unwillingness of participants to reveal their views in a group setting, and the possibility that the feelings of all members of the group may not be equally represented in the results, have been overcome by conducting individual interviews, as well, with students of each year. In addition, to mitigate the risk that participants with strong views might dominate the group and exert influence on others, the researcher gave equal opportunities of expression to all participants. Also, the researcher being aware of pre-conceived ideas and hypotheses on the study (which emerged from the literature review) prepared and followed the same interview schedule in all focus group interviews without leading students to express specific ideas and opinions in any way.

### **3.11.6 Construction and piloting of interviews**

The exact date and time of the interviews was arranged in two phases because of the big number of the participants. The researcher went to Athens twice: four schools were visited between 17/02/09 and 20/02/09 and the other four schools between 07/04/09 to 10/04/09. The number of interviews was defined by the purposes of the interview, in this case to get in-depth, individual data, and the ability of the interviewees to provide the necessary data (Cohen *et al.*, 2000). Whilst an open approach to the interview was warranted and certainly facilitated the exploration of ideas or themes as they arose, an underlying structure, although flexible, was identified in advance and based upon the theoretical framework of this research (Denscombe, 2007). The interviews followed a predefined semi-structured interview schedule which guided themes of the conversation. The duration of each interview was approximately 45 minutes.

The researcher facilitated the interview process by motivating the participants to express their thoughts, experiences and feelings about the ‘all-day’ school and ensuring interviewees’ privacy and comfort. The approach to performing an interview was in accordance with the key characteristics of successful interviews identified by Kvale (1996). Kvale emphasized the importance of engaging with the participants allowing the interviewer to probe and explore responses and issues. As a result, a deeper understanding and valid interpretation of the responses can be archived. The language used was therefore simple, nature and non-threatening promoting a relaxed and informal atmosphere.

Special attention was given to the style of questioning. Open-ended questions were formulated since they hold numerous advantages over closed questions: they allow the interviewee to speak freely about a subject or experience and as such; enable new themes or issues to arise; present opportunities for the researcher to probe more deeply into responses; help gain a deeper understanding; clarify certain issues that may not be initially clear (Cohen *et al.* 2007). Cohen *et al.* also stated that open-ended questions may often result in some unexpected answers which can be hypothesis generating alongside hypothesis testing, enabling the research to progress to a deeper level of meaning and understanding and allowing the development of new theories.

The interviews were conducted using a tape-recorder as such they could be transcribed later. Tape-recording was chosen as opposed to note-taking because it preserves actual natural language, tone of voice, expressions that may help to acquire more elaborate understanding of the interviewees' answers; Wellington (1996) believes that tape-recording gives the interviewer freedom to concentrate entirely on the interviewee's answers and to be more flexible in contributing to the discussion; to record is the objective and data can be re-analyzed after its completion.

In this study, interviews were used as an additional data collection method with the aim of gathering data in a more flexible and straightforward way, directly. With the number of the interviewees being limited, in the case of the parents and teachers, the researcher wanted to ensure that responses from all of them will be received, something that it is not certain in the case of using only questionnaires. Teachers', parents' and students' in-depth opinions and perceptions about their experience with their every day involvement in the operation of the 'all-day' school were very important for this research. Therefore, the use of interviews was determined as one of the most appropriate methods for conducting this research.

The interview schedules were piloted with a small number of head-teachers, class and specialist teachers, parents and students identified in the close environment of the researcher. Piloting is essential when constructing questionnaires since it provides insights to ways of improving the instruments (De Vaus, 2001). It is a critical process in developing the suitable questions (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2007; Denscombe, 2007). The results of the piloting of the instruments improved the formation and clarity of the questions, modified the layout of the questionnaire and enhanced the design of the questionnaire. Appropriate adjustments were made, such as rephrasing questions, replacing unfamiliar terminologies with simpler and clearer phrases and reordering questions.

Overall, interviews were used to illuminate participants' experiences detailing the operation of the 'all-day' school. In addition, interviewing was used as a way of triangulating data and obtaining more in-depth insights on the issues examined by the questionnaires.



### **3.11.7 Interview content**

The interviews were carried out in the Greek language as all the interviewees were Greeks. The interview questions given in the appendix are an exact translation of the questions in Greek. The aim of the interviews was the collection of in-depth data for enriching the account around the ‘all-day’ school reform. Interviewing is a valuable method for exploring issues not being addressed before, since it is a way of knowledge digging (Mason, 2002a). Due to the exploratory nature of the study, the interviews were semi-structured. An interview schedule with open-ended questions was prepared (see Appendix ...). The particular format of questions is context sensitive; it permits expansions to be made, new themes to be included and further exploration to be made drawing from interviewees’ responses (Cohen et al., 2000). Following the interview schedule designed for this study interview questions were developed around thematic axes that emerged from the study’s research questions. Teachers, parents and students were interviewed after visiting the eight chosen ‘all-day’ schools from the periphery of Athens.

- **Teachers’ interviews**

At the same day, when the questionnaires were distributed and completed by the teachers, the teachers were asked whether they could take part in an interview concerning their views and feelings about the operation of the ‘all-day’ school and commenting on any possible impact of this type of school on their lives. The interviews were performed in a calm and private setting inside the ‘all-day’ schools decided by the head teacher. The interviewees were informed as to the nature of the interview, the principle aim of the research and the structure that the interview would take, as recommended by Kvale (1996). Ethical issues were discussed and addressed before commencing the interview, ensuring informed consent was achieved. All teachers who were approached showed willingness to participate in the study. According to Kvale (1996), the researcher established an atmosphere in which the participants felt safe enough to talk freely about their experiences and feelings. In order to establish rapport with each interviewee, the researcher informed participants about her similar professional experiences and background as a primary teacher at Greek schools.

- **Parents' interviews**

Parents' interviews were performed in a similar manner as teachers' interviews. The venue and time have been arranged in collaboration with the head teacher of each school. The interviews took place in a calm and private setting inside the 'all-day' school provided by the head-teacher. Parents were informed about the purpose of the research and the structure that the interview would take. Ethical issues were discussed and addressed before commencing the interview, ensuring informed consent was achieved.

- **Students' interviews**

Students' group interviews were arranged by the head teacher of each school. Group interviews were in the form of a whole-class discussion. The class teacher was present during this process, however without having any involvement. The researcher asked students one question at a time drawing from the pre-defined interview schedule. In more detail, all students' views were freely expressed before the researcher proceeded to another question. Different views, feelings and beliefs from the everyday experience of the students at the 'all-day' school emerged. In some cases the voices of students complemented each other while in other instances, they were contradicting. In both cases, interesting insights were collected students' spontaneous and lively participation.

In addition, face to face interviews were conducted with students from classes not participating in the group interview sessions. One of the criticisms of group interviews is the potential influence of some of the interviewees on other members of the group that may alter their responses (Denscombe, 2007). Therefore, face-to-face interviews helped overcome possible limitations of the group interviews by collecting the individual perspectives of the students of the 'all-day' school. Students', parent's and teacher's interviews were tape-recorded.

Interviews were conducted with head-teachers, deputy head- teachers of the afternoon zone of the 'all-day' school, teachers, parents and students. Eight interviews were conducted with the head-teacher of each participating school, eight with the deputy head- teachers of these schools, 32 with teachers (16 class teachers and 16 specialist teachers), 37 parents and 29 group-student interviews (from Year1 –Year 6) and 16 individual students (see Table 3). As Cohen et al. (2000) argue the number of

interviews is defined by the purposes of the interview, in this case to gain in-depth, individual data, and the ability of the interviewees to provide the necessary data. The choice of purposive sample assisted in the identification of people, in this case teachers, parents and students, actively participating in the process and the operation of the ‘all-day’ school.

In collaboration with the head-teacher of each school, the researcher identified the sample for the teachers’ and students’ interviews. The head-teacher, trying not to alter the smooth operation of the school indicated to the researcher those teachers available for an interview. Therefore, the interviews with the teachers were conducted either during break time or when teachers did not have any teaching responsibilities. In addition, the head-teacher suggested one class from each year (Year 1 to Year 6) to participate in group and one-to-one interviews. After a repetitive pattern of insights was observed in the collected interview data, the researcher gradually reduced the number of the participating classes from each school. Similarly, the head-teacher, the day before the researcher visited each school, invited in writing the parents to participate in the interviews. Table 3 presents the interview participants of each pilot ‘all-day’ school visited in the periphery of Attica (Athens).

**Table 3. 4 Interview participants**

No	Name of school	Head-teachers	Deputy head-teachers	Class teachers	Specialist teachers	Students classes	Students individuals	Parents
1	50 <sup>th</sup> School of Athens	1	1	2	2	6	2	6
2	89 <sup>th</sup> School of Athens	1	1	2	2	6	2	5
3	4 <sup>th</sup> School of Agion Anarguron Athens	1	1	2	2	3	2	4
4	30 <sup>th</sup> School of Athens	1	1	2	2	3	2	6
5	5 <sup>th</sup> School of Galatsiou-Athens	1	1	2	2	3	2	4

6	138 <sup>th</sup> School of Athens	1	1	2	2	3	2	4
7	1 <sup>st</sup> School of Peramatos-Piraeus	1	1	2	2	3	2	3
8	2 <sup>nd</sup> School of Mellision-Athens	1	1	2	2	2	2	5
	<b>Total</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>37</b>

### 3.11.8 Analysis of interview data

Thematic analysis was used to outline themes from the research data with the aim the socio-cultural context and social conditions that motivated the participants' accounts to be theorized (see Analysis Chapter). According to Braun and Clark (2006) thematic analysis is “*a method for identifying, analyzing and reporting patterns themes within data*” (p. 79). In this research the procedures for phenomenologically analyzing interview data were followed (Hycner, 1985):. These are: transcription; bracketing; listening to the tapes and reading the transcripts to gain a sense of the whole; crystallization of what the participants have said, retaining their literal words; clustering and determining themes from clusters; checking for accuracy with the participants; contextualization of themes; and finally a summary which describes the world of the participants, as experienced by them. The thematic analysis of interviews revealed a number of dilemmas and contradictions within and between school settings and stakeholders' views. As a result, dilemma analysis was deployed to better facilitate the interpretation of these contradictions. In the next section, dilemma analysis is explained.

#### **Dilemma analysis**

A useful way of analysing data is to compare interpretations from different participants through ‘dialogue’. Contradictions, different opinions, can provide a rich data for a deep analysis. Having selected data by a significant number of participants the researcher can start analysing the collected data by searching for contradictions such as dilemmas, disagreements, inconsistencies, tensions and conflicts of interest. In

this way the most important element of data can be easily selected from an overwhelming and massively detailed data. This way of analysis is more objective as the researcher is focused on the participants' contradictory opinions and views. This procedure of data analysis then is called dilemma analysis and is a direct application of 'dialectics' (Winter and Giddings, 2001, p.214.)

Dilemma analysis is based on the main idea that most situations, events, states of mind contain or consist of contradictions and as a result impose 'dilemmas'. 'Dilemma' situations derived by the participants' views and thoughts, beliefs and feelings are a challenge for both interpretation and response (Winter & Giddings, 2001). Dilemma analysis has been designed to solve the problem that most researchers face with regard to the vast amount of data collected. It is impossible to use all the data collected. As such, it has to be reduced in order to focus on elements which are the most significant. This kind of analysis is also very important as the researcher has the advantage of selecting not just what seems interesting but what is significant in the development of new ideas from a vast amount of data (Winter and Giddings, 2001).

With regards to the specific study, the participants are considered as co-researchers. It has been stated from the first steps of this research that one of the main aims of the particular study is to give voice to the key stakeholders of the 'all-day' school to voice their experience from their active participation in the operation of the 'all-day' school. Dilemma analysis of the participants' interpretations was chosen in contrast to content analysis which aims to 'classify' participant words putting their ideas into 'boxes' (Winter and Giddings, 2001, p.239). By employing the dilemma analysis method, the primary aim is to learn anything new and unexpected from the participants' accounts.

### **Deploying dilemma analysis for the interview data collected from teachers, students and parents**

Dilemma analysis was chosen as the method of selecting the most significant parts of data collected from teachers', students' and parents' accounts concerning the impact of the 'all-day' school on their lives. Firstly, on reading the data emphasis was placed on those statements which contradicted each other. The term contradiction refers to contradicting opinions or beliefs of the same person, the opinions and beliefs of different participants or finally to when a participant views are against a particular

statement or key policy document. For example, all the participants in this study have been asked to what degree they believe that the theoretical aims of the ‘all-day’ school, as they are defined in the policy documents of the Greek Ministry of Education, have been fulfilled. Thinking that the criteria of examining the application of the theoretical aims of the ‘all-day’ school by the three key groups of stakeholders may be different, it is obvious that different ideas, beliefs, feelings and expectations will arise from the interview data analysis. As a result, statements that are contradicted are selected from the rest of the data and indicated as issues of significance which need to be analysed and discussed. Table 3.6 summarizes the participants and the methods of data collection used in this study.

**Table 3. 5 Research participants and methods of data collection**

<b>Research Participants</b>	<b>Methods of data collection</b>
<b>Teachers</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Head teachers</li> <li>• Deputy head- teachers</li> <li>• Class teachers (Morning-afternoon zone)</li> <li>• Specialist teachers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Questionnaires</li> <li>• Interviews</li> </ul>
<b>Students</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Group interviews</li> <li>• One to one interviews</li> </ul>
<b>Parents</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Questionnaires</li> <li>• Interviews</li> </ul>

### **3. 12 Ethical issues**

For this research the following ethical steps have been taken: The study went through the process of obtaining the ethical approval of the Brunel University Research Ethics Committee and the Institute of Education of Greece in order to be able to access the interview sample in the ‘all-day’ schools in Athens. The second step that had to be undertaken was obtaining the participants’ consent. All the participants, teachers and parents, signed the consent letter (see Appendix 3) before the interview taking place. For those students participating individually in the interview a previous written consent had been received by their parents. The consent letter described the procedures of the study, promised confidentiality privacy and anonymity and informed the participants that they could withdraw from the research at any time. The purpose of the

study was clearly described (see Appendix 1). Any questions or concerns expressed by the participants were discussed before the interview conducting.

The ethical lines proposed by the British Educational Research Association guidance (2012) were adhered to throughout the study. More precisely, the participants were informed prior to providing any data that they retain the right to withdraw at anytime they wish to, even during the completion of the questionnaires or after the interview has commenced. In addition, the researcher informed all participants about the purposes, rationale and possible outcomes of the study. Moreover, the completion of the questionnaires requested personal information (i.e., personal details on years of working experience and e-mail addresses) that probably constituted an intrusion into the respondents' privacy. In order to address this issue, the researcher both orally and in writing (in the case of questionnaires) stressed her responsibility in preserving the confidentiality, anonymity and non-traceability of participants, safeguarding the data collected and using it strictly for the purposes of the study.

Ethical issues are raised throughout the process of conducting the research, during and before data collection and analysis. The ethicality of the research is heavily based upon the researcher's interpretations and abilities in implementing research. Thus, the researcher carefully planned, conducted and reported results having a broad knowledge of the content of the study and awareness about the drawbacks and ethical issues around the methods in use. In particular, the set of questions has been carefully chosen keeping in mind issues of sensitivity. During the interviews, the researcher tried to establish a comfortable atmosphere for the interviewees so that they could freely express their opinions.

The issues of access, institutional consent, informal consent, confidentiality, anonymity and power were considered and applied also to the data collected from the questionnaires. All the questionnaires collected were anonymous and treated with confidentiality. The ethical considerations which were taken into account in this research are listed below.

- Access
- Institutional consent
- Informed consent

- Confidentiality
- Anonymity
- Power

### **3.12.1 Access**

One of the first obstacles to overcome in the fieldwork aspect of research is the issue of access (Bogdan and Biklen, 2003). Informed consent lays the foundation to gain access to research site especially if the researcher's presence will be over an extended period of time. Before a researcher can be granted permission to operate within a given space, gatekeepers ought to be sufficiently informed about the research. Firstly, the study went through the process of obtaining the ethical approval of the Brunel University Research Ethics Committee and the Pedagogical Institute of Greece, a department of the Ministry of Education, in order to be able to access the interview sample in the 'all-day' schools in Athens. Letters were prepared and sent to each head-teacher of the eight 'all-day' schools. Permission for access was granted after almost one year and finally formal letters were addressed to the head-teachers seeking permission for the research.

### **3.12.2 Institutional consent**

Having received selected the eight 'all-day' schools in the periphery of Attica (Athens), the researcher made telephone contact with the head-teachers and agreed a mutually convenient date and time for a meeting. At the meeting, the researcher's credentials were verified using copies of letters from the university, researcher supervisors, and Ethics Committee. After receiving the head-teacher's clearance, the researcher was later introduced to the school's deputy head-teacher and rest teachers. A letter for the participant teachers introducing the researcher and the aims of research project was also given to the head-teacher to be read at the then upcoming staff meeting (see Appendix 2). The researcher was later formally introduced to the school's PTA (Parents Association), which gave further legitimacy to the researcher's presence in the school. A letter also introducing the researcher and the aims of the study was given to the PTA (see Appendix 1). Gaining access to the research site signaled the start of a researcher's affiliation that, by necessity required further



nurturing and development (Roth, 2005). This was especially since the researcher would have been operating in the research field for an extended period of time where issues of trust and harmonious interactions would have been crucial to the success of the research. As was previously mentioned, the researcher did not take for granted access to teachers' classrooms. As was mentioned above, in order to gain access to their classrooms for conducting the interviews, the researcher approached teachers individually and with the presence of the head-teacher and each encounter was treated as acts of re-negotiation.

Researchers sometimes act as a participant in the research site (Roth, 2005). However, in the case of this research project, the researcher having previously working as a primary teacher in different 'all-day' schools, than those chosen for the research, kept the distance needed without revealing to the participants her previous teaching experience. This was deemed necessary for the participants being able to express their feelings, perceptions and views, about the phenomenon under examination, without interfering from the researcher's involvement, in order to safeguard the purpose and integrity of the research project (Cohen et al, 2007).

### **3.12.3 Informed consent**

Gaining informed consent by the participants is one of the most crucial issues involved in research. Informed consent gives the prospective participants the opportunity to accept or decline to engage in the research with full information regarding the function, aims, objectives and potential harm that such an involvement may have (Bulmer, 2001). There are two significant aspects which emphasize on the importance of gaining informed consent. Firstly, there is the need for participants to understand and secondly to voluntarily agree and participate in the research (Isreal and Hay, 2006). The participants' right to freedom and self-determination is the premise on which informed consent rests. They also have the right to withdraw even after consent has been given. Importantly, informed consent can only be seen as such only after all the relevant information has been given to participants that would impact their decision to participate or not (Johnson and Christensen, 2008 and Cohen et al, 2000).

The researcher having to come into direct contact with children greater precautions were taken to uphold high ethical integrity of the research process. For this reason,

written consent from both the head-teachers and their parents (see Appendix 3). The researcher tried not to be alone with pupils. Group interviews with pupils conducted with the noiseless presence of their teachers.

#### **3.12.4 Confidentiality**

In this research participants were assured that the information that supplied would have been treated with the strict confidentiality. To achieve this, information in note books were stored safely and contents were not revealed to other parties. In addition, information that was word-processed was stored using security coded password to further protect data. The researcher was also aware that there are restrictions to the promise of confidentiality if terms of legal issues (Denscombe, 2002) especially since children were involved in the research. Fortunately, there was no occurrence that warranted an over-riding of the principle of confidentiality.

During the process of conducting the interviews, allocating and collecting the questionnaires, the researcher, prior to completion, gave in written and verbally the same information about the purpose of the study to all participants. In particular, during the interviews, the interviewer was careful not to influence the process with personal opinions and attitudes and by seeking answers to support the initial hypotheses. In order to avoid bias, any misunderstandings of what the interviewees were saying were followed up by questions that asked for clarifications. The formation of the questions was clear and straightforward and the interviewer was trained and aware of all possible negative aspects when conducting research.

#### **3.12.5 Anonymity**

According to Oliver (2003) anonymity is the ‘cornerstone’ of research ethics. It offers participants the chance to have their identity concealed. It is usually good practice that research material is presented in such a manner that the identity of participants (whether by name or role) is undiscoverable. However, exceptions can be made to this convention. In such a case the researcher needs to be absolutely certain that participants are in agreement with their identity being exposed and as such permission should be secured in writing (Denscombe, 2002) and preferably witnessed too.

Pseudonyms were used for all research participants and schools involved in the research so that they cannot be traced.

### **3.12.6 Power**

The issue of power in the research process is generally accepted as a fact; it is more a question of ‘how much’ rather than ‘if’ it does. According to Kinchele and Berry (2004, p. 2) research is a “power-driven act”. In essence, a researcher exercises the power to evaluate circumstances and construct an account of what is actually happening, that is, defining what is accepted as reality (Schostak and Schostak, 2008). Therefore, researchers should be aware of this and put measures in place to manage this influence that comes with operating in a research space. A researcher’s attributes (age, gender, class and race) and attitudes affect research activities (O’Leary, 2004). Not only should participants be informed in both a written and verbal manner about their rights to withdraw from the research process, but also the researcher should eliminate any pressure that makes it appear to the contrary. The researcher should in no manner exert pressure on participants that can minimize their perception that their right to withdraw is indeed genuine (Johnson and Christensen, 2008). The researcher’s experience has been one of being in a position where her opinions were valued by virtue of level and place of education. Therefore, care was taken not to abuse the sphere of influence. The next section will explain the measures that were taken to authenticate and verify research activities.

### **3.12. 7 Authentication and verification process**

Authentication (from the Greek word: *αὐθεντικός*, real or genuine) is the act of confirming the truth of an attribute of a datum or entity. This might involve confirming the identity of a person, or ensuring that a product is what its *packaging and labeling* claims to be. Authentication often involves verifying the validity of at least one form of identification. According to Lincoln and Guba (1985) a research can be authentic only if the strategies used for conducting the research are appropriate for reporting truly the participants’ ideas. More specifically and according Bryman, (2008, p.379) a research can be authentic if it represents fairly different viewpoints among members of a social setting (fairness); if research provides members with a better understanding of the social setting (ontological authenticity); if research offers members the chance to

understand better the perspectives of other members of their social situation (educative authenticity); If research motivates members to act in order to change their social setting (catalytic authenticity); If research empowers members to take the steps needed for engaging them in action (tactical authenticity).

The specific research was authentic in respect to all areas mentioned above. All the research participants encouraged to express freely their different viewpoints and feelings. They were provided with a better understanding of their situation by reflecting their own practice and context. They had also the opportunity to voice their thoughts which can empower them to make decisions regarding any possible progress of their situation in the future.

### **3. 13 Interview and questionnaire effects**

In every research project researchers encounter dilemmas which relates to the practical issues of undertaking research in its natural environments (McDonnell et al, 2000) that has the element of unpredictability and issues beyond the control of the researcher. Scott (2000) raises the criticism that research reports have a rather make-belief quality that hides from the reader the real makings of the research process. In fact, Ryen (2004, p. 219) describes the data gathering as more colourful and challenging“ than the majority of published research material. In heeding the implicit advice in this criticism, the researcher has decided to be as ‘research transparent’ as is possible in sharing a few aspects of the research project that presented a dilemma. Without doubt, research is an iterative process. The researcher as a participant observer or interviewer becomes an integral part of the data collecting techniques and may be prone to injecting bias (Cohen *et al.* 2007). During the process of conducting the interviews, allocating and collecting the questionnaires, the researcher, prior to completion, gave in written and verbally the same information about the purposes of the study to all participants. In particular, during the interviews, the interviewer was careful not to influence the process with personal opinions and attitudes and by seeking answers to support the initial hypotheses. In order to avoid bias, any misunderstandings of what the interviewees were saying were followed up by questions that asked for clarification. The formation of the questions was clear and straightforward and the interviewer was trained and aware of all possible drawbacks when conducting

research. The importance of adopting a pre-suppositionless stance was kept firmly in mind throughout the interview session.

### **3. 14 Conclusion and summary**

This chapter discussed the methodology and methods employed in the research. It presented the strengths and limitations of the two methods used to produce data required to answer the research question. Importantly, the ethical guidelines followed to safeguard the high standard of the research in keeping with gatekeeper requirement were explained. The researcher also reflected on some the challenges experienced during the research process.

## Chapter 4 - Analysis

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The preceding chapter presented the methodological design of this thesis. This chapter presents in detail the analysis of the data collected. Data was collected from semi-structure interviews with teachers, parents and students and from questionnaires distributed to teachers and parents. The data collected from the questionnaires and interviews has been thematically analysed.

### 4. 1 Semi structured interviews

Data from semi structured interview illuminate the beliefs, feelings, perceptions of the three key stakeholders, teachers, students and parents about the establishment and operation of the ‘all-day’ school reform.

#### 4.1.1 Procedure of data analysis

The procedures used for their data analysis and the underpinning assumptions should be made explicit by researchers, in order to assess the worth of the research and make comparisons and contrasts with similar research topics (Attride-Sterling, 2001). For this reason, this research attempts to make the research process as much explicit as possible. Thematic analysis was used to figure out themes from the research data. Thematic analysis is “*a method for identifying, analysing and reporting patterns themes within data*” (Braun and Clark, 2006, p. 79). In keeping with the epistemological orientation of the research, which is constructionist framework, where meanings and experiences are socially constructed - produced and reproduced, thematic analysis was suitably fitted in this framework. Thematic analysis was focussed on theorising the socio-cultural context and social conditions that motivated the participants’ account. One of the advantages of thematic analysis is its wide range of flexibility and its compatibility with both essentialist and constructionist frameworks. Due to its theoretical non-allegiance it has proved to be a rather useful tool in unpacking vast and complex data set (Braun and Clark, 2006).

Theme analysis is a qualitative research method which is discovery-oriented in nature having the ability to identify main themes (Meier et al, 2008) from textual data set at different degrees of conceptualization (Attride-Sterling, 2001). Meier et al (2008, p.291) further articulate that theme-analysis “*combines both a theme-oriented approach and a phase-oriented approach*”. In keeping with the phenomenological orientation of this research following steps were considered:

- Firstly, the scrutinizing of the text was directed by open, axial and selective coding. Firstly, open coding identifies the important codes. The ‘open coding’ required a keen examination of the data set highlighting the categories of concepts contained within. This stage sets the foundation for theoretical potentials.
- Secondly, the key categories identified at the open coding stage were interconnected. In essence, this level of coding puts as it were an axis through the previously labeled codes. The aim at this stage was to find interrelationships amongst the categories (Punch, 2009).
- Thirdly, selective coding, as the name suggests, at this stage the researcher purposefully chooses a core category, and focuses on it.

In the next section the thematical analysis of the interviews with teachers, students and parents will be presented.

#### **4.1.2 Interviews data analysis: Teachers**

The writing-up of the data analysis has been structured upon the set of themes presented in the following outlines. These are the major themes that emerged from the analysis of the teachers interviews:

##### **Themes that emerged from teachers interviews**

###### **1. Changing work patterns**

- *Power relationships between teachers*
- *Professional tensions*

###### **2. Curriculum enhancement**

- *Differences between policy and practice*
- *Lack of human resources*
- *Lack of time resources*

- *Failure of homework completion*
- *Parapaideia*<sup>8</sup>
- *Curriculum flexibility*
- *New teaching methods*

### **3. Relationships**

- *Teachers failed cooperation*
- *Students' relationships with teachers*
- *Students interaction with their peers*
- *Students and 'all-day' school*
- *Parents interaction with teachers*
  - *Working parents and 'all-day' school*
  - *Non working parents and 'all-day' school*

### **4. Organisational issues**

- *The failure of the Ministry of Education, to appoint teachers within the necessary time*
- *The failure of the Ministry of Education to provide the appropriate facilities and equipment for the 'all-day' schools*
- *The contribution and involvement of the local authorities in the operation of the 'all-day' school*
- *Head-teacher's influential role in the succession of the 'all-day' school*

### **1. Changing work patterns**

- *Power relationships between teachers*

There are obvious contradictions in teachers' accounts concerning their professional status and how they perceive their role in the operation of the 'all-day' school. As a result of the diverse perspectives and understanding of their role, a number of 'dilemmas' are posed trying to interpret and analyse their responses (Winter and Munn-Giddings, 2001, p. 239). Teachers' roles seem to be perceived differently and power relations are created amongst them depending mostly in which zone of the 'all-day' school they are working.

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<sup>8</sup> The term '*parapaideia*' is referred to the extra private tutorial lessons of the taught learning subjects in school that take place outside school and the students attend them if they want to pass the exams.



More specifically, it seems that the working conditions for the morning teachers have not changed dramatically with the introduction and operation of the ‘all-day’ school. This is something that can be noticed from what teachers are claiming especially in those ‘all-day’ schools where there is a distinction between the morning and the afternoon zone. In the ‘all-day’ schools in Greece the curriculum can be applied in two different ways. There are schools which operate by teaching the main subjects (Language, Maths, History) in the morning zone and leave the additional subjects (ICT, dance, theatre, art, sports) for the afternoon zone. For the morning zone the class teacher is responsible for teaching the main subjects while different specialist teachers are appointed to teach the afternoon subjects and activities. In the latter case, the majority of the afternoon specialist teachers are not permanent and are sent to the schools with noticeable delay, i.e. this could well be two or three months after the school programme has started. In this type of ‘all-day’ school, the role of the morning and afternoon teacher is considerably distinctive and generally the morning teacher is thought to hold a more important role. For the afternoon zone there are two types of teachers: The specialist teachers dealing with their individual subjects and the afternoon class teachers whose task is to assist and support the pupils with their homework mainly in Greek Language and Maths and any extra work. However, drawing from the teachers’ narratives, it is noticeable that tensions and conflicts arise from their everyday interactions with other teachers, students and parents. As stated:

*“The morning class-teacher has the first word. He is responsible for his class. The afternoon class-teacher has to help the students with the completion of their homework. His role is supplementary to the morning teacher. The parents will come and ask from the morning teacher to comment about students’ progress (Interview 19, MT)*

Another afternoon teacher similarly expresses his dissatisfaction and disappointment with the discriminatory treatment of his role not only by the morning teachers but by parents as well. He argued:

*“When we have the parents day, parents regard the morning teacher as the most important...They have never come to meet me and ask how their children are doing with their afternoon lessons...I believe it is something to do with the morning teachers’ message conveyed to the parents about our role in the afternoon school and not disregard as such from the parents themselves” (Interview 15 AT)*

In the cases of the ‘all-day’ schools where there is a distinctive line between the morning and the afternoon zone the working conditions for the morning class teachers

seem not to have changed as they work from 8.30 am to 12.30 maximum to 13.30. The morning zone class teachers complain when their workload has increased in those cases whereby in the absence of the afternoon specialist teachers they have to improvise to occupy the pupils or have the responsibility of spending extra time with them. Teachers' relationships are becoming very strained and frustrated when there is a need for the morning class teachers to change their daily school routine because they have the upper hand and they seem to speak from a position of power. In their majority, the morning class teachers work the same number of hours and in the same way as they worked in the mainstream schools before they had to move or before they decided to teach in an 'all-day' school. Having to work in the morning zone of the 'all-day' school and being the class teachers, their attitude is as if they had been given the right to have the first word in the schooling praxis. It can be seen that the morning class teachers perceive themselves in a professional setting which grants them with more powers in deciding things in the functioning of the 'all-day' school. As argued:

*“Working now in the morning zone of this ‘all-day’ school and until 1.30pm I feel the same as if I would work in a mainstream school... There is not any big difference... The only thing is that sometimes, because the specialist teachers have to go and teach in different schools, our work and the schedule of the lessons is affected...we have to compromise and change the school schedule for the benefit of those teachers (he means the specialist teachers) (Interv.6 MT)*

The attitudes of the morning teachers seem to be negative towards the afternoon teachers, many times unintentionally, as they consider their teaching status stable and separate themselves from the other teachers working in the afternoon zone.

*“I’m pleased to work in the morning zone as nothing has changed for me...I finish school early in the afternoon...and I am the main teacher for my class... There are problems but they have to do with the specialist teachers and mainly the afternoon teachers in general (Inter.13 MT)*

The morning teachers in some way separate themselves professionally from the afternoon zone teachers as they perceive themselves as the main teachers of the 'all-day' school having to teach the basic school subjects. There are exceptions in the way the morning teachers perceive their role in the morning zone which take the form of a more personal character and approach. It cannot be claimed that the class teachers have in their majority a clear understanding of the philosophy of the 'all-day' school incorporating unified and equally shared roles amongst its teachers. But as we see

from the following comment, there are teachers that make a substantive contribution to the smooth operation of the 'all-day' school:

*"I work in the morning zone and I feel that I have to work more... I am the deputy teacher and my responsibilities have extended to the afternoon zone ... but I'm really happy to stay for longer hours... because for me it is a matter of voluntary contribution to the school" (Interv.8 MT).*

On the other hand, in those schools which have a more unified form of operation offering the flexibility for the so-called main subjects to be equally distributed between morning and afternoon zone, it seems that there are less obvious tensions between morning and afternoon teachers. Similarly this is also the case when some of the afternoon additional subjects such as ICT, Music have been removed to the morning zone. The morning teachers have a flexible working schedule different from the one of the main stream school which allows them to work both in the morning and in the afternoon zone. The same happens for the specialist and afternoon class teachers. They can also have a flexible schedule allowing them to work both mornings and afternoons according to the needs of the school and those of the students. In this case, not only the school seems to be more unified but also the teachers of different subjects and activities give the impression that they work in a more cooperative mood when their roles are equally shared and evenly distributed. As stated:

*"I believe that the unified model of 'all-day' school is the best form of schooling. It is unfortunate that the institutionalisation of the 'all-day' school has not been expanded to the rest schools. I have worked here from the first day of its operation as an 'all-day' school where you can do so many things...And I can also argue this from my students' acceptance and enthusiasm. They don't want to leave the school even after 3.30pm. This proves that we have succeeded..." (Interv.4 MT)*

The aim of the 'all-day' school is to provide a unity in the teaching of subjects from a thematic point of view and the structuring of the school programme. This can be affected through a 'rolling' (kuliomeno) programme. In other words, there can be coherence in the teaching of different subjects and activities. At the same time, this offers the possibility of better cooperation amongst teachers, according to them, than in the case of the two-zone school. However, there are still conflicts and arguments amongst the teachers in relation to the degree of flexibility of their working status. It is very difficult for the morning class teachers to accept any compromise as they perceive their role as more significant than the others.

*“The application of the ‘rolling’ school programme is more successful in this school in comparison with the one used in the ‘all-day’ schools. The lesson programme is unified in that it connects the morning and the afternoon zone effectively... The only thing is that there are more tensions and arguments between us especially at the beginning of the school year when we have to decide and make the final school programme... The morning class teachers cannot accept easily to work late hours in the afternoon...” (Interv.11 MT)*

It is difficult for the morning teachers to accept any compromise in their cooperation with the other teachers. Contrarily, they enjoy the benefits of their teaching role in the morning zone and at the same time they claim additional ‘rights’ in the name of the authority offered to them by being morning class teachers. As stated:

*“I love teaching in the morning zone and having to teach specific subjects, for example Maths... and at the same time I have the opportunity to help my students with the Maths homework and spend more of the morning zone time on the subject. This helps to complete the prescribed syllabus in Maths more effectively and what is more significant I can concentrate better on certain chapters which I consider important for my students.” (Inter. 12MT)*

The morning teachers seem to enjoy and take advantage of the given power their title offers them as class teachers. Consequently, they have the first choice in the formation of the school programme and the teaching schedule, most importantly, as they consider their class their personal territory.

- *Professional tensions*

There are class teachers who work in the afternoon zone alongside with the specialist teachers. This was an innovation for the primary schools in Greece solving a longstanding problem which had to do with the appointment of unemployed primary teachers who had to wait for years to get a job in a primary school. Before that the working hours for primary teachers were from 8.30am maximum to 1.30pm depending on the class they were teaching. In the ‘all-day’ schools primary teachers are offered the possibility of teaching in the afternoon zone from 12.00 to 3.30pm or earlier in the morning zone if the school programme is unified and connecting the two zones. For those who decide to work in the afternoons their feelings and reactions are mixed as in most cases their role is perceived by teachers, parents and students as of secondary importance and their work as a substandard. More specifically and as teachers stated:

*“The attitude of the morning teacher towards to the afternoon teacher is not co-operative, it is demanding ‘do what I haven’t time to do in the morning’. This is not co-operation. Never is acceptable the opposite... If something*

*cannot be achieved in the afternoon zone, there is no chance to be completed in the morning zone...The afternoon teacher is obliged to help the morning teacher but rarely to be helped.” (Interv.16 MT)*

Different teachers’ roles in the ‘all-day’ school create different teaching sets. As claimed:

*“The afternoon zone is a ‘baby-sitting’ zone. This is my sense from parents’ attitude. They don’t really care what happens in the afternoon zone... They meet the morning teachers to ask about their children’s progress. The afternoon teachers are perceived as child minders” (Interv.1 AT)*

It seems a paradox, on the one hand, for the role of the afternoon teachers to be perceived as of minor importance (to a certain extent) while on the other hand the expectations from them are very high. The afternoon teachers are receiving extra pressure for helping their students mainly with their homework in Language and Maths in a ‘messy’ afternoon zone having, in most cases, to work with two and three different classes in the same classroom. At the same time, they do not seem to enjoy any gratitude from others nor personal satisfaction about their commitment. There are efforts by the most organised and well performed ‘all-day’ schools for each class to have its own afternoon class teacher but this is not always feasible. As stated:

*“Each afternoon teacher goes to two or three different classes to help the students...Because there are 11 classes and the available teachers are 6 or 7.” (Interv2. DT)*

Afternoon teachers’ jobs become stressful as they have to work under pressure with students of more than one different classes and different needs. As argued:

*“It’s impossible for the afternoon teacher to help all his students to finish their homework at school. This is partly achievable for the classes of Year 1 and 2. The amount of homework for these classes is less. For years 5 and 6, for example, students preferably finish their homework in Language and Maths but they will always have to study the rest subjects at home.” (Interv.7 AT).*

It can be clearly observed that that afternoon teachers are not only disappointed about their role being underestimated but that they also experience more anxiety because of the increased responsibilities given to them. As argued:

*“There are times I feel as an assistant teacher and not an afternoon class teacher...and my sense is confirmed from how my role is perceived from my morning colleagues and the head-teacher. My role for them is*

*supplementary...I am here to help students with their homework. I have no saying in suggesting and changing things.” (Interv.8 AT)*

The ‘all-day’ school teachers seem not to be satisfied with the way that the ‘all-day’ school operates in regard to the working circumstances of the specialist teachers. They believe that one of the main problems of the ‘all-day’ school is the delay in the appointment of the specialist teachers by the Ministry of Education. All the specialist teachers, for example, teachers of Art, Music, Drama, ICT, have temporary contracts and the procedure of the authorization and approval by the Ministry of Education of these contacts seems to take a long time. As a result, there are gaps in the school program and what is worse the students miss precious time in starting all these activities on time. In addition, the curriculum cannot be applied effectively, and all these issues cause disappointment and frustration amongst teachers. As argued:

*“I can see from my experience as a class teacher that things would be much better for all of us if the specialist teachers were permanent and not having to work under temporary contracts...Because of that there are times when I have to cover them if I am free or the students are left outside playing in the yard... What follows...it is a clash situation with arguments and conflicts between us and with the head teacher” (Interview12, Morning Teacher)*

Emphasis needs to be placed on the tensions and conflicts between teachers working in the afternoon school. But according to the teachers, the cause of all the problems mentioned above is the rushed and unplanned development and application of the concept of the ‘all-day’ school. As stated:

*The idea of the establishment and operation of the ‘all-day’ school was very good. However, since the Pedagogical Institute has abandoned the ‘all-day’ schools and they run under the solely supervision of the Ministry of Education there are serious problems with the appointment of the specialist teachers...This affects all of us...For me personally is very hard to keep a balance without tensions between morning and afternoon teachers... every time I have to ask the class teachers to cover an absent specialist teacher it is a big problem ...I cannot rely on their willingness... It’s a constant anxiety for me every time a specialist teacher is missing to find ways to keep my students creatively occupied, my teachers not disturbed in their work and the school programme running normally.” (Interview17, Head-Teacher).*

It is clear that the consequences of the shortage or the delay of the specialist teachers being sent on time to the ‘all-day’ schools affect the class teachers in the morning and the afternoon zone. According to class teachers, working in an ‘all-day’ school it is not practically an easy task. There are times, as it has been mentioned, when the morning

teachers, because of the lack of the specialist teachers, have to compromise and change their working hours in order for the school programme to be applied with less confusion for the students and teachers. This is not always feasible as not all of them are willing to cooperate and as a result confrontations and intense disagreements happen, thus impacting on the teacher relationships. As claimed:

*“There are well qualified teachers who have all the enthusiasm, any responsibility and commitment in what they do, they believe that their job is a profession as well as a vacation but they feel that they are treated unfair and without the necessary respect in what they do.” (Interview1, Morning Teacher)*

Overall, it is obvious enough that the specialist teachers play a significant role in the operation of the ‘all-day’ school as the institutionalisation of the ‘all-day’ school places huge emphasis on the additional activities and subjects for the benefit and the advantage of the students. It cannot be expected from an ‘all-day’ school to operate efficiently without the extra and supplementary activities and, hence, without enough specialist teachers. For as long the prompt appointment of the specialist teachers at the beginning of the school year is unsolved the consequences on teachers’ professional lives will remain troubling and deeply disappointing.

## **2. Curriculum enhancement**

- *Differences between policy and practice*

As observed in teachers’ responses, their first reaction about the additional learning subjects and activities was positive as they considered them necessary from a pedagogical and social point of view. The introduction of new subjects and activities was well-received by the majority of the teachers. The specialist teachers’ accounts were especially interesting, because these were based on their experience and daily interaction with the students. They believe that these extra activities are enjoyable and pleasant for the students. Students can have the opportunity to participate and enjoy extra activities at school in the afternoon zone, such as dancing, computing lessons, foreign languages, drama and sports and the parents do not have to pay for these activities privately. As indicated:

*“I’m quite young and from what I can remember as a primary student, we didn’t have the opportunity to enjoy such school activities. Children do now have the chance to do something more and different than just their lessons at school. All the activities they are involved in, such as dancing, music,*

*computers... it's a very positive innovation of the 'all-day' school." (Interview 4, Afternoon Teacher)*

Another teacher commented:

*"Living in the century of technology where computers dominate our lives, I believe that all the students from their early years should at least be computer literate... and in the 'all-day' schools extra emphasis is given on computing lessons." (Interview 13, Morning Teacher)*

These activities are beneficial for all involved, students, parents and teachers. For the students, the new activities and subjects are very helpful especially for those coming from low income families. They would, otherwise, not have had the opportunity to learn and enjoy something additional at school for free, and different from the lessons and activities that the conventional school offers them. As stated by a participant:

*"In our school, students of Year 5 and 6 have the opportunity to learn French or German, except English which is the second compulsory language for them... This is an example of extra activities that all pupils can enjoy at school without an extra cost for parents." (Inter.4 Head-teacher)*

So for the parents, the 'all-day' school covers the need to offer their children additional activities that they could not afford otherwise, according to the teachers.

For the specialist teachers, the 'all-day' school solved a major social problem, by offering employment to special subject teachers. Most of the specialist teachers, for example music, art, drama and ICT teachers have been unemployed for years but with the introduction of the 'all-day' school they have the opportunity to practise for the benefit of the students, themselves and society as a whole. As stated:

*"I'm a PE and Dance teacher working in this 'all-day' school temporarily...This is my second working year...On the one hand, I'm happy to have an hourly paid job. However, I would feel less anxious if I knew from the first day of the academic year, that I could work in a certain school, but at least I have a job for this year..." (Inter.4 AT)*

The 'all-day' school helps young teachers of different subjects to get employment, even if this is not feasible under permanent contracts and forms the best temporary solution for them.

- *Lack of human resources*



However, there are those teachers from the morning and afternoon zones who admit that the extra activities are not taught from the beginning of the academic year. They blame the Ministry of Education for that. According to the teachers the reason for the delay of teachers' contracts and appointments is not clear. This, however, causes disruption in the smooth running of the school programme and creates conflict amongst teachers due to teachers having to cover lessons they have not planned for. The normal practice would be that at the school, the specialist teachers should know from the outset about their appointment by the Ministry of Education. According to the teachers there have been cases of such a delay whereby the specialist teachers have not arrived before the end of the first term. This naturally affects the whole school operation. There are gaps between teaching hours, students being left outside in the school play-grounds, with long breaks and limited supervision by the school teachers. These are major problems that confront the teachers. As stated:

*“All the extra subjects are fine... What should be done is the improvement of the working condition for the main and specialist teachers.... The ‘all-day’ school should be ‘built’ from the beginning.” (IMT)*

The head-teachers consider the Ministry of Education responsible for the lack of funds, and the delay in appointing specialist teachers. The Ministry of Education on the other hand, found it difficult to provide schools with the necessary funding especially nowadays when the European Union has stopped subsidising this project. As expressed by a participant:

*“This is the second phase of the ‘all-day’ school’s operation...It started running under the best circumstances and perspectives...Unfortunately, in the course of time they (the Ministry of Education, the authorities) abandoned it to its fate...The first two years of its piloting operation, all the teachers needed were at school from the first academic day... The last seven years it is a declining project...What is wrong? They probably realised that the project needs much more funding than anticipated...” (Inter.3 AT)*

The introduction of new subjects is an innovation for the ‘all-day’ school as IT, Design and Technology, Drama, Art, Sports, have been added to be taught by specialist teachers appointed by the Ministry of Education, with specific and defined pedagogical aims to be achieved. Unfortunately, the delays in appointing the necessary specialist teachers, with limited funds have left the ‘all-day’ school in a failing status.

- *Lack of time resources*
  - *Failure of homework completion*

However, while all teachers agree that the new subjects and activities are necessary, they are disappointed about the limited time spent on homework. They firmly believe that what is needed is more time for the completion of homework at school, rather than the addition of extra activities in the afternoon zone. As stated:

*“We give more emphasis in helping students with their Language and Maths homework in the afternoon zone...Unfortunately, this is not always possible because most of the times students end up going home with unfinished homework. The time we have for students’ homework completion is not enough...” (Interview 6, Morning Head Teacher)*

Another teacher added that they have tried to overcome this problem by appointing a ‘homework’ teacher, at least for the first and second years. As claimed:

*“A lot of emphasis is given on students’ homework to be completed at school. In our school, we have decided to appoint an extra teacher for helping students of Years 1 and 2 with their homework... while for all other Years we have had to merge two classes together to be able to cope with the lack of teachers...”(Interview 3, Afternoon Teacher).*

Teachers understand the priority given by the ‘all-day’ school to provide students with the opportunity to complete their homework during scheduled school time. The teachers feel disappointed that the time spent for this purpose is limited. Most of the time, teachers have to work with students of two different classes, but the number of students needing help is very large. In as much as they try to cope with this demand, they are also struggling to keep the standards high. As argued:

*“We, primarily, aim for our students to return home having completed their homework at school. In our school this is feasible to some degree for Years 1, 2, 3 and 4. For the senior students this is impossible as they have more subjects to study and consequently more homework daily.” (Interview 7, Afternoon Teacher)*

Another teacher views the problem of homework completion as the major shortcoming of the ‘all-day’ school. As claimed:

*“For the students of Years 5 and 6, it is impossible for us to help them finish their homework at school, because they have homework for more than one subjects and the time spent for this purpose is not enough... This is the weakest point of the ‘all-day’ school.” (13MT)*

The problem lies in the limited time allowed according to the following statement:

*“It’s impossible for the students of year 5 and 6 to complete their homework in 40 minutes per day. The ‘all-day’ school aims at homework completion at school so that students can go home ‘leaving their school bags’ behind... This has not yet been achieved.” (Interview 3, Afternoon Teacher)*

From their daily interactions with parents, the teachers claim that the question of the unfinished homework causes concerns to parents as well as teachers. As argued:

*“There are complaints from the parents... They are not pleased with the homework because their children are not able to finish everything at school. Some parents ask for the ‘all-day’ school project to be abandoned. They wish for all these schools to close...” (Interv.17, Head-Teacher)*

However, as there is great variability in the administration across, different approaches generate different results. In the case described below by a deputy teacher, the choice of a permanent homework teacher facilitates the completion of homework:

*“Our priority is to have a consistent ‘homework’ teacher for each class in the afternoon Zone... This helps students more to finish their homework at school.” (Interview 7, Afternoon Teacher).*

Above all, teachers agree that the homework completion at school is especially beneficial for those students who need extra help. As stated:

*“The afternoon teachers try to help the students with learning difficulties or those who need extra attention and help who would otherwise not have been be able to complete their homework.” (Interview2, Head Teacher)*

The homework completion is a crucial issue for the ‘all-day’ school not only for the students but also for the parents. It saves parents from spending extra money for helping their students with private tuition, which leads to a major problem, that of *parapaideia*.

○ *Parapaideia*<sup>9</sup>

It is common practice for parents in Greece to send their children in the afternoon for additional activities, and supplementary private tutorial lessons, thus costing extra

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<sup>9</sup> The term ‘*parapaideia*’ is referred to the extra private tutorial lessons of the taught learning subjects in school that take place outside school and the students attend them if they want to pass the exams.

money. One of the social aims of the ‘all-day’ school is to help families with low income, by offering students the opportunity to enjoy all these activities and have extra help at school. Teachers, however, find themselves divided on this issue. As argued:

*“The parents are visiting the class teacher in the morning zone. They may come to see me, as I am the teacher of English in the afternoon zone, at the end of the first term when they are taking their children’s report but after that they decide to send their children to ‘phrontistirio’<sup>10</sup>... Parents’ attitude towards foreign languages lessons in the ‘all-day’ school is contempting. They rely on the ‘phrontistirio’ and believe it is the right place for their children to learn a foreign language.” (Interview 5, Afternoon Teacher).*

However, the teachers have realised the importance of offering students in the ‘all-day’ school activities and subjects, which they could enjoy rather than have extra private tuition. For this purpose, a questionnaire is sent to the parents at the beginning of the new academic year asking them which activities they consider important and should be added to the curriculum. As stated:

*“We decide about which subjects and activities can help students more by sending a questionnaire and asking the parents to report their preferences and suggestions. So we have an indication about students’ needs through their parents’ eyes (Interview 6, Morning Head Teacher).*

To break a tradition of schooling system that was well-established is a huge upheaval in the changes that are necessary to bring about a reformation in education.

- *Curriculum flexibility*

In the ‘all-day’ schools there is the innovation and flexibility for teachers to formulate the school programme according to the student needs and at the same time meeting the requirements of the curriculum. The varied subjects enhance the learning atmosphere of the students in more creative and interactive ways. According to the teachers, in some instances this has been achieved. As stated:

*“In the ‘flexible zone’ I’m happy to work with my students differently. We work as a team. The students are relaxed and can speak about their experiences, their lives, things they love to do and they learn through each other influences and situations. Drama, art, creative games help them to express and uplift themselves and learn in a different and pleasant way.” (Interview12, Morning Teacher)*

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<sup>10</sup> ‘Phrodistirio’ is called the private institution where students can go in the afternoon and have extra help in taught learning subjects at school.

Rather than being limited to traditional study time, the students have a broader experience of learning, which encourages active learning. As stated:

*“In the ‘all-day’ school we have the flexibility to organise and put into practise the school programme in a way that helps the teachers and the students. In my opinion, there is no inconsistency between the morning and the afternoon zone. Students attend lessons of the same importance during the whole day (Interview8, Morning Teacher).*

Each school sets its own rules, which challenge the ‘all day’ school education as a whole. As said:

*“The Ministry of Education defies with its formal documents of 2006 the analytical programme and curriculum for the ‘all-day’ schools. However, it becomes the school choice which subjects are of highest need. In my view this helps to promote the unique needs of the school programme and future targets for success.” (Interview17, Head-Teacher).*

Having explored the opinions of the teachers who participated in this study about the formation and application of the school programme, it became apparent that much emphasis is placed on personal teacher choices. However, each school has significant differences in its approaches which are the direct influences of the teachers within each school. As stated:

*“There is flexibility in the school programme which is decided in common by the board of teachers and of the personnel.” (10MT)*

Due to this flexibility, teachers are able to juggle and combine lesson plans, so their quality of work is of much higher standards. As suggested:

*“The new teachers spend some time to adjust themselves here...but most of them are young teachers with new ideas and much of willingness to co-operate and help...What helps them more is the flexibility of the schooling programme, the fact that they have spare time to prepare their work for the next day inside the school. The majority are newly appointed teachers that have remained in these teaching posts. This enhances stability and structure to the school, with better organisation.” (Inter.4 MT)”*

There are advantages and disadvantages with the flexibility of the curriculum application in the ‘all-day’ school, but it seems that with suitable management, it is a real innovation for the primary educational system in Greece.

- *New teaching methods*

Having the 'all-day' school's programme enriched with additional subjects and activities it is necessary for teachers to move from the traditional teaching methods to more innovative and creative, which help students to learn more happily and effectively. The new situation automatically creates conflicts amongst those who insist on applying "well-tried" teaching methods and all the others who realize the need of putting into practice new teaching methods. Again, the contradictions and conflicts are shared between the morning and afternoon teachers. The morning class teachers are used to more traditionally orientated teaching methods while the afternoon teachers, and in their majority the specialist teachers, express the need for a different teaching approach. As pointed out:

*"We have as specialist the flexibility given by the particularity of the subjects to choose those teaching methods and practices that suit to our personality and apply to the needs of our students following the curriculum aims."* (Interview13, Morning Teacher)

Another teacher emphasises the effect on the students that the application of new teaching methods have. As she claimed characteristically:

*"We try to have a different approach in teaching the afternoon zone activities and subjects. We try to escape from the traditional teaching methods and we are happy to see our students to enjoy their lessons."* (Interview1, Afternoon Teacher)

It is important for teachers to realise that the 'all-day' school does not differ from the mainstream school only because it has extended afternoon teaching hours, which are mainly spent for more enjoyable and pleasant activities for the students. The 'all-day' school should be characterised by unity in its programme and to give the same educational importance to all subjects and activities trying to encourage new teaching approaches for the benefit of the students and the teachers.

*"The additional activities and subjects are supplementary and integrated to the curriculum... However, these subjects (Art, Computers, Drama) are completely new and unusual for the students, so there is need to be taught differently to attract, on the one hand, their interest and on the other hand students to enjoy all the benefits from these extra activities."* (Interview2, Head-Teacher)

The new teaching methods should not be innovative and creative for each subject separately. The 'all-day' school aims to help students connect the knowledge gained from one subject with relevant knowledge from another subject. This is of major

importance and requires new teaching methods to be applied by each teacher and in cooperation with the teachers of different subjects in the school. However, this is hardly achievable as the teachers of the 'all-day' school perceive their roles differently and assign more importance to their personal teaching approaches and methods without realising the need to review and reconsider their professional self in a new school setting. As stated:

*"I am the music teacher for the afternoon zone. I try to do different things in the afternoon zone from what the other music teacher is doing in the morning zone...We hardly speak or discuss about the possibility to work together, share ideas and our experience for a lesson which students really enjoy... However, I would be happy if the lesson of Music could be taught as connective and unified lesson for both the zones (Interview1, Afternoon Teacher).*

A special needs teacher provided a very good account of the inability or unwillingness of teachers to adapt to a new school environment. She believes that the teachers of the 'all-day' school refuse to see education differently and the reason is that it needs a huge effort to persuade yourself that what you have studied and practiced for many years needs to be reconsidered and reformed when the times and settings change.

*"I am a teacher for children with different needs in this 'all-day' school. I would be happy to see my students to learn differently...For my students it is important to enjoy what they learn...It is also important students to learn through different but well connected subjects...I find it very frustrating and upsetting when the class teacher ignores me and they do nothing for the students with learning difficulties because they don't want to change their teaching routine... Every time I try to explain to them that in the 'all-day' school students of different abilities have more opportunities to achieve more than in a traditional school I make a new enemy. (Interview11, Morning Teacher)*

Overall, one can conclude that the relevant flexibility teachers have in the application of the school programme and in choosing the teaching methods and practices for their class, generates conflicts and confrontations between them. In the case of the 'all-day' school where a new educational system is tested, teachers seem to challenge their professional authority and autonomy and face difficulties adapting to the new school context.

### **3. Relationships**

- *Teachers failed cooperation*

The 'all-day' school emphasizes the importance of close cooperation between the morning and afternoon teachers. This is important as one of the basic aims of the 'all-day' school, is that it should operate as one unit rather than be divided into two separate zones. In this way the school operates smoothly under a single programme, and also it helps students to gain the most from their long stay at school. However, in order to achieve successful cooperation and communication between the morning and afternoon teachers, they themselves need to be willing to cooperate as currently most holding different perspectives. If cooperation is achieved between the teachers then the 'all-day' school will achieve its aims. As pointed out:

*“Things have been improved since the ‘all-day’ school has started operating... and now teachers communicate more and you can see the curriculum has been updated with more specific and clearer aims and practices.”(Interview13, Morning Teacher)*

By and large, teachers agree that they should regularly contact each other and cooperate, otherwise the aims of the 'all-day' school cannot be fulfilled. However, this was not a universal belief amongst teachers. In other words, there is a great reliance on how responsible, passionate, and enthusiastic the teacher is with the idea of working in a different type of primary school. There is not a clear formal protocol on how the morning teachers should liaise effectively with the afternoon teachers. There are issues relating to compromise and being in agreement regarding the school's operation which they must decide not only amongst themselves but also with the head-teacher. As stated:

*“When we have a school project to organise, all the teachers from the morning and afternoon zone have to work together. Otherwise, there is maybe a lack of contact amongst the teachers which also causes a lack of unified progress within the school. (Interview5, Afternoon Teacher).”*

Another teacher reveals that the communication between morning and afternoon teachers is not direct and face to face, but it is through a 'book' where the morning teacher writes what the homework is for the next day, and the afternoon teacher has to help students to finish this homework at school. As stated:

*“There is a ‘book’ where the morning teacher writes what the homework is for the next day, and the afternoon teacher is required to work with the students to complete this homework. There are times when the morning teacher doesn't see the afternoon teacher... No matter whether the other afternoon activities or subjects are connected with the morning taught subjects, the emphasis of the*



*homework has priority over the lesson to be taught. This is deficiency on the teaching programme of the school... One of the main aims of the 'all-day' school, is that the continuation and the coherence of the morning and afternoon zone should be incorporated. (Interview2, Afternoon Teacher) ”.*

As acknowledged by another teacher's comment:

*“It depends indeed on us how we communicate with each other, mainly through the ‘communication book’ (Interview7, Afternoon Teacher).*

There is also poor communication between teachers who work in the same zone. As the following example illustrates:

*“I don't know what the PE teacher is doing in the afternoon zone, we work in the same school but we do not see each other (Interview4, Morning teacher)*

Some teachers are pleased with not having to pay special attention to other subjects. As this teacher explains her main emphasis is on teaching only Language and Maths.

*“I don't know how the afternoon zone works... Compared to my previous school experience at present I work in a class where I teach ‘only language and Maths’, and all the other subjects are taught in the afternoons by other teachers... This gives me the opportunity to emphasise more on the ‘core’ lessons... It is something that is decided by the board of the teachers.” (Interview12, Morning Teacher)*

There exist a lack of balance and support between the teachers themselves, as the example below shows:

*“For me, when the morning teacher asks, from the afternoon teacher to do things that have not been completed in the morning zone, this becomes a matter of demand. The specialist teachers are always being asked to help the class teachers, and never the other way around.” (Interview16, Morning Teacher)*

The priority is in favour of the morning teachers, who have a stronger control as a whole over the students' communication with their parents. This also causes problems with the afternoon teachers who rarely get to see the parents. As stated:

*“There is a relevantly good collaboration between teachers, but there are also disagreements and problems amongst them. In this case the morning teacher has the first word as the afternoon teacher's role is particularly auxiliary and complementary. The morning teacher is responsible for its class and the person who the parents are referring to every time there is a problem.” (Interview17, Head-Teacher)*

When comparing the morning teachers and the afternoon teachers' roles, there are great differences in status. This would usually mean that there is a huge separation between the authoritative opinions which overrule the general views as a whole.

- *Students' relationships with teachers*

Teachers believe that as the students have to stay longer at school this helps them to have a more substantial relationship with their teachers. They get involved in other activities which are important for them from pedagogical and social perspective. Relationships are therefore more socially encouraged between the students and the teachers. As described:

*“Except helping my students with their lessons, I supervise them during their lunch time. It is something new to me to see them eating in the canteen and being more relaxed than when working in their classrooms. I can see another aspect of them... I am not just their teacher but it is good to also see the students share their lunch time with each other as well as their teachers.”*  
(Interview 7, Morning Teacher)

The fact that students have to spend more time in the 'all-day' school helps them to create new bonds and relationships with each other. This helps teachers gain more understanding and insight into the relationships between the students. As stated:

*“It is difficult for the younger students, for example of Year one, to stay at school for so long... It is a big change in their life... Sometimes, I feel that I am not just their teacher but a person who can help them in the little things...”*  
(Interview 12, Morning teacher)

However, a dramatic change is taking place in the structure of the Greek family life over the past years. Families no longer have the added help of child care from the extended family e.g. grand-parents. Therefore, the imposed social changes led to reformations within education. As a result, the 'all-day' school became a necessary requirement for the students following the new social changes. As stated:

*“The structure of the Greek family has changed. Today there aren't grandmothers to take care of their grandchildren while their parents work. For this reason the 'all-day' school is essentially important for students to create relationships with each other, and also the bonds they have newly formed for staying at school all day...They not only work longer but also play and interact more with their classmates. The hours at school are therefore more beneficial for the students, otherwise they would stay at home unattended watching TV”* (Interview13, Morning Teacher)

- *Students interaction with their peers*

The ‘all-day’ school with the new subjects and activities included addressing both pedagogical but also social aspects became invaluable for the early years of development. Learning, therefore, also became more enjoyable:

*“I see my students interact more creatively when I give them roles to play for the Drama practice sessions... You have the sense that drama classes bring them closer together and new relationships are formed.” (Interview 4, Afternoon Teacher)*

Another teacher observes and encourages this positive attitude for the students, which is far more rewarding in the long run of the ‘all-day’ school experience:

*“In the ‘all-day’ school students have more time to learn together, play together, eat their lunch together, and this inevitably means that more interaction will bring them closer and encourage friendships...” (Interview 10, Afternoon Teacher)*

On the other hand, there are some concerns amongst teachers regarding the students of the junior classes. They suggest that the students become more aggressive, argue with others and misbehave. Teachers think that because students stay longer at school this create difficulties in their behaviour and illustrates to some degree the changes in the family structure. As argued:

*“I have noticed in the last years, changes of schooling behaviour amongst students. There are examples of worryingly argumentative and negative forms of behaviour shown, not only by the senior students, but also by the students of the prep classes. In my opinion, this has to do with the changes in the decline of values and morals in today’s society.” (Interview 17, Head Teacher)*

Overall, it can be seen that despite any negative aspects of the ‘all-day’ school, new forms of relationships as well as different types of interaction and communication, are created amongst students and teachers.

- *Students and ‘all-day’ school*

As revealed in the responses from the teachers, the students who go and study at the ‘all-day’ school, seem to enjoy some positive aspects of the ‘all-day’ school, but at the same time, there are concerns regarding the long hours students spend at school. The perceptions and beliefs of the teachers about the effect of the all-day’ school on students lives differ from school to school, and from teacher to teacher. There are

many different factors interfering in their final judgement about the ‘all-day’ school’s influence on students’ lives. They can be as diverse as the number of schools. Those who see the institutionalization of the ‘all-day’ positively, they see their students’ attitude towards the ‘all-day’ school positively. However, they recognise the need for things to become better in the management, infrastructure and in general in the operation of the ‘all-day’ school. As stated:

*“Our students are not just pleased, they are really happy... They do enjoy their stay here, and are happily involved in the school activities. They are content during their school time.” (Interview8, Morning Teacher).*

Another teacher agrees and yet recognises the lack of resources and staff that is required:

*“Students spend their time creatively and happily here... although for the extra activities, sports, dancing, music, computing lessons, our school is lacking the extra facilities and staff.” (Interview9, Morning Teacher)*

In another school, the structure seems to have reached a better standard as a whole, and it is demonstrated through the positive effect on students’ lives:

*“In general, our students want to stay for longer at school. We have students who stay on after 3.30p in the optional afternoon zone, and they do enjoy their activities here.” (Interview4, Head Teacher)*

On the other hand, there are those teachers who are very pessimistic and criticise the impact of the ‘all-day’ school on the students, as they think that the students are becoming extremely tired, and exhausted, having to stay for long hours at school. Considering that the students of the ‘all-day’ schools use the same facilities and infrastructure of the ordinary schools, it is easy to understand why teachers complain about the failure of the ‘all-day’ school, to deliver what has been promised to their students. When the ‘all-day’ schools started operating in 1997, the schools which have been chosen to operate as pilot ‘all-day’ schools were funded by the EU in order to be facilitated with all the necessities needed for the longer stay and for education of their students. It was proven that all the changes and improvements that took place in those schools, were temporarily designed and rushed. The students may really feel tired if during the lunch time, they cannot enjoy their lunch in a proper canteen inside the school, and instead they can have a long break outside of the school yard eating a quick snack. As pointed out:

*“There are two important issues to be considered. The first is that students should have lunch in proper canteens, and secondly they should have the possibility of resting and relaxing in specially designed classrooms. Considering the long hours that they have to stay at school, students are becoming more aggressive and violent after 1.30pm as limited facilities are offered.” (Interview6, Head Teacher)*

Overall, it becomes apparent from teachers’ observations that the students could really enjoy the benefits of the ‘all-day’ school and be happier when they have to stay longer hours, if the infrastructure and the management of these schools was better planned and effectively applied.

- *Parents interaction with teachers*
  - *Working parents and ‘all-day’ school*

The teachers believe that parents view the ‘all-day’ school as a form of baby-sitting, especially during the afternoon zone. According to teachers, parents believe that the most important zone is the morning zone, because they are used to the convention of the morning school. Teachers claim that parents believe the morning teachers’ role is more important, as in their eyes they are the main teachers of the ‘all-day’ school, whilst in their eyes the afternoon teachers’ role is not as important.

*“Parents are not interested in what extent the ‘all-day’ school fulfils its pedagogical and social aims. What they do care is to leave their children in a safe place especially in the afternoon hours.” (Interview11, Morning Teacher)*

These beliefs are also evident in the way parents contact teachers to get information about their children’s progress. As they are used to consulting the morning teachers about their children progress, they totally ignore the afternoon teachers. Parents are interested in a safe environment for their children to stay so they can work or fulfill other commitments, which they may have. According to the teachers, parents consider that the traditional form of school is the norm, and they perceive the ‘all-day’ school not as a school in unity, but as a school divided into two zones offering them the option for their children to stay for longer in the afternoon zone. As stated:

*“Parents and grandparents consider a proper school to be the morning zone, because it is the school we were familiar with. The afternoon zone in their minds is a kind of ‘baby- sitting’ zone.” (Interview15, Morning Teacher)*

However, there are causes of concern regarding the length of the day, even though the long hours provide the advantage for the working mothers to continue in their careers

disregarding the children's needs. Without doubt this has created changes in society which affects strong family traditions. This inevitable change in the workforce of Greece with more mothers at work has created a dimension of great reconstruction for the schooling system. As stated:

*“The ‘all-day’ school solves a big social problem, this of the working mothers, but on the other hand the school hours for the children are exhausting.” (Interview5, Afternoon Teacher)*

Teachers agree that the all-day school addresses the need of the working parents for their children to stay for longer at school. In most of the all-day schools, lessons finish at 15:30. However, there is the option for the students to stay until 16:15 if the Teachers and Parents' board agreed. As stated:

*“The ‘all-day’ school has failed to achieve its aims. However, it provides parents with the feeling of leaving their children in a safe schooling environment for long hours. It is something important for all those parents with extra working responsibilities, and having to stay at work until late in the afternoon.” (Interview1, Morning Teacher).*

At this point it is worth clarifying that in Greece, the 'all-day' schools operating as unified schools with a compulsory school programme, and attendance for all the students from 8:30-15:30. There is the possibility for students to go to this type of schools earlier at 7:30, and have breakfast at school. They can also finish lessons at 16:30 if their parents wish to do so, and there are teachers available for these extra hours to stay with them. On the other hand, there are the conventional, mainstream primary schools operating from 8:30-13:30 (maximum hours) with the option for the students to stay late in the afternoon until 15:30, if their parents are working. In the conventional schools not all the students have to stay long hours at school, but only those whose parents work. These schools are known as primary schools with the 'creative activities' afternoon zone. The 'all-day' schools are different from the mainstream schools because of the compulsory programme that all students need to participate in. It is not an option that is offered by the school. According to teachers, the working parents do not seem to be very critical with the institutionalisation of the 'all-day' school. As stated:

*“Our school is located in a neighbourhood with people of the working class. They do support the idea and the existence of the ‘all-day’ school, because they have to work and they cannot afford to pay for the afternoon safe keeping of their children (Interview7, Morning Teacher)*

However, not all teachers view the ‘all-day’ school as an essential component of the primary education or in any way beneficial for the students due to the long hours causing unnecessary tiredness. As pointed out:

*“The students are coming to the ‘all-day’ school as their parents have no other option. In my view it is exhausting for students to stay at school so many hours. It is a kind of forced institutionalization schooling for children (Interview10, Morning Teacher)*

The concept of the ‘all-day’ school varies amongst working parents and the non-working parents.

○ ***Non working parents and ‘all-day’ school***

Parents would prefer to have the flexibility to decide if they want their children to stay in the afternoon zone. The teachers have claimed that there is a significant number of parents who would prefer the afternoon zone to be optional. In other words, this is mainly a concern of those parents, where probably one of them does not work and who had been used to sending their children to mainstream schools. We should highlight that the school hours for the ‘all-day’ school are compulsory for all students from 8:30-15:30. However, there are the traditional schools which operate as morning schools with the option to a non-compulsory afternoon zone for those parents who wish their children to stay for longer. From the teachers’ point of view:

*“In my opinion, the ‘all-day’ school is a huge advantage for the working mothers. However, from my every day interaction with the mothers I can see that there are some mothers that do not work, would prefer to bring their children home sooner.”(Interview3, Morning Teacher)*

The ‘testing’ period for the institutionalization of the ‘all-day’ school, undoubtedly must take into consideration all the different views and perceptions of those involved e.g. teachers, parents and students as a whole. This is not yet the case, and it is difficult only from the teachers’ point of view to conclude whether they believe in the expansion of the ‘all-day’ school, as a new form of school, or whether these schools should be abolished. What is clear, however, from teachers’ opinions is the need for reformation of the ‘all-day’ school, as they believe they have learnt many lessons from its operation, and the piloting of the ‘all-day’ school. There has already been a period of 10 years since this new type of schooling started. The adjustments have been huge for the teachers, students and parents. Teachers strongly believe that the ‘all-day’ school has to continue operating for the benefit of all involved. They also believe that

the primary schools in Greece need to be reformed in general, considering the lessons learned by the piloting of the ‘all-day’ schools. As stated about a school that has managed to overcome obstacles and obtained a balanced well structured learning environment:

*“Our school is very popular. I’m the person in charge for students’ enrolments each year and we have a long waiting list from early in the May, as parents from not only our periphery but from quite distant areas wish for their children to come here.” (Interview8, Morning Teacher)*

Teachers agree that this school has achieved a high reputation amongst parents who are eager to send their children there:

*“We have the approval and support from the parents in our aims and achievements of our school. We have the support of parents which maintains the high standard of the school, and therefore the effort is combined with the family and school life for our students.” (Interview8, Morning Teacher)*

The ‘all-day’ school could be well organised from the very beginning of the school year. This would be much appreciated by the parents according to the teachers. However, teachers believe that parents do not yet trust and respect the ‘all-day’ school. This is due to disappointment in general because the changes are still in working progress. A well organised ‘all-day’ school could persuade the working parents to send their children to this type of school, instead of having to send them to private schools.

#### **4. Organisational issues**

- *The failure of the Ministry of Education, to appoint teachers within the necessary time*

Nowadays, the ‘all-day’ schools run the second phase of their operation, without any funding from the EU, and with the solely supervision and funding of the Ministry of Education. According to the teachers at the ‘all-day’ schools there is a decline in positive progress.

However, the new government wants to expand the ‘all-day’ school and 800 new ‘opened’ ‘all-day’ schools are scheduled to operate across Greece as stated in the Government Gazette 2011. So, the government sees the need to expand the ‘all-day’ school, but according to the teachers the ‘all-day’ school needs to be reformed based on the experience gained from its operation up to-date. According to teachers the reality is, that the ‘all-day’ schools seem to be in decline, due to the insufficient and



delayed number of the specialist teachers, which are needed to work in these schools, and also due to the inappropriate facilities and equipment available to the ‘all-day’ schools. From the 8 ‘all-day’ schools I have visited the 6 operate as double schools, which means that in the same building two different schools operate. There are huge difficulties for teachers and students alike, in relation with overcrowded classes, limited play grounds, and facilities. As stated:

*“I work in the ‘all-day’ school from the first day of its operation. When the ‘all-day’ school started as a new form of schooling in the Primary Education in 1999 it was like a ‘bolt from the blue’. We were told that our school was chosen to operate from September as an ‘all-day’ school, amongst the other 28 in the whole country. We had no idea what ‘all-day’ school meant... We had some seminars just to announce to us that this was a new type of innovating school where students should learn through the ‘experiential learning’ and to re-evaluate all that we had learnt throughout our teaching profession..”.*(Interview14, Morning Teacher)

The situation, in which the ‘all-day’ school now exists and operates, is problematic due to the disorganised and unprofessional state of these schools. For some schools the success is the result of the willingness, the enthusiasm and also of the personal effort and commitment of those individuals such as, head-teachers, teachers and specialist teachers, who believe in the establishment, the expansion and reformation of the ‘all-day’ school. Some teachers strongly believe that the ‘all-day’ school is necessary as a new form of schooling for the advancement and improvement of students’, teachers’ and parents’ lives as a whole. However, teachers believe that the Ministry of Education is responsible for not appointing the specialist teachers on time and therefore the schools are not prepared and cannot operate with clear aims from the beginning of the new academic year. As stated:

*“We give to the students their school timetable from the first day the school opens. The timetable includes all the subjects and activities that should be taught according to the curriculum. The problem starts from the second day of the new academic year as the specialist teachers are not at school. The last two years the specialist teachers started working at school in February. This year for first time we had those teachers on the 1<sup>st</sup> of December. The students have music, drama, computers, for example, in their timetable but they don’t have the specialist teacher. Every time at the end of the academic year we send letters to the authorities and the next year the problem remains. How can a school operate without teachers? (Interview2, Afternoon Teacher)*

While the situation is unacceptable, the complete chaos of the authorities responsible for the allocation of teachers across subjects and the lack of provision worsen the situation.

- *The failure of the Ministry of Education to provide the appropriate facilities and equipment for the 'all-day' schools*

Teachers claim that suitable facilities, resources and school equipment are necessary for the 'all-day' schools to operate. All 'all-day' schools use the facilities used by the mainstream primary schools. When 'all-day' schools were first introduced new facilities and classroom refurbishment took place. New white boards, projectors, extra books and schooling material were made available to teachers and students. It became apparent that for the students who had to stay and work extra hours inside the school, needed extra provision of facilities. Teachers claim that in theory the provision of the 'all-day' school is beneficial. However, they strongly believe that the 'all-day' schools have failed to provide the additional working areas for the specialist subjects, and activities such as art, music, dancing, and drama, due to the lack of the necessary space, and infrastructure needed for these schools. As a music teacher of the afternoon zone stated:

*“To teach dancing outside, somewhere in the school yard, is not an easy task. Even if the assembly hall is available, which is not the appropriate place for the dance lessons, it is also very difficult to squeeze a class of 30 students in a classroom. The students are very enthusiastic with this activity, but for me as a teacher it's extremely difficult to do my lesson due to the lack of space without the provision of a properly delegated dance-drama room.”*  
(Interview4, Afternoon Teacher)

An English teacher also added:

*“How can I teach English properly while I need extra books, a video, a CD player, which the school does not provide, or even when I need some photocopies from books that I buy, and the photocopier does not work?”*(Interview5, Afternoon Teacher)

As it can be seen, in addition to the failure of the authorities to appoint the specialist teachers on time for the beginning of the academic year, the other main problem, according to the teachers, is the inadequate school facilities. Teachers argue that because of this problem, some of the initial proposed subjects had to be abandoned. As stated:

*“Activities such as ‘Music and movement’, ‘Traditional Greek dancing’, ‘Art and Design’ gradually had to be abandoned.” (Interview3, Afternoon Teacher)*

The last seven years the ‘all-day’ school, seems from the teachers’ point of view to be in decline due to lack of adequate funding, necessary facilities and insufficient number of specialist teachers who are not appointed on time.

Teachers are frequently expressing their disappointment. All the promises and enthusiasm of the first years have slowly disappeared. They believe that it is a declining concept which needs immediate reformation to make it viable. Teachers complain about the funds, which are available for the ‘all-day’ school, and also the need to be seen as a school which addresses different needs for different students. For example, they complain about the buildings and the unacceptable or not existent facilities for the schools, the need of creation of a proper canteen, where the students can have school meals or their packed lunch. Teachers argue that the ‘all-day’ school has failed to achieve its aims. This therefore is an impediment in achieving a positive outlook for both parents and teachers, with the children, as the changes of the ‘all-day’ schools do not seem to lead to any positive changes in the future. As a teacher claimed:

*“The ‘all-day’ school started differently, with theoretical targets that have been proven in the course of time that they have never been placed into practice (Interview3, Morning Teachers)*

While another teacher added:

*“These schools are offering scrappy education. They should be reconstructed and rebuilt from the beginning.” (Interview1, Morning Teachers)*

While some teachers are positive and hopeful about the institutionalisation of the ‘all-day’ school, there are those who seem to be indifferent and uncertain with the idea of the expansion of the ‘all-day’ school. As argued:

*“I am really undecided whether or not the ‘all-day’ school should become the future form of Primary education in Greece. From my experience I feel that asphyxiates and exhausts the students.” (Interview11, Morning Teacher)*

However, other teachers have the point of view, that despite any changes, extra school time simply means more babysitting. As stated:

*“There was a lot of criticism by the academics and the trade unionists from the beginning that the ‘all-day’ school would end up as a baby-sitting institution*

*(they mean in the afternoon zone). This is because it was obvious the refusal of the teachers to accept any reform and change in their job routine had its negative effect.” Interview16, Morning Teacher).*

Another teacher commented:

*“The ‘all-day’ school is a frustrated project, because in Greece to foresee the aspects of the project that are both the negative and the positive. This requires much valuation and planning which necessary. However, there are consequences of inevitable disaster due to the lack of funds and hurried and impatient planning as a whole.”(Interview16, Morning Teacher)*

The Ministry of Education, according to teachers, has not provided enough funding for the changes required for the ‘all-day’ schools and for the specialist teachers, without whom the school cannot operate. As a whole, teachers have not had their views respected or listened to. There are still negative attitudes, both for and against the advancement of the ‘all-day’ school.

- *The contribution and involvement of the local authorities in the operation of the ‘all-day’ school*

This research took place in eight different ‘all-day’ schools in the wider area of Athens. Only in one school, according to teachers’ accounts, the local authority seems to play an energetic and vital role in the successful operation of this school. As stated:

*“In particular, the municipal council are people who are interested in Education, in our school. They support our efforts and they are next to us every time we need them (Interview4, Head-Teacher)*

This particular school is well supported according to its head-teacher. This has a great impact positively for the school ethos. Another teacher commenting on the same issue added:

*“The ‘all-day’ school is a necessary form of schooling for the Primary Education nowadays. But it is a matter of a harmonious and close collaboration with all the social factors involved, and mostly it is a matter of political decisions, for measures to be taken for things to become better in the Primary Education.” (Interview1, Morning Teacher).*

The collaboration of all these factors has a positive effect on the operation of this specific school.

- *Head-teacher’s influential role in the succession of the ‘all-day’ school*

In most of the ‘all-day’ schools the person in charge, is the deputy head-teacher but in the papers it is the head-teacher. The deputy head –teacher is appointed by the teachers’ board of each ‘all-day’ school. It has to do with within-school decision and this is related to the ‘revolutionary possibility’ offered by the ‘all-day’ school, to facilitate an independent operation and optional curriculum, decided by the Teachers’ and Parents’ board of every school. As stated:

*“It is common the deputy head-teacher to be responsible for the afternoon zone if he agrees, because most of the times nobody wants extra responsibilities. In that case one of the teachers is appointed as the person in charge, depending upon some criteria as they are defined by the formal documents of the Ministry of Education. There is also the possibility for this person to receive an extra allowance as a reward.” (Interview16, Morning Teacher)*

A deputy teacher who is the person in charge for the afternoon zone of the ‘all-day’ schools also commented on his difficult role:

*“One of the main needs of the ‘all-day’ school is the creation of indoors gyms, extra classrooms, music, dance classrooms, and proper dining rooms and canteens where the students can have their lunch properly. What happens today in the ‘all- day’ schools is very disappointing. I find it very frustrating to see my students bring their food from home, and then they have to eat their lunch outside in the school grounds...And this reflects one aspect of the disorganisation that exist within our school... It’s very sad for me that I am unable to help.” (Interview3, Afternoon Teacher).*

However, despite all the problems and negativity with some teachers, there are those who have a positive view for the future of the ‘all-day’ school. As this head-teacher commented:

*“The ‘all-day’ school is the school of the future, because it is a school which came to serve parents’ needs and its curriculum helps students to learn in a creative and pleasant way. Education is not something static; it must be under reconsideration and reformation every time the social conditions change.” (Interview2, Head Teacher)*

This teacher noted that time has passed with small changes taking place, yet hoped that eventually things will progress and achieve high standards. These changes may include the Ministry of Education, the local authorities and teachers working together with parents. As stated:

*“The ‘all-day’ school is the school which many parents trusted and hoped that it would solve many social and educational problems...While it is obvious that the Ministry of Education and the other authorities have failed to provide the*

*expected support and management after 10 years of its operation, I believe that the head-teacher with the contribution of the school staff, can make the difference. The 'all-day' school remains a project under way after so many years. (Interview16, Morning Teacher)*

However, with along optimistic expectations, there exists a strong negative outlook:

*"Nowadays the problems it is not only that the 'all-day' schools have been abandoned in their destiny but moreover there is not any prospect of any kind of support or willingness for things to change and become better." (Interview18, Head-Teacher).*

The 'all-day' school in theory as a concept seems like a good educational reform for the primary education in Greece, but unfortunately it has not been planned and applied correctly. We can say that if the 'all-day' school is to be reformed then there needs to be, according to the teachers perspectives, a new start as a whole, as the existing operation is evidently unsuccessful.

#### **4.1.3 Interview data analysis: Students**

The main aim of the 'all-day' school was the establishment and operation of a new form of school, which was expected to fulfil the needs of the students, teachers and parents in a changing society. These new needs emerged from the catalytic changes occurring in the Greek society, not only as a new member of the European Union in 1981, but also as a member of the world society which constantly and rapidly changes.

The experience of the past for changing societies in a changing world has shown that a country which wants to adjust its citizens in a new form of living is ready to cope with the demands of the globalization and has to decide to put into practice a series of social and educational reformations. The 'all-day' school was a necessity, a first step of reforming the primary education in Greece, with the purpose of helping and preparing the students, firstly, to become the future Greek citizens of a new global society, secondly to help the teachers adjust to the new needs of their profession, and the parents to cope with the new social and working circumstances. This would be feasible with the enhancement of the curriculum with new subjects and activities, the reformation of the school buildings into improved and well resourced school environments, where well trained teachers would be ready to put into practice new teaching methods for the best benefit for their students.

The ‘all-day’ school has two significant roles to play in relation to its students: The role of providing and covering the pedagogical needs of the students, and that of preparing them to live in a changing society. The writing-up of the data analysis has been structured upon the set of themes presented in the following outlines. These are the major themes that emerged from the analysis of the students interviews:

## **Major themes**

### **1. Children’s perceptions about aspects of their school experience**

- *Poor human resources*
- *Poor facilities*
- *Relationships*
- *The impact of the longer school day*

### **2. Planned curriculum not effectively resourced**

- *Students have no beneficial substitute activities*
- *Unsuccessful homework completion*

### **3. Student-teacher relationships**

### **4. Students’ perceptions of the effects of the longer school day on them**

- *Long school day for students in poorly equipped schools*
- *Long school day and students’ relationships*

In the next section data collected from interviews with students were processed using thematic analysis. Quotes taken from interviews conducted in Greek were translated in English initially and then deployed in the analysis. The analysed group interviews with students are 21 in total. The children’s perceptions about the aspects of their school experience with respect to poor human resources, poor facilities, relationships, and the impact of the longer school day will be presented as follows.

## 1. Children's perceptions about aspects of their school experience

- *Poor human resources*

Analysing the data from the interviews with students going to 'all-day' schools in Athens, it was interesting to hear them voicing their thoughts about the impact of the 'all-day' school in their lives. It was really motivating to hear them commenting on the new aspects and prospects of the 'all-day' school, as they are mainly the receivers and those whom must practice and apply the innovations and changes introduced by the 'all-day' school. Again there were contradictions in students' accounts concerning the effect of the 'all-day' school in their lives. According to the students, the 'all-day' school, in general, has affected their lives and because of their unfulfilled expectations there are negative comments as well as positive. As stated:

*"I like my school, because it is good, we learn lots of things, and the teachers are really nice with us...but it is not fair when we don't have a music teacher or an art teacher in the afternoon zone and instead we are left outside playing. We may have these teachers after Christmas or we do something different from what we had been promised." (int.4 Y6)*

Another student had also expressed his contradicting feelings about the 'all-day' school:

*"With the morning teacher we learn lots of things about History which is my favourite subject...with the afternoon teacher we have activities that I had never had before and always had hoped to do. We do computers lesson, dancing and extra sports but we never have those teachers from the first day we start lessons...So, until the specialist teachers come to our school, we have to stay with the afternoon teacher who helps us with our homework... most of the times we have to share the same teacher with another class " (int.14 Y3)*

For the students of the 'all-day' school it is the first time that they can share their school lives with different teachers. It is a new experience for them as now they have more than one teacher and not only the class teacher, who used to be the most important teacher in their school life. From what students say, it can be seen that the morning teacher, the class teacher, who is appointed from the beginning of the new school year, plays the most significant role in the school life, as they are the permanent teachers, whom they rely on. There is a sense of uncertainty and dissatisfaction revealed in students' sayings in relation to the afternoon teachers. There is no doubt that they acknowledge and understand the beneficial influence of the afternoon zone, with the new activities and subjects. However, students are not



pleased with the delays in the appointment of the specialist teachers, and the gaps in the school programme which in the end results in more distress and disruption in their school lives. As stated:

*“The IT teacher teaches us how to work and use the computer. Computing is my favourite lesson, because I learn so many things... We play games and do funny things... I have learnt how to draw on the computer...But this year we started computing lessons in November because we didn’t have our teacher from the beginning.” (int.13 Y4)*

- *Poor facilities*

The students had much to say about the unacceptable facilities and infrastructure of their ‘all-day’ schools. Students complained a lot about the lack of appropriate and basic facilities, and voiced the need for changes and improvements in their classrooms and in their schools in general. As stated:

*“We need new equipment... For example, we have this old white board. Also, we always have to switch the lights on, because it is too dark in this classroom.”(int.8 Y6)*

Another student commented regarding the school building and the lack of maintenance:

*“There is a leak coming from the radiators for months. Nobody seems to do anything about it...and during the winter we are freezing...” (int.8 Y6)*

While the maintenance of the ‘all-day’ schools seems to be a serious problem, the students also noticed that the basic day to day running of the school premises and the issues of hygiene are inappropriate. As stated:

*“The toilets are dirty... I would like my school to be cleaner.” (Interv.1 Y5)*

Another student added:

*“I want my school to be cleaner and the children not to throw rubbish on the floor. And I want the walls to be painted... The toilets not are clean and the windows are broken...I want to change things that have to do with the building... I want my school to have flowers and trees in the surrounding grounds...My school looks like a prison” (int.2 Y4)*

The ‘all-day’ schools lack appropriate premises as they use the buildings of the previous mainstream schools and in some cases have to share the school premises with another ‘all-day’ school, or mainstream school. When the first ‘all-day’ schools started

operating, a renovation of the existing mainstream schools had to take place. Some improvements had to be made as funding was available by the European Union. Now the 'all-day' schools are in their second phase of operation, there is no more funding, and have been abandoned with appalling facilities. In addition there is disappointment for the students with regard to the outside school grounds. There are very compact and also there is hardly any room for playing sports. As stated:

*“The schoolyard is not big enough for so many students...there are two schools in the same building.” (int.16 Y4)*

Another student also complained:

*“I would like to have more space, because the school grounds are too small and there isn't enough room for us to play...I want our school to have grass and flowers.” (int.2 Y4)*

In another school a student referred to the aesthetically sad appearance of their school grounds:

*“I would like to change the colour of the walls in the schoolyard...we could colour and make some nice pictures on them during our Art lessons...” (int.4 Y6)*

Comments as the following represent vividly the students' feelings about their school's poor facilities and premises:

*“When you get adjusted to the school, you feel well... but, the first days, I felt like I was imprisoned...It is very different from the school I used to go to, when I finished early in the afternoon...” (int.18 Y5)*

While the school play grounds are unsuitable for so many students to enjoy their sports activities or just to relax during the break, there are also concerns regarding the status of their classrooms:

*“I would like to change the classrooms, to make them bigger... Also, we should have more classrooms in the school...” (int.4 Y6)*

Other students criticized the poor condition of the classrooms, where they spend almost their whole school day. The 'all-day' school's premises and classrooms fail to provide an environment, which would inspire and motivate the students to stay and work effectively for long hours. Students should have all the comforts and extra relaxing space inside their classrooms, for the times needed to be occupied with more creative and artistic subjects. Students are, therefore, confined in classrooms that are

not appropriately designed to accommodate the needs of a class of thirty pupils. Contrary to the regulations and inspirations of the ‘all-day’ school, the classrooms have been abandoned and look like blank boxes. As pointed out:

*“I would like my classroom to have nice pictures on the walls and be clean with some space free to rest and relax when we draw or read a book.” (int.7 Y1)*

The lack of resources and school equipment is a current problem in the ‘all-day’ school. At least students are provided with their own books, as an additional problem for them is the lack of well resourced school libraries where they can study. As stated:

*“We have a small library where we go very rarely... If we want to study or find extra information we have to work at home...but teachers ask us to bring to school any books we no longer need at home.” (Int.13 Y4)*

In another school a student added:

*“I would like to have projectors which work properly, because we can’t watch a movie.” (int.4 Y6)*

What is also of high importance and merits attention is the absence of particular classrooms for their specialist subjects and activities. For example, Music, Art, Dance and ICT are taught in the same classrooms. In the ‘all-day’ schools, it is very common that the standard classrooms are used also for these special subjects, and with the additional absence of special instruments and resources. As stated:

*“We don’t have music hall and music instruments for the Music lessons... We do Music in our classroom learning some new songs when we have a school celebration or extra event (national days or religious celebrations)” (int.15 Y5)*

In addition, the ‘all-day’ schools, in their majority, do not have indoor gyms or extra courts for the students to participate in different sports. The schoolyard is the only place where any sport takes place. As pointed out:

*“Some other schools have a gym, but we don’t have one” (int. 1 Y5)*

Another student added:

*“I would like a football court with grass, because we can only play basketball in the schoolyard, where we fall down and get injured.” (int.4 Y6)*

However, a little improvement in the schools makes a big difference in students' attitudes. As stated:

*“Now I like my school more, because basketball and football courts were added.” (Int.11 Y3)*

On the other hand, while the school gives emphasis to environmental issues, so that students can become more environmentally conscious, there exists a discrepancy between what is said and what actually happens. As argued:

*“I would like my school to have recycling bins...We have learnt that we must protect our environment and start recycling...” (int.2 Y4)*

Another worrying matter is this of the lack of proper canteens in the 'all-day' schools, where students can eat their lunch in acceptable conditions. What has happened, in all these schools, is that they use a big classroom as a dining room. Some tables and extra chairs have been added, with the 'extra' provision of one or two microwaves for the food to be heated for those students who wish so. However, there is a small canteen inside the school, where students can buy a snack but that is all. Students are provided with lunch from home or they can eat just a snack from the school's canteen. The afternoon teacher supervises the students during their lunch which last about 20-30 minutes. As stated:

*“We could have at least a bench, because some children have to sit down on the floor or stand up when they eat.” (int.7 Y1)*

Students have voiced their concerns about the status of the buildings and the premises where their schools are operating. There is lack of extra classrooms, furniture, equipment which are necessary to make a difference in a learning environment. Students might not be inspired to learn as a result of an unattractive school environment.

## **2. Planned curriculum not effectively resourced**

- *Students have no beneficial substitute activities*

Students seem to be enthusiastic and to enjoy the new school subjects and activities, when these new activities are really placed into practice, and there is the possibility for them to do these activities, as their school programme provides. They have the opportunity to learn subjects such as ICT and to enjoy all new activities by

participating in Drama, Music, Art classes and sports, mainly in the afternoon zone. As stated:

*“When my brother was coming to this school, students didn’t have the subjects we do and they didn’t study from the same books we study.” (int.1 Y5)*

Another student commented on the benefit of computing lessons:

*“I like the IT lessons, because we play and learn in a pleasant way.” (int.1 Y5)*

Students realise and enjoy the benefits of the additional subjects as they have the opportunity, when this is feasible, to escape from their daily school routine, and enrich their school life with new subjects which seem to be, according to the students, very creative and interesting. As stated:

*“My favourite subjects are Geography, History and Maths from the morning zone ... but I’m happy to have ICT and Drama in the afternoon zone because I learn new things and I enjoy learning.” (int.4 Y6)*

The benefits of the new activities seem to be multidimensional as pointed out:

*“I like the ‘all day’ school, because we can do things that we cannot do at home. For example, we have Music, Arts, Drama lessons and we can spend more time doing these lessons with our friends.” (int.6 Y5)*

Another student added:

*“I like the afternoon zone, because there are some activities, which we don’t have during the morning zone, such as IT, Arts, Drama lesson and Music...These are my favourite lessons.” (int.6 Y5)*

There were students who, the addition of just one new favourite activity claimed that this was enough to like their school. As stated:

*“I like the ‘all-day’ school, because we have Sports in the afternoon” (int.11 Y3)*

For another student having Dance at school makes a big difference in their lives. As stated:

*“I like the most the Dance lessons in my school, because we are taught lots of things about dance and we have fun.” (int.11 Y3)*

Even in these cases, when the school is unable to offer to its students all the activities that it has promised, students are pleased at least to participate in any available activity during the afternoon zone. As pointed out:

*“If there is nothing to do in the afternoon, we have athletics and play games outside with the PE teacher...I don't mind if we share the same teacher with another class... I'm happy instead of staying in the class and do some drawings, because we cannot do anything else, for example, to go and play any sport outside” (int.5 Y4)*

From what students say it seems that the enhancement of the ‘all-day’ school curriculum with all these activities has a positive effect on students’ school life.

- *Unsuccessful homework completion*

The completion of the homework at school and particularly in the afternoon zone has been prioritised by the constitution and theoretical background of the ‘all-day’ school. Students are expected to go home with their homework finished at school. At least for the lessons of Language and Maths the homework completion is necessary to take place at school with the help of the afternoon class teacher who is appointed mainly for this purpose. From students accounts this is not possible. There are several reasons, but the main problem seems to be the delay of the appointment of the afternoon specialist teachers on the one hand and, on the other, the shortage of primary teachers needed to help students with their homework in the afternoon zone. The problem with the inadequate number of teachers, who are sent to work in the afternoon zone, affects the operation of the ‘all-day’ school badly, causing a disorganised situation and substandard function of the school as a whole. The curriculum of the ‘all-day’ school defines and makes clear that one to two hours per day, depending on the class level, should be spent on the preparation and completion of the homework at school. However, this is not the case.

From what students claimed the homework completion remains a controversial issue. It seems that the ‘all-day’ school has failed to achieve this target. This seems to have affected mainly the senior students as they have more subjects to study, they are given more homework and most of the times they have to share the same afternoon teacher with another class. The students of Year 1 and Year 2 have been given the priority of having their own afternoon teacher to help them with the completion of their homework. As claimed:

*“In general, you can’t finish your homework if you don’t hurry up.” (Int.1 Y5)*

The school homework seems to be excessive as stated:

*“On Mondays, Tuesdays and Wednesdays we have Greek homework to do and the teacher gives us lots of work to do. We don’t have time to study.” (int.1 Y5)*

Another student complained of the difficulty to sustain the strained study of all subjects:

*“I sometimes like the school, but sometimes I don’t like it. I like that we are able to learn things that will help us in our life and that’s why we do all these subjects. What I don’t like is that we sometimes find it difficult to study all of them.” (int1 Y5)*

Due to lack of time and failure to set realistic targets there is always unfinished work.

As stated:

*“We always have unfinished homework because there is not enough time to complete it at school.” (int.5 Y4)*

Unexpected changes happen, that leave the students quite disappointed as stated:

*“There isn’t a day that we have a two-hours-homework study with the afternoon teacher. For example, in the afternoon zone, today, we have Art and then the teacher who usually helps us with the homework, today, she isn’t here because she had to replace another teacher in the morning zone – and instead we were told that we’ll do Dance.” (int.7 Y1)*

Because of overcrowded classrooms with students of different classes to work together trying to complete their homework, there is the problem of different class abilities.

Therefore, students find it very difficult to receive individualised help.

*“We do very few things in the afternoon zone, because some students don’t want to do their homework, they speak with each other and we can’t finish our homework.” (int.6 Y5)*

Another important issue concerning the completion of homework is that there is no consistency in the homework schedule. As claimed:

*“Sometimes we don’t finish our homework... we don’t have time, because the morning teacher sometimes gives us lots of things to do. But, sometimes she doesn’t.” (int.7 Y1)*

It can be assumed that when the school programme is followed, students are able to complete their homework. However, this is not always the case, as unpredictable factors disturb the school programme. As stated:

*“It depends on how much time we are given. If we have two hours for homework preparation, we can finish it. If we don’t have two hours, we can’t finish it.” (int.7 Y1)*

While in some schools there are times when students can complete their homework, there are schools where the situation with the way that the afternoon zone works is completely chaotic. As stated:

*“I have homework left for home...almost every day...For some of the homework we have even to study History and the Religious Education at home...” (int2 Y4)*

There is always extra homework to do at home. As pointed out:

*“I sometimes finish my homework here, and sometimes I have to do extra work at home.” (int.3 Y2)*

As noted, even if the homework which is given by the morning teacher is completed at school, there are times when an unreasonable extra homework is given by the afternoon teacher. As pointed out:

*“Sometimes we do everything here (at school) and sometimes the afternoon teacher gives us more work for home.” (int.3 Y2)*

It is also important to mention that because of the differences in the application of the school programme across schools, when the school programme planning does not consider students needs, there are additional problems for the students with the homework completion. This happens, in those cases when the school programme is planned according to the teachers available. As stated:

*“Sometimes we have the time to finish everything here, but when the homework preparation is planned for the last school hour, we don’t have time.” (int.3 Y2)*

However, it can be seen that teachers try to prioritise the pieces of homework that they think students are not able to do on their own at home. As stated:

*“I believe... that we do here all the homework we have in writing... and at home we have to study the most important subjects, such as History, Geography which we can study without help... we do the homework for subjects that we are not able to do by ourselves at home.” (int.4 Y6)*



Another student commented on the shortage of time allowed for homework completion:

*“We have one hour every day for homework preparation...This is not enough to finish everything...I normally do my homework at school. There are days that I don’t manage to finish it, because we have more homework to do or I don’t have enough time.” (int.5 Y4)*

However, not the same policy is applied in all the ‘all-day’ schools about the way they organise homework completion. In other schools they try to help students to finish the difficult part of the homework, while in others students start with the easy homework and spend more time with the completion of the difficult and more complicating homework at home. As stated:

*“I find at home all the information the teacher asks us to find. If we don’t have lots of things to do, I finish my homework at school. If there is a difficult exercise, we have to do it at home.” (int.5 Y4)*

Students’ accounts regarding their homework were the same in all the ‘all-day’ schools considered in this study. They voiced their concerns about the insufficient time which is given and spent on their homework and they assigned responsibility to their school for the way they help their students with their homework. As stated:

*“I rarely finish my homework at school, because we have only one hour, which is not enough...We only finish the written homework, such as Greek and Maths... sometimes we don’t have enough time even for these subjects.” (int.8 Y6)*

However, while students need more help with their homework, because of possible learning difficulties, it can be seen that the school is unable to help them. As stated:

*“I can’t finish my homework at school, because I’m slow in writing and because I have a bad hand-writing... I have to erase everything and write it from the beginning...This takes ages and I never do any Maths homework at school as I spend all my time doing my Greek language homework” (int.11 Y3)*

A lot of unfinished homework has to be completed at home. This affects students’ home time as instead of having all the time they need to do engage in different activities at home or at least to rest and spend time with their family, they continue their homework dedicating a considerable amount of time. As pointed out:

*“If the teacher gives me lots of homework, it is so difficult for me to complete it– I don’t know what the other children think –I have to study until late at home.” (int.15 Y5)*

As each class teacher is responsible for the amount of homework they think is necessary for their class, things become more complicated. It is common for the primary Greek teachers to give a lot of homework to their students as they believe that a lot of homework can help students. There are examples, as indicated by students' accounts, with teachers who believe that teaching and learning is an inside school matter. As stated:

*“Our morning teacher doesn't give us lots of homework, because she wants to find out what we can do in the classroom...” (int.15 Y5)*

Another student added:

*“I finish most of my homework here, because it is more difficult to do it at home. For example, our teacher gave us today some History questions to answer for tomorrow. We will try to answer them in the afternoon zone and we will try to study most of them here. (...) We have learned methods how to study quickly and easily” (int.18 Y5)*

It seems that students in the 'all-day' schools are not pleased and satisfied at all with the homework preparation and completion at school as it is very rare for them to finish their work at school. A primary aim for the 'all-day' school is for students to go home ready for the next day without having extra studying. However, from what students have mentioned, this is not achievable.

### **3. Student-teacher relationships**

The 'all-day' school aims to create strong and supportive relationships amongst the students and their teachers. The students should have all the support and encouragement needed from their teachers to develop, improve and expand their skills whilst at school. Students have expressed their views about their relationships with their teachers which seem to be very interesting. Each student emphasises different aspects when commenting about their relationship with their teachers. There are those students whose good or bad relationship with their teachers is based on the professional role of their teacher. They believe that they have a good relationship with their teachers if they are helpful with them and make the lessons easy and pleasant. As stated:

*“I like the morning zone, because we have our own teacher ... we do many lessons together and we also have time to rest and draw. I like also the evening zone, because although we are lots of children in the same*

*classroom, we work together with the help of the afternoon teacher and we sometimes do extra work on our Maths skills.” (int.9 Y4)*

Another student added:

*“I like the IT, the Arts, the Dance lessons and the French lessons, because our teachers are good with us. They help us to learn easily and we have a nice time with them.” (int.10 Y5)*

Students’ preference of a zone, morning and afternoon zone, is closely related to which zone their favourite teacher is teaching. As stated:

*“I like the afternoon zone, because we finish the homework and our teacher gives us extra Maths homework, because she wants to help us more.” (int.9 Y4)*

However, students’ comments about their teachers illustrate different interpersonal relationships depending on their expectations from this relationship. Different students’ expectations create different judgements for their teachers. Students take the opportunity to express their feelings and personal perceptions about what they would expect from their relationship with their teachers. As pointed out:

*“I would like to talk more with my teachers, we should in general talk about the problems we have ...we feel the need to talk about all these things.” (int.4 Y6)*

Another student found their teacher supportive as they were next to them when they needed them. As stated:

*“When we argue with other students our teacher helps us to become friends again.” (int.12 Y1)*

Another student added:

*“Our teacher helps us when we dispute with others.” (int.13 Y4)*

Students expressed the wish to feel safe with uncomfortable situations, such as when they are involved in arguments with other students and when they feel unable to solve these problems on their own. They expect teachers to play different roles in their school lives. Apart from teachers being important for helping with their lessons, students expressed the need for a teacher who cares, supports and encourages them during the long school hours. They also expected their teachers to set clear and sufficient classroom rules, which guide their school behaviour.

*“Our teacher told us at the beginning of the year that when we have an argument with other students, we should talk to her.” (int.19 Y4)*

Serious behavioural incidents which need teachers’ involvement to be sorted out seem to be treated fairly by them. As stated:

*“When somebody is bullying us, teachers help us... We have all the attention we need and we feel that they support us.” (int.16 Y4)*

However, there are differences in students’ perceptions not only from school to school, but, sometimes, also inside the same class, regarding the way they think they are treated by their teachers. As argued:

*“We sometimes feel that we don’t get the help we need from the teachers...When we argue, there are times when the teacher doesn’t care.” (int.16 Y4)*

In cases where students had a trustful relationship with their teachers, they expressed their respect and fondness of them. They wanted to rely on them the times they needed help with their lessons, but also when they needed help to solve problems in their relationships with other students. As stated:

*“We have the same feelings about our teacher... we feel the same as for our mum.” (int.18 Y5)*

Concluding, the students of the ‘all-day’ school had to accept that more than one teacher, and not only the class teacher, will play an important role in their school life. Depending on what was important for them, students emphasized less or more on teachers’ professional role and expressed their opinions about their relationship with them.

#### **4. Students’ perceptions of the effects of the longer school day on them**

- *Long school day for students in poorly equipped schools*

Students’ opinions about the long hours of the ‘all-day’ school are mixed across schools and students. It depends on the school’s different circumstances and how students experience their school life as individuals. As claimed:

*“We stay at school for so many hours...it is exhausting...I sometimes like the school, because we learn things which will help us in our life studying all these new subjects. What I don’t like is when the (school) day finishes and I go back home having extra work to do without any help.” (int1 Y5)*

For the students whose parents work and have to go to school early in the morning, (at 7.30 waiting until 8.30 to start) the school day becomes even longer and more tiring. As stated:

*“I don’t like my school, because it starts too early in the morning.” (int.10 Y5)*

While another student added:

*“I don’t like my school, because my day is so long...and I have to wake up early in the morning.” (int.10 Y5)*

On the one hand, the ‘all-day’ school allows working parents to leave their children earlier at school without having to worry about their children’s safety while they work. On the other hand, for the students it is very difficult to start their day so early, as they have to go back home late in the afternoon and the infrastructure facilities and human resources are not available to make their time more pleasant. They complain about the tiredness they feel, but this is something that should be considered from the onset while planning the ‘all-day’ school. The conceptualisation planning and implementation of the ‘all-day’ school was not carefully considered. As stated:

*“My mum keeps waking me up early because I have to go to the school and I feel sleepy...This is good for her because she is at her work on time but for me the day is endless...” (int.13 Y4)*

Another student noted:

*“I don’t know why it is so tiring...When we finish lesson in the morning zone it would be helpful to have a proper lunch time and after some pleasant activities to have a break from our lessons. Instead, what we do, we start doing our homework...and if the afternoon (specialist) teachers are at school we may have PE or we play football in the school yard” (int.12 Y1)*

The ‘all-day’ school does not seem to provide a suitable learning environment according to students’ accounts. It is poorly planned and equipped for the long hours that it operates. As stated:

*“I am not happy with my school, because we spend so many hours here, and we get bored. I am so tired at the end of the day” (int.13 Y4)*

Students seem to be more dissatisfied in those cases where they have to go to school as early as at 7.30 in the morning. Probably the students are not creatively involved in enjoyable activities, which could possibly become a pleasant break during their long

school day. The ‘all-day’ school should be a source of creativity and inspiration for all its students. At least, there are times when students can finish their homework at school and this is a great relief after having to spend so much time at school. As stated:

*“I’m always getting tired at school...But when I go back home and I don’t have to revise or to do any more homework with my parents, I’m very happy” (int.9 Y4)*

However, there are times, when students acknowledge some benefits from staying long hours at school. As stated:

*“I’m happy and my parents are happy because we play (at school) with our friends instead of staying home and have nothing to do. And we also learn things.” (int.11 Y3)*

While many students could appreciate that the ‘all-day’ school helps their parents to have all the time they need for their work or to spend less time helping them with their homework, there are students, especially from the senior classes who complain that it is impossible to finish their homework at school and they go back home late in the afternoon having extra out of school activities to do. For example, they have English private tuitions, piano lessons, swimming, and for this reason the students themselves are becoming very anxious and stressed struggling with the extra time needed for these activities. As a result, on the one hand, the long school hours give parents the opportunity to have all the time they need for their work commitments, but, on the other hand, there is little time left in the evening for the students to cope with the other activities planned by their parents. As claimed:

*“In the ‘all-day’ school we don’t have enough time to do our homework, and have other out-of-school activities... We only have half an hour for homework preparation and after that we are left in the schoolyard for hours...playing football” (int.8 Y6)*

Another student added:

*“I cannot study at school. I have more activities to do and my English lessons (He means out of the school) and I don’t have time.” (int.15 Y5)*

Overall, regardless of all the students like or not staying late in the afternoon in the ‘all-day’ school, they believe that they do not have any free time to do things they enjoy. They seem to be stressed and under constant pressure as the day is not enough for them to cope with their school responsibilities and their parents’ extracurricular afternoon expectations.

- *Long school day and students' relationships*

According to the students, spending long hours at school affects their interpersonal relationship and creates positive and negative forms of interaction. There were students who claimed that they made new friends at school as they have more time to spend with their classmates. As stated:

*“In the ‘all-day’ school we find new friends and we enjoy learning and playing together.” (int.7 Y1)*

A further point was made:

*“I like my school, because I meet my friends here...I have lots friends at school and in the afternoon I can play with them...I can only play at school with my friends because when I go back home it is too late and I have to finish my homework and do out of school activities.”(int.2 Y2)*

In the ‘all-day’ school it is important for the students to spend their long stay creatively and pleasantly. It seems that friendships at school play a balancing role in students’ lives and affect their school performance. The students of the ‘all-day’ school seem to overcome negative aspects of their school thanks to the benefits of their friendship with their classmates. As stated:

*“In the ‘all day’ school, we can do things that we can’t do at home. For example, we have Music, Arts, Drama and we enjoy more these subjects because we are with our friends.” (int.6 Y5)*

This was re-iterated by the following student:

*“We have nice time at school with our classmates...We are all the students friends in my class...We work in groups and help each other...When we have something difficult to do my friend helps me...we seat in the same desk” (int.13 Y4)*

Learning and playing with friends at school is of great benefit for the students as pointed out:

*“I like my school, because I can learn different things with my friends and play with them.” (int.6 Y5)*

Even when the long day at school becomes very tiring, having good friends lightens and reduces the bad emotions and thoughts of the students as stated:

*“I am a bit tired in the ‘all-day’ school, but it isn’t an important problem to me. I spend my time pleasantly with my friends.” (int.14 Y3)*

It is important for students who spend long hours at school to have the ability to build and maintain good relationships with each other. Especially for the students of the 'all-day' school, which do not provide the appropriate teaching and learning conditions for the long school hours, they can adjust themselves better if they have good friends as stated:

*“In the afternoon, when we are left outside to play, because we don't have any teacher to do our lesson, I play with my friends instead...We have fun and enjoy playing... Otherwise, I would have to wait alone, until my parents take me from school” (Int. 8 Y6)*

The students of the 'all-day' school spend almost their whole day at school. It is important for them to have good friends at school and develop the necessary social skills. Friendships at school can help them develop emotionally and morally from an early age. Apart from the ability of learning how to communicate and work together at school, they also learn how to solve daily problems. As stated:

*“When I have a problem with my classmates, my friends at school help me to sort it out...I'm not left alone, I have my friends.”(int.2 Y4)*

However, staying at school for long hours, tensions and arguments can start especially in overcrowded schools as the 'all-day' schools have small play grounds and limited outdoor activities are offered to the students. Students have illustrated very vividly their every day relationships at the 'all-day' school and how these relationships are built as stated:

*“When I have problems with my classmates or with older students from other classes during the break we sometimes ask our teacher to sort it out and after we are friends again...We may argue a lot when we cannot play football in the school yard because the big students do not leave for us any space to play...” (int.2 Y4)*

Another student claimed:

*“When we argue each other, the assistant headmaster helps us to become friends again... There are times we argue with our classmates for silly things...Other times there are some students who are bullying us... but we have learnt how to sort out our problems and become again friends.” (int.12 Y12)*

Negative forms of behaviour seem to be a problem between younger and older students. These problems arise during break time. The 'all-day' school did not provide for different break times for younger and older children. All the students, of age 6 to age 12 (Year 1 to Year 6) share the same small grounds during the break. This is



especially hard for the students of the small classes as they have no experience of coping with aggressive forms of behaviour with older students. Situations may become traumatic for the younger students, as they may be bullied or mistreated by the senior students as pointed out:

*“What I don’t like about my school is when I get shouted and the older children hit us during the break...” (int.16 Y4)*

This was supported by another student:

*“If I argue with somebody, I will go to the first teacher I find in the schoolyard and ask help... I’m scared of the older students.”(int.1 Y5)*

Friendships at school play an important role not only when students work and learn together in the classroom but mainly when they are left outside in the school grounds to play and rest during break time. In an overcrowded schoolyard students test their ability to communicate and play with other students harmoniously, but this is not always easy. However, because friendships develop between students, difficult and unpleasant incidents can be avoided with the support of friends as pointed out:

*“There are some boys from Year 6 who are chasing us and sometimes they hit us without having done anything bad to them...My friend is very scared but what I do I go and play with him where a teacher is standing in the schoolyard” (Int. 17 Y5)*

Students’ school friendships and relationships have been a favourite subject of study for many researchers. Based on what students said during research, we can conclude that the long school hours create opportunities to develop strong friendships, which can have a positive impact on students’ performance and attitudes towards school. In summary, students expressed their dissatisfaction with their school facilities and learning sources but have emphasised that longer school hours give the opportunity to establish strong relationships with their peers and teachers.

#### **4.1.4 Interviews analysis: Parents**

The ‘all-day’ school aims to fulfil needs of students, teachers and parents beyond those offered during regular school hours in Greece and as required under the national curriculum. A lot of emphasis is given by the ‘all-day’ school on the fact that the students can stay for longer in school enabling them to study more subjects and participate in more activities. This could become achievable with the application of

new teaching methods and practices, with student participation in more activities and the provision of extra classes to the students to complete their homework at school. The 'all-day' school was designed with the aim to provide parents with the opportunity to work long hours leaving their children in a safe, improved and creative schooling environment, a place for students to develop and enhance their academic, creative and sporting skills. The 'all-day' school was to play an important pedagogical and social role endeavouring to provide equal opportunities to its students and simultaneously helping parents focus on their career and be more successful at work.

The possibilities offered by the 'all-day' school is not limited to students and working parents but can also impact on non-working mothers' lives. In a country such as Greece, where it is tradition for fathers to work and for mothers to bring up the children, staying at home and sacrificing plans for personal development or a professional career is common practise. The 'all-day' school brings broader opportunity and flexibility to mothers enabling them to compete, get jobs and be part of the countries workforce. It is interesting at this stage to see how the 'all-day' school can affect the personal and professional live of parents.

The data analysis has been drawn from set of themes presented and discussed with parents. The major themes that emerged from the analysis of the parents interviews are as follows:

### **Themes that emerged from parent interviews**

#### **1. Parents different perspectives on the effect of the all day school on their lives:**

- *Effect on working parents' life*
- *Effect on non working parents' life*

#### **2. Parents' perceptions on the curriculum enhancement:**

- *The new school activities and subjects beneficial for the students though theoretically in place have not been put into practice due to lack of human resources and poor school infrastructure*
- *Parents unfulfilled expectations for equal school opportunities*
- *Homework completion, an unsolved issue for the parents*

#### **3. Relationships**

- *Tensions between parents and students due to the failure of the 'all-day' to fulfil its promises*
- *Relationship between parents and teachers*

### **1. Parent's perspective on the effect of the all day school on their lives.**

Parents agreed that the operation of the 'all-day' school is very beneficial and particularly convenient for the working parent. The extended school hours mean children can stay at school until 16.00 instead of 13.30 currently the end time offered by mainstream schools. Parents therefore have the opportunity to spend more hours at work and be able to gain full time employment. In addition mothers who are not working, due to the limited hours between dropping off and picking children up, are able to offer employers more working hours and therefore opportunity to go to work should they wish to. Whether parents currently work or not the 'all-day' school provides opportunity for new work or advancement of careers. Many parents feel that though it is beneficial for their children to stay in a safe school environment, they concur that their children often return home tired without actually completing their homework at school. However, parents' views on the all-day school varied. The differences are epitomised in working and non-working parents set out below.

- *Effect on working parents' life*

The 'all-day' school has solved a practical problem for the working parents, especially in the case where both the parents work. These parents have the opportunity to leave their children at school, where an enhanced curriculum has been provided for the students, and, whilst enabling them to focus on their work commitments and responsibilities. Whilst this is obviously a considerable benefit for working parents, the paradox is that working parents are less interested in examining to what degree the 'all-day' school actually fulfils its aims. Working parents seem to be less interested in the quality of education offered to their children during the extra hours they spend at school, especially in the afternoon. They appear to be remarkably apathetic in the operation of the 'all-day' school, satisfied that it provides a safe environment for their children and this does not cost them financially. As stated:

*“(The ‘all-day’ school) it’s convenient for me... The extra activities my child is doing in the afternoon zone are quite important but I don’t know what they do exactly...I know, for example, that in the last two years they do not have a music teacher...They have Music in their school programme but instead the class teacher tries to teach them some songs...” (Int. 6)*

One parent highlighted the importance of not having to pay a child minder to take care of their child in the afternoon whilst they were at work and quoted:

*“It’s (the ‘all-day’ school) very convenient for us, as we can work...The important thing is that our child can stay at school for longer... otherwise we would have to pay a childminder and we couldn’t afford it” (Int.1)*

Another working mother added:

*“My child says that he is pleased with the ‘all-day’ school...He plays...He says that he learns...I don’t know what they do exactly in the afternoon...At least he is not complaining for staying at school for so many hours... It’s ok...” (Int.3)*

Parents emphasised the importance of the morning zone as they considered this to be where all the important subjects, those in the national curriculum, were taught. They perceived the afternoon zone supplementary, of less importance, than the morning zone. They saw it as a place for their children to stay with their teachers and classmates until late in the afternoon, irrespective of how creatively or academically they spent their time whilst there. One parent quoted:

*“I give more emphasis on the morning zone and on the subjects of the morning zone...Any extra activities the children have in the afternoon is for their own benefit...My children stay in the afternoon zone until I finish my work ...They play with their friends and I don’t need to rush from my work” (Int. 9)*

Another mother’s impression was that the ‘all-day’ school is different from a mainstream school. She did not seem to have any extra expectations from the ‘all-day’ school, other than that it gave her the ability to work that was very important for her. She stated:

*“I’m pleased in general as a working mother... (referring to the ‘all-day’ school)... and there are problems in the all-day school as in many of the public schools in Greece...” (Int.5)*

A working father added:

*“It’s especially convenient for mothers. I cannot see any difference in my working life except the fact that my wife can work and we have sufficient and better income as a family” (Int.7)*

In today's Greek society women play a significant role in the workforce of the country. Greece is following the rapid social and economic changes around the world with women holding a prominent role in the Greek workforce. The consequences of these social changes are contradicting. As literature review shows women have improved their social standing with their active involvement in the country's labour force but, drawing from this evidence, this is still not an easy achievement. The situation appears to be easier for married mothers, as they share the family responsibilities and commitments with their husbands, whilst for single mothers life is much tougher. The 'all-day' school can provide these mothers with the solution enabling them to leave their children at school for as many hours they need to sustain full time work. As a single mother stated:

*"In previous years I suffered constant anxiety and stress around who could help me look after my children when they came back from school. As a single mother I have to work...Half the money I earned was spent on paying a child minder. Coming from work late every day I had to help them with their homework and take them to English lessons...Now things are better... but I still help them with their homework..." (Int.19)*

Even for parents in a more traditional family setup, who have the opportunity of grandparents helping out with the children whilst they are at work, the long hours of the 'all-day' school offered flexibility and took the burden of everybody. As pointed out:

*"When my children were younger they were picked up from the school (the mainstream school) by their grandparents...They stayed at my parents house until late in the afternoon watching television or fussing around... Once I returned from my work, I had to help them with homework and get them to swimming classes and English lessons (frontistirio)...I was exhausted every day... and on the top of that it was an extra daily duty for my parents... which made me feel anxious and uncomfortable...Now things are better... at least for their grandparents... as my children stay at school in the afternoon..." (Int. 13)*

New mothers decided to send their children to an 'all-day' school as they wanted to carry on working and fulfil their career expectations. As stated:

*"This is the first year for my child at the 'all-day' school. It is better for me as I can stay at my work... until late without rushing and having to leave earlier to pick him up from school (Int. 15)*

Setting aside all the negative aspects of the 'all-day' school, presented by the participants in this study, what is of crucial importance, is the fact that the 'all-day'

school provides parents, regardless of their working status, with the chance to leave their children in a safe school environment feeling free to cope with their work commitments.

- *Effect on non-working parents*

When this research took place, in March-April 2009, from the parents who were interviewed, most of those unemployed were mothers. Amongst them were mothers who supported and applauded the operation of the ‘all-day’ school and the extra hours it offered, and looked forward to finding or starting work. For mothers who wanted to enter the workforce the challenges were tough. Working and motherhood seem to be two conflicting priorities. A mother can really struggle to balance her professional ambitions with her family commitments. The ‘all-day’ school aims to help parents and especially mothers to start or keep a full-time job and support their families financially. As stated:

*“I don’t work at the moment but I’m trying to find a job...Now I have all the time I need to look for a job.” (Int.10)*

However, for those mothers who were not interested or had no plans of getting a job, there were many objections and much criticism on the way the ‘all-day’ school operates. Non working mothers have much more time than the working parents to observe and get involved with their children’s education at home and at school. They expressed much more criticism and concern around specific areas of the ‘all-day’ school which affected their children’s performance at school. They complained about the long hours the ‘all-day’ school has been set to operate under. As argued:

*“I don’t work and I would prefer my child to finish school earlier at 13.30 at mainstream school. I completely disagree with the idea that my child has to stay at school until late in the afternoon ... and come back without having finished at least his homework...I had no option...this is the only school in my neighbourhood and unfortunately they decided to operate as an ‘all-day’ school... which means that the students cannot finish lessons early...This is not fair...My child comes home exhausted.” (Int. 4)*

Another mother added:

*“They didn’t ask us if we agreed for this school to operate as an ‘all-day’ school. The school is close to where I live...If I wanted my children to finish school earlier I would have to have taken them to another school, in another neighbourhood, or to a private school... I don’t see any difference in my*

*children in staying at school for so many hour Most afternoons they are outside in the school yard kicking a ball ( playing football) because they don't have specialist teachers to do the extra activities they have been promised..." (Intr.8).*

Unfulfilled expectations of the school has caused dissatisfaction amongst parents and raised concerns over the lost hours at school. As stated:

*"My daughter stays at school until 3.30 pm ... when she comes home I have the constant stress over her doing her homework...She never finishes her homework at school...They (students) are supposed to have English lessons at school...They don't learn anything. If she didn't go to frontistirio (out of school English institute) she wouldn't learn anything." (Int.18)*

The non-working mothers, in this particular study, were not satisfied with the operation of the 'all-day' school. A more positive response to the school would have been expected from this group as it provides them with more free time to do things they enjoy during their children's extra time at school. This is probably because they feel they are able to fulfil their personal commitments and get involved in activities they enjoy without the need to leaving their children longer at school. As claimed:

*"My priority is my children's education. Before sending them to the all-day school I had all the time I needed to do things I enjoyed in my daily routine...Now my routine is much more stressful... as I have to spend long hours late afternoon with my children's extra out of school activities.... And deal with my husband coming back from work without having finished my responsibilities with the children... (Int.17)*

Parents' views are clearly divided on the impact of the 'all-day school' on their lives. The differences are more apparent between working and non-working parents as their priorities and needs are different. Each group see the 'all-day' school from a different perspective. However, the institutionalisation of the 'all-day' school is based on increasing the school day, in order to achieve higher social and pedagogical targets.

## **2. Parents' perceptions on the curriculum enhancement**

- *The new school activities and subjects beneficial for the students though theoretically in place have not been put into practice due to lack of human resources and poor school infrastructure*

Parents expressed their dissatisfaction in the failure of the 'all-day' school to fulfil its promises and deliver the expected results. A lot of emphasis was placed on the new subjects and activities the 'all-day' school would provide from the very first day it was

established and announced by the Government. To facilitate these new subjects and activities, extra classes were needed, together with a review of the curriculum, more hours to deliver the classes and therefore extended school hours. In addition Specialist teachers were needed to deliver the new subjects and were appointed by the Greek Ministry of education. The ‘all-day’ school was not instigated to provide parents with an afternoon babysitting service. In accordance with the theoretical aims of the ‘all-day’ school, the students should be creatively engaged with subjects and activities from an improved curriculum. With the application of new teaching methods, teachers would prepare children for the challenges of an ever changing society and life ahead.

The theoretical aims of the ‘all-day’ school were very ambitious and highly promising but the reality unfortunately very different. Parents recognise the importance in improving the student’s performance and general progress with the additional activities. However, they believe that whilst at the ‘all-day’ school children are not engaging in all the activities they are expected to do in accordance with the ‘all-day’ school curriculum. As stated:

*“In our school, students are not doing Dance and Sports...From what I understand, they are not doing other activities in other ‘all-day’ schools as well....If the head-teacher can guarantee provision of some of the specialist teachers the school needs for these activities, then our children can participate and take these subjects...” (Int. 1)*

Another parent remarked about the missed opportunity for students to participate in these promising new activities and raised concerns over the inconsistent application of the curriculum in relation to the extra subjects:

*“All the extra activities are so important for our children...but I don’t know how correctly these are applied... Thinking about it now, for the last two years the children have not had a music teacher. They have been given the Music book but no teacher to teach music...They have been given a Drama book but they don’t have a Drama teacher ...” (Int.6)*

Parents cannot effectively prepare their children’s school schedule and plan around family activities because of the constant uncertainty of the schools programme dependant on the availability of teachers to deliver. As one parent pointed out:

*“Children do not have the specialist teachers from the beginning of the school year. It is now March, and only this week was a Drama teacher brought into the school...We cannot rely on the schools extra activities...For this reason we*



*parents have to plan the out of school activities for our children so promised by the school....The 'all-day' school's organisation is an absolute mess regards the extra activities and subjects..." (Int.2)*

Another parent added:

*"My child wants to stay for long hours at school simply to play with friends..." (Int. 13)*

Parents appreciate the contribution of the extra curriculum activities in improving children's learning. They can see the difference in their children's performance when these activities are properly put into practice. They are especially pleased with the social and personal development subjects, which have a positive impact on their children personalities. Quoted:

*"The children can do different things after 12.30 pm that they wouldn't be able to do at home...I know that their school programme is very tiring but my children are not complaining... because they enjoy the afternoon zone subjects, such as Dance and Music..." (Int. 5)*

In addition to the problem with the late or the non-existent appointment of the specialist teachers and the negative impact of this situation on students, parents seem to be disappointed with the poor infrastructure of the 'all-day' schools. Even where the school has been able to secure a specialist teacher, there is often inadequate or lack of proper facilities and classrooms to deliver the specialist subjects. This adds to the disappointment of the parents as stated below:

*"I cannot accept that the school asks students to stay in their classrooms when they are due to have PE, every time is raining or the weather is not particularly good, because they don't have an indoor gym...And how can the students have Art lessons in the same classroom they do their other lessons and because of lack of appropriate facilities the Art teacher tasks them with drawing only...Do you know that our children do not have a canteen to eat their lunch because the school uses the previous canteen as a classroom?" (Int. 3)*

Another parent commented:

*"My children spend so many hours at school in a building which shouldn't be called a school. It's just a building which owes its name to having students...Empty classrooms, overcrowded play grounds and a big empty hall...these are the facilities of my children's school...We cannot expect teachers to perform miracles on their own in a school environment like this..." (Int. 18)*

In the first few years the ‘all-day’ school operated, some improvements were made to the mainstream school buildings chosen to facilitate the new extended school hours and curriculum. Buildings were converted to provide the necessary improvements required to deliver the new activities and celebrated the beginning of a new era for the primary school. Unfortunately with the passing of time, and limited funding these schools have seen facilities abandoned and no improvement in the infrastructure. One representative of the parents’ board remarked:

*“When this school started working as an ‘all-day’ school it was something new for us...something innovative...We were so impressed with the changes in the classrooms and the building refurbishment that took place...We were convinced that it was a new start for our children studying... It’s so sad to see this school deteriorate over the years, leaving only with inappropriate facilities for our children...” (Int. 2)*

Another parent added:

*“I also remember the first years this school operated... even the minor redecorations, addition and alterations, in the classrooms made a big difference...There were new boards, new school furniture and new equipment added to classrooms... even a ‘rest’ area inside the classroom with cushions and a small sofa, A relaxing and comfortable area for the children during their long stay at school...All these changes belong to the past... The classrooms today look like derelict bomb sites...” (Int.12)*

Overall, parents agreed that much improvement was required in delivering the extra activities and subjects of the ‘all-day’ school curriculum. Parents had good reasons to be disappointed with the inadequate teaching of the new activities and academic subjects. These parents had witnessed first-hand the failed efforts of the ‘all-day’ school in providing students with the promised extra activities and subjects. Parents all agreed that the ‘all-day’ school needed to analyse the positive and negative performing areas, reconsider and reform the school curriculum and facilities, if it was to meet its aims, improve performance and surpass parent expectations.

- *Parents unfulfilled expectations from school to provide their children with equal opportunities*

With the enhancement of the curriculum the ‘all-day’ school aimed to offer equal opportunity for advanced education to all students. Here students would have the opportunity to participate in activities or study subjects which their parents may not

otherwise be able, to provide them. Students in low-income and minority families could now enjoy activities and subjects such as Sports, Dance, Music, Art, Drama, ICT and foreign languages for free during their stay at school. The ‘all-day’ school’s introduction of the new activities intended to expand the opportunities of all students in participating not only in a more enjoyable but a challenging way of learning as well. The school therefore plays an important role in balancing out inequalities in opportunities not normally available to children from low-income families. Whilst planning an enhanced curriculum to offer equal opportunities for learning and achievement to all students seems an easy task, applying and resourcing this has not been successful: As stated:

*“We were told that our children will do English lessons at school. This was a huge relief to us, as we would not need to pay for private tuition...something that is really unaffordable for us. ...Unfortunately though they take English at school we still need to take them to a frondistirio (institute) as they don’t appear to be learn anything at school...” (Int. 13)*

Another parent seemed to have a stoical acceptance over the failed promises of the ‘all-day’ school:

*“I don’t work and cannot work...We rely on my husband’s income which provides us with a moderate lifestyle...We cannot afford to send our children on additional out of school activities as they cost a lot...I would be very pleased if my children could do all the afternoon activities that they were promised at school...But at least they can play at school with friends for longer instead of coming back home and watching TV...” (Int.14)*

Whether parents work or not, the enhanced curriculum offers activities such as Music, Drama, Art, Sports and ICT integrated in the national curriculum. This gives students at the ‘all-day’ school the opportunity to get involved, enjoy and benefit from extra creative and academic activities which they could only obtain privately out of school.

- *Homework completion, an unsolved issue for the parents*

Working and non-working parents concurred that non completion of homework at school remains an unsolved problem for the children and for them. Many parents reported that students are consistently coming home with unfinished homework, though the curriculum is designed to give them all the time they need to finish their homework at school. As stated:

*“It’s a nightmare...My children are not only coming back with unfinished homework making it is difficult to plan other activities they do out of school*

*like English, swimming, ballet, but also extremely tired because of the long day they had.” (Int. 2)*

Another mother added:

*“My young child, who is in Year 1, comes home, most of the times, with his homework finished...My older children always have homework to do...The thing is that when I insist to finish their homework at home we end up arguing over the long hours they stay at school and the extra hours they need to complete work at home...” (Int.4)*

One couple decided to move their children to a mainstream school next year as they find it difficult to cope with the unorganised and unreliable set up of the ‘all-day’ school their children currently go to. Despite the fact that both parents need to work, both firmly believe the long hours their children spend in the ‘all-day’ school are a complete waste of time. The family had different expectations in the operation of the ‘all-day’ school. Setting aside the shortfalls of the daily school programme due to delayed appointment of teachers and/or shortage of specialist teachers, parents are further aggrieved that the school failed to deliver its promise on enabling children to complete homework during school time. Parents stated:

*“We both work ...I remember that we had welcomed the opening of the ‘all-day’ school in our neighbourhood and for good reason....Unfortunately, we realised very early on that something was wrong .. This is the second year our children are attending this school but enough is enough...They always have homework to do at home, homework that is impossible to finish without our help...What’s the point of sending them going to an ‘all-day’ school? We’ll have to see what we can do about them coming home earlier ...” (Int.4)*

Whilst parents agree that there is a problem with the homework, their opinion on the overall need of the school differs, because many parents have no option but to send their children to an ‘all-day’ school even though they are aware of the school’s dysfunctional operation. As pointed out:

*“My children come home with unfinished homework but I don’t really mind because they can at least stay in school whilst I’m still at work...” (Int. 5)*

One of the main objectives of the ‘all-day’ school is to provide the time and help for students to complete their homework at school. It is an objective strongly emphasised to parents and considered an important function of the ‘all-day’ school. Parents have expressed their opinions and concerns over the failed effort of the school to provide its students with the help needed to complete their homework at school. Parents felt that

irrespective of the other problems the 'all-day' school has, the longer school hours should enable students to complete all their homework at school. They all agreed that measures should be taken to review and reform the function and operation of the school if there was to be any chance of improvement.

### 3. Relationships

- *Tensions between parents and students due to the failure of the 'all-day' to fulfil its promises*

According to some parents, the 'all-day' school has failed them and their children in satisfactorily delivering its promises. Unfortunately the 'all-day' school has been trying to operate under difficult circumstances, let down by the lack of funding, insufficient teaching resource and inappropriate facilities. All culminating in state of disarray and disorganisation seem to have affected students, teachers and parents. Parents added that tensions often rise between them and their children, because they realise they have to cover gaps in their children's education with additional supportive activities and tuition. Children come home, tired from a long day at school with realms of unfinished homework and face an extra stressful schedule of activities later on in the afternoons. Parents highlighted the difficulties they have in persuading their children to attend after school activities leading to arguments and tension ultimately affecting their relationship with their children.

As stated:

*"My child is supposed to have English lessons at school...In our school, one week they have English the other week something happens and the lesson is cancelled ...If I didn't send him for private English tuition after school, he would not be able to take on English at high-school...But we constantly argue every time he has extra English lessons, complains that he is tired and questions the point of English lessons at his school..." (Int.8)*

Another mother added:

*"I know it's not my child's fault for not finishing his homework at school, but I keep asking him every time he has to do extra homework at home why he didn't try enough to finish at school. I blame him, he blames the school and I spend an hour listening to him moaning until he finishes everything..." (Int.18)*

However, it is not only the unfinished homework that causes arguments between parents and children. Parents claimed their children are under constant pressure at

school and at home to finish their homework and to attend additional activities beyond the school. Despite this, parents feel that they have no choice, but to provide their children with all those activities that are supposed to be provided by the school during the day. It is clear that the 'all-day' school is contributing to rising tensions and resulting in unnecessary stress for students and parents. The parent-children relationship seems to be under strain with the school offering a solution with extended hours enabling parents to work on the one hand, and letting them down by not delivering on its promises on the other hand. Parents have, therefore, found themselves having to fill the gap in their children education, unfulfilled by the 'all-day' school, through paid extra tuition. To add to the difficulties parents reported that students are reluctant to attend extra activities after school as they feel tired after spending so long day at school. As stated:

*“Before my children started going to this school (the ‘all-day’ school) they used to go swimming, karate, attended piano lessons and a number of other activities outside school without complaining...Now there is great confusion...For example, they have within their school programme, extra music lessons, art lessons and sports but not the specialist teachers to deliver these subjects... Therefore as well as the extra cost for us, as a family, to send them to do these activities privately, our children are reluctant to attend anything after school.” (Int.7)*

Another parent added:

*“I hoped that in this school my child could do all these extra activities that I could not ordinarily afford to pay for...Now I work full time and earn more money, but find my child complaining that it is very tiring to do extra activities after schools so late in the afternoon...” (Int.9)*

Overall, parents expressed their dissatisfaction and disappointment over the missed opportunities the school had in helping and improving children's standard of education and activities in the extra time built in to the 'all-day'. If the school delivered on its promises, children would not have to attend many after school activities, and they could better cope with homework not completed at school. This would inevitably reduce stress and friction between children and parents, who have their best interest at heart. Parents were clear on the areas of failures and believed the whole operation of the school should be challenged and measures taken to improve it.

- *Relationship between parents and teachers*

Parents hold conflicting views regards the different teachers working at the ‘all-day’ school. Parents believe the teachers delivering the subjects in the morning are the most important for their children’s progress. They emphasised that they hold good relationships with the morning teachers because they believe they play the most important role in their children’s education. As stated:

*“The most important teachers for me are the morning ones because I believe the subjects that students are taught in the morning that include, Maths, History and Language, are the most important subjects. I’m more interested really in liaising and collaborating with the afternoon teachers” (Int.6)*

Parents seem to regard morning teachers as the most important, and see them in the same light as those in mainstream school, where the class teacher is responsible for the class progress. Parents, therefore, consider them first and foremost as key to their children’s education. As stated:

*“For me, there is no difference between the old school (mainstream school) and this one (‘all-day’ school). The morning teacher is the one who teaches and helps my children to learn...The other ones (in the afternoon zone), when they are at school, just keep the students company...What is different with the ‘all-day’ school is not the teaching but that the students can stay at school until late afternoon...” (Int. 9)*

Another parent commented very interestingly that not only did he perceive the morning teacher as the most important but also regarded the morning subjects as ‘the lessons’ taught in the school. He did not mention any of the afternoon subjects and activities as they did not exist for him.

*“When we have parents’ day, I go and see the morning teacher...For me these lessons are of primary importance... (Core morning subjects)... (Int.7)*

There are defined stronger relationships between parents and those teachers, teaching core subjects in the morning at the ‘all-day’ school. Parents have a better understanding and appreciation of core subjects on an academic level so naturally they favour teachers delivering these subjects. Unfortunately, because of the erratic way the school operates during the afternoon parents understandably pay little emphasis on the extra activities and consequently have little respect for the specialist teachers brought in. This happens in particularly when teachers are appointed half way through the academic school year. As stated:

*“I can see there is a problem with the teaching staff...I would be pleased to meet with the class teacher and any specialist teacher if they were available to*

*teach my child all the extra curriculum subjects from the start of the academic year. Then at least they would become a regular and steady teacher for my child throughout the whole school year...” (int.4)*

Another parent added:

*“Once a month we have a meeting with the morning teacher (class teacher) and we can see the deputy teacher if we have any problem with the specialist teachers...” (Int.5)*

The afternoon subjects and activities added to the ‘all-day’ school curriculum over and above those in the national curriculum. These were introduced to make a difference in students’ education by providing them with opportunities to develop extra skills in a safe and pleasant environment. However, it is extremely sad to discover that parents do not deem the extra activities as important as the core subjects like Maths, Language, History, etc. This is however understandable when the school itself has not shown the same emphasis on the organization and delivery of the afternoon activities. The school is most certainly responsible for the parent’s negative attitude to the afternoon activities by not putting an equal emphasis on the whole enhanced curriculum. Even if the afternoon subjects and activities were properly structured and delivered, parents are not convinced they would add significantly to students’ education in the same way core subjects do. As pointed out:

*“The morning teachers are important for me and I see them often...The afternoon teachers are babysitting our children...I don’t think students learn anything in the afternoon...At least they are happy playing with their friends and we as parents feel secure that they are being looked after in a safe environment...” (Int. 10)*

There are, however, some parents who understand and appreciate the importance of the additional subjects and activities the ‘all-day’ school offers and have contact with the specialist teachers, where possible. As pointed out:

*“I know that not all parents meet with the afternoon teachers...But I try to see them and maintain a good relationship with them, as I know they try hard working under difficult circumstances...” (Int.2)*

This was supported by another parent:

*“All my children’s teachers are so good...My children are happy with them...It is important for me to see all of them at the monthly meetings...No matter what subjects they teach...To be honest I’m more sympathetic towards the specialist teachers as they don’t receive the respect they deserve for what they do...” (Int. 1)*



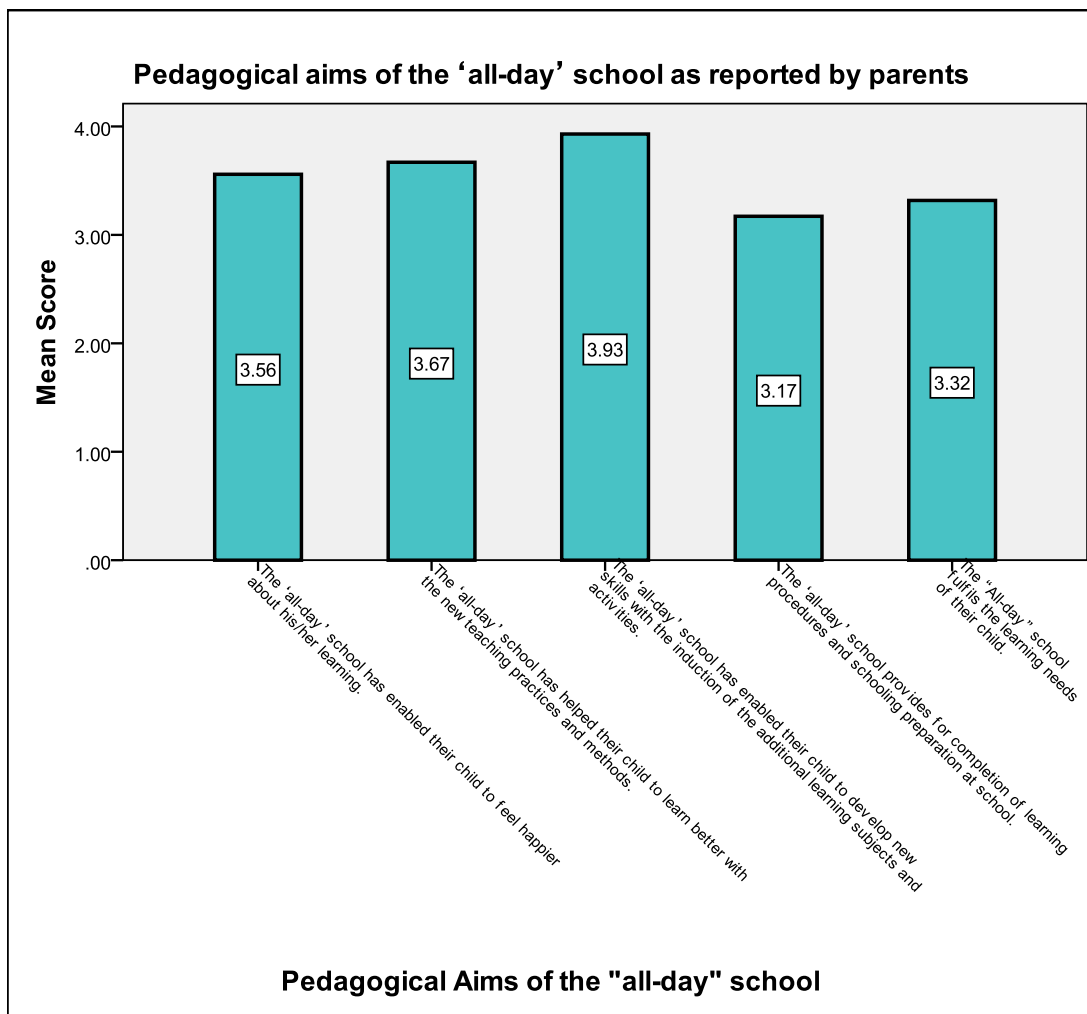
Parents' views certainly differ over teachers delivering core subjects and those delivering the extra activities. There are the parents who respect all teachers equally irrespective of the subjects they teach and those who see little importance in the teachers covering the extra activities. This stems generally from personal attitudes and perceptions about teaching and towards teachers no matter what their area of expertise. This study has revealed, that the way the school system and establishment treats its teachers' directly affects how parents inevitably perceive them and treat them.

## **4.2 Questionnaire data analysis**

### **4.2.1 Analysis of questionnaires for parents**

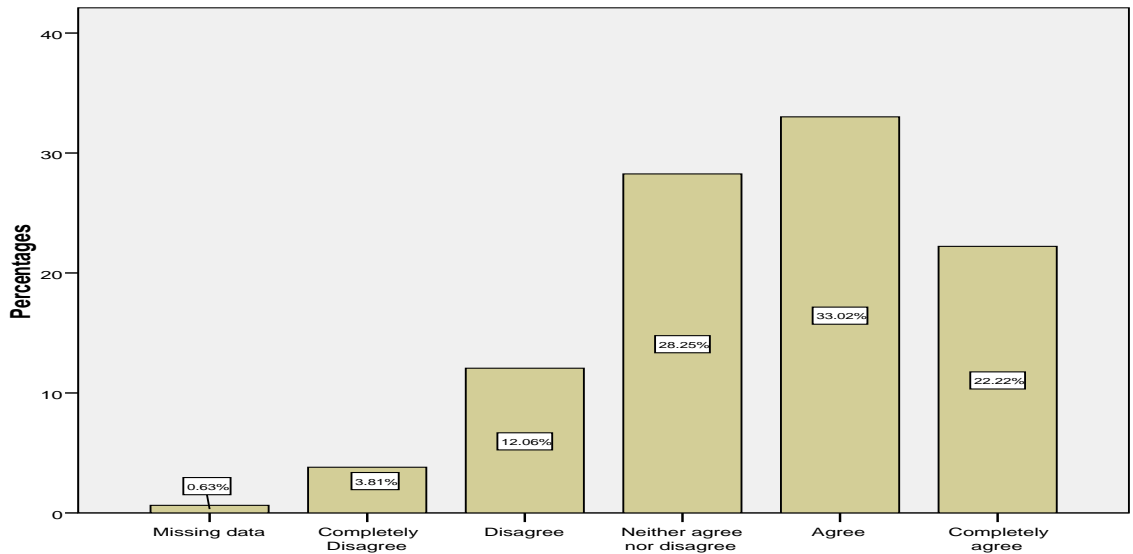
The bar-graph below presents mean scores (on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1-5) of parents' responses on the questions relating to the pedagogical aims of the 'all-day' school (N=315). The majority of parents (55.24%; Mean = 3.55) agreed that their children feel happier about their learning in the 'all-day' school while a considerable number of parents have not expressed a clear opinion (28.25%) about this aspect of the "all-day" school. A large percentage of parents (66.03%) believed that their children have been helped by the introduction of new teaching practices and methods by the 'all-day' school. Regarding the introduction of the additional learning subjects and activities in the afternoon school 76.19% of the parents have found the specific innovative aspects of the 'all-day' school to be beneficial for their children. However, one of the main aims of the 'all-day' school is the completion of the students' homework at school. From parents' responses this is a controversial issue since 43.18% (Mean=3.17) of the parents believed that the 'all-day' school gives their children the opportunity to complete their homework at school while 32.38% of them are not satisfied because their children fail to complete their homework at school. At the same time, a significant percentage of the parents (24.44%) are not certain whether the 'all-day' school fulfils this aim. Finally a percentage of 48.89% of parents (Mean=3.31) agreed that the 'all-day' school helps their children and fulfils their learning needs. However, 25.08% of the parents are not satisfied. It is finally noted that 25.4% of the parents have not decided about the learning impact of the 'all-day' school on their children.

**Figure 4. 1 Pedagogical aims of the ‘all-day’ school**



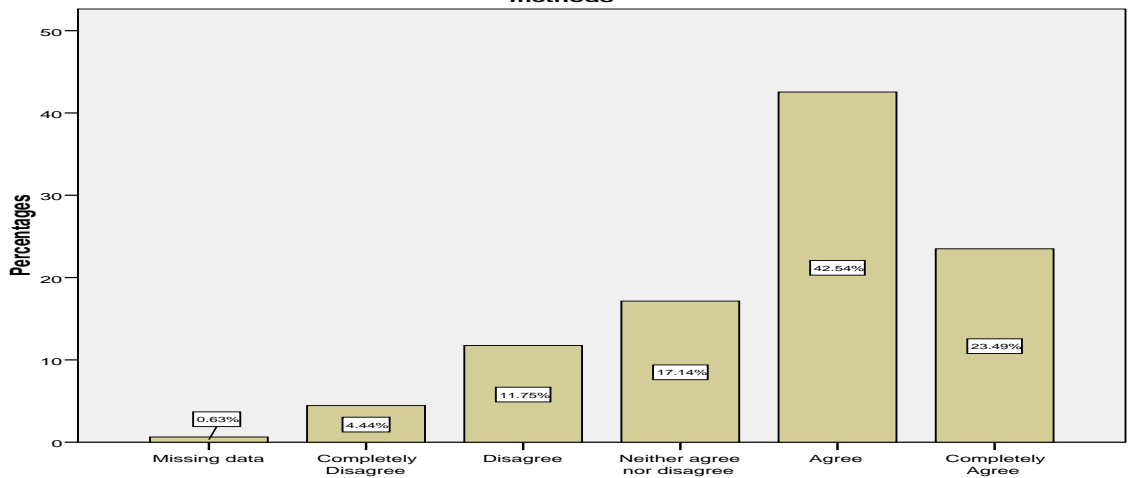
The next five graphs present in more detail parents’ accounts on the pedagogical aims of the “all-day” school.

**The 'all-day' school has enabled my child to feel happier about his/her learning**

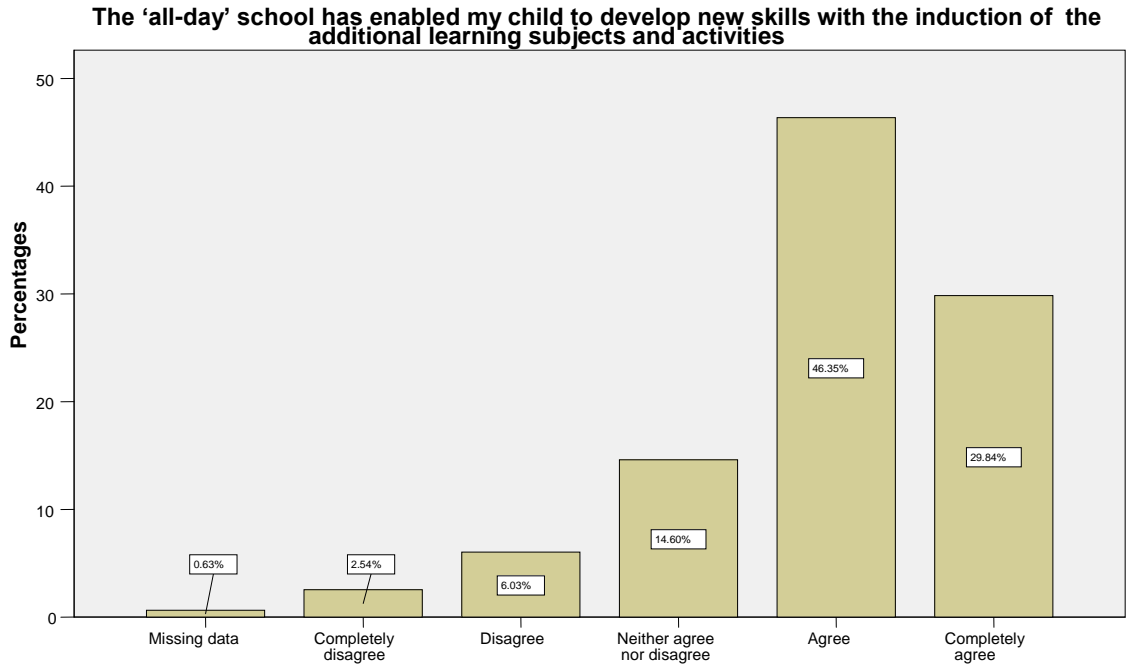


The majority of parents (55.24%) agreed that their children feel happier about their learning in the “all – day” school while a considerable number of parents have not expressed a clear opinion (28.25%) about this aspect of the “all-day” school.

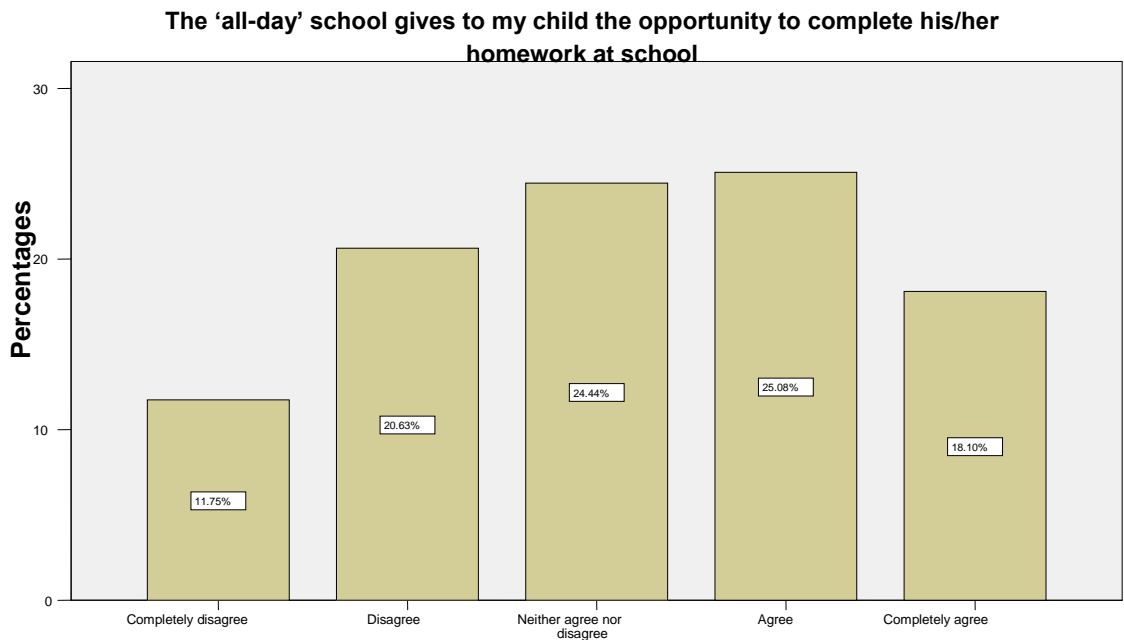
**The 'all-day' school has helped my child to learn better with the new teaching practices and methods**



The majority of parents (66.03%) believe that their children have been helped by the introduction of new teaching practices and methods by the ‘all-day’ school.

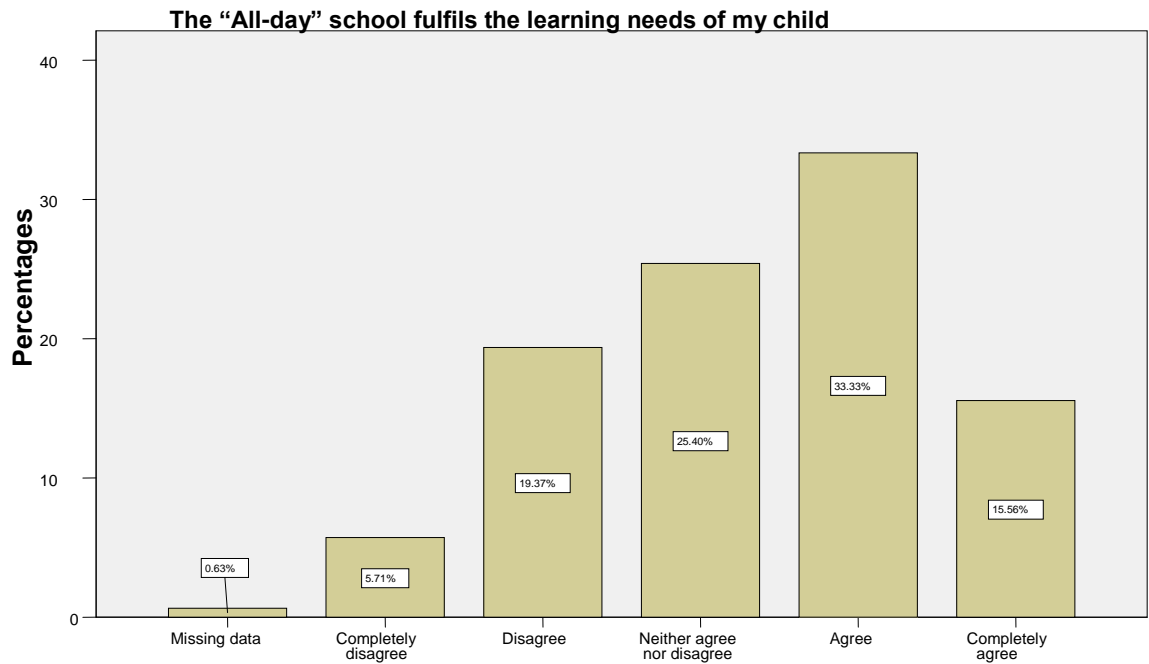


Regarding the induction of the additional learning subjects and activities in the afternoon school, 76.19% of the parents have found the specific innovative aspects of the 'all-day' school to be beneficial for their children.



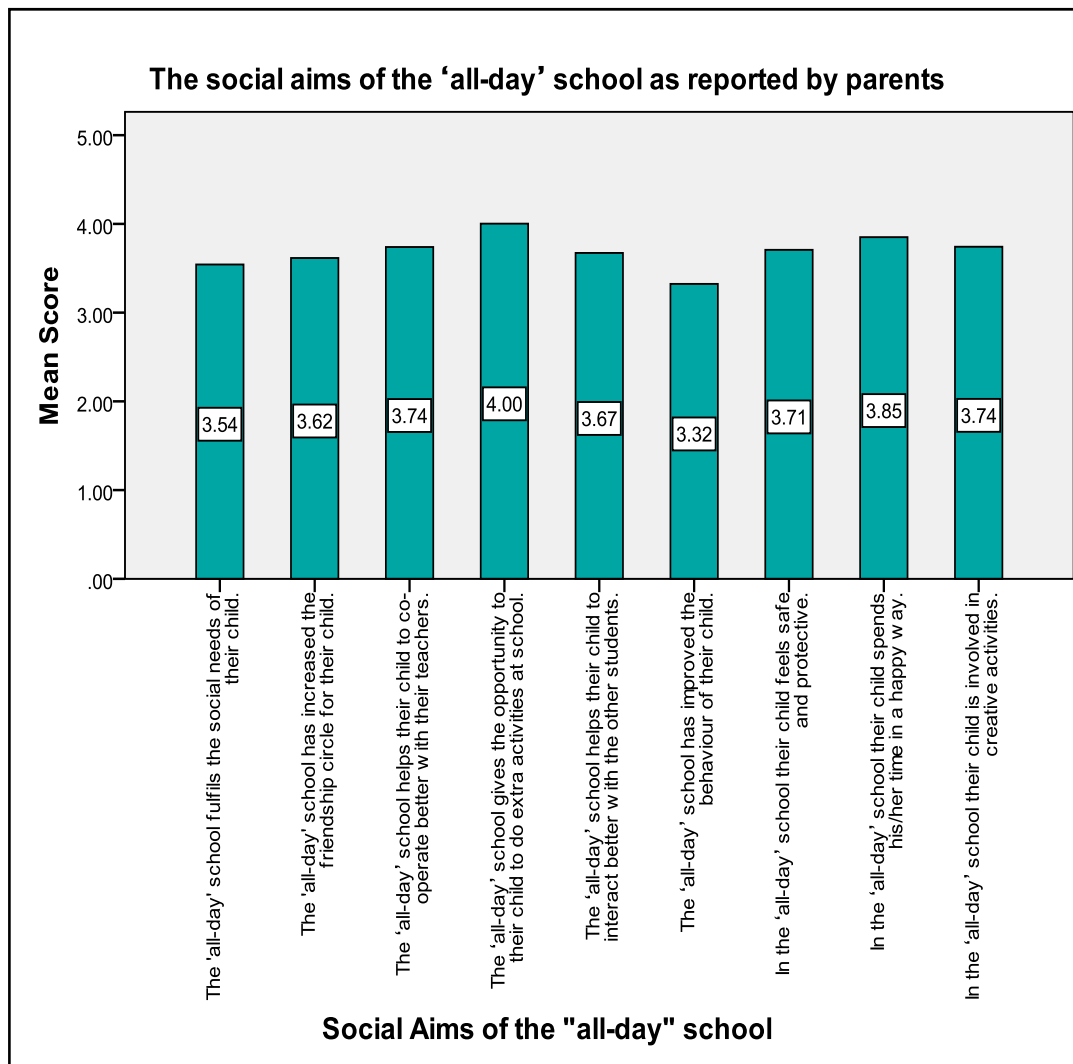
One of the main aims of the 'all-day' school is the completion of the students' homework at school. From parents' responses it is indicated that this is a controversial issue since 43.18% of the parents believed that the 'all-day' school gives their children the opportunity to complete their homework at school while 32.38% of them are not

satisfied because their children fail to complete their homework at school. At the same time, a significant percentage of the parents (24.44%) are not certain whether the ‘all-day’ school fulfils this aim.



A percentage of 48.89% of parents agree that the ‘all-day’ school helps their children and fulfils their learning needs. However, a percentage of 25.08% of the parents is not satisfied. It is finally noted that 25.4% of the parents have not decided about the learning impact of the ‘all-day’ school on their children.

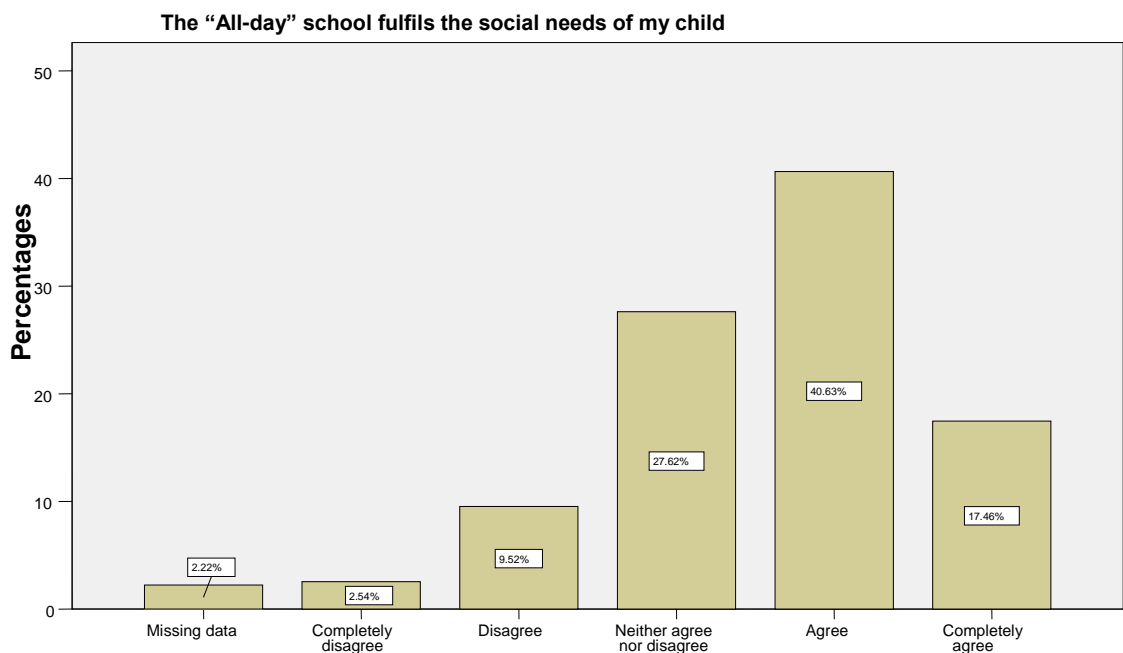
**Figure 4. 2 Social aims of the ‘all-day’ school**



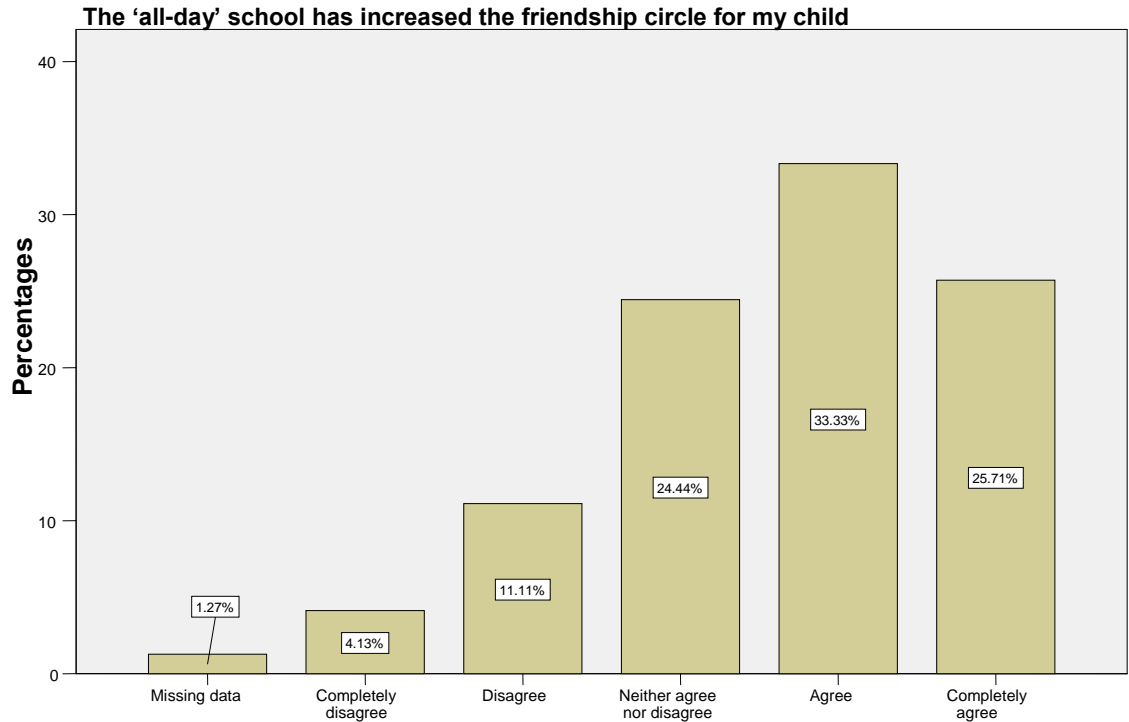
The ‘all-day’ school should play a significant role in developing the social needs of students. The majority of parents (58.09%, Mean=3.54) recognised the importance of the ‘all-day’ school in giving their children the opportunity to improve their social skills. It is indicative that a considerable percentage of parents (59.04%) believe the ‘all-day’ school is the right environment for their children for developing new friendships with the other students. In addition, a significant percentage of 68.89% of parents believe that the relationship between the students and their teachers at the ‘all-day’ school is positive. One of the aims of the ‘all-day’ school is to give the students the opportunity to get involved with as many extra activities as possible (sports, ICT classes, artistic and aesthetic activities). It seems that this has been achieved with 80.31% of parents agreeing that their children have the opportunity to participate in different extra activities at school (Mean=4.00). Also, most of the parents (62.22%)

agreed that the ‘all-day’ school gives their children the opportunity to interact positively with the other students. As many as 48.89% of parents believe the ‘all-day’ school helps their children improve their negative forms of behaviour whilst 29.21% of them do not seem to have a clear view about this important issue. It is revealed here that parents are merely satisfied from the ‘all-day’ school’s performance on this specific social aim. The majority of parents (72.70%) feel that their children are happy when they stay at the ‘all-day’ school. This is very important if we think that the ‘all-day’ school operates long hours and the students were not used to spending so many hours at school.

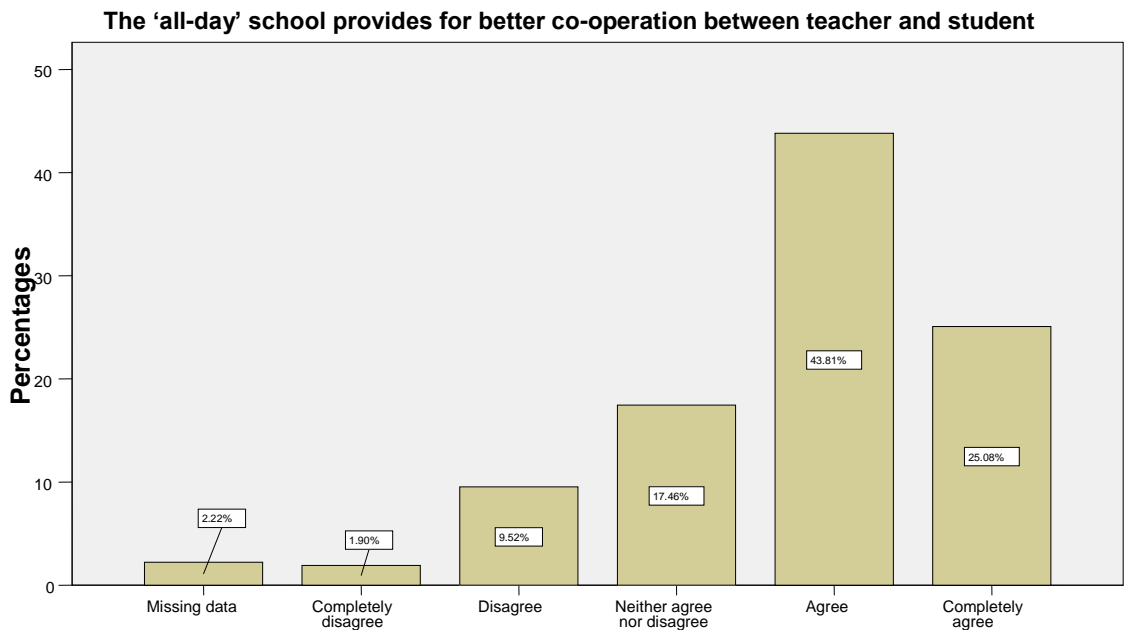
The next graphs present in more detail parents’ accounts on the social aims of the “all-day” school .



The ‘all-day’ school has to play a significant role in relation with the social needs of students. The majority of parents (58.09%) recognise the importance of the ‘all-day’ school to give their children the opportunity to improve their social skills.



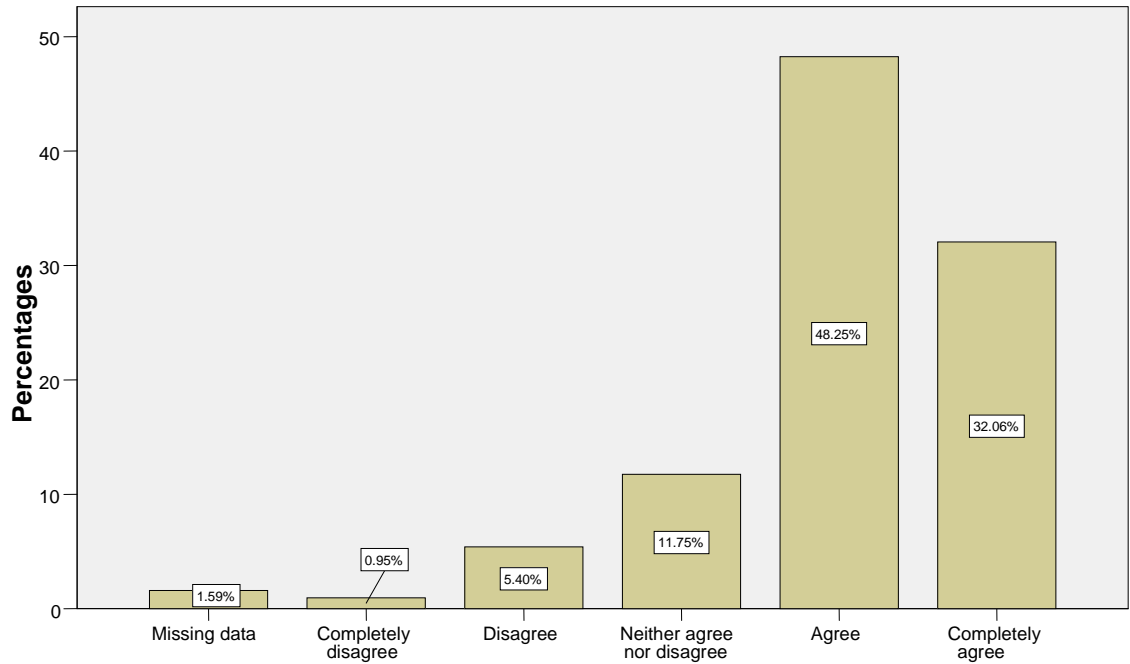
It is indicated from this table that a considerable percentage of parents (59.04%) believe that the 'all-day' school is the right environment for their children to create new friendships with the other students.



A percentage of 68.89% of parents believe that the relationship between the students and their teachers at the 'all-day' school is positive.

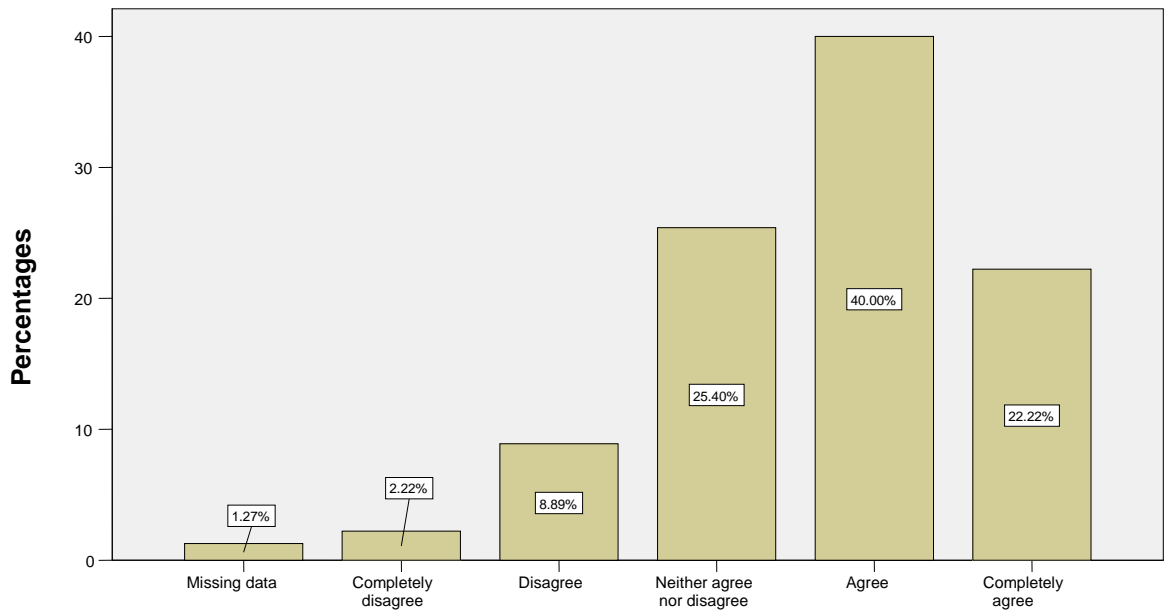


**The 'all-day' school provides the opportunity to my child to participate to extra activities**



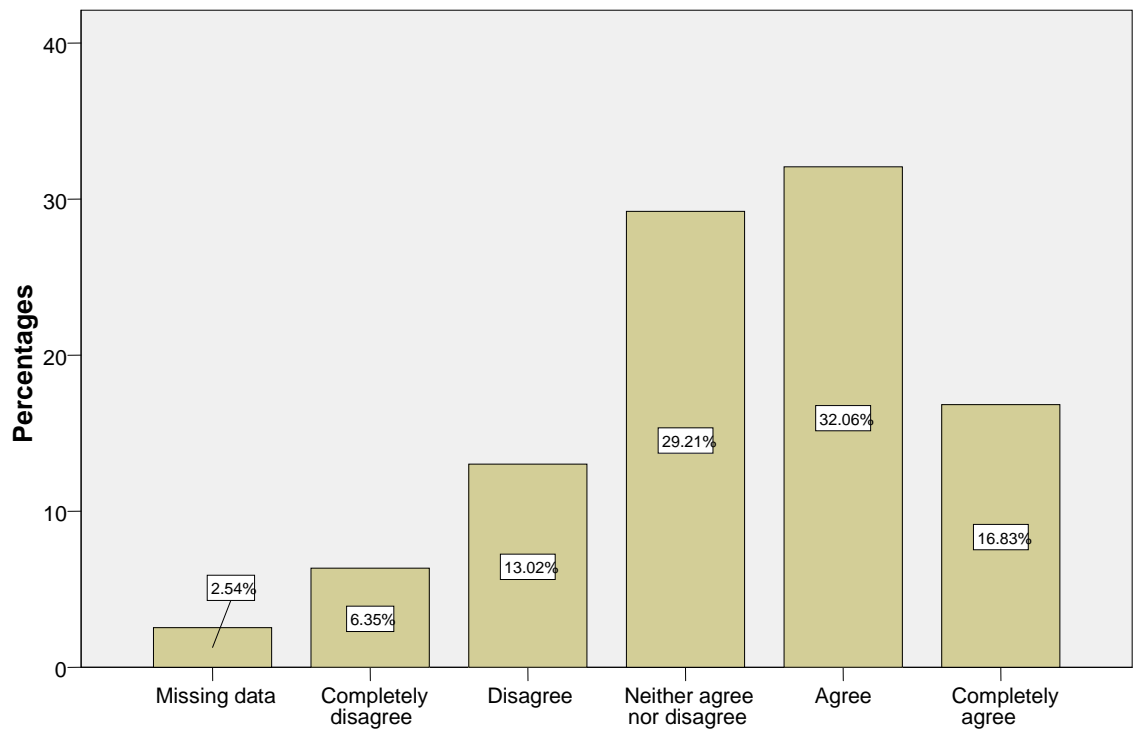
One of the aims of the 'all-day' school is to give the students the opportunity to get involved with as more extra activities as possible ( sports, ICT classes, artistic and aesthetic activities). It seems that this has been achieved as a percentage of 80.31% of parents has agreed that their children have the chance to take part in different extra activities at school.

**The 'all-day' school provides for creation of an essential interaction among students**



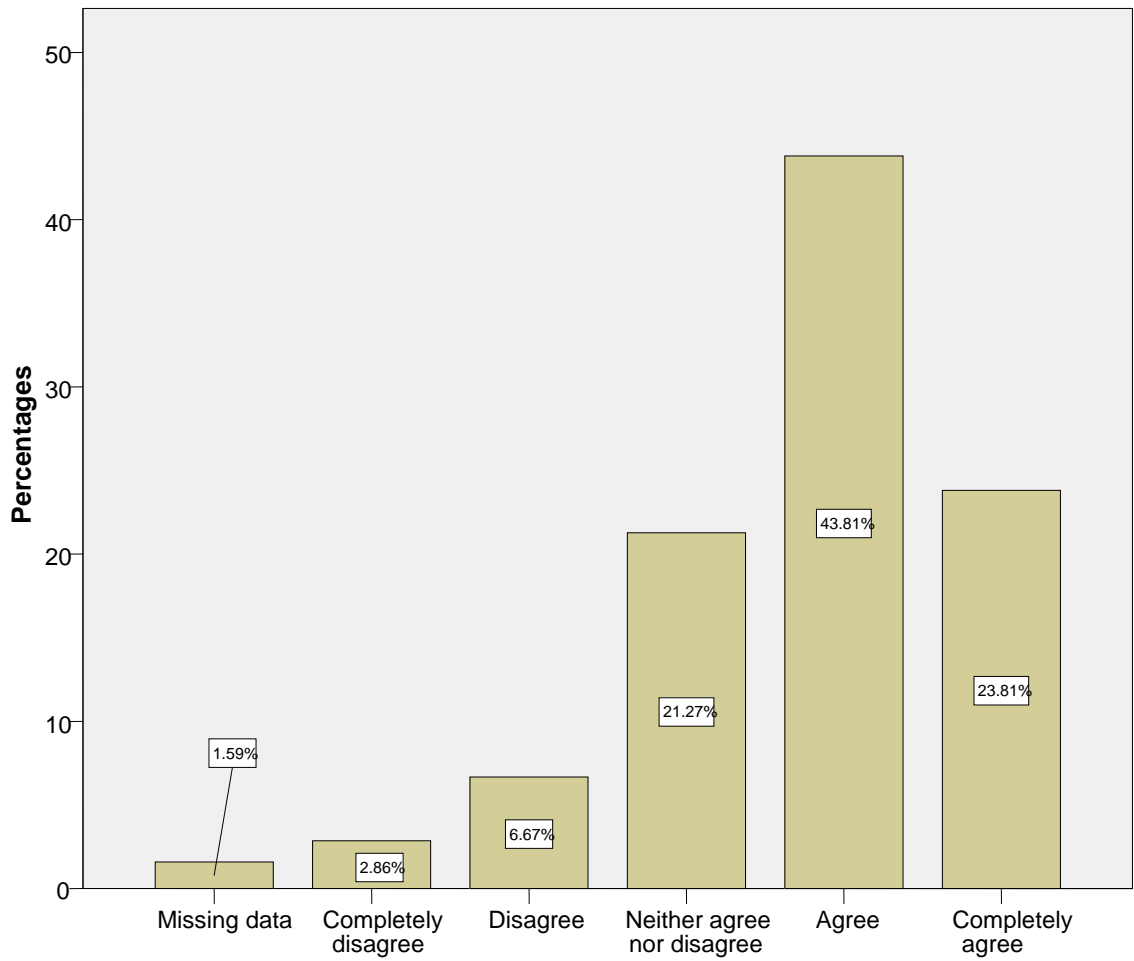
Most of the parents (62.22%) have agreed that the 'all-day' school gives their children the opportunity to interact positively with the other students.

**The 'all-day' school provides for limitation of negative forms of child behavior**



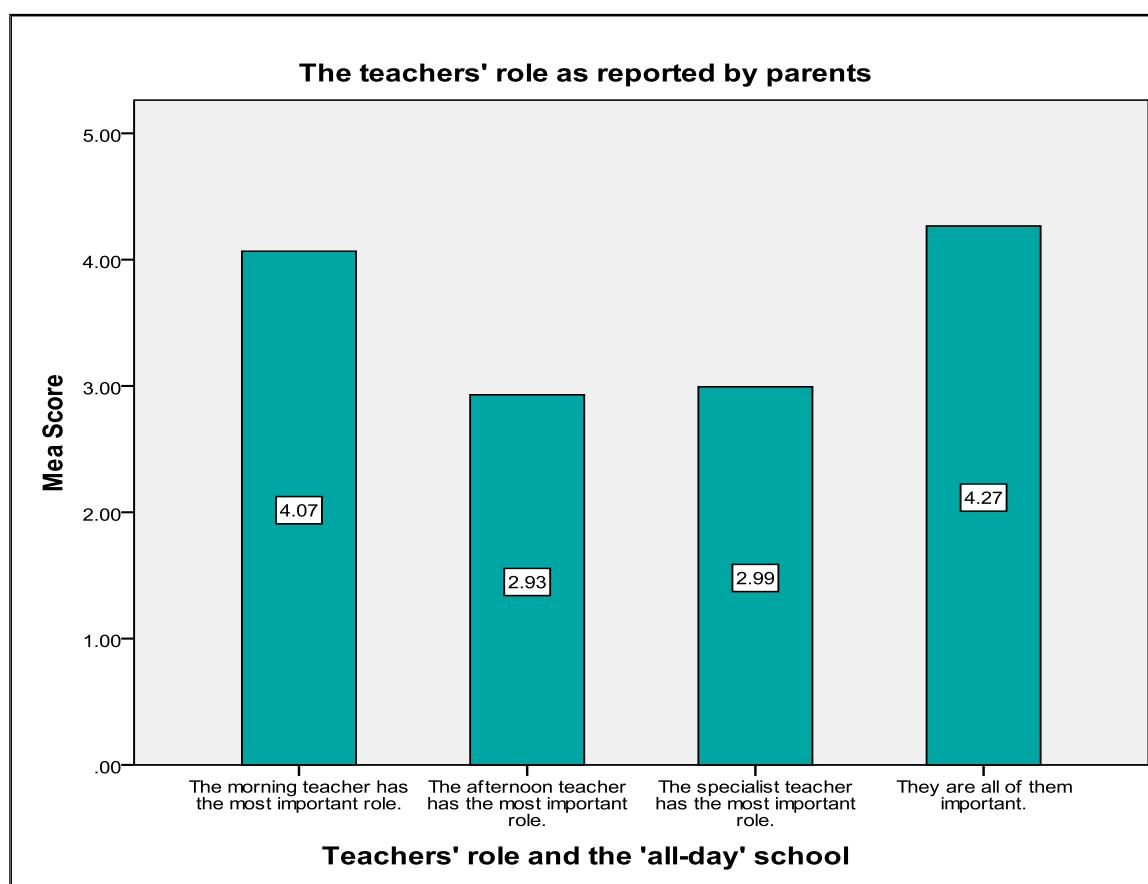
This table shows that a percentage of 48.89% of parents believe that the 'all-day' school helps their children to improve their negative forms of behaviour while there is also a percentage of 29.21 % of them that they do not seem to have a clear view about this important issue. It is revealed here that parents are merely satisfied from the 'all-day' school's performance on this specific social aim.

**In the 'all-day' school students spend their time creatively**



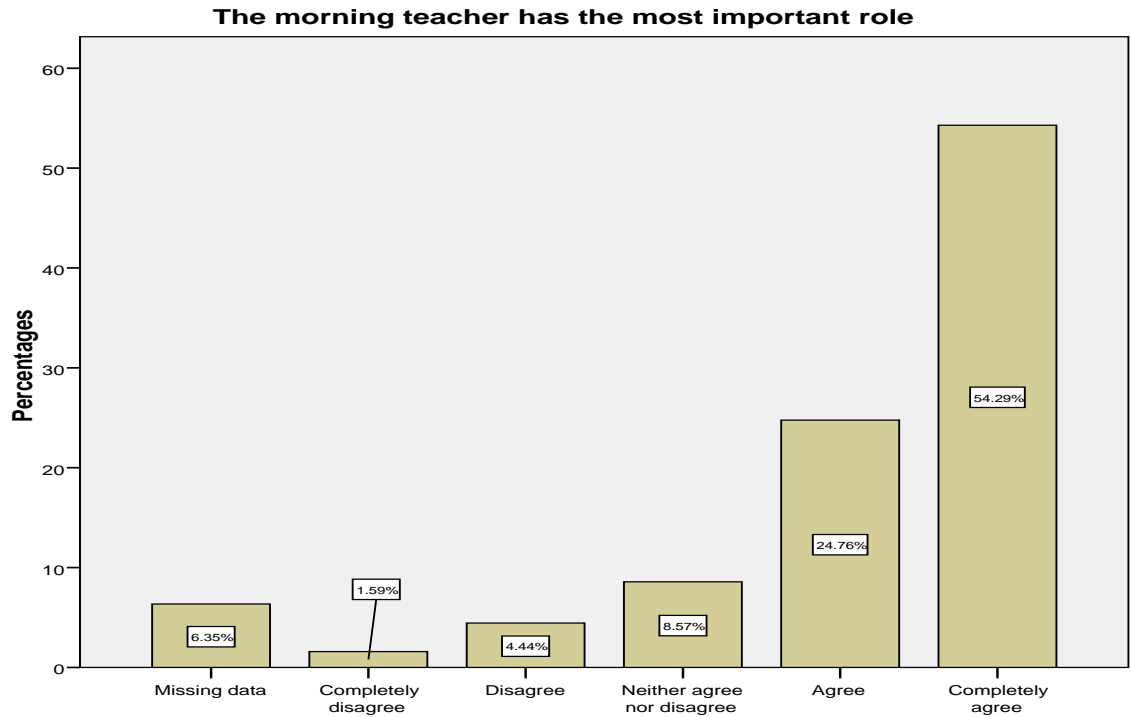
In this table the figures show that the majority of parents (72.70%) feel that their children are happy when they stay at the 'all-day' school. This is very important if we think that the 'all-day' school operates long hours and the students were not used to spending so many hours at school.

**Figure 4.3 ‘All-day’ school and teachers**

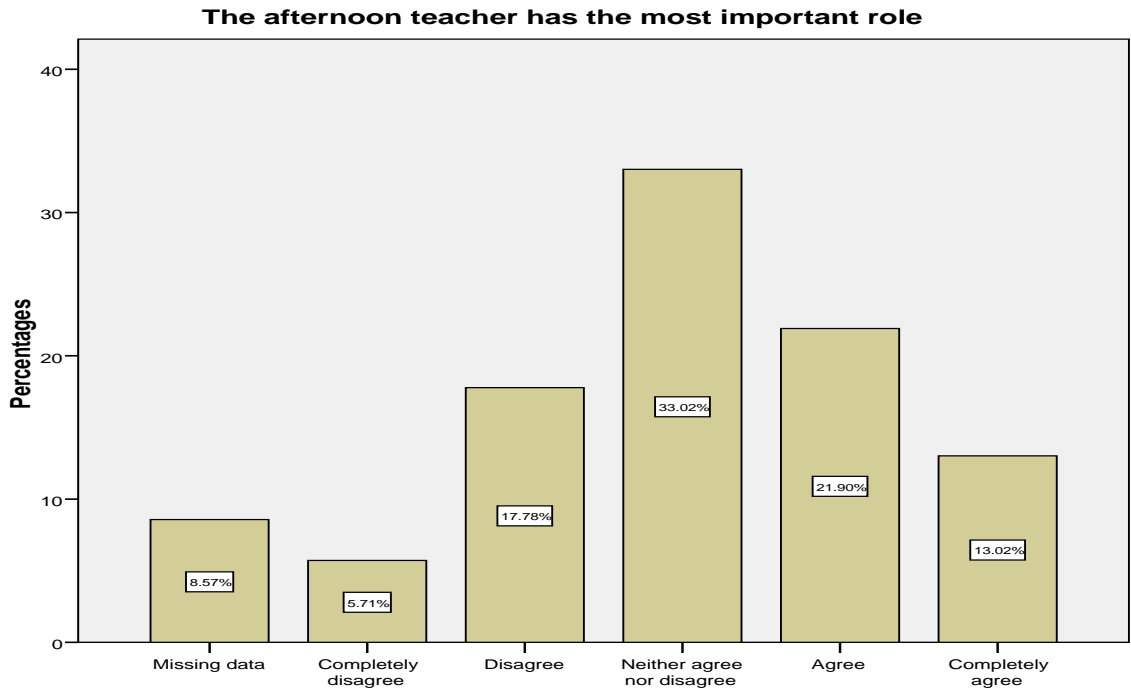


A considerable percentage (79.05%, Mean=4.07) of parents perceives the morning teacher more important than the others. There is the firm belief among parents that the teachers in the morning zone play the most significant role in their children’s progress. Only a small percentage (34.92%, Mean=2.93) believes the afternoon teacher plays the most important role for their children, while 33.02% neither agree nor disagree. This shows that the parents in the majority of cases are not yet certain about the importance of the afternoon teacher and they consider the role of the afternoon teacher supplementary when comparing the figures in the previous table where parents clearly viewed the morning teacher’s role to be the most important. Only 36.19% (Mean=2.99) of parents consider the specialist teacher’s role the most important in the ‘all-day’ school whilst an analogous 34.92% of parents have no a clear view on this issue. In general as it is indicated in the fourth graph a comparably large percentage of 83.49% (Mean=4.27) of parents recognise and agree that all the teachers play an

important role in their children education in ‘all-day’ school. The next graph present in more detail the above findings.

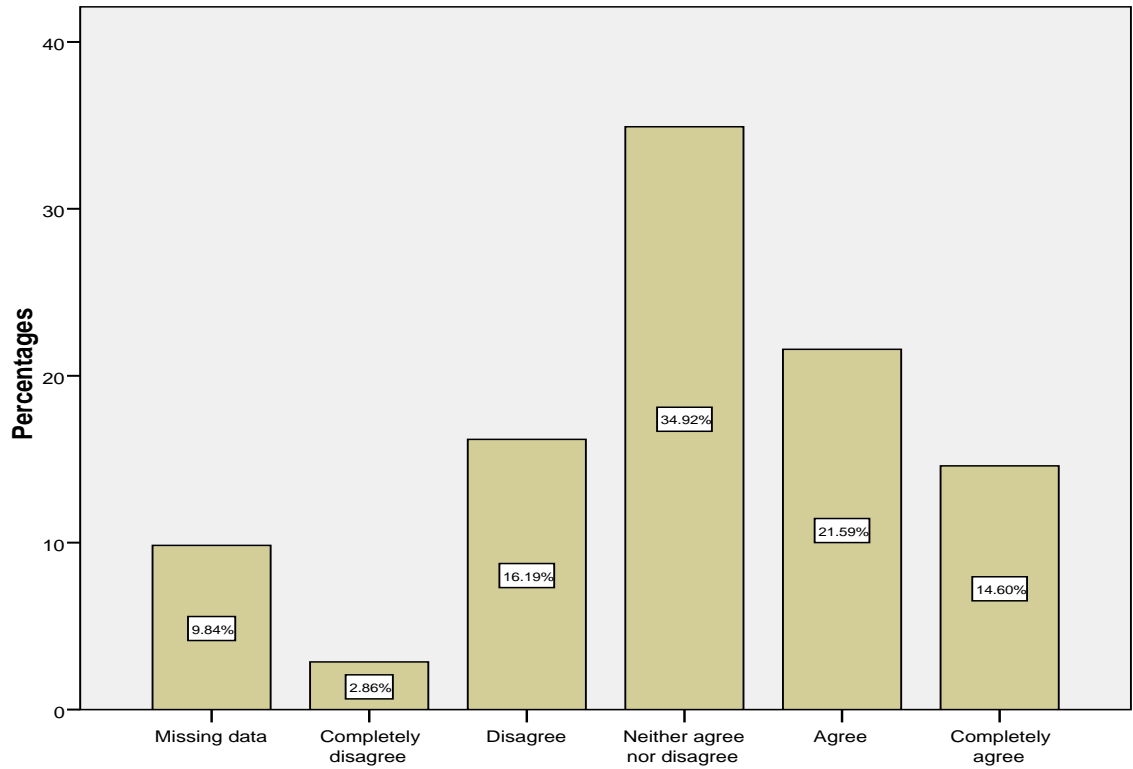


From this table it is indicated that a considerable percentage of 79.05% of parents perceive the morning teacher more important than the others. There is the firm belief among parents that in the morning zone the teachers are playing the most significant role in their children’s progress.



This table proves that only a percentage of 34.92% believe that the afternoon teacher plays the most important role for their children, when in the same table a percentage of 33.02 neither agree nor disagree. That shows the parents in their majority are not yet certain about the importance of the afternoon teacher and they consider the role of the afternoon teacher supplementary in comparison with the figures of the previous table where parents clearly view the morning teacher's role to be the most important.

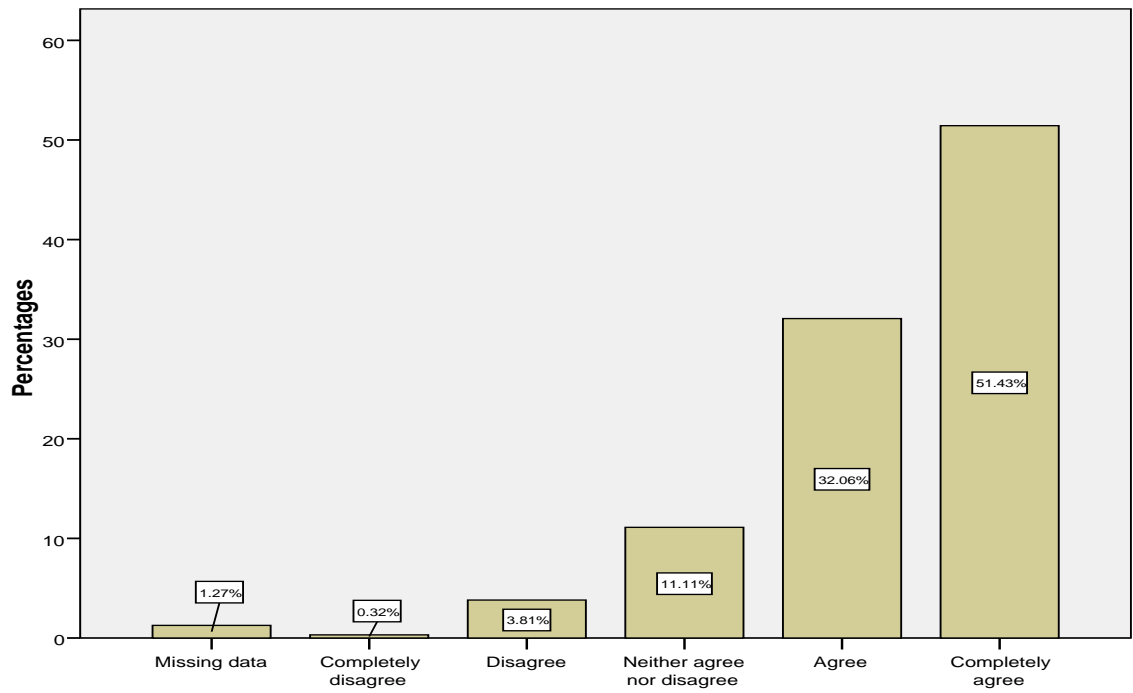
**The specialist teacher has the most important role**



This table also shows that only a percentage of 36.19% of parents consider the specialist teacher's role the most important in the 'all-day' school while a analogous percentage of 34.92% of parents have no a clear view on this issue.

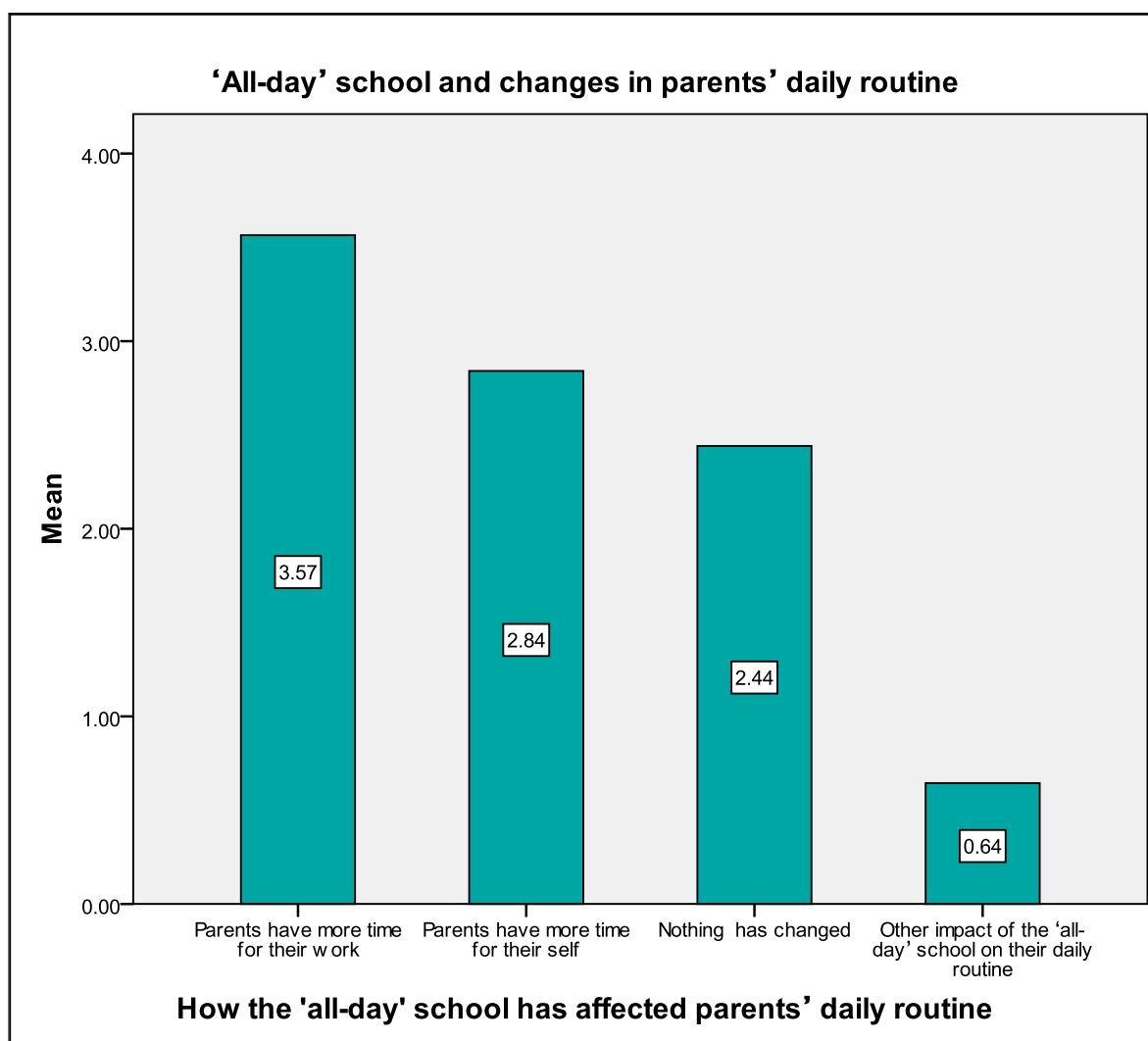


**All the teachers of the 'all-day' school are important**

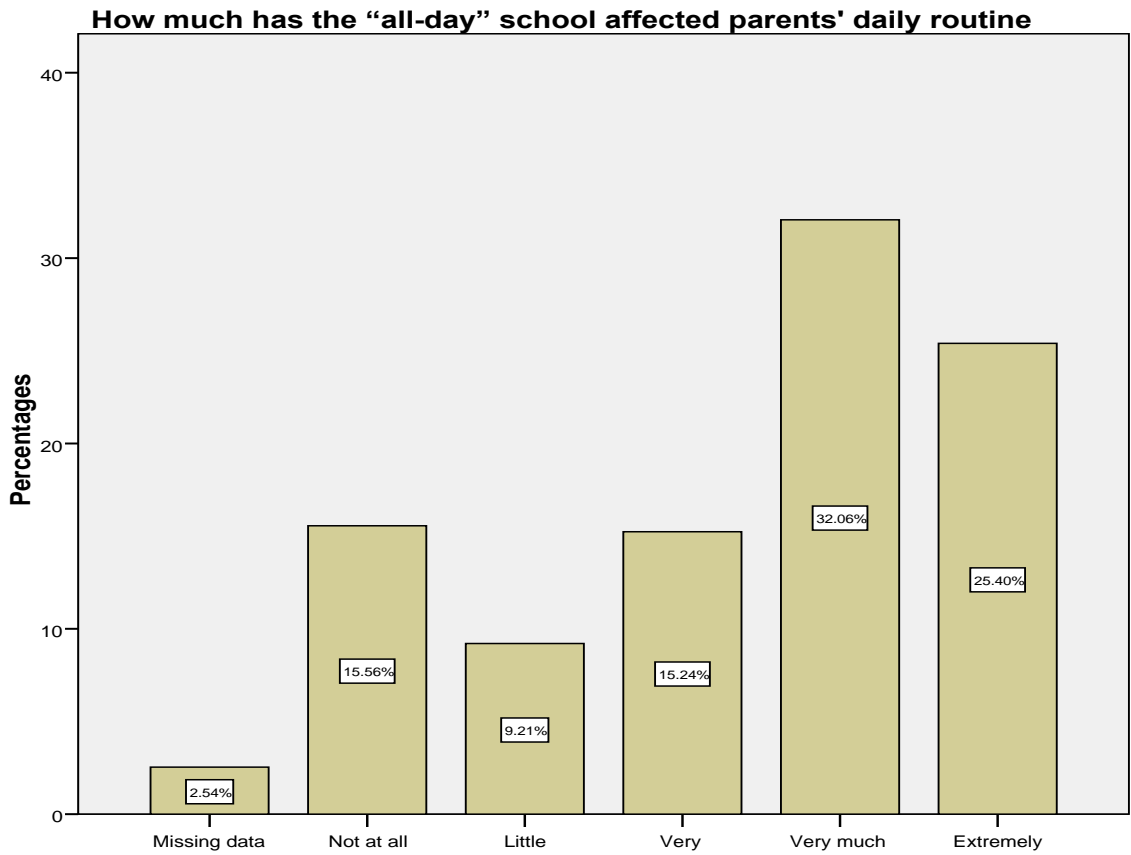


The above table indicates that parents in a comparably large percentage of 83.49% of parents recognise and agree that all the teachers play an important role in their children education in 'all-day' school.

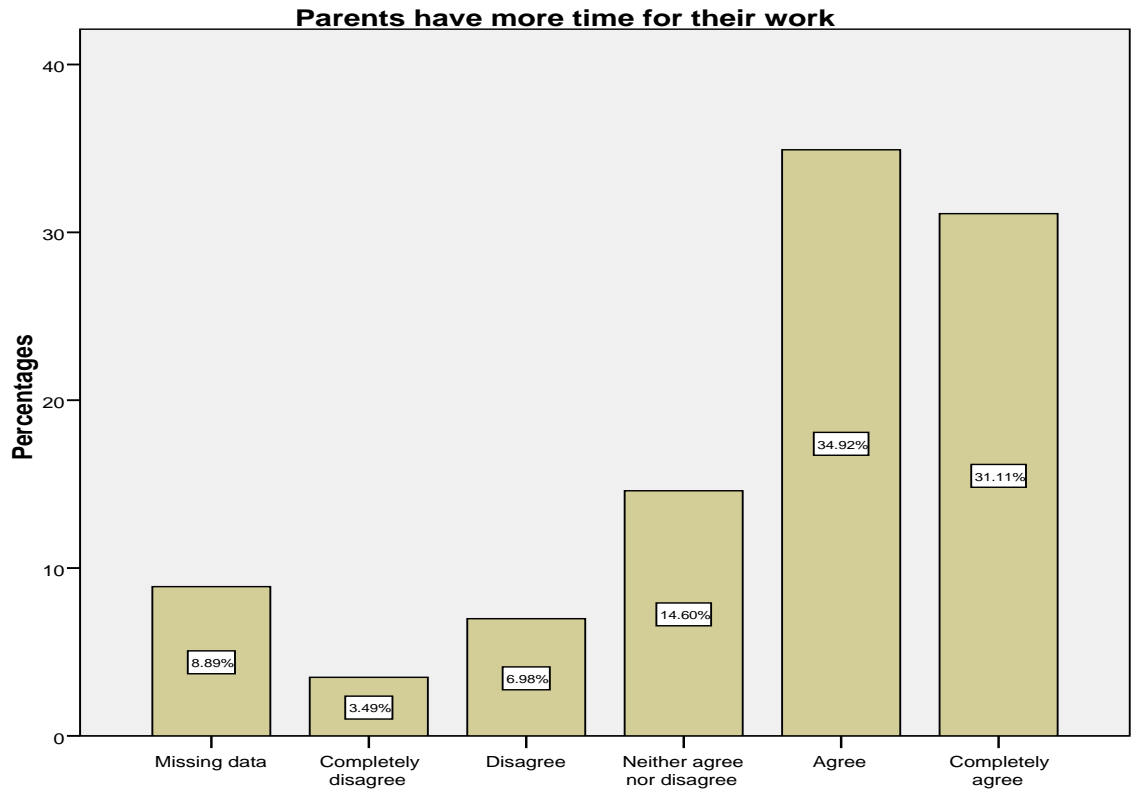
**Figure 4. 4 ‘All-day’ school and parents’ daily routine**



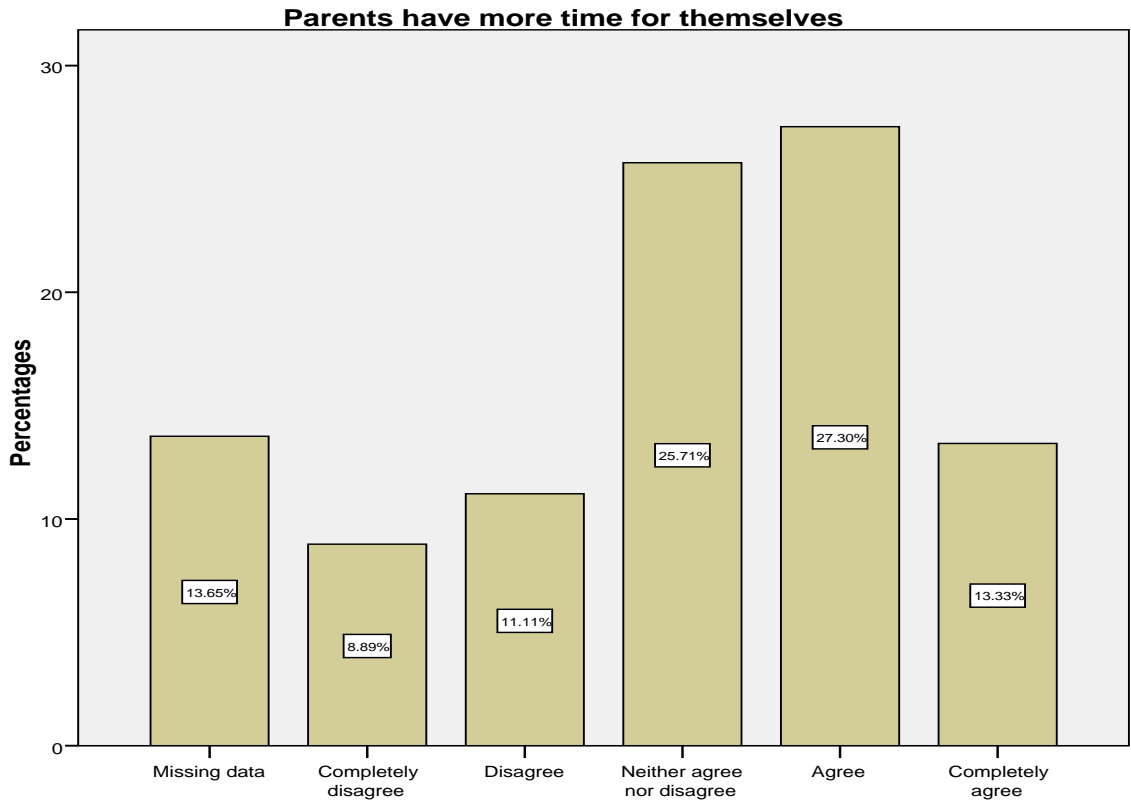
A percentage of 57.46% of parents agreed that in general the ‘all-day’ school has affected their daily routine. The majority of parents (66.03%, Mean=3.57) seem to believe that the ‘all-day’ school gives them the opportunity to spend more time at work. It is also indicated by parents’ answers that the impact of the ‘all-day’ school on parents’ lives is significant as 40.63% (Mean=2.84) of parents agreed that the ‘all-day’ school allows them more time for themselves. However, a number of parents (25.71%, Mean=2.44) could not state clearly if there is any change in their lives as a result of the longer hours that their children are spending in the ‘all-day’ school. Finally, a percentage of 67.94% of parents have not expressed their opinions about other possible effects of the ‘all-day’ school on their lives. The next graph present a mode detail account of the above findings.



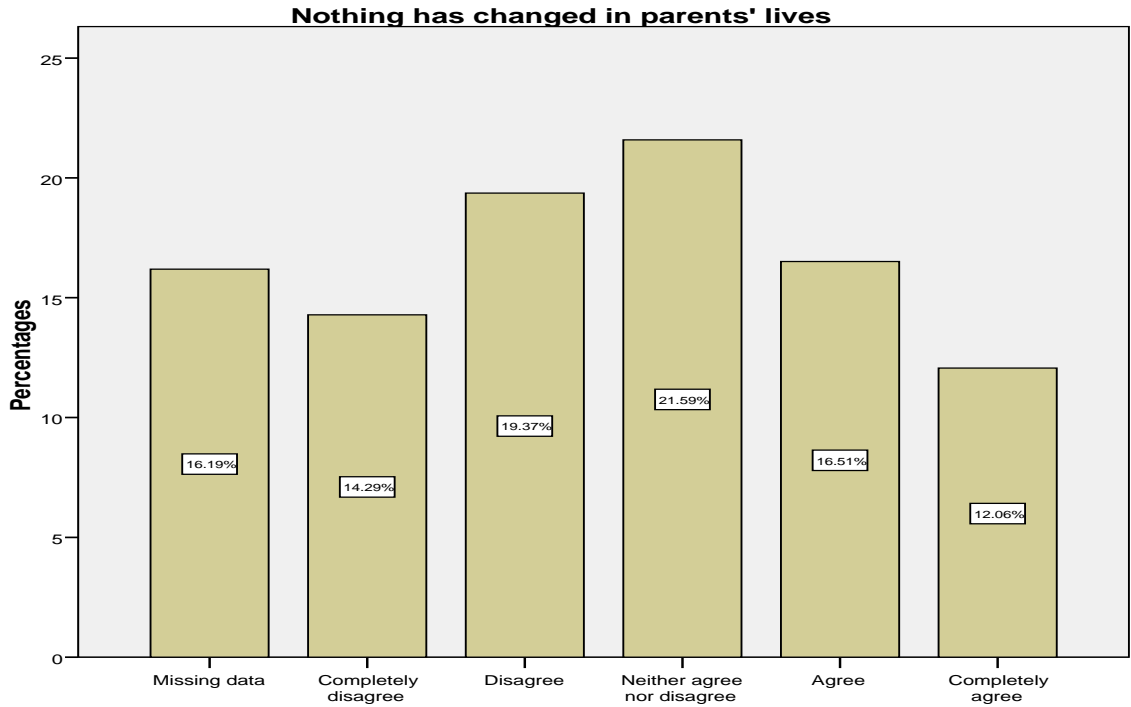
The figures of this table show that a percentage of 57.46% of parents believe that in general the ‘all-day’ school has affected their daily routine.



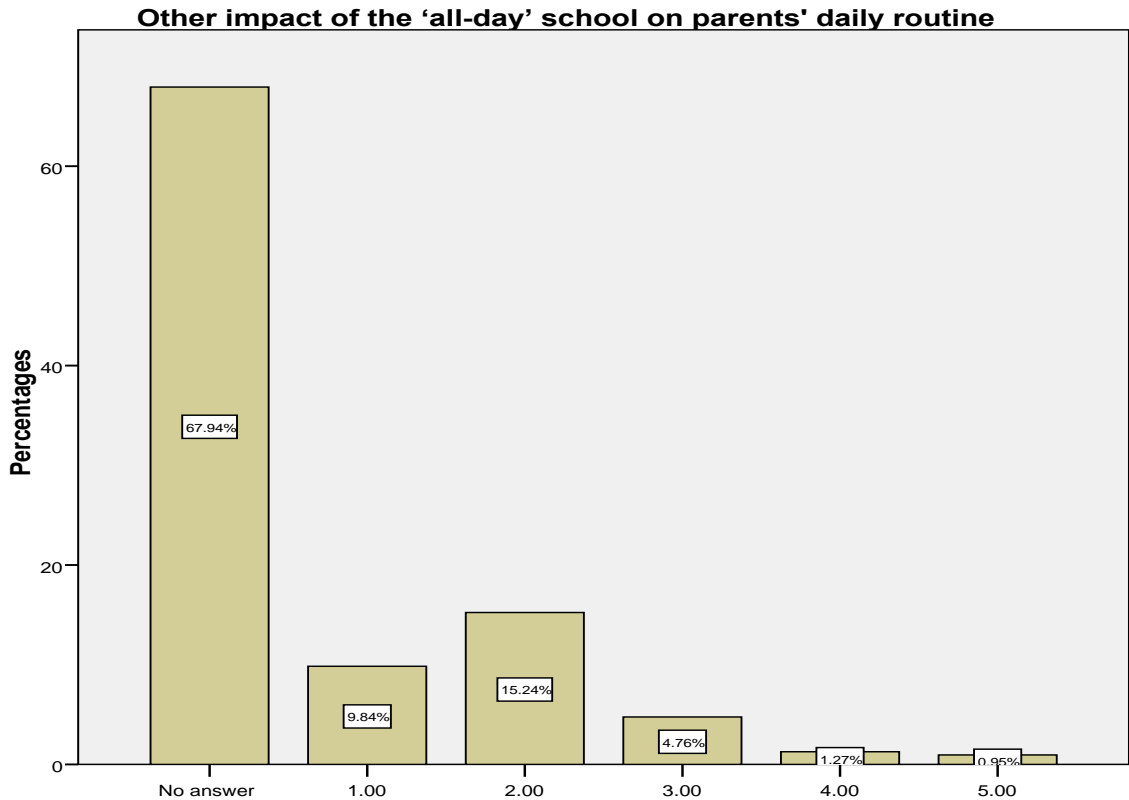
This table confirms that parents agree in their majority (66.03%) that the ‘all-day’ school gives them the opportunity to spend more time for their work. It is shown more specifically the impact of the ‘all-day’ school on parents’ lives in relation with their jobs.



This is an interesting table as well in relation with the effect of the ‘all-day’ school on parents’ lives as there is a percentage of 40.63% of parents that they think that the ‘all-day’ school allows them to spend more time for themselves. However, a not inconsiderable percentage of 25.71% of parents cannot state clearly if there is any change in their lives because of the long hours of the ‘all-day’ school’s operation.



This is a table of a big interest as it reveals that parents' views are not so clear about whether the 'all-day' school has not changed their daily routine. There is a percentage of 33.66% of them that they disagree in comparison with a smaller percentage of 28.56% of parents that they agree that the 'all-day' school has not changed their daily routine. However, percentages of 21.59% of them neither agree nor disagree. These findings can be clearer if they be compared with the findings of the three previous tables.

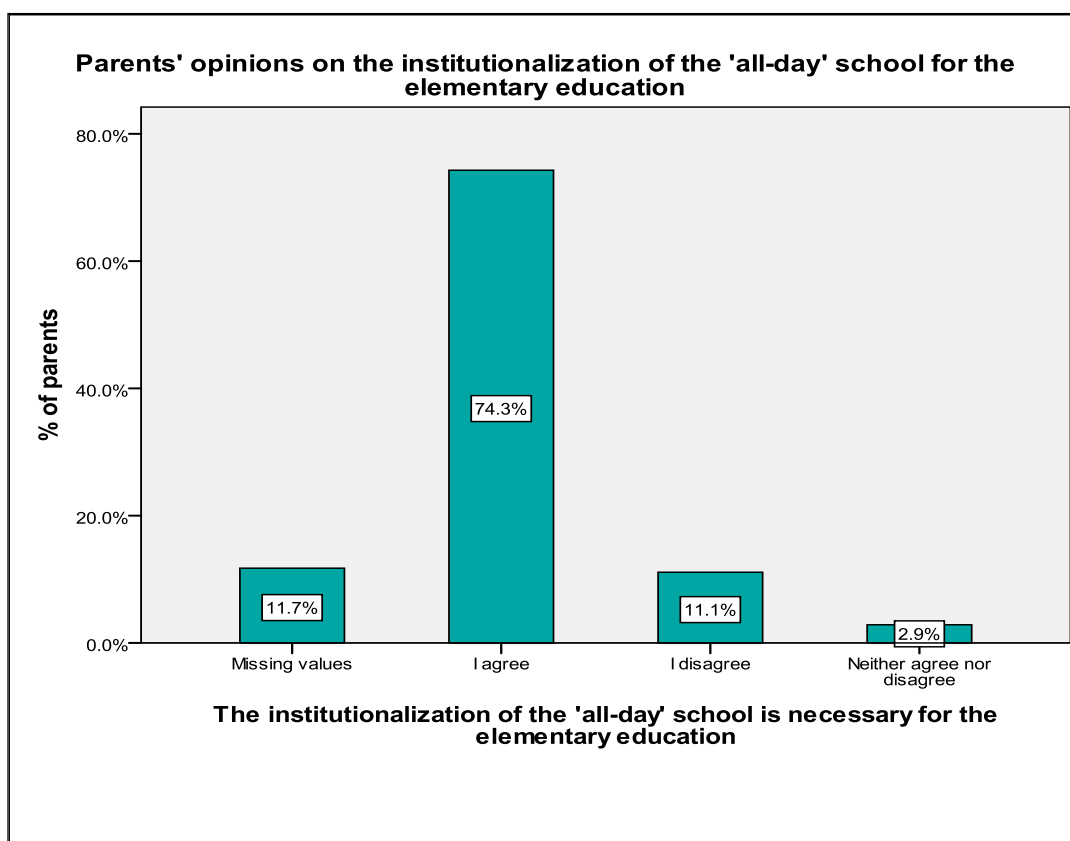


From this table it is indicated that a percentage of 67.94% of parents have not expressed their opinions about other possible effects of the 'all-day' school on their lives. A qualitative form of analysis is going to be given to the rest (32.06%) percentage of parents' views (to be completed).

- **Parents' criticism of the 'all-day' school**

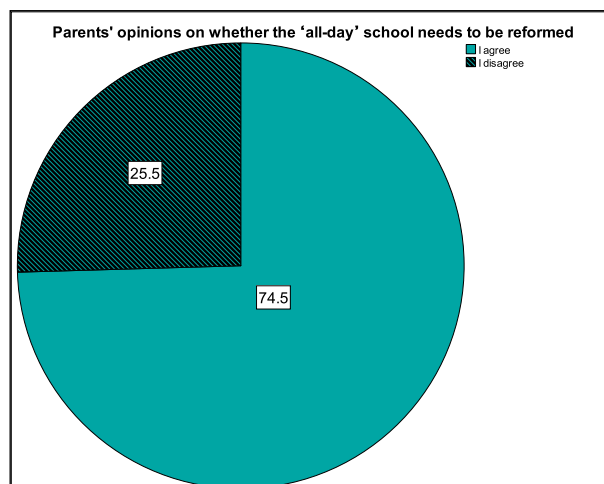
A significant number of parents (47.30%) believe that the 'all-day' school fulfils the students' needs, with 21.59% of parents not having a clear view on this issue and 16.19% not expressing any view. A percentage of 39.05% of parents agreed that the 'all-day' school covers the teachers' needs, whilst a considerable percentage at 30.16% neither agreed nor disagreed, and a further 24.44% of parents have not given an answer at all. However, the majority of parents (59.68%) considered that the 'all-day' school fulfils their own needs. Regarding whether the 'all-day' school satisfies the needs of students, teachers and parents, the majority of parents (52.70 %) perceived that the 'all-day' school fulfils the needs of all of them. At the same time, there is a smaller percentage (26.98%) of parents that neither agreed nor disagreed about this issue.

**Figure 4. 5 Parents’ opinions on the institutionalization of the ‘all-day’ school**



Parents have concluded that the institutionalization of the ‘all-day’ school is necessary for the elementary education with a percentage of 74.3% of them to have declared positively the need of the expanding of the ‘all-day’ school in the primary education. However, they agreed in their majority (74.5%) that the ‘all-day’ school needs to be reformed.

**Figure 4. 6 Parents’ opinions on whether the ‘all-day’ school needs to be reformed**





#### **4.2.2 Summary of the findings from the parents' questionnaires**

Overall, it seems that the parents' perception is that the pedagogical aims of the 'all-day' school have been implemented into practice. This is evidenced from the fact that parents believe that their children learn happily with new teaching practices and methods and develop new skills. However, it is worth noting that the completion of the homework at school is still a matter of concern.

In respect of the social aims of the 'all-day' school, there is a similar positive response from parents. They seem to be satisfied as they believe that their children expand their circle of friends, that there is greater interaction among students and greater cooperation between students and their teachers. They can also see that the 'all-day' school provides of reduction in negative forms of students' behaviour. More importantly, they are highly satisfied with the opportunity their children have to participate in extra activities in the afternoon zone. In general, they agree that their children spend their time in the 'all-day' school happily, creatively and constructively.

Regards the importance of the morning, afternoon and specialist teachers, the findings reveal that there is inconsistency in parents' perceptions. In particular, they strongly believe that the morning teacher plays the most important role in the 'all-day' school whilst they appreciate the importance of the other teachers as well. However, what is evident in this new form of schooling where all the teachers are supposed to play an equally important role, parents still perceive the morning teacher to be the important one. This fact indicates that in parents' mind the morning zone is of greater importance for their children's education.

Regarding the impact of the 'all-day' school on parents' daily routine, parents pointed out that the 'all-day' school gave them the opportunity to dedicate more time to their work. On the contrary, they do not believe that the 'all-day' school has affected the time spent for them.

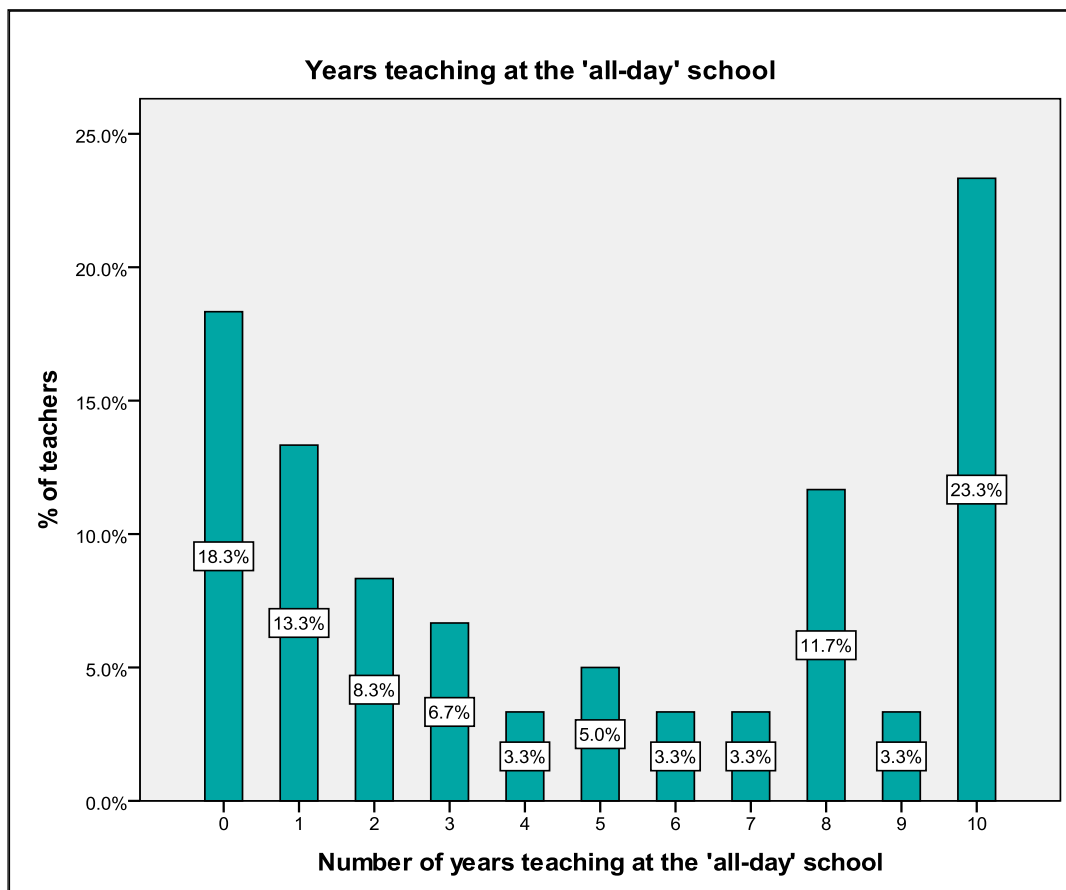
Finally, criticizing the institutionalization of the 'all-day' school parents emphasized the fact that the needs of parents' and students' are satisfied at the 'all-day' school. However, parents did not give a clear response to the question on whether the 'all-day' school is a necessary for the elementary education. However, they strongly agree in their majority and they request for changes.

## 4.3 Analysis of questionnaires for teachers

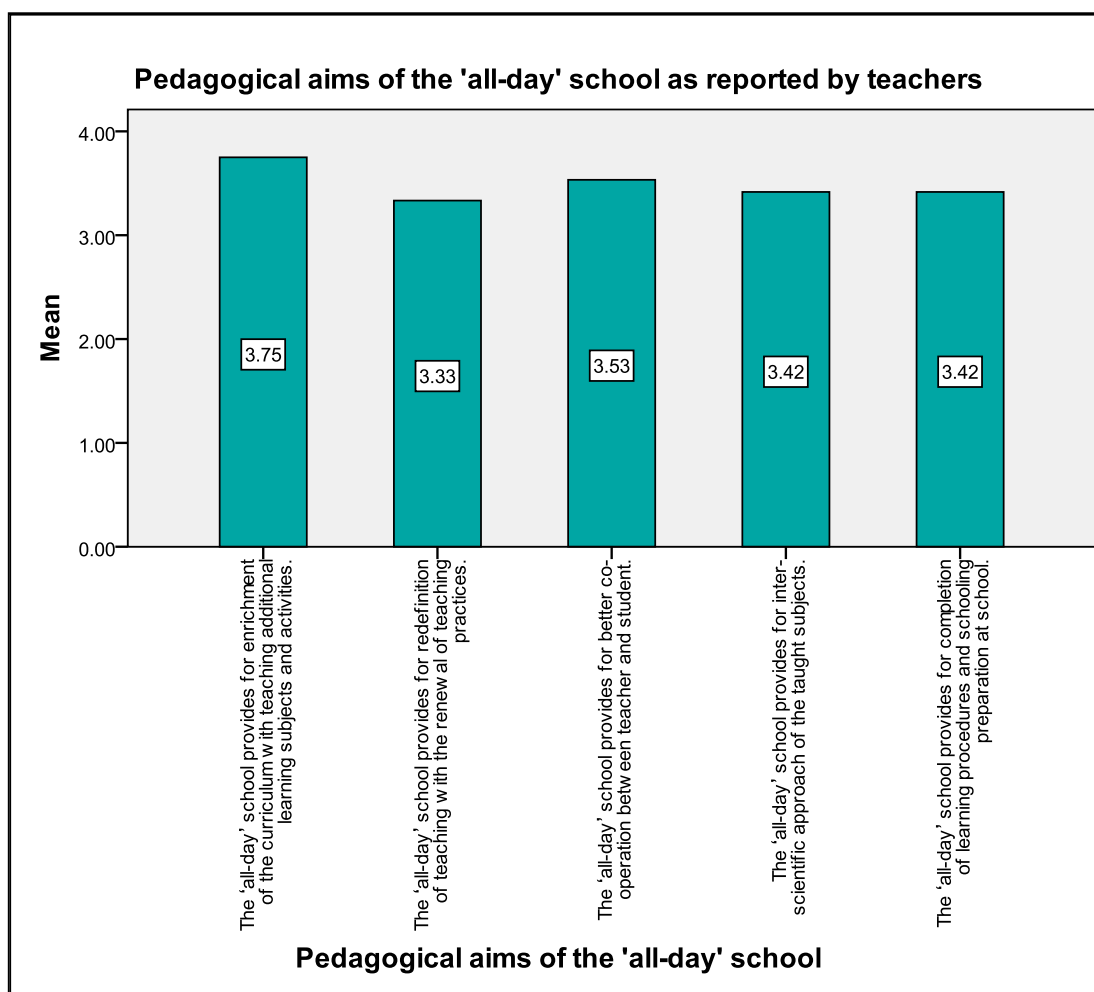
### 4.3.1 Demographic data

Amongst the 60 teachers who answered the questionnaires the 72% of them are female while the 28% are male teachers. The participants' distribution by age is 68% in the range of 30-45 years of age, 12% who are under 30 years of age, and the rest of them (20%) are above of 45 years of age. The 81.7% of these teachers have a previous working experience in an 'all-day' school and only a percentage of 18.3 % of them answered that they have not worked previously in an 'all-day' school.

**Figure 4. 7 Years teaching at the 'all-day' school**



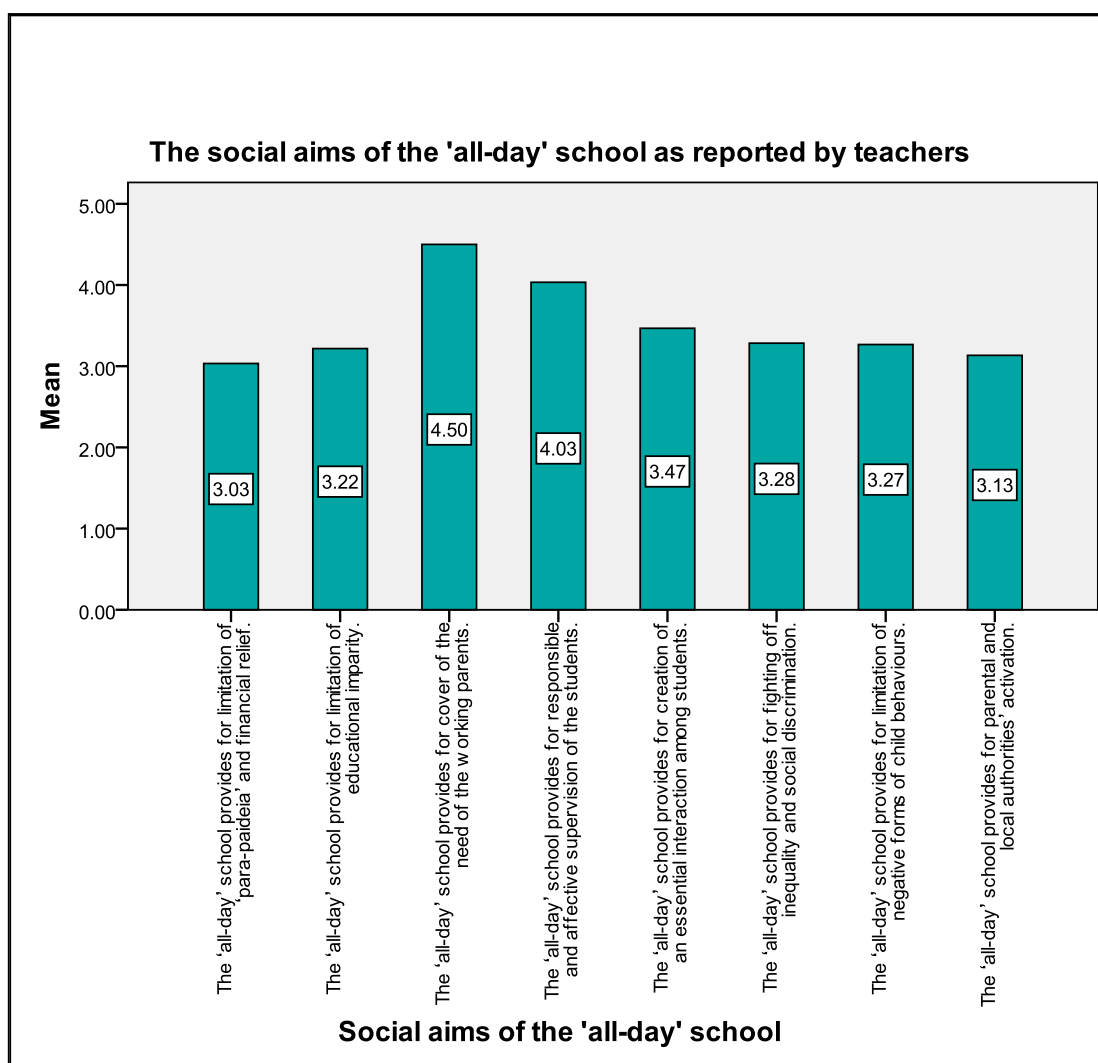
**Figure 4. 8 Pedagogical aims of the ‘all-day’ school**



A percentage of teachers (46.67%, Mean=3.75) agreed that the ‘all-day’ school provides for enrichment of the curriculum with teaching the additional learning subjects, while a percentage of 38.33%, Mean=3.33, believed that the ‘all-day’ school needs to redefine and renew the teaching methods and practices. However, there is a significant percentage of teachers (30%) who have not expressed a clear view about this issue. A percentage of 43.33%, Mean=3.53, of teachers seem to agree that the ‘all-day’ school provides a better-cooperation between teachers and students. Again it can be seen that there is a percentage of 35% of teachers who are uncertain about how successful is this cooperation between students and teachers as neither agreed nor disagreed. Regarding the way that the different subjects are taught in the ‘all-day’ school, a percentage of 40%, Mean=3.41, agreed that the inter-scientific approach is applied, while 30% of the teachers have not expressed a clear opinion. Finally, teachers in their majority (41.67, Mean=3.41) believed that the ‘all-day’ school

provides for completion of learning procedures and homework preparation at school but again there is a considerable percentage of them (38.23%) who neither agreed nor disagreed.

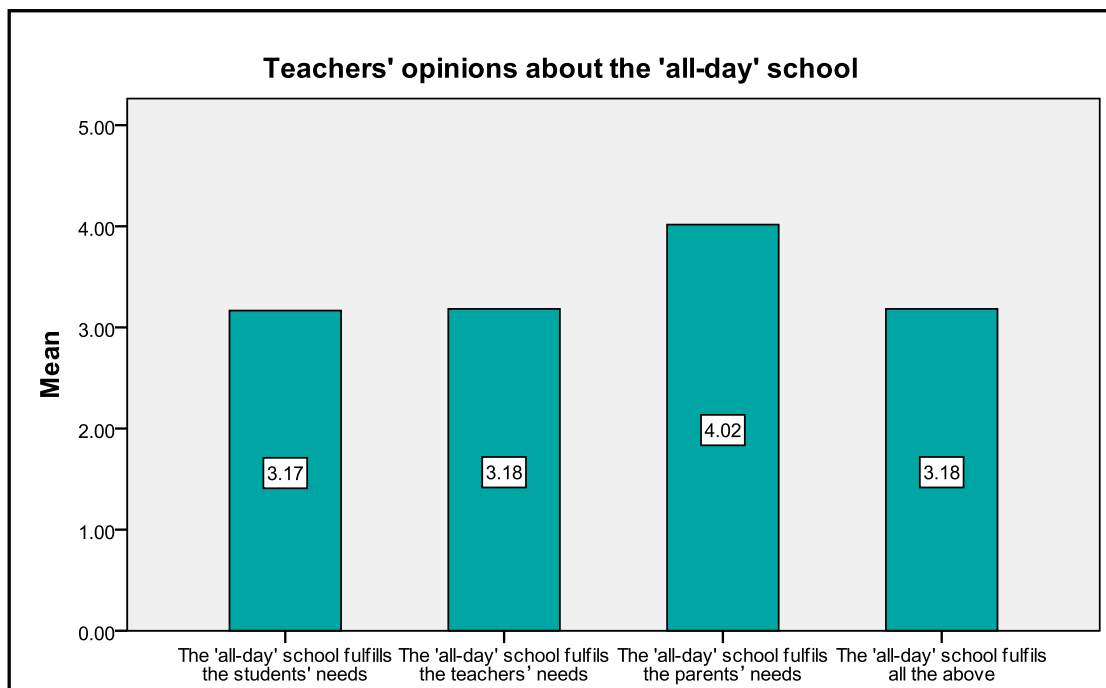
**Figure 4. 9 Social aims of the ‘all-day’ school**



A percentage of 40% (Mean=3.03) of teachers agreed that the ‘all-day’ schools limits ‘para-pedia’ and offers financial relief especially of those of the lower class. However, a considerable high percentage 35% disagrees with this opinion. Approximately half (45%, Mean=3.22) of the teachers agreed that the ‘all-day’ school limits the educational imparity with the induction of new learning subjects. A percentage of 31.6 remained undecided. Almost all teachers (95%, Mean=4.50) agreed that the ‘all-day’ school covers the needs of the working parents. Similarly, more that 80% (Mean=4.03)

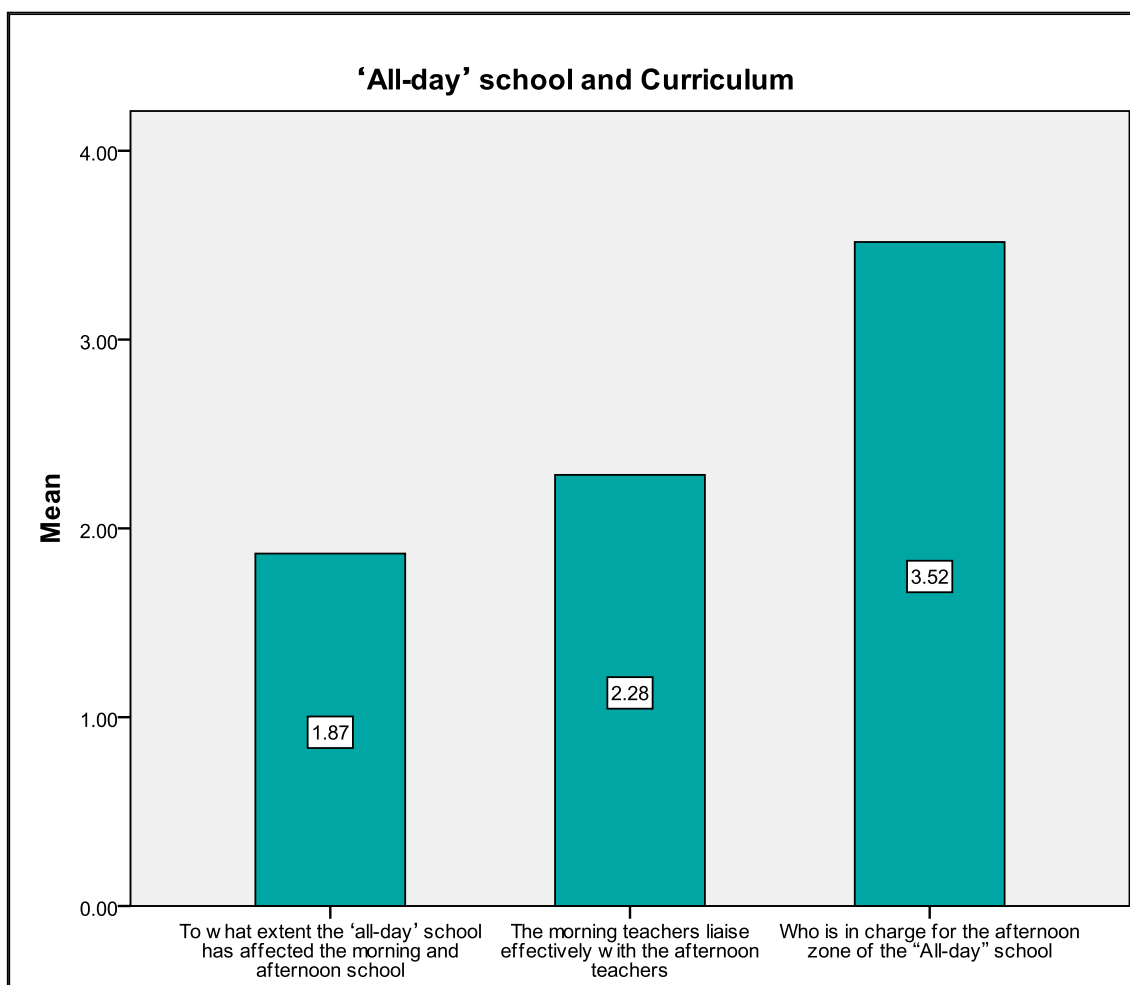
of teachers agreed that the ‘all-day’ school provides responsible and affective supervision of students. A lower percentage (53.3%, Mean= 3.47) agreed that it supports the acceptance of others and the understanding of cultural differences. In terms of the role of the ‘all-day’ school in fighting inequality, only a 38.3% (Mean=3.28) agreed that the school fights inequality and social discrimination. Almost half of the teachers (45%, Mean=3.27) agreed that the ‘all-day’ school limits negative forms of inequality. A 35% remains undecided. Finally, only a 35% (Mean=3.13) agreed that the school provides for parental and local authorities’ activation in order the school to be the heart of the local community life.

**Figure 4. 10 Teachers’ opinions about the ‘all-day’ school**



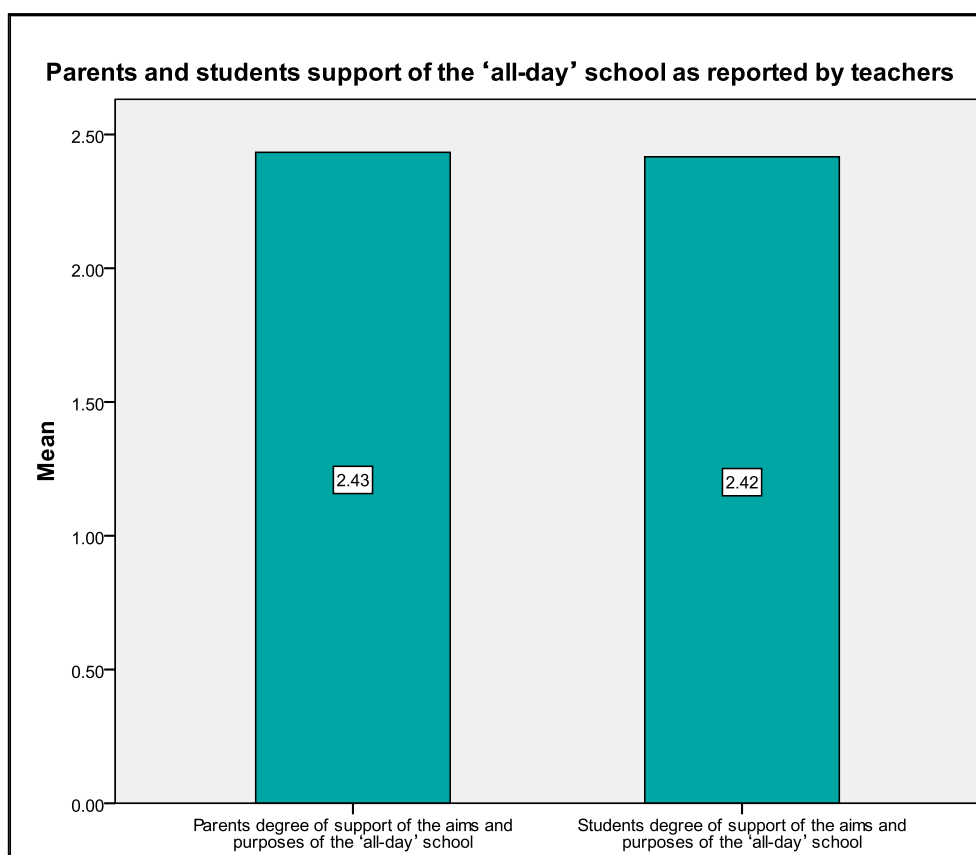
Almost half of the teachers (46.6%, Mean=3.17) agreed that the ‘all-day’ school fulfils students’ needs while a higher percentage (51.6%, M=3.18) agreed that it fulfils teachers’ needs as well. A great 80% (Mean=4.02) agreed that the school fulfils parents’ needs. In general, a 48.3% (Mean=3.18) agreed in all the above.

**Figure 4. 11 ‘All-day’ school and curriculum**



The majority of teachers (60%, Mean= 1.87) supported that the ‘all-day’ school has little or at all affected the morning and afternoon school. A similar percentage (63.3%, M=2.28) agreed that the morning teachers liaise little or at all with the afternoon teachers. Neither the head-teachers nor the specialists have been found to be responsible for the afternoon zone of the ‘all-day’ school as 78.3% (Mean=3.52) stated that other people are responsible for it.

**Figure 4. 12 Parents’ and students’ support of the ‘all-day’ school according to teachers**



As evident in the above graph, teachers’ belief that parents and students are similarly supportive of the aims and purposes of the ‘all-day’ school. Specifically, a 53.3% (Mean=2.42) argued that students are little supportive of the ‘all-day’ school while a 40% supported that students are very much supportive. In terms of parents’ role, a 45% (Mean=2.42) agreed that they are very much supportive whereas 46.7% stated that they are only little supportive.

#### **4.3.2 Summary of the findings from the teachers’ questionnaires**

Overall, it seems that the teachers’ perception is that the pedagogical aims of the ‘all-day’ school have been partly implemented into practice. This is evidenced from the fact that teachers agreed that the ‘all-day’ school provides for enrichment of the curriculum with teaching the additional learning subjects However, they perceived that the ‘all-day’ school needs to redefine and renew the teaching methods and practices. Teachers have also expressed positively about teachers-students cooperation and they

seemed to agree that the 'all-day' school provides a better-cooperation between teachers and students. Regarding the way that the different subjects are taught in the 'all-day' school, teachers opinions are divided whether or not the inter-disciplinary approach should be applied as they expressed doubts about its effectiveness . Finally, teachers believed that the 'all-day' school provides for completion of learning procedures and homework preparation at school but again there is a considerable percentage of them who neither agreed nor disagreed.

Regarding the social aims of the 'all-day' school teachers partly agreed that the 'all-day' schools limits 'parapedia' and offers financial relief especially of those of the lower class. Approximately half of the teachers agreed that the 'all-day' school limits the educational imparity with the induction of new learning subjects. There is strong evidence from the findings that almost all teachers agreed that the 'all-day' school covers the needs of the working parents. Similarly, teachers agreed that the 'all-day' school provides responsible and affective supervision of students and it supports students' acceptance of others and the understanding of cultural differences. Teachers also agreed that the 'all-day' school limits negative forms of inequality. However, the findings reveal that there is inconsistency in teachers' perceptions with regards the degree of the school's encouragement for parental and local authorities' activation and involvement in school life. In general, teachers agreed that the 'all-day' school fulfils students' and teachers' needs but mainly it fulfils parents' working needs. The majority of teachers expressed the view that the 'all-day' school has little or at all affected the morning and afternoon zones. This fact is of major importance as from teachers' experience can be revealed that the 'all-day' school does not operate as one unit with a smooth programme and cooperation between morning and afternoon teachers but it is divided into two separate zones. It is evidence from the findings that teachers strongly agreed that the morning teachers liaise little or at all with the afternoon teachers. Teachers also had no a clear picture about who was accountable for the operation of the 'all-day' school especially regarding the afternoon zone. However, teachers believe that parents and students are similarly supportive of the aims and purposes of the 'all-day' school.



## **4.4 Conclusions**

In this chapter data collected from semi structured interviews and questionnaires with the teachers, parents and students of the 'all-day' school have been analysed. Thematic analysis was the method used to analyse the semi-structured interviews. Due to emerging contradictions amongst the teachers', parents' and students' views about the impact of the 'all-day' school on their lives, dilemma analysis was deployed in order to better serve the purposes of this study. These findings will be discussed in detail in the next chapter drawing from the existing literature with the aim of answering the thesis research questions.

# Chapter 5 - Discussion

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## 5.1 Introduction

At the outset of this thesis a number of key questions were posed to guide the research towards a conclusion. These questions arose as a result of a clear review of existing literature on factors related to the operation of the pilot ‘all-day’ school scheme in Greece. Whilst this research has covered some of the ground of previous researches the core questions of interest are:

1. To what extent have the theoretical aims of the ‘all-day’ school been put into practice?
2. What is the impact of the ‘all-day’ school on the professional lives of teachers?
3. What are students’ perceptions of the ‘all-day’ school?
4. What are parents’ perceptions of the ‘all-day’ school?

In the following sections, each of these questions will be discussed in detail.

## 5.2 Research question 1

**To what extent have the theoretical aims of the ‘all-day’ school been put into practice?**

The findings reveal important information about the role and impact of the pilot ‘all-day’ school in Greece on the lives of students, teachers and parents. A number of important issues that have resulted from the questionnaire and interview material are both encouraging and disappointing for the operation of the ‘all-day’ school and the successful application of the ‘all-day’ school curriculum in primary education. The

'all-day' school was introduced and applied as a means of providing a flexible and educational environment to enhance and accelerate learning. However, the application and operation of the 'all-day' school, since it was first introduced in 1997, as this research reveals, was affected by a number of issues. It is worth noting that the pilot 'all-day' school, which is the phenomenon under examination in this study, was badly affected during a period of a severe economic recession in Greece. The 'all-day' school scheme included a number of ambitious plans, which aimed at improving learning through the introduction of creative activities, parental support for working families, elimination of '*para-paideia*' and assisting unemployed teachers with subject specialism. A consideration of the theoretical aims of the 'all-day' school, pedagogical and social, in light of the findings, indicates that some of these aims seem to have been put into practice whilst some others remain unaccomplished. In the following section, the extent of the implementation of both social and pedagogical aims of the 'all-day' school will be analytically discussed.

- **Social aims of the 'all-day' school**

The establishment of the 'all-day' school was the result of a number of socio-political and economical changes which took place in Greece upon its entry into the European Union in 1981. Significant changes in the Greek society related to new family structures occurring with the entrance of an increasing number of women in the country's workforce. These changes led the Ministry of Education to recognize and accept the need for reforming the educational system by prioritizing the needs of working parents (Law 1566/85). In the following paragraphs, the social aims of the 'all-day' school are presented and discussed in relation to the literature and in the light of the findings emerging from this study.

- *Limitation of 'para-paideia'<sup>11</sup> and financial relief especially of those of the working class*

The 'all-day' school aimed at limiting the '*para-paideia*' phenomenon and at offering parents financial relief by giving their children the opportunity to complete their homework at school and in addition to participate in extra activities which otherwise they would be unable to enjoy. This was an important ambition of the 'all-day' school

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<sup>11</sup> The term '*para-paideia*' is referred to the private tutorial of the taught learning subjects in school that take place outside school and the students are made to attend them if they want to pass the exams.

scheme since parents could spend long hours at work while their children could spend extra time at school participating in creative and pedagogical activities without any monetary implications. These activities included homework preparation, sports, theatre education, ICT, foreign languages, music, art and cultural group activities (FEK 12/620/61531/G1/2011; FEK 1327/2011 t. B; Ministry of Education, 2012, §4).

From teachers' perspectives all the additional subjects and activities were necessary for curriculum enhancement and based on their experience students perceived them as *extremely enjoyable and pleasant*. This is a view supported by a previous study highlighting the contribution of the 'all-day' school to students learning in a different and more enjoyable way in relation to the enrichment of its curriculum with extra activities (Chaniotakis, 2009). The significance of teachers' views are in accordance with the views of the OECD report (2012); both views perceived a real need to reform the academic orientation of the Greek primary school curriculum from teacher-centered approaches to active student-centered learning.

This study, however, broadens our understanding of the specialist teachers' accounts concerning the new activities and subjects of the 'all-day' school. Their accounts were particularly interesting, because these were based on their experience and daily interaction with the students. Specialist teachers had responsibility for teaching different new subjects and activities- an innovation introduced for the first time in Greek primary education as in the mainstream schools all the subjects are taught by the class teacher (Ministry of Education, 2012, §4). The specialist teachers highlighted the significance of introducing new subjects and activities for students' active learning, and also the importance of applying different teaching methods which appeal to all students, especially of differing abilities (Bouzakis, 1995; Konstantinou, 2007; Chaniotakis, Gregoriadis & Thoidis, 2009).

According to teachers the new activities and subjects are very helpful especially for students from low income families who can enjoy additional activities different from the lessons and activities of the conventional school programme. Parents' financial relief and support, especially for those with low income as a result of the introduction of the 'all-day' school's new activities and subjects is evident not only from teachers' perspectives but also from students' and parents' accounts. What is important, at this point, is the fact that this view has been supported partly in the past by previous

studies which, however, have examined only the views of the teachers concerning the enhancement of the ‘all-day’ school curriculum and the possible effect on students only (Chaniotakis, 2009; Loukeris *et al*, 2009).

The significant contradiction, however, is that although parents acknowledge the pedagogical and social importance of the additional activities for their children and themselves, they are negative in relation to the way the ‘all-day’ school provides these activities to their children. Parents believe that the ‘all-day’ school has failed to put into practice its promises regarding the extra activities. They argue that the ‘all-day’ school failed to provide students with the promising new activities effectively and they raise concerns over the inconsistency between curriculum decision making and curriculum implementation. The above findings support similar results from previous studies stressing out the failure of the ‘all-day’ school to effectively provide these activities to students (Pashali and Tsiagki (2000); Papapetrou and Sousamidou (2004); Arvaniti , 2004; ΓΣΕΕ-ΑΔΕΔΥ, 2007).

According to parents’ accounts the fact that the ‘all-day’ school has failed to provide students’ with the promised activities, for reasons which will be discussed in the following sections, has resulted in specific complications. ‘*Para-paideia*’ is a persistent problem for the Greek education forcing the parents to send their children for additional activities and supplementary private tutorial lessons in the afternoon costing extra money. As a result, the phenomenon of ‘*para-paideia*’<sup>12</sup> remains unresolved as the Greek state has failed with the establishment and operation of the ‘all-day’ scheme to contribute to the limitation of ‘*para-paideia*’<sup>13</sup> and the financial relief of low income families. This is an important finding, as there is not enough evidence from previous studies concerning the operation of the ‘all-day’ school in Greece and its effect on students families’ financial relief.

- *Limitation of educational parity with the induction of new learning subjects in order for low-ability students to be more supported*

The Ministry of Education aimed with the new learning subjects and activities of the ‘all-day’ school to help and support the students with learning difficulties. This was an

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<sup>12</sup> The term ‘*para-paideia*’ is referred to the private tutorial of the taught learning subjects in school that take place outside school and the students are made to attend them if they want to pass the exams.

ambitious aim in order for all students to be equally supported. Having had the ‘all-day’ school’s programme enriched with additional subjects and activities it was necessary for teachers to move from traditional teaching methods to more innovative and creative ones, which could help students learn effectively and in a more recreational way. There is evidence from the specialist teachers’ accounts that students’ performance was much better with the application of new subjects and activities especially for low ability students. The same views are supported by students’ accounts emphasising *the enjoyable and pleasant activities*, which help them learn better and easier. These findings support similar views of previous studies about students’ improved education at the ‘all-day’ school (Arvaniti, 2004) with the provision of extra activities. It is worth noting, however, that these findings contrast with students’, parents’ and teachers’ different preferences about what subjects and activities they consider the most suitable for students’ needs (Papapetrou & Sousamidou, 2004).

However, what is interesting and new from these findings is the expanded database producing useful descriptive information about teachers’ views. A more detailed understanding of specialist teachers’ opinions about the teaching methods and approaches of the new activities and subjects, which conflict with those of the class teachers, is revealed. The findings show a constant contradiction between class teachers’ views and specialist teachers’ view about the function and operation of the ‘all-day’ school which will be discussed in the following sections. Teachers’ accounts concerning the effectiveness of the introduction of the new subjects of the ‘all-day’ school and their effect on students’ performance are in contradiction with parents’ views who have also participated in this debate.

The study reveals that parents place greater emphasis on the morning-zone teachers’ contribution to their children’s performance perceiving the specialist teachers’ role as unimportant. There is no such evidence from previous studies examining the effect of the collaboration of class and specialist teachers on students and how these roles are perceived by both parents and students.

Concerning students’ opinions the findings highlight their enthusiasm participating in the extra activities recognising their importance in learning differently and happily.

Similar views have been expressed by the students in a previous study conducted by Papapetrou & Sousamidou (2004) with parents placing extra emphasis on the completion of homework at school and being less interested in their children's participation in other athletic, aesthetic or artistic activities and subjects.

- *Cover of the need of the working parents*

The 'all-day' school aimed at responding to parents who wanted an organised school that supported and educated their children, supported the working family and released the financial burden and the search for out of school care. In practice, however, and according to the findings, parents argue that the 'all-day' school failed partly to fulfil its promises. Similar findings in the past have revealed parents' dissatisfaction with inappropriate facilities and conditions in the schools (Pashali & Tsiagki, 2000; Papapetrou & Sousamidou, 2004; INEE/GSEE/ADEDY, 2007; Mousiou-Mylona, 2004)

The extended schooling programme of the all-day school offered tremendous help to working families and parents who needed to feel that their children had a safe and productive long afternoon at school while they worked long hours. Parents (57.46%) agreed that in general the 'all-day' school has affected their daily routine. The majority of parents (66.03%) seem to believe that the 'all-day' school gives them the opportunity to spend more time at work. Parents' answers also indicate that the impact of the 'all-day' school on parents' lives is significant as 40.63% of parents agreed that the 'all-day' school allows them more time for themselves. It is an important decision made by the Greek Ministry of Education to assist the working families and to provide a creative and suitable learning environment for their children especially for families experiencing financial difficulties. The positive feedback provided by the majority of parents fully confirms the 'all-day' school's success in that respect. As argued, the all-day school is very useful for working parents as they have the opportunity to work long hours and students remain in a safe environment.

Positive feedback was also received by non-working parents who felt that they were given enough time to look for a job or work part-time should they wish to. The 'all-day school' succeeded in offering parents an opportunity that they would not have had, if they had sent their children to a regular school. This was seen by parents as the only important outcome of the 'all-day' school for their children. They are not particularly

interested in the activities that their children are involved in the afternoon as long as they gain the knowledge required from attending morning class, and stay safe somewhere in the afternoon until they finish work. Some working parents' responses confirm this view and highlight how important it is for them to leave their children at school without having to pay a childminder or having to rush back from work to pick their children up from school. This is an important finding that acknowledges the positive aspects of the operation of the 'all-day' school in assisting working families as well as single mothers who want to fulfil their career expectations.

The main objection came from the non-working parents who felt that there was no particular reason for their children to attend the afternoon zone. Their nonworking life meant that they had free time to collect children from school. One of the most significant reasons for the non-working parents being dissatisfied was the issue of students not being able to finish their homework as they got involved in other activities. They perceived children's education as very important and were ready to commit themselves to their children's extra time outside school activities. The parents believed the time spent in the afternoon session, therefore, gets 'wasted' as students do not learn properly with non-specialist teachers.

The responses provided by both working and non-working parents are very significant regarding their evaluation of the 'all-day' school. Their views reflect the extent to which the 'all-day' school meets its purposes and the expected level of student learning and performance. In addition, their views provide essential information that could not have been extracted from students alone. Parents can pinpoint problems with their children's performance in school and satisfaction with the curriculum. Indeed, parents might have been more satisfied with the operation of the 'all-day' school, if their children came back from school exhausted from a long day activity and with unfinished homework that had to be completed through private tutoring. This research study significantly complements the literature that did not take into account parents' views extensively. The findings, for instance, from parents' responses that the lack of basic facilities to support practical learning and the gaps in human resources, which affect student performance, are significant and wide-ranging enough to reveal the limitations of the 'all-day' school. Parents should be given the opportunity to participate and have a say in the 'all-day' school management for their children better education. The present study provides important information to the Greek educational



authorities to hear the voices of the stakeholders participating in the operation of the ‘all-day’ school and take measures to improve it.

- *Responsible and affective supervision of students*

The study shows that parents do not perceive the ‘all-day’ school as a school with two unbreakable and connected zones, but they view the morning zone as the most important, as the ‘*proper school*’ in comparison with the afternoon zone, which is mentioned with contempt as a form of ‘baby-sitting’. However, the findings reveal that teachers believe, despite all the negative aspects of the ‘all-day’ school that the ‘all-day’ school provides parents with the feeling of leaving their children in a safe environment for long hours. It is of great importance for all those parents with extra working responsibilities having to stay at work until late in the afternoon. At this point, according to these findings, teachers claim that parents trust and rely more on the morning zone teachers, because they are used to the morning school system. These beliefs are also evident in the way parents contact teachers to get information about their children’s progress. As they are used to consulting the morning teachers about their children’s progress, they totally ignore the afternoon teachers. Parents are interested in a safe environment for their children to stay so they can work or fulfil other commitments, which they may have. This evidence is supported by parents’ views in previous studies as well, concerning the social characteristics of students in the *open and flexible* ‘all-day’ school, concluding that the ‘all-day’ school provides students with a safe environment while their parents work until late in the afternoon (Lamnias & Ntakoumis, 2003).

According to the teachers, parents consider that the traditional form of school is the norm, and they perceive the ‘all-day’ school not as one school unit, but as a school divided into two zones, which offers their child the option of staying for longer in the afternoon zone.

The ‘all-day’ school was legislated and initiated in response to the apparent need for a bigger workforce and also the growing number of working mothers (Law 2525/97). Moreover, the Ministry of Education lays emphasis on parents’ views and perceptions in the formation of the school programme. They are invited to suggest up to two teaching subjects to help the school and family to fulfil the educational and social needs of the students providing a safe and creative school environment with the

ultimate goal of providing equal opportunities for education for all students. Furthermore, the initial purpose of the all-day school was the elimination of ‘para-paideia’<sup>14</sup> (Law 2525/97, Gazette Φ.Ε.Κ. 1471/22.11.2002). However, the results of this study confirm that the ‘all-day’ school maintained the status quo rather than eliminating the issue of ‘para-paideia’.

The ‘all-day’ school proved insufficient in providing education for all subjects and interests in such quality and quantity in which students do not require additional classes outside school. This issue was exacerbated by the lack of time for students to complete their homework in school. The lack of resources and the need for supply teachers further added to the problems. The findings from teachers’ responses show that teachers were unhappy with the limited time provided for students within the curriculum to complete their homework within the school premises. This is also associated with the perceptions of parents seeing the all-day school activities as non-important placing more significance to the classes of the morning zone.

- *Creation of essential interaction among students*

The findings of this study, as revealed from students’ responses contribute to the literature that argues that the ‘all-day’ school suffers from shortcomings and deficiencies that affect students’ learning environment (Grollios & Liabas, 2012, p. 12). The present study, however, provides a more detailed account by analysing the responses of students along with teachers’ and parents’ views offering significant evidence about students’ relationships and interaction in this specific school environment. All the previous studies, conducted in Greece concerning the impact of the institutionalization and operation of the ‘all-day’ school on students, examined, merely, whether or not the school has succeeded to provide them with a successful and effective learning environment (Androulakis, 2006; Konstantinou, 2007; Loukeris *et al.* 2009; Grollios & Liabas, 2012 ).

According to the students, spending long hours at school affects their interpersonal relationships and creates positive and negative interactions. There were students who claimed that they made new friends at school as they have more time to spend with

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<sup>14</sup> The term ‘*para-paideia*’ is referred to the private tutorial of the taught learning subjects in school that take place outside school and the students are made to attend them if they want to pass the exams.

their classmates. In the 'all-day' school it is important for the students to spend their long stay creatively and pleasantly. It seems that friendships at school play a balancing role in students' lives and affect their school performance. The students of the 'all-day' school seem to overcome negative aspects of their school thanks to the benefits of their friendship with their classmates. Even when the long day at school becomes very tiring, having good friends lightens and reduces negative emotions and thoughts. It is important for students who spend long hours at school to have the ability to build and maintain good relationships with each other. Especially for the students of the 'all-day' school, which do not provide the appropriate teaching and learning conditions for the long school hours, the findings reveal that they can adapt better if they have good friends. The students of the 'all-day' school spend almost their whole day at school. It is important for them to have good friends and develop the necessary social skills. Friendships at school can help them develop emotionally and morally from an early age. Apart from the ability to learn how to communicate and work together at school, they also learn how to solve daily problems.

However, when staying at school for long hours, tensions and arguments can start, especially in overcrowded schools as the 'all-day' schools have small playgrounds and limited outdoor activities. Students have illustrated very vividly their every day relationships at the 'all-day' school and how these relationships are built. Negative forms of behaviour seem to be a problem between younger and older students. These problems arise during break time. The 'all-day' school did not provide for different break times for younger and older children. All the students, of age 6 to 12 (Year 1 to Year 6) share the same small grounds during break time. This is especially hard for the students of the small classes, as it is less likely to cope with negative forms of behaviour from older students. Things can turn out very traumatic for the younger students, as they can be bullied or mistreated by the senior students.

Friendships at school play an important role not only when students work and learn together in the classroom but mainly when they are left outside in the school grounds to play and rest during break time. In an overcrowded schoolyard students test their ability to communicate and play with others harmoniously, but this is not always easy. However, because of friendships develop between students, difficult and unpleasant incidents can be avoided with the support of friends. This evidence is supported by a significant percentage of parents (48.89%) who believe that the 'all-day' school helps

their children improve their negative forms of behaviour whilst 29.21 % of them do not seem to have a clear view about this important issue.

Students' school friendships and relationships have been a favourite subject of study for many researchers. Based on what students said during research, we can conclude that the long school hours create opportunities to develop strong friendships, which can have a positive impact on students' performance and attitudes towards school. The 'all-day' school plays a significant role in developing the social needs of students. These findings are also supported by parents' responses, as the majority of parents (58.09%) recognised the importance of the 'all-day' school in giving their children the opportunity to improve their social skills. It is indicative that a considerable percentage of parents (59.04%) believe the 'all-day' school is the right environment for their children to develop new friendships with the other students. Also, most of the parents (62.22%) agreed that the 'all-day' school gives their children the opportunity to interact positively with the other students. In addition, a significant percentage (68.89%) of parents believes that the relationship between the students and their teachers at the 'all-day' school is positive.

- *Parental and local authorities' involvement in order the school to be the heart of the local community life*

One of the main aims of the 'all-day' school was the active involvement of parents and local authorities in school processes in order for the school to 'open' its doors to the local community and to broaden interaction amongst the stakeholders. The 'all-day' school is called to play a significant social role encouraging teachers, students, parents and local authorities to work together with the aim of improving and expanding its social and pedagogical aims (Law 2525/97, Pedagogical Institute, 2002).

The present study took place in eight different 'all-day' schools in the wider area of Athens sadly revealed the absence of any local authorities' involvement in the school's life. Only in one school, according to teachers' accounts, does the local authority seem to play an active and vital role in the successful operation of the school. This finding reveals the inconsistency between the theoretical aims of the 'all-day' school for active participation of the local authorities in the local school with what happens in practice. This particular school is well supported, according to its head-teacher, which has a positive impact on the school ethos.

This research study contributes significantly to the literature as previous studies have not taken into account local authorities' participation in Greek primary school at all. The findings, for instance, from the teachers' responses on the lack of active participation of the local authorities in the 'all-day' school's life are significant enough to understand the limitations of the 'all-day' school. Local authorities alongside with parents were not given the opportunity to actively participate and have a say in the school processes, and as a result teachers and students continue to experience the same difficulties regarding the poor facilities and other problematic organizational issues concerning the operation of the 'all-day' school. On the contrary, international studies (Epstein, 2001; Epstein & Sanders, 2002; Henderson & Mapp, 2002; Hill & Taylor, 2004; Bacete & Rodriguez, 2004; Hogue et al., 2002; Jeynes, 2005; Sheldon & Epstein, 2005) highlight the importance of collaborative relationships and activities involving school staff, parents and local community and authorities. Effective partnerships of all these members should be based on mutual trust and respect, and shared responsibility for the education of the children and young people at the school (DEEWR, 2008).

More specifically, the importance of parents' involvement in the 'all-day' school life for succeeding its aims was highlighted from the beginning of its institutionalization (Law N.2525/97). Parents for the first time had the opportunity to participate and express their opinions about which activities and subjects consider necessary and more useful for their children benefits. The findings reveal that teachers and head-teachers welcome parents' involvement in decision making regarding the afternoon subjects and activities. This is significant considering that one revolutionary possibility offered by the 'all-day' school is that it could facilitate an independent and optional curriculum decided by the teachers' and parents' board of every school. According to teachers' accounts the activities and subjects that are taught during the two or three additional hours are decided by each 'all-day' school considering parents' opinions and preferences. This is a very important innovation since the school curriculum in Greece has traditionally been unified and government controlled (Law 1566/ FEK 167, Vol. A/ 30/09/1985). The study reveals that, despite the difficulties that the 'all-day' school faces in applying its theoretical aims, considering parents' involvement, it manages to partly engage parents in the school's life (F. 50/492/108832 /Γ1/ 22/ 8/2008, FEK 804, Vol. B /09/06/2010).

The findings also reveal that teachers and parents hold positive attitudes about parents' participation in school. They acknowledge the importance of encouraging parents' involvement in school matters, as they agree that it can help students perform better (Ferrara, 2009; Gibson & Jefferson, 2006; Mapp et al. 2008;). Recent research revealed similar results emphasizing that parental involvement enhances student educational outcomes (Jeynes, 2012). Previous studies have also highlighted the importance of parent-teacher collaboration, which can contribute to children's character development (Molland, 2004; Mylonakou and Kekes, 2007). Overall parents' involvement and cooperation with the school can enhance student achievement (Koshy, Brown, Jones & Portman - Smith, 2012). Finally, teachers' and parents' accounts confirm previous results showing that effective parental involvement in school leads to considerable benefits for students across all years supporting student achievement (Baker & Soden, 2005; World Bank, 2008).

Thinking that in Greece parents' involvement is less critical compared to other educational systems around the world, the 'all-day' school can become the example of encouraging parental participation in the school life. In a following section a more descriptive discussion will take place with the particularities of the parents-teachers interaction as revealed from their own accounts.

- **Social aims conclusions**

In conclusion, the study reveals that teachers from morning and afternoon zone completely agree and welcome the enhancement of the 'all-day' school with the new subjects and activities as important for students' learning. In addition, they agree that the new subjects and activities offer the opportunity to all students to enjoy for free activities and subjects with no extra cost for the parents. There are, however, concerns expressed by all the different teachers of the 'all-day' school regarding the extra problems they face from the failure of the new subjects and activities to be put into practice. Concerning teachers' views about the cover of the needs of the working parents, they agree that the 'all-day' school offers to their children a safe environment for long hours. They also believe that the 'all-day' school helps students to interact better with each other and with their teachers. Finally, teachers would prefer for parents and local authorities to play a more active role in the school's life.

Summarising parents' views about the importance of the enhanced curriculum of the 'all-day' school, they agree with teachers that the enriched programme of the 'all-day' school is necessary for their children's education and for their financial relief and the reduction of *'para-paideia'*. They also share with teachers the same beliefs about the inconsistency between policy and practice regarding the application of the new subjects and activities. Finally, they agree with teachers that the 'all-day' school offers them the opportunity for spending long hours at work having their children of a safe environment. In addition, students, also, express happily their views about the different school environment where they can share a pleasant and friendly interaction with their classmates and their teachers. They express their satisfaction about the new subjects and activities highlighting their impact on learning differently and creatively.

Having discussed the degree to which the social aims have been met in practice in the 'all-day' school from teachers', students' and parents' perspectives, in the following section the pedagogical aims of the 'all-day' school will be discussed in detail, as they are evaluated by the same stakeholders.

- **Pedagogical aims of the 'all-day' school**

The 'all-day' school places equal importance on its pedagogical aims and their fulfillment as on the social aims which attempt to benefit all the participants, teachers, students and parents (Law 1566/85). The Greek Ministry of Education decided the reformation of the educational system with regards to primary education was necessary, prioritizing the needs not only of the working parents, but those of the teachers and students. In the next paragraphs, the pedagogical aims of the 'all-day' school are presented and discussed in the light of the findings emerging from this study.

- *Enrichment of the curriculum with teaching additional learning subjects and activities*

Results indicate that all the participants in the study, teachers, students and parents, agree that the enrichment of the 'all-day' school curriculum with extra subjects and activities is beneficial for the students' progress. Teachers agree that curriculum enhancement can improve students' pedagogical and social needs. Moreover, they

emphasize the relative autonomy and flexibility they enjoy for the first time in deciding, alongside with the head-teacher's and parents' suggestions, which of the extra subjects and activities are considered as more advantageous for the needs of the students in each school. The particular results are of high importance since any previous effort for curriculum reform in the Greek education has been characterised as *'limited'*, *'fragmented'* and *'inadequate'* without being accompanied by a *'structural'* educational reform at all levels of the Greek general education (Flouris & Pasiadis, 2003, p. 76). Trying to identify the reasons led from one to another failed curriculum reforms, centralism, bureaucracy and control as well as disagreement amongst political parties and mainly the lack of educational policy continuity are some of the main factors that can be considered (Ifanti, 2007).

It is worth mentioning, that from teachers', parents' and students' accounts emphasis has been put on the significance of the 'all-day' school curriculum enhancement and the relative freedom and autonomy that teachers and parents are enjoying in deciding the afternoon subjects and activities. The degree, however, of the real effect of the curriculum enhancement on students', teachers' and parents' lives is under discussion. Teachers, students and parents agree that there is no doubt about the pedagogical and social significance of the enhancement of the curriculum. However, what, happens in reality, is a totally different matter. When discussing different aspects of the 'all-day' school schemes impact on teachers, students and parents, it is obvious from all the stakeholders' accounts that there is an inconsistency between education policy making and policy implementation. This is a well-documented problem highlighted in previous research with emphasis placed on the fact that the decision-making in the Greek education system seems to be an individual rather than a collective procedure based on personal and political perceptions (Gerou, 1996; Papadimitropoulos, 2003; Saiti & Eliophotou-Menon, 2009). More importantly, every time the government changes the Minister of Education administration changes which has resulted in an over-flexible education policy (Saiti & Eliophotou-Menon, 2009) and a vast number of Education Acts and Laws which create a huge centralised and bureaucratic education administrative system (Persianis, 2003, p.45). As a result, the State fails to implement and put into practice efficiently and timely any education planning and decision (Saiti & Eliophotou-Menon, 2009). In addition, the situation becomes increasingly complicated as the majority of decisions necessitate the Minister's signature.



In conclusion and regarding the enhancement curriculum, the extra new activities and subjects are beneficial for all involved, students, parents and teachers. For the students, the new subjects are very helpful, as it has been discussed above, especially for those coming from low income families. They would not, otherwise, have had the opportunity to learn and enjoy something additional at school for free, and different from the lessons and activities of the conventional school. For parents, the 'all-day' school offers the opportunity for their children to participate in additional activities that they could not afford otherwise, according to the teachers' and parents' accounts. For the specialist teachers, the 'all-day' school solved a major social problem, by offering employment to special subject teachers. Most of the specialist teachers, for example, music, art, drama and ICT teachers have been unemployed for years. With the introduction of the 'all-day' school they have the opportunity to work and offer their services to students and the society as a whole. Additionally the 'all-day' school helps young specialist teachers to find employment, even if this is not feasible under permanent contracts.

Another interesting finding is that teachers accept the need of the timetable of the 'all-day' schools to be unified something which have been of a priority for the Ministry of Education (F.12/620/61531/G1/2010 (FEK 804/2010, t. B'; F. 12/620/61531/G1/2011 FEK 1327/2011; F.12/773/77094/G1/2006; FEK 1139, B'; F.12//620/61531/G1/2010 (FEK 804, t. B').

The present study shows that teachers either from the morning zone or from the afternoon zone realize the need for cooperation to decide which teaching subjects will be taught in the 'all-day' school, to co-estimate the needs and capabilities of the specific school units such as students' interests, students' learning levels, parents' preferences, school's facilities and equipment and extra available school time. Teachers also admit that they take into account the parents' suggestions for their preferred teaching subjects. These findings are more than encouraging as they reveal the willingness and positive attitude of teachers to support the introduction of the additional subjects believing in their positive impact on students. Teachers also emphasize the fact that they consider the autonomy and choice of decision making, in the formation and planning of the school programme, given for first time to students, teachers and parents, as revolutionary and innovative (F.12/520/61575/Γ1/30-5-2011).

Regarding teachers' views about which new subjects and activities are most popular amongst students it is revealed that students enjoy more sports, drama, dancing and computing lessons. In other words, students prefer subjects which encourage their creativity, emotions and action with gender differences being identified. This evidence is supported by previous research as well emphasizing the significance of learning through enjoyable and active subjects (Papapetrou and Sousamidou, 2004).

Finally the study reveals that the curriculum of the 'all-day' school places emphasis on the afternoon cultural group activities, encouraging students from different classes, mixed groups to participate. In this study teachers highlight the importance of student interaction in these activities with the collaboration of teachers, specialist teachers and local authorities.

- *Redefinition of teaching with the renewal of teaching practices in order for teaching methods to become collaborative and explorative - Inter-disciplinary approach of the taught subjects*

The findings reveal teachers' views are contradictory concerning the teaching practices and methods applied in the 'all-day' school. The morning teachers insist on 'well-tried' and more traditionally oriented teaching methods whilst the afternoon teachers, especially the specialist teachers, realise the need for the application of new teaching approaches and methods in order for the students to enjoy learning. A recent OECD report (2012) attributes the slow and minimal change in the curriculum over the years to the fact that teachers have no challenge to assume new roles or develop new teaching practices. However, the findings reveal again the inconsistency between policy making and policy implementation in the Greek educational system considering the ambitious 1996-2002 educational reform with regards the curriculum reform. The main element of this curriculum reform was the development of the Single Unified Frame of Curriculum Studies, *Ενιαίο Πλαίσιο Προγραμμάτων Σπουδών*, (EPPS). The new form of curriculum was a multidisciplinary curriculum emphasising a better coordination between the different levels of compulsory education, introducing new subjects and identifying more concrete educational goals (Law 2525/1997, article 7). Regarding primary education and within the context of the Single Unified Frame of Curriculum Studies Interdisciplinary (DEPPS), *Διαθεματικό Ενιαίο Πλαίσιο Προγραμμάτων Σπουδών* the 'flexible zone' was integrated at the primary school level

in order to enhance the curriculum interdisciplinary and with creative activities concerning health education, environmental education, cultural and social education (Alahiotis, 2001, p.5).

The contradicting views expressed by class and specialist teachers about the need to reconsider the teaching practices and methods in the ‘all-day’ school reveal once again the degree of difficulty in applying a prescribed education policy without considering the particularities of the Greek education (Persianis, 2003). However, despite teachers’ argumentative attitude, there is hope for the teaching methods improvement in the ‘all-day’ school. Traditional teaching methods have been replaced by interdisciplinary approaches which emphasise on students’ holistic learning needs connecting the different subjects of the curriculum rather than learning from each subject solely (Pedagogical Institute, 2003).

- *Completion of learning procedure and schooling preparation at school (homework completion)*

Students’ perceptions collide with teachers’ views of the ‘all-day’ school in many ways. First and foremost, students expressed their dissatisfaction with the issue of the homework completion in school (F.12/520/61575/Γ1/2011), which they found inappropriate as they do not have enough time to focus on preparation. The issue of homework has dissatisfied most importantly the parents as they are obliged to send their children to classes outside school, and the teachers as they feel that the time is not sufficient (in this case homework is limited to one hour) for homework preparation. This is an interesting result as the issue of homework seems to affect the primary agents of the ‘all-day’ school culture and this issue needs to be promptly discussed.

This finding contributes to the current literature, (Kyrizoglou, Grigoriadis, 2003; Thoidis & Chaniotakis, 2008), which highlights that the problems affecting the ‘all-day’ school emanate from unprepared students and challenges the view that this is only associated with the students and not the parents and teachers. This study is not suggesting that the ‘all-day’ school is failing completely in that respect but accepts the view that the ‘all-day’ school encounters difficulties, and makes suggestions about the extending hours, which should accommodate both the teachers to assist students to prepare well within 1 hour. For parents a well-prepared student for the following day at

school means less complications in relation to sending students to private classes and less concern about student performance in school. The afternoon teachers who experience this problem on a regular basis highlight the problem but their views are not taken into account as they have limited say and influence on the schooling programme.

Perhaps the morning teachers in collaboration with the head-teachers, who play a major part in the formation of the school programme, and witness limitations on student performance due to a lack of preparation, should initiate a dialogue between the different parties and provide sustainable solutions. There are examples, as indicated by students' accounts, with teachers who believe that teaching and learning is an internal school matter.

- *Better co-operation between teachers and students.*

Despite the difficulties students experience in completing their homework at school, they seem to enjoy the activities taking place in the afternoon zone. According to the teachers' perceptions students are quite happy to study and participate in extra specialist subjects provided by the curriculum, as they would have not been able to study any of these subjects if they stayed at home. The study of languages, sports and music offers students the opportunity to learn in groups and share their knowledge and experiences with the teacher and other students as learning becomes more enjoyable. This offers students the satisfaction of learning effectively and performing better.

While one would expect that teachers' troubled relationships would hinder student performance, this study reveals that good relationships between teachers are not a prerequisite necessary for successful student performance and/or a successful school culture. This finding challenges the traditional view in the literature that associates good collaboration between teachers as necessary for students' successful learning and contributes to the literature that supports it (Cullen, 2007). One point worth mentioning is that students' positive attitude to learning in the afternoon session was also associated with the strong relationships created with their teachers. The findings of this study reveal that the extended programme of activities taught in the all-day school enhanced the student-teacher relationships, as students got closer to teachers and their peers, leading to increased pedagogical and social skills.

The 'all-day' school curriculum not only allowed students to develop strong relationships with more than one teacher, the class teacher, but it contributed to the creation of better relations between teachers and their peers, which was one of the main aims of 'all-day' school (F.50/268/102487/Γ1/2012, Ministry of Education). This is an interesting finding as it contradicts the negative result of the 'all-day' school, which according to teachers, affects and creates tensions between teachers. The positive aspect of the 'all-day' school is that it offers a flexible school programme that helps ease tensions between teachers, as they need to work more closely with each other. The 'rolling' of the school programme allows for subjects to be equally distributed amongst morning and afternoon sessions creating flexibility and encouraging interaction between teachers.

- **Pedagogical aims conclusions**

In conclusion, the study reveals that teachers are satisfied with the relevant freedom and autonomy they enjoy for the first time in the formation of the school programme and in deciding which extra activities they consider more important for the students of each school. There is, however, a high degree of contradiction between the class teachers' and the speciality teachers' views regarding the redefinition and introduction of new teaching methods. The academic orientation of the primary school curriculum forces class teachers to present themselves as the authority or the expert in the field, and to apply teacher-centred approaches in teaching, leaving little room for student active learning (OECD, 2012).

The class teachers, as revealed, insist on traditional well-tried teaching methods while the specialist teachers call for new methods which encourage students' active participation in learning where students can discover how to learn differently and happily. Trying to identify the reasons behind these contradictions probably the 'limited', 'fragmented' and 'inadequate' curriculum changes without being accompanied by a 'structural' educational reform at all levels may be the key factor (Flouris & Pasiás, 2003, p. 76). In addition, factors such as centralism, bureaucracy and control as well as disagreement amongst political parties and mainly the lack of educational policy continuity can be considered (Ifanti, 2007).

According to findings, the most controversial issue regarding the pedagogical aims of the ‘all-day’ school remains the completion of homework at school. Teachers acknowledge that due to time limitations and lack of staff students are unable to complete their homework at school. The present study reveals that there is a real gap between policy making and policy implementation. Again trying to identify the reasons behind this gap the example of the ‘all-day’ school clearly shows that decision making in the Greek educational system seems to be an individual rather than a collective procedure based on personal and political perceptions (Gerou, 1996; Papadimitropoulos, 2003; Saiti & Eliophotou-Menon, 2009). In addition, every time the government changes, the Minister of Education alongside the political administrators change which has resulted in an over-flexible education policy (Saiti & Eliophotou-Menon, 2009) and a vast number of Education Acts and Laws which create a huge centralised and bureaucratic education administrative system (Persianis, 2003, p.45). As a result, the State fails to implement and put into practice efficiently and on time any education planning and decision (Saiti & Eliophotou-Menon, 2009). The situation becomes more complicating as the majority of decisions necessitate the Minister’s signature.

Parents’ accounts regarding the pedagogical aims are focused mainly on the failure of the ‘all-day’ school to fulfil its promises regarding the application of the new activities and subjects. They express their dissatisfaction about the way the ‘all-day’ school operates and they call for reformation of its institutionalization. Their main concern is that their children are coming back home late in the afternoon with their homework uncompleted and they have to spend extra time and effort in assisting them with the extra work left unfinished for the next day. This is another example of inconsistency between education policy and practice confirmed by the institutionalization of the ‘all-day’ school scheme. This evidence supports previous research findings regarding educational reforms in Greece concluding that contradicting reforms in education have devastating results for all stakeholders (Saiti & Eliophotou-Menon, 2009; Andreou, 2000, Persianis, 2003).

Finally, students highlight their satisfaction in learning differently, the opportunity to interact for first time with more than one teacher and to develop strong relationships with their classmates (Ministry of Education, Φ.50/492/108832 /Γ1/ 22/ 8/2008, FEK 804, Vol. B /09/06/2010). Nevertheless, they strongly complain for the poor

infrastructure and facilities at their school and how these affect their education and school lives. A matter which is linked with the failure of the Ministry of Education to put into practice its promises.

### **5.3 Research question 2**

#### **What is the impact of the ‘all-day’ school on the professional lives of teachers?**

In the following sections, issues associated with the professional lives of the teachers and how they have been affected by the implementation and operation of the ‘all-day’ school will be discussed. More specifically their professional relationships with other teachers, their relationships with parents and their opinions about the resources and how they affect all participants’ lives will be discussed.

- **Professional relationships with other teachers**

The increase of school hours for the teaching of specialist subjects required consistent assistance by the afternoon teachers who needed to work collaboratively with the morning teachers. The differences in role and teaching subject affected rather than enhanced relationships between teachers. As Day et al. (2007) point out the different roles, responsibilities and new dynamics created by teachers’ interaction are key elements that influence teachers’ professional development within the school. In the case of the ‘all-day’ school and according to the reports from teachers, cooperation between the morning and afternoon teachers was minimal. This was due to the discriminatory attitude of the class teachers playing the main role, as opposed to the supplementary role of the specialist teachers. A significant percentage (63 %) of teachers supported this evidence by claiming that the morning teachers liaise a little or not at all with the afternoon teachers. Relationships, in that respect, are very competitive and sometimes, as Barth argues, ‘dangerous’ for the running of a healthy learning ‘community’ (Barth, 2006, p. 1). According to this research *power relationships* are developed between teachers and tensions and conflicts arise from their everyday interactions. The afternoon teachers expressed dissatisfaction and disappointment with this discriminatory treatment by both the morning teachers and by parents. The attitudes of the morning teachers seem to be provocative towards the afternoon teachers, many times unintentionally, as they consider their teaching status as stable and separate themselves from the other teachers working in the afternoon

zone. The morning teachers in some way separate themselves professionally from the afternoon zone teachers as they perceive themselves as the main teachers of the ‘all-day’ school having to teach the basic school subjects. By contrast, such attitudes and perceptions contradict the aims of the ‘all-day’ school, as defined by the official documents (Law 2525/97, Φ.Ε.Κ. 1471/22.11.2002, Φ. 353.1./324/105657/Δ1/8-10-02, ΦΕΚ 1340τ. Β, ΥΑ), calling for a close, interactive and effective cooperation between class and specialist teachers in the morning and afternoon zone. The morning teachers seem to enjoy and take advantage of the power their title offers them as class teachers. Consequently, they have first choice in the formation of the school programme and the teaching schedule and they consider their class their personal territory. Collegial relations between teachers are very difficult to establish especially when teachers have different subject specialties that do not require the sharing of knowledge, or discussions about common practice (Barth, 2006). In the ‘all-day’ school, specialist teachers have encountered difficulties in communicating with the class teachers of the morning zone.

According to the reports of the specialist teachers there were times when they felt isolated and ‘left out’ even though they were asked for assistance by the class teachers of the morning zone. This finding contributes to the literature (Wang & Haertel, 1994) that treats this relationship between teachers as a dichotomy in the school community. In addition, the present study enhances this point further by highlighting the view that tense relationships between teachers are more evident between teachers working in different sessions and with different skills sets. As this study shows, for instance, the class teachers, working in morning sessions with permanent contracts, were given a greater say in the formation of the school programme and the teaching programme than the non-contractual specialist teachers whose role was considered supplementary. In short, the role of the class teacher was considered more important than the role of the specialist teacher who assisted students with their specialist subjects and homework.

Another important finding of this study, which is supported by the current literature (Barth, 2006) and is related to the latter point, is that the full time school teachers have the skills and knowledge needed to assist students better. Although this is not always the case, it is evident from the present study that the parents of the students attending the all-day school share a similar view as they believe that their children



learn better in class when working with morning teachers. One reason that enhances this belief is that the morning teachers tend to have a stronger control over students' communication with their parents than the afternoon teachers who have no communication with them at all.

Collaboration and interaction between teachers is also limited or non-existent, as they do not tend to see each other directly. As this study reveals, teachers work at different times of day and are involved in different tasks and subjects. Communication is not direct but through a '*book*' where the morning teacher leaves notes to the afternoon teachers and relates to the subject matter.

Teachers' collaboration is further exacerbated by differences in teaching practices. This finding contradicts the literature (Southworth et al, 2000) as the lack of strong professional relationships between teachers who, in the case of the 'all-day' school, are not able or willing to collaborate and share teaching practices, methods and ideas. This prevents teachers' professional development and affects school improvement. Teachers have different concerns about teaching and student methods and practices. This study reveals that the morning teachers are more interested in using curriculum-centred methods of teaching. The afternoon teachers are using learner-centred teaching methods where the role of the student is more important, as it acknowledges individual skills and experiential student learning (Law 2525/97, F.50./343/85329/Γ1, 31-8-2005).

In addition, there are gaps in teaching, which have to be filled by the morning and afternoon teaching staff. This creates frustration and anxiety as a result of the increased responsibilities. This affects professional development as teachers do not have extra time for training and professional innovation. This finding supports the views of Hargreaves and Goodson (2004) that teachers' work has intensified and has been significantly restructured with roles broadened including prescribed curricula, policy and resources. As a result teachers' work has affected their professionalism moving from a culture of classroom autonomy and individualism and expertise to a culture of goals, standardized criteria and accountability (Hargreaves & Goodson, 2004).

This study reveals that the extended teaching programme required an increase in the number of specialist teachers. However, the Ministry of Education (MOE) failed to

bring substitute teachers to areas in which they were particularly needed. The absence of essential staff resulted in the deterioration rather than the enhancement of relationships between teachers. This is closely associated with organisational and policy issues often decided outside school.

Poor relationships are linked, therefore, to the inability of the Greek Ministry of Education to provide sufficient teaching staff. The Ministry of Education's contribution is essential to enhance teachers' relations. More essential, the time teachers devote to the teaching of extra classes could be used for professional development. This is very important considering that teachers need to keep themselves constantly informed about curricula and pedagogy innovations as well as about new developments into new technologies. Reflecting on the significance of teachers' new roles in modern societies, it is understandable why in many high-performing education systems teachers have a double role to play: to improve educational outcomes by improving themselves (OECD, 2011). Professional development helps teachers understand the subject matter that they are teaching, and can lead to improvements in students' learning. Professional development has proven successful for enhancing student achievement and performance (Joyce & Showers, 2002).

More specifically, this study reveals that teachers' professional development in Greece is characterized by inconsistency and lack of well designed action by the Greek Ministry of Education, an argument strongly supported a recent OECD report (2012). In addition, it can be claimed that any training provision offered to teachers is decided and carried out through conventional practices without any form of flexibility (Papastamatis et al, 2009).

- **Relationships with parents**

The 'all-day' school places emphasis on teachers' relationship with parents as it has been designed to serve and fulfil the needs of the working parents (Law 2525/97, F.E.K. 1471/22-11-02, F. 353.1./324/105657/Δ1/8-10-02, FEK 1340τ.Β, YA, F. 12/620/61531/G1/31-5-2011, FEK 1327/2011τ. Β'). Parents' participation in the operation of the 'all-day' school is considered crucial in determining the school's success.

The ‘all-day’ school aimed at responding to parents who wanted an organised school that supported and educated their children, supported the working family and released the financial burden and the search for out of school care. In practice, however, parents argue that the ‘all-day’ school failed to fulfil its promises. According to teachers, parents were often complaining about the lengthy day at school that their children experienced and the insufficient time provided for homework completion. This is a view which supports previous studies highlighting parents’ concerns about the completion of the homework at school, especially for Language and Mathematics (Papapetrou & Sousamidou, 2004; Thoidis & Chaniotakis, 2008; Androulakis, 2006; Konstantinou, 2007; Loukeris *et al.* 2009).

In short, while the all-day school assists working families with the extended programme, it proved an impediment to student learning and performance. Teachers admit that students’ parents often argue that they should be given the choice about whether or not to send their students to the afternoon session. This view emanates mainly from non-working parents who have the time and flexibility to collect their children from school earlier. There is an evident disagreement between parents about the usefulness of the all-day school and how students are benefiting from the extended schooling programme. The specific findings contradict previous research results showing that parents, in their majority (93.9%), were satisfied and have expressed positive views about the operation of the ‘all-day’ school (Institute of Labour, IN.E-Γ.Σ.EE, 2003).

- **Satisfaction with resources**

According to teachers the reality is that the ‘all-day’ schools seem to be in decline, due to the insufficient and delayed number of the specialist teachers, who are needed to work in these schools, and also due to the inappropriate facilities and infrastructure available at the ‘all-day’ schools. From the eight ‘all-day’ schools, which participated in this study, six operate as double schools, which means that in the same building two different schools operate. There are huge difficulties for teachers and students alike, relating to overcrowded classes, limited playgrounds, and facilities. The situation, in which the ‘all-day’ school operates is problematic due to the disorganised and unprofessional state of these schools. Unfortunately, these findings support results of previous studies, which means no measures have been taken for the situation regarding the school resources to be improved (Pashali & Tsiagki, 2000; Arvaniti, 2004;

Mousiou-Mylona, 2004; Androulakis, 2006; Konstantinou, 2007; Loukeris *et al.* 2009).

In some 'all-day' schools, their success is the result of the willingness, the enthusiasm and also the personal effort and commitment of those individuals such as, head-teachers, teachers and specialist teachers, who believe in the establishment and in the expansion and reformation of the 'all-day' school for the benefit of the Greek primary education. An important evidence revealed from this study and which contributes to literature is that good school leaders can really make the difference and effectively transform a school (Hargreaves, 2009; Hargreaves and Fink, 2008; Leithwood *et al.*, 2004; Middlewood, 2010).

Some teachers strongly believe that the 'all-day' school is a necessary form of schooling for the advancement and improvement of students', teachers' and parents' lives as a whole. However, teachers believe that the Ministry of Education is responsible for not appointing the specialist teachers on time and, therefore, the schools are not prepared and cannot operate with clear aims and objectives from the beginning of the academic year. Once again teachers highlight the need for more organised and well thought educational reforms under a widely agreed strategy among the Greek political parties (OECD, 2011).

Teachers also claim that suitable facilities, resources and school equipment are necessary for the 'all-day' schools to operate. All 'all-day' schools use the same facilities used by the mainstream primary schools. When the 'all-day' schools were first introduced new facilities and classroom refurbishment were carried out. It became apparent that the students who had to stay and work extra hours inside the school needed extra provision of facilities (Pedagogical Institute, 2003). Unfortunately, these facilities are no longer provided by the Greek state to the 'all-day' school.

Teachers claim that in theory the provision of the 'all-day' school is beneficial. However, they strongly believe that the 'all-day' schools have failed to provide the additional working areas for the specialist subjects and activities such as art, music, dancing, and drama, due to the lack of the necessary space and infrastructure needed.

Overall, the last seven years the 'all-day' school, seems from the teachers' point of view to be in decline due to lack of adequate funding, necessary facilities and

insufficient number of specialist teachers who are not appointed on time. Teachers are frequently expressing their disappointment. All the hopes and enthusiasm of the first years have slowly disappeared. They believe that it is a declining concept, which needs immediate reformation in order to be viable. Teachers complain about the funds, which are available for the ‘all-day’ school, and also the need to be seen as a school, which addresses different needs for different students. For example, they complain about the buildings and the unacceptable or non-existent facilities for the schools, the need of creation of a proper canteen, where the students can have school meals or their packed lunch. Teachers argue that the ‘all-day’ school has failed to achieve its aims. This therefore is an impediment in achieving a positive outlook from the teachers’ point of view, as the changes of the ‘all-day’ schools do not seem to lead to any immediate positive changes. The future of the ‘all-day’ school has also been affected by the economic crisis in Greece which makes its future even more uncertain (OECD, Greece at a Glance Policies for a Sustainable Recovery, 2010).

### **5.4 Research question 3**

#### **What are students’ perceptions of the ‘all-day’ school?**

- **Access to teachers**

An important issue that is acknowledged by students of the ‘all-day’ school and shared by teachers is that the students’ relationships are strengthened, especially with the afternoon teachers. Students enjoy learning in the afternoon classes as they have the opportunity to interact closely with the teacher and fellow students. The afternoon classes, which involve group activities, help students build their social and pedagogical skills and learning more effectively as children are able to note any problems directly to the teacher and also benefit from a close interaction with their peers. Students acknowledge that their extended programme allows subjects to be studied through experiential learning that they would not have been able to experience in mainstream schools or if they had the choice to stay at home.

The ‘all-day’ school aims to create strong and supportive relationships amongst the students and their teachers. The students should have all the support and encouragement needed from their teachers to develop, improve and expand their skills whilst at school (Law 2525/97, F.E.K. 1471/22-11-02, F. 353.1./324/105657/Δ1/8-10-

02, FEK 1340τ.B, YA, F. 12/620/61531/G1/31-5-2011, FEK 1327/2011t. B’). Students have expressed their views about their relationships with their teachers, which seem to be very interesting. Each student emphasises different aspects when commenting about their relationship with their teachers. There are those students whose good or bad relationship is based on the professional role of their teacher. They believe that they have a good relationship with their teachers if they are helpful with them and make the lessons easy and pleasant.

Another important issue brought forward by students, and directly relating to the point made above, is that students feel that in order to win the favour of the teacher in afternoon sessions, the teacher should always offer them the treatment they deserve. One student refers to the case of students arguing with each other and the important role the teacher should play in resolving the argument. Other example students mentioned is that teachers should provide the assistance and knowledge to students who need it the most. Teachers who care about their students are more likely to build trustful relationships with them and gain their confidence and respect (Klem & Conrell, 2004).

In addition, students can build trust and confidence when teachers seem to have the right amount of knowledge for their speciality. Students seemed to think that in most cases the teachers of the afternoon sessions are not specialist for the subject matter. Teachers are rather inclined to fill gaps of different specialism in the school programme following delays in the appointment of specialist teachers.

- **Sufficiency of resources**

The findings reveal that students’ dissatisfaction is also associated with the poor facilities of the all-day school for studying specialist subjects. Students’ numerous complains about the lack of important basic facilities to do sports, good-size classrooms and assistive technology for studying IT has gradually deteriorated.

It can be argued that the ‘all-day’ school was affected enormously by the major cuts imposed on the public sector by the Greek austerity programme. However, when the final reforms took place on the ‘all-day’ school it was very important to deal with this soon and appropriately (F.12/773/77094/G1/2006, FEK 1139, t. B’ and F.12//620/61531/G1/2010, FEK 804, t. B’). The students are now encouraged to do

sports in the courtyard and not in indoor gyms or courts for sport education. Moreover, as the number of students grew (30 students per class) due to the amalgamation of two schools, facilities became obsolete.

Furthermore, students' responses highlight a number of negative aspects of the 'all-day' school related to infrastructure facilities, and the absence of specialist teachers, which are significant enough to impede student performance. Student performance was equally impacted by long hours of teaching and unfinished school homework left to be completed at home. The 'all-day' school creates a very unpleasant environment for the students as it operates a long-hour programme with no proper lunchtime and no break from classes. The present study contributes significantly to the literature by revealing students' accounts and treating them equally important as of the teachers' and parents'. This is important as in previous studies concerning the institutionalization of the 'all-day' school in Greece a lot of emphasis have been placed only on teachers' and parents' views.

It is evident that the planning of the 'all-day' school was not seriously considered before being implemented. It is obvious, following the analysis of students' responses that the reform of the 'all-day' school created more problems than it solved at least for the benefit of the students. The 'all-day' school does not offer an appropriate learning setting for its students. It is not adequately equipped with the necessary facilities to assist students with their learning and more importantly, it does not offer students a well-planned school programme with breaks and activities supported by the necessary system and infrastructure.

- **Time to complete tasks (homework)**

The completion of the homework at school and particularly in the afternoon zone has been prioritised by the constitution and theoretical background of the 'all-day' school. Students are expected to go home with their homework finished at school (Law 2525/97, Ministry of Education, 1998). At least for the lessons of Language and Maths the homework completion is necessary to take place at school with the help of the afternoon class teacher who is appointed mainly for this purpose (Ministry of Education, F.12/520/61575/Γ1/30-5-2011).

The present study reveals that many students cannot complete their homework at school as there is a significant delay in appointing the afternoon specialist teachers on time and a shortage of primary teachers needed to help students with their homework in the afternoon zone. The students themselves are supporting teachers' and parents' views about the failure of the 'all-day' school to offer to them the opportunity to complete their school tasks at school and return home without their schoolbags. These findings also contribute to previous research results showing students' dissatisfaction and frustration concerning their homework completion at school (Papapetrou& Sousamidou, 2004).

Considering that the 'all-day' school is still perceived as a project in progress it is disappointing, after sixteen years of its operation, to continue facing problems related to homework completion due to inadequate number of teachers sent to work in the afternoon zone. These problems affect the operation of the 'all-day' school badly, causing a disorganised situation and substandard function of the school as a whole. The curriculum of the 'all-day' school defines and makes clear that one to two hours per day, depending on the class level, should be spent on the preparation and completion of the homework at school (Ministry of Education, F.12/520/61575/Γ1/30-5-2011). However, this study reveals that this is not the case.

From what students claimed it is revealed that the homework completion remains a controversial issue. It seems that the 'all-day' school has failed to achieve this target. This seems to have affected mainly the senior students as they have more subjects to study, they are given more homework and most of the times they have to share the same afternoon teacher with another class. The students of Year 1 and Year 2 have been given priority in having their own afternoon teacher to help them with the completion of their homework but according to students, no matter what class level, the issue of homework remains unresolved for the 'all-day' school.

- **Impact on students personal lives**

In the 'all-day' school it is important for the students to spend their long stay creatively and pleasantly (Ministry of Education, 1998; Pedagogical Institute, 2003). The study reveals that friendships at school play a balancing role in students' lives and affect their school performance. The students of the 'all-day' school seem according to



their own accounts to overcome negative aspects of their school thanks to the benefits of their friendship with their classmates. Learning and playing with friends at school is of great benefit for them. The findings highlight that even when the long day at school becomes very tiring, having good friends make students happy. These findings are very important as there is not any other study conducted in Greece concerning students' feelings and thoughts regarding their relationships with their classmates and the ways they use to cope with the obstacles they face as a result of attending the 'all-day' school.

The present study contributes to the literature showing how important it is for students who spend long hours at school to have the ability to build and maintain good relationships with each other. This evidence becomes more important considering that the students of the 'all-day' school are not being provided with the appropriate teaching and learning conditions but they feel better if they have good friends. Moreover the students of the 'all-day' school spend almost their whole day at school. It is important for them to have good friends at school and develop the necessary social skills. Friendships at school can help them develop emotionally and morally from an early age. Apart from the ability to learn how to communicate and work together at school, they also learn how to solve daily problems. However, the study reveals that tensions and arguments can start as a result of the long school hours especially in the overcrowded 'all-day' schools with asphyxiating play grounds and limited outdoor activities offered to them. Also, the findings show that negative forms of behaviour seem to be a problem between younger and older students. These problems, as the present study reveals, arise during break time. The 'all-day' school did not provide for different break times for younger and older children. All the students, of age 6 to age 12 (Year 1 to Year 6) share the same small grounds during the break. This is especially hard for the students of the small classes as they have no experience of coping with negative forms of behaviour with older students.

In conclusion, the findings reveal that the long school hours create opportunities to develop strong friendships, which can have a positive impact on students' performance and attitudes towards school. This study broadens our understanding of the students' accounts concerning the impact of the 'all-day' school on their lives. Their accounts were particularly interesting, because these were based on their experience and daily interaction with other students and were based on first hand experiences.

## 5.5 Research question 4

### **What are parents' perceptions of the 'all-day' school?**

In the following sections significant findings are revealed regarding parents' accounts about the impact of the 'all-day' school on their working and family lives. Parents also give important evidence expressing their thoughts about the education provided to their children. Finally, interesting results are shown reflecting parents' relationships with the morning and afternoon teachers.

- **Impact on parents' personal lives (work options-finances)**

To reinforce the issues discussed above, it is worth analysing parents' responses as a means of comparing their views paralleled to the teachers' and students'. A high percentage of parents (57.46%) agree that in general the 'all-day' school has affected their daily routine. The majority of parents (66.03%) seem to believe that the 'all-day' school gives them the opportunity to spend more time at work. It is also indicated by parents' answers that the impact of the 'all-day' school on parents' lives is significant as parents agree that the 'all-day' school allows more time for themselves, not either to spend at work or to get involved in activities that otherwise they could not have the opportunity to participate. These finding contribute significant to the existing literature and broaden our understanding of the parents' accounts concerning the effect of the 'all-day' school on their lives. Similar findings have been revealed by previous studies (Pashali & Tsiagki, 2000; Lamnias & Ntakoumis, 2003; Arvaniti, 2004).

- **Response to education provided**

More than half of parents (55.24%) agreed that their children feel happier about their learning in the 'all-day' school while a considerable number of parents have not expressed a clear opinion (28.25%) about this aspect of the "all-day" school. The main purposes of the 'all-day' school are very promising but they have loopholes that should be either reformed or dealt with swiftly to meet the needs of students. Especially in the afternoon zone this situation seems to be the most troubling with the absence of important staff, poor infrastructure and fruitless student activities. It can be argued that improvement of school facilities was abandoned at a time when Greece experienced major budgetary cuts in public services. Since then the 'all-day' school suffered enormously from major cuts that affected its operations immensely.

There are not only external factors affecting the main functions of the ‘all-day’ school. The ‘all-day’ school was also affected by planning issues that were never fulfilled. Parents revealed that the ‘all-day’ school failed to structure the school curriculum according to the standards of equal opportunities to advance education (Law 2525/97; Ministry of Education, 1998; Pedagogical Institute, 2003).

This legislation required the ‘all-day’ schools to provide activities and study subjects (such as Music, Drama, foreign languages) to low-income and minority families that are unable to provide these for them. This was a very ambitious plan that encountered problems in its implementation. The study reveals that a large percentage of parents (66.03%) believed that their children have been helped by the introduction of new teaching practices and methods by the ‘all-day’ school. Regarding the introduction of the additional learning subjects and activities in the afternoon school 76.19% of the parents have found the specific innovative aspects of the ‘all-day’ school to be beneficial for their children (Ministry of Education, 2012, §4).

However, as it is evident from parents’ responses, it is extremely difficult for the ‘all-day’ school to provide a sustainable programme where students learn effectively in the afternoon session. Students are not learning sufficiently as there is not enough time for them to cover all subjects required and to complete their homework on time. From parents’ responses this is a controversial issue since 43.18% of the parents believed that the ‘all-day’ school gives their children the opportunity to complete their homework at school while 32.38% of them are not satisfied because their children fail to complete their homework at school. These findings support previous views of the students and teachers participating in this study who have expressed similar concerns about the failure of the ‘all-day’ school to efficiently support students with their homework completion. In addition, the above findings support similar results of previous studies stressing out the disappointment of parents realizing that the ‘all-day’ school has failed to meet its social and pedagogical needs (Institute of Labour , INE & Institute of Pedagogical Studies of the Teaching Association of Greece, ΓΣΕΕ-ΑΔΕΔΥ, 2007).

An immediate result of these deficiencies was the creation of tension between all those involved in its operation. In this case, relations between parents and their children were affected, as parents were required to cover the gaps of their children's unfinished homework by providing extra tuition. In parallel to the issue of the unfinished homework parents claim that they had to keep up with the stress students brought home from an exhaustive day at school and with the burden of the private classes. This is an important finding as it fully captures the meaning of the two-way flow of influence that the 'all-day' school created amongst teachers, between teachers and students, and between parents and students. The present study contributes significantly in understanding the particularities and complicating relationships which are created amongst the stakeholders participating in the operation of the 'all-day' school. It is worth mentioning that if the 'all-day' school worked efficiently, relationships between the people involved in its operation would have been better in the school culture. Relationships would become better if the school programme worked properly, if there were no staffing problems, facilities were adequate and there was no evidence of discrimination against teachers whose role is mainly supplementary. It is also worth highlighting, though, that this research study has revealed for first time the contradicting relationships dynamics between the main three stakeholders, teachers, parents and students caused mainly by the inconsistency between the promised education and the education provided.

- **Parents' relationship with teachers**

An important point that should be mentioned in relation to parents' perceptions of the 'all-day' school is parents' relations with the teachers. It can be argued that the strong relations parents build with the morning teachers and not with the afternoon teachers contributed greatly to the deterioration of the 'all-day' school community. Indeed, a high percentage of parents claimed that the morning teachers played a more important role in children's education as they provided knowledge on core subjects of primary importance taught in mainstream schools. Only a small percentage (34.92%) believed the afternoon teacher plays the most important role for their children, while 33.02% neither agreed nor disagreed. The afternoon teachers mainly provided company to students who stayed at school until late afternoon. It is sad to see that parents do not treat the extra activities taught in the afternoon classes as equally important as the subjects taught in the morning classes. This attitude contradicts the statute of the 'all-

day' school which clearly states that the 'all-day' school should operate as a unified school and not divided in two separate zones (Law 2525/97; Ministry of Education, 1998; Pedagogical Institute, 2003).

There are parents, however, that appreciated the value of the afternoon classes. As argued, afternoon teachers put a lot of work in teaching extra activities and have to deal with an extremely high number of students in small classrooms. It takes a lot of skill and knowledge to be able to cope with the needs of students especially when teachers' work is not much appreciated by the school system. This is another important finding of the failures of the 'all-day' school system as it values the work of teachers differently in accordance to their status, teaching background and influence on the school curriculum. Although one might argue that judgement towards teachers can be formed from general perceptions and general attitudes, in this case a school system with so many deficiencies will generate shortcomings of its execution. The present study, however, broadens our understanding of the parents' accounts concerning their relationship with the teachers.

## **5.6 Conclusions**

In conclusion, the study reveals crucial perspectives held by parents' concerning their relationships with the teachers of the 'all-day' school. It is evidence from international recent research that parental involvement enhances student educational outcomes (Jeynes, 2012). Regardless of the form of parents' involvement in their children education the main purpose of this involvement is for their children to do well in school (Ferrara, 2009; Gibson & Jefferson, 2006; Mapp et al. 2008). Parents as educational stakeholders provide schools with valuable help. Their involvement and cooperation with the school can enhance student achievement (Koshy, Brown, Jones & Portman - Smith, 2012). Research has also shown that effective parental involvement in school leads to considerable benefits for students across all years and it is seen as important in supporting student achievement (Baker & Soden, 2005; World Bank, 2008).

However, in the case of Greece, parents' involvement is less critical compared to other educational systems around the world. In Greece, each school forms its own parents'

committee according to the Law 2621/98. Therefore, the example of the ‘all-day’ school which encourage parents’ involvement in the school processes could mark the beginning of a new era in the Greek primary education.

## **Chapter 6 – Conclusions**

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### **6.1 Introduction**

In this chapter the results, findings and discussion from the questionnaire and interview material will be drawn together. An overview of the research process will be briefly carried out. A summary of the main conclusions will be presented in response to the research question. The implications for policy and practice will be discussed and the recommendations will be made. The limitations of the research will be explained and possible areas for further research in relation with this research will be identified. Finally, the contribution of the research to knowledge will be discussed.

### **6.2 Overview of the research process**

The focus of this research is the reform of the pilot ‘all-day’ school legislated and initiated in the period 1997-2002 and its impact on teachers’, parents’ and students’ lives. The aim of this research is to provide the data on the perceptions and feelings of the teachers, parents and students, who are playing an important role in the operation of the ‘all-day’ school. In order to identify study’s sample, eight (8) amongst 16 ‘all-day’ Greek schools in the District of Athens were contacted (see table 1). From these eight schools in the sample, 922 respondents participated in the survey. From the total number of respondents 107 were teachers with response rate 56% and 815 were parents with response rate 39%. In addition, interviews were conducted with head-teachers, deputy head- teachers of the afternoon zone of the ‘all-day’ school, teachers, parents and students. Eight interviews were conducted with the head-teacher of each participating school, eight with the deputy head- teachers of these schools, 32 with teachers (16 class teachers and 16 specialist teachers), 37 parents and 29 group-student

interviews (from Year1 –Year 6) and 16 individual students. Part of the data gathered coincided with the literature data which had been previously reviewed while new data contradicted to the literature was also collected. The data collected was thematically analyzed and the main findings have been analytically discussed. In the next section the main conclusions in response to the research question will be presented.

## **6.3 Answering the research questions**

This research was focused on the research questions stated in Chapter 1. The basic purpose of this research was to explore what is the impact of the institutionalization of the ‘all-day’ school on the teachers’, students and parents’ lives. This primary focus was explored by investigating the views and perceptions of the main stakeholders involved in the ‘all-day’ school. In the next section a summary of the main findings will be presented.

### **6.3.1 Research question 1**

*To what extent have the theoretical aims of the ‘all-day’ school been put into practice?*

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with teachers, parents and students of the ‘all-day’ school concerning the degree of the successful implementation of the theoretical aims of the ‘all-day’ school. In addition questionnaires based on the theoretical aims of the ‘all-day’ school distributed to the teachers and parents trying to find out their perceptions.

#### **Research findings with regards to the Social aims of the ‘all-day’ school**

*Additional activities and subjects:*

- All participants, teachers, students and parents emphasized that the new activities and subjects were very helpful especially for those students of low income families. However, the ‘all-day’ school had failed to implement effectively the extra activities and raised concerns over the inconsistency between curriculum decision making and curriculum implementation.



- The phenomenon of '*para-paideia*'<sup>15</sup> remains unsolved as the 'all-day' school has failed with the additional subjects and activities to provide financial relief to the low income families.
- The 'all-day' school has failed to persuade parents that the 'all-day' school is a unified school with two unbreakable zones. Parents consider the morning zone as the most important, as the '*proper school*' and the afternoon zone as a '*baby-sitting*' zone.
- The need of the new subjects and activities to be taught by specialist teachers created tension relationships between morning and afternoon teachers.

*Students' interaction:*

- Negative forms of behaviour seemed to be a problem between younger and older students as the 'all-day' school did not provide for different break times for younger and older children.
- However from students' accounts revealed that the long school hours created opportunities to develop strong friendships, which can have a positive impact on students' performance and attitudes towards school.
- The majority of parents (58.09%) recognized the importance of the 'all-day' school in giving their children the opportunity to improve their social skills.
- A significant percentage (68.89%) of parents believes that the relationship between the students and their teachers at the 'all-day' school is positive.

*Parental and local authorities' involvement in the 'all-day' school:*

- Teachers highlighted the lack of active participation of the local authorities in the 'all-day' school. However, teachers and head-teachers welcomed parents' involvement in afternoon subjects and activities decision making.

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<sup>15</sup> The term '*para-paideia*' is referred to the private tutorial of the taught learning subjects in school that take place outside school and the students are made to attend them if they want to pass the exams.

## **Research findings with regards to the pedagogical aims of the ‘all-day’ school**

### *Curriculum enhancement:*

- The enhancement of the ‘all-day’ school curriculum with extra subjects and activities is beneficial for the students’ progress according to all stakeholders.
- Teachers welcomed the autonomy and choice of decision making in the formation and planning of the school programme.
- Students preferred subjects which encouraged their creativity, emotions and action.

### *Teaching practices and methods:*

- Teachers’ views were contradictory concerning the teaching practices and methods applied in the ‘all-day’ school.
- The morning teachers insist on ‘*well-tried*’ and more traditionally oriented teaching methods while the afternoon teachers, especially the specialist teachers, emphasized the need for applying new teaching approaches and methods in order the students to enjoy learning.
- The morning teachers are more interested in using curriculum-centred teaching methods.
- The afternoon teachers are using learner-cantered teaching methods where the role of the student is more important.

### *Homework completion:*

- The most controversial issue regarding the pedagogical aims of the ‘all-day’ school remains the completion of homework at school. All the participants agreed that the ‘all-day’ school encounters difficulties (time and staff shortages) in providing students with the help needed for completing their homework at school.
- The afternoon teachers expressed their disappointment as they have limited say and influence on the school programme.

### *Cooperation between teachers and students:*

- Teachers believed that students were happy to study and participate in extra specialist subjects

- Teachers' troubled relationships have not affected students' progress.
- Students' positive attitude to learning in the afternoon session was associated with the strong relationships created with their teachers. The extended programme of activities taught in the all-day school enhanced the student-teacher relationships, as students got closer to teachers and their peers, leading to increased pedagogical and social skills.
- The 'all-day' school curriculum not only allowed students to develop strong relationships with more than one teacher, the class teacher, but it contributed to the creation of better relations between teachers and their peers.

### **6.3.2 Research question 2**

*What is the impact of the 'all-day' school on the professional lives of teachers?*

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with teachers, parents and students of the 'all-day' school concerning the impact of the 'all-day' school on teachers' professional lives. In addition, questionnaires distributed to the teachers and parents trying to find out their perceptions about the impact of the 'all-day' school on teachers' professional lives. In the next section, findings from research question 2 are summarised.

*Teachers' relationships:*

- The differences in role and teaching subject affected rather than enhanced relationships between teachers. Cooperation between the morning and afternoon teachers was minimal.
- *Power relationships* were developed between teachers and tensions and conflicts arose from their everyday interactions.
- The morning teachers seemed to enjoy and take advantage of the power their title offers them as class teachers.
- Tense relationships between teachers are more evident between teachers working in different sessions and with different skills sets.
- The afternoon teachers expressed dissatisfaction and disappointment with the discriminatory treatment by both the morning teachers and parents.
- Collaboration and interaction between teachers was also limited or non-existent, as they do not tend to see each other directly.

- Teachers' collaboration was further exacerbated by differences in teaching practices.
- The Ministry of Education (MOE) failed to bring substitute teachers to areas in which they were particularly needed. The absence of essential staff resulted in the deterioration rather than the enhancement of relationships between teachers.

*Satisfaction with resources:*

- Teachers believed that the Ministry of Education has failed to appoint specialist teachers on time.
- Teachers strongly believed that the 'all-day' schools have failed to provide the additional working areas for the specialist subjects, and activities.
- Teachers expressed their disappointment about the funds available for the 'all-day' school which addresses different needs for different students.

### **6.3.3 Research question 3**

*What are students' perceptions of the 'all-day' school?*

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with teachers, parents and students of the 'all-day' school concerning the impact of the 'all-day' school on students' lives. In addition, questionnaires distributed to the teachers and parents trying to find out their perceptions about the impact of the 'all-day' school on students' lives. In the next section, findings from research question 3 are summarised.

*Access to teachers:*

- Students' relationships were strengthened, especially with the afternoon teachers.
- The afternoon classes, which involved group activities, helped students to build their social and pedagogical skills and learn better as they are able to note any problems directly to the teacher and also benefit from a close interaction with their peers.

*Sufficiency of resources:*

- Students' dissatisfaction was associated with the poor facilities and resources of the 'all-day' school for studying specialist subjects.
- Students believed that the 'all-day' school did not offer an appropriate learning setting for them.

*Time to complete tasks (homework):*

- Students could not complete their homework at school due to shortage of primary class and specialist teachers.
- The failure of the 'all-day' school to assist its students with their homework has affected mainly the senior students as they have more subjects to study.

*Students' relationships:*

- Friendships at school played a balancing role in students' lives and affected their school performance.
- The long day at school became very tiring, but having good friends lightened and reduced the bad emotions and thoughts of the students.
- Students having to stay at school for long hours caused tensions and arguments in the overcrowded 'all-day' schools with asphyxiating play grounds and limited outdoor activities.

#### **6.3.4 Research question 4**

*What are parents' perceptions of the 'all-day' school?*

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with teachers, parents and students of the 'all-day' school concerning the impact of the 'all-day' school on parents' lives. In addition, questionnaires distributed to the teachers and parents trying to find out their perceptions about the impact of the 'all-day' school on parents' lives. In the next section, findings from research question 4 are summarised.

*The impact on parents' working lives:*

- The 'all-day' school allowed parents more time for themselves not necessarily to spend it at work but for getting involved in activities that otherwise they could not had the chance to participate.

*Response to education provided:*

- Parents agreed that their children felt happier about their learning in the ‘all-day’ school. The additional learning subjects and activities in the afternoon zone have been perceived beneficial for their children.
- Parents believed that the ‘all-day’ school curriculum in practice did not offer equal opportunities to all students.
- Parents realized that the ‘all-day’ school had failed to meet its social and pedagogical needs and admitted the creation of tension between all those involved in its operation because of all the deficiencies.

*Parents’ relationship with teachers:*

- Strong relations parents built with the morning teachers and not with the afternoon teachers contributed greatly to the deterioration of the ‘all-day’ school community.
- Parents claimed that the morning teachers played a more important role in children’s education.
- Parents’ discriminative attitude towards the afternoon zone teachers reflected the failures of the ‘all-day’ school system to equally value the work of all teachers.

*Parents’ relationships with their children:*

- Relations between parents and their children were affected, as parents were required to cover the gaps of their children’s unfinished homework by providing extra tuition.
- The issue of the unfinished homework intensified parents-students relationships as they had to keep up with the stress students brought home from an exhaustive day at school and with the burden of the private classes.

## **6.4 Implications for policy and practice - Recommendations**

In the following section the research implications will be discussed and recommendations will be made in an effort to identify the areas on which the present study can have utility and influence on both policy and practice.

### **6.4.1 Educational policies**

It would be valuable for the Greek Ministry of Education which undertakes any responsibility of high –level educational planning and policy making to leave behind the strong central control and bureaucratic practices and move forward allowing all the members of the educational community to participate in the formation and effective application of the national education policy. The case of the ‘all-day’ school has proved that the Greek Ministry of Education underestimated all these factors necessary for the successful implementation of its theoretical aims into practice. Therefore, it is critical for the primary education and the education as a whole in Greece to become a collective procedure allowing the voices of its active stakeholders to be heard. Education policies should be based on a commonly agreed strategy amongst the Greek political parties rather than the result of any change occurred in power or because of the conflict with the previous government (Gerou, 1996; Papadimitropoulos, 2003; Saiti & Eliophotou-Menon, 2009). .

### **6.4.2 Curriculum reform**

The ‘all-day’ school curriculum enhancement in theory with additional subjects and activities was very promising considering the flexibility given for first time to the teachers, parents and students to have a say in the final structure of the school programme. However, while the design and theoretical background of the formation of the ‘all-day’ school curriculum was very ambitious, in practice its implementation met tremendous obstacles. The Greek Ministry of Education should have taken in consideration the particularities of its educational system and dealt in advance with those parameters such as centralism, bureaucracy and control as well as disagreement amongst political parties and mainly the lack of educational policy continuity (Saiti & Eliophotou-Menon, 2009). It would be crucial for the ‘all-day’ school’s future a better planned curriculum which it would be based not only on the needs of the students but mainly on the degree of its successful implementation step by step.

The curriculum changed content should be adapted to the changing needs of the Greek society. The ‘all-day’ school reform was an effort of demonstrating to European partners that Greece is moving forward aiming to educational modernization, decentralization, openness, flexibility and quality through an innovative, revised and

enhanced curriculum (Law N.2525/97). However, after fifteen years of its establishment, the 'all-day' school remains a project in process. It is critical for the primary education in Greece the institutionalization of the 'all-day' school to become the successful example of reforming the primary Greek schools learning from the mistakes of the past years. This can be feasible by adding subjects that will prepare students in becoming competent professionals in a globalized society and successfully cope with the demands of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. This study offers the opportunity to the Greek educational community to listen to the stakeholders' voices that evaluate the institutionalization of the 'all-day' school through their active participation in its operation and take measures.

### **6.4.3 Teaching methods and practices**

Although in Greek primary education the traditional teaching methods have been replaced by the interdisciplinary approach (Pedagogical Institute, 2003), the case of the 'all-day' school reveals that there is a constant conflict amongst those teachers who insist on the '*well-tried*' teaching methods and those ones, especially the specialist teachers, who have realized the need for the application of new teaching approaches and methods in order the students to enjoy learning. It is crucial for the Greek Ministry of Education to provide teachers with the necessary training from the beginning of their career in order to apply those teaching methods necessary for their students' better learning. Teachers should be ready to cope with increasingly more complex learning environments achieving the best results for their students (OECD, 2012). For this reason the Ministry of Education needs to enhance teachers' training starting from the early stages of their studies and during their whole teaching career.

### **6.4.4 Teachers' professionalism**

Teachers working in the 'all-day' school experience a series of professional challenges. Unprepared to teach in a completely new educational environment found themselves to experiment their professional status in a conflict and contradicting school environment. The teachers of the 'all-day' school should move from the autonomy and individualism enjoying into their classrooms to cooperate with different specialist teachers achieving educational outcomes under very difficult conditions. This is not easy to be achieved if the teachers will not be inspired and learn how to



cooperate better and more effectively with their colleagues. It is a matter of good leadership which can inspire teachers' work, encourage their performances and manage building a harmonious school environment for the benefits of all stakeholders (Hargreaves, 2009; Hargreaves and Fink, 2008; Leithwood et al., 2004; Middlewood, 2010). In addition, teachers have been assigned with the demanding task of providing their students with those skills to become competitive and active citizens and workers of the 21<sup>st</sup> century (Goodson, Hargreaves, 2006; OECD, 2011). There is also a need for teachers to enhance students' ability to succeed into classrooms with cultural heterogeneity and diversity by differentiating their teaching styles, methods and approaches. It would be beneficial if the Greek Ministry of Education implement robust and consistent professional development training to assist head-teachers' and teachers' competence in order to keep them constantly informed about curricula and pedagogy innovations as well as about new developments into digital resources.

#### **6.4.5 School leadership**

The case of the 'all-day' school makes clear that it is necessary for the school leaders in Greek primary education to enhance their roles with extra responsibilities which at the present are limited to bureaucratic duties such as the '*interpretation*' and '*implementation*' of the laws and regulations (Eliophotou-Menon and Saitis, 2006; Fintzou, 2005; Pyrgiotakis et al., 2001; Saitis & Menon, 2004; Saitis & Gournaropoulos, 2001; Saitis, 2008; Saiti, 2012). This is crucial for the future of the 'all-day' school which needs head-teachers and deputy head-teachers who are not just accountable to deliver and implement the decisions of the authorities. The 'all-day' school leaders should be entitled with more flexibility and freedom in organizing and running their schools according the real needs and particularities' of each school. Given the fact that the 'all-day' school is an innovation for the primary education the same innovative should be the role of its head-teachers and such as to become the example for inspiration for all the head-teachers of the primary education in Greece. There is need for the 'all-day' school head-teachers to follow the example of their colleagues in other western countries, such as in the UK, and make the difference in their school (Hargreaves, 2009; Hargreaves and Fink, 2008; Leithwood et al., 2004; Middlewood, 2010). For instance, emphasis should be placed by the Greek Ministry of education on teachers and leadership training as charismatic and well trained

teachers and leaders can only improve the educational standards (Harris, 2005; Leithwood et al. 2004; Southworth, 2002). It is time for the Greek government to encourage the institutionalization of school agencies responsible for teacher and leadership training in order the quality of the education workforce to be improved. The Government and local authorities could work together for the creation of school agencies which can enable and support the development of a self-improving, school-led system following the successful example of similar agencies (National College for Teaching and Leadership) in the United Kingdom (DoE, 2013).

#### **6.4.6 Quality assurance procedures**

Every ‘all-day’ school should have a charismatic, capable head-teacher accountable to a range of school performances. The head-teacher of the ‘all-day’ school is called to play a crucial role in monitoring, planning, organizing and balancing the operation of the ‘all-day’ school. It would be helpful if quality assurance procedures could be placed into practice by the Greek Ministry of Education in order the school standards to be kept high. The lack of quality assurance procedures in the operation of the ‘all-day’ school makes necessary for the Greek educational authorities to take prompt measures for the benefit of all the stakeholders. Greece should learn lessons from other education systems, where emphasis is placed on quality assurance procedures, inspection and monitoring of keeping the school standards high. The Greek Ministry of Education should follow the successful examples of the UK where a robust planning, monitoring and evaluation by leaders was consistent with school managers to analyze a range of performance data. The Greek schools need to adopt policies from other educational systems where the head-teachers carefully tracked the progress that pupils made, conducted lesson observations systematically, and routinely scrutinized pupils’ work to identify strengths and areas for further development (DoE, 2013).

#### **6.4.7 School stakeholders’ interaction**

The ‘all-day’ school gave the chance to its stakeholders to play an active role in the school’s operation for the first time. Having this opportunity the stakeholders of the ‘all-day’ school should closely interact and cooperate in order for the ‘all-day’ school to have a beneficial impact on all of them. The ‘all-day’ school is still a project in progress with uncertain future. It is true that under the difficult economic situation that

Greece is experiencing the 'all-day' school has a number of challenges to overcome. Issues, such as, poor human resources, inexistent funding, the inability of the Ministry of Education to appoint on time the teachers needed, organizational problems, are some of the obstacles that the 'all-day' school should overcome. It is crucial for the stakeholders to join their voices and efforts and keep alive and progressive the 'all-day' school project regardless all its problems. If the Greek educational authorities are unable to improve the operation of the 'all-day' school, the cooperation of the stakeholders can make the difference.

#### **6.4.8 Parental involvement**

It is an innovation for the primary education in Greece that for the first time the 'all-day' school 'allows' parents to have a say in the curriculum formation asking them to suggest the extra subjects and activities that they perceive important for their children needs. This is very important as in Greece parents' involvement is less critical compared to other educational systems around the world. Hopefully, parents' involvement in the 'all-day' school practices can be expanded in all the levels of the Greek education given that parental involvement can become a valuable resource for the school. Such an initiative should be encouraged by the school itself by inviting parents to participate more actively in the school's operation. This can also be achieved if the school allows for parental management, involvement in education programs decision making or administration of the school (Ferrara, 2009; Gibson & Jefferson, 2006; Mapp et al. 2008).

#### **6.4.9 Local authority involvement**

Except the crucial role of the parents' involvement in the 'all-day' school processes, local authorities also can play a significant part. The 'all-day' school aims to '*open*' its doors to the local community and broaden its stakeholders' interaction. It would be beneficial for the local community and for the school if the 'all-day' school invited the local authorities to participate in school activities, for instance, with cultural character, enabling them with responsibilities in organizing and presenting events with the participation of teachers, students and parents.

#### **6.4.10 Homework completion**

One of the most controversial issues of the ‘all-day’ school is the homework completion at school. A closer cooperation between teachers and parents would possibly help students to complete their homework at school. Previous studies (Goldman, 2005; Desforges & Abouchar, 2003; Peters, Seeds, Goldstein & Coleman, 2008; Duckworth, 2008; Flouri & Buchanan, 2004; Sharp, Keys, & Benefield, 2001) focus on the importance of parental involvement in pupils’ homework mainly completed at home. However, in contemporary societies a number of challenges such as work commitments for both parents, single parents, childcare issues of other children, lack of time and difficulties with literacy and numeracy prevent parents from providing their children with their homework support needed (Farrell, 2003; Bynner & Parsons, 2006). In such cases, the school should provide parents with the opportunity for their children to complete their homework at school. The Ministry of Education should prioritize the appointment of sufficient number of teachers in the ‘all-day’ schools tasked with the responsibility of helping students with their homework completion. In addition, changes in the curriculum and school programme could help the smooth operation of the ‘all-day’ school allowing for more time for students’ homework to be completed at school.

#### **6.5 Limitations of this research**

One of the limitations of this study is that, although an effort has been made for the institutionalization and operation of the ‘all-day’ school to be examined in depth, the research methods used focussed on the interviews and questionnaires only. Observations could have enhanced the evaluation of the ‘all-day’ school scheme providing the opportunity to observe and experience from firsthand the stakeholders’ interaction. The power of the participants’ voices in a research project is clear but observing them would further strengthen the research findings. In addition, this study did not collect data on the actual students’ learning outcomes after attending the ‘all-day’ school, therefore it remains unclear what the impact of this reform on learning actually is. However, it is noted that this was not one of the aims of this study.

Another limitation of the study was that it took place in the periphery of Attica (Athens). There are currently 28 pilot ‘all-day’ schools operating in Greece but only 8 contributed data to this study. Including the remaining in the study could have provided additional insights as to how the ‘all-day’ school operates and reveal further details on the particularities that relate to its operation leading to further suggestions for improvement.

## **6.6 Further research**

The present study has examined in great extent the impact of the ‘all-day’ school on teachers’, parents’ and students’ lives revealing significant views of the main stakeholders who are actively involved in the ‘all-day’ school processes. The voices of the research participants call for reconsideration and reformation of the ‘all-day’ school. As a result, this study can become the aspiration for an extended possible research exploration in the institutionalization of the ‘all-day’ school scheme. In Greece there are only 28 pilot ‘all-day’ school with compulsory attendance for all their students. It would be, therefore, very beneficial, this time the learning outcomes to be examined evaluating in what degree the ‘all-day’ school contributes to the students’ better academic performance. Such an evaluation alongside with the contribute of this study could provide the educational community and authorities with all the information needed for revaluating and reforming anew the ‘all-day’ school project. Finally the present study can become the basis of further research regarding the need of consistency between policy making and policy implementation in Greek education.

## **6.7 Contribution to knowledge**

The present research is very significant as it is the first study examining the institutionalization of the ‘all-day’ school in such depth. It is the first to enable the main stakeholders of the ‘all-day’ school, the head-teachers, teachers, students and parents, to both voice their experience and to evaluate the ‘all-day’ school scheme after sixteen years of its operation.

This research has explored the impact of the institutionalization of the ‘all-day’ school in Greece, on teachers, students and parents. Previous studies have examined the

operation of the 'all-day' school to a degree but were focused on different aspects of its operation, not addressing significant parts of its process. Specifically, previous studies about the 'all-day' school were general and did not manage to bring together the key elements of the all-day school neither did they provide a comprehensive and holistic examination of its operation. A major aspect of this study's contribution is the examination of the perceptions of the key stakeholders of the 'all-day' school offering them the opportunity to express their perceptions and to consider their personal experiences of being involved in the school's life. This study is distinctive in that it contributes significantly to the existing research knowledge, broadening our understanding of those parameters affecting the implementation of educational reforms in Greece and moreover highlighting the particularities that are characteristic of the Greek education system.

One of the major contributions of this study is the identification of persistent inconsistency between policy making and policy implementation in Greek education. As a result, the pedagogical and social aims of the 'all-day' school were not successfully put into practice as evidenced from the perceptions of the involved stakeholders. Second, this study reflects the educational situation in Greece offering explanations and answers concerning an education system which struggles to be modernized and improved mainly because of its centralized and absolute status and its controlled character. Third, the present study contributes significantly to knowledge as it has empowered the research participants, enabling their voices to be heard by those concerned with Greek education. All contradictions, tensions and dilemmas expressed not only by the different groups of stakeholders but by the members of the same groups of participants make the particular study distinctive and unique. This study could provide the stepping stone for the reconsideration and reformation of the 'all-day' school proposing a set of changes regarding ways in which its institutionalization could be improved. Despite the contradictory views of its stakeholders and their dissatisfaction because of its unsuccessful operation, the 'all-day' school provides an educational reform which has the potential to fulfil its theoretical aims. The stakeholders of the 'all-day' school strongly agree that this reform is potentially innovative and with certain adaptations, holds great promise for the future of the primary education in Greece.

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## Appendix 1: Information letter



Dear

My name is Ailina Gkoratsa and I am a research student in the Department of Education at Brunel University under the supervision of Professor Roy Evans and Dr Deborah Jones.

I am writing to ask whether you would be interested in participating in a research enquiry that draws on the field of Educational Reforms that have taken place in Greece as a result of the country's entrance into the European Union. My research study will be particularly focused on the establishment and operation of the 'all-day' school.

As a previous primary teacher in Greece, working the last years in 'all-day' schools, I believe that my research study will be very useful for all of us, teachers, parents and students.

Within your busy schedule, I would really appreciate the opportunity to talk with you. More specifically, I am interested in exploring the implementation of the "all- day" school in Greece in terms of its consequences on teachers' work. I am also interested in exploring parents' and students' views about the impact of the 'all-day' school on their lives. The research would involve you in a short interview of between 45 minutes to one hour.

If you agree I would be pleased to come to your school at a convenient time for you. All interviews are confidential and although the work will be published, individuals will not be identifiable in any way and no comments will be attributed.

Many thanks for your time and I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely

Ailina Gkoratsa

E-mail: xxxxxxxx@yahoo.com

Tel.: 0044(0)xxxxxxxx, 0044(0)xxxxxx

## Appendix 2: Letter to the head teacher

January 10th 2008

Dear .....

### **Re: Interviewing teachers and students in your 'all-day' school**

I am writing to you to request your help with a research project on the impact of the institutionalization of the 'all-day' school in Greece on teachers', students' and parents' lives.

I am a research student in the Department of Sports and Education at Brunel University under the supervision of Professor Roy Evans and Dr Deborah Jones. At this stage, I would like to conduct interviews with the teachers and students from Year 1 to Year 6 in your school. Therefore, I would be very grateful if you were kind enough to allow me to visit your school and conduct the interviews with the teachers and students of your school.

Before undertaking my doctoral studies, I worked for many years as a primary school teacher in Greece. I can assure you, therefore, that I am sensitive to the needs of children, teachers and schools when there are visitors in the classroom.

If appropriate and desirable, I would be more than willing to assist the teacher on the day of my visit, in order to conduct the interviews without disturbing the daily school programme.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions concerning the aims of my research or the nature of my proposed visit. I also enclose the contact details for my supervisor, who is more than happy for you to contact them directly.

I hope you will be able to help with the initial stages of this research project. I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely,

Ailina Gkoratsa

## Appendix 3: Parental consent letter



**“What is the impact of the institutionalization of the ‘all-day’ school in Greece on teachers, parents and students lives?”**

### Parental Consent Form

*Please circle as appropriate*

Have you read the Participant Information Sheet?	Yes	No
Have you had an opportunity to ask questions and discuss this study?	Yes	No
Have you received satisfactory answers to all your questions?	Yes	No
Do you fully understand what the study involves?	Yes	No
Do you understand that your child/ward is free to withdraw from the study at any time?	Yes	No
without having to give a reason for withdrawing?	Yes	No
Do you consent to your child taking part in this study?	Yes	No

**Signature of Parent/Guardian.....Date.....**

**Name in capitals.....**

## Appendix 4: Participant consent letter in Greek



«Ποια είναι η επίδραση του Ολοήμερου Σχολείου στην Ελλάδα στους δασκάλους, μαθητές και γονείς;»

### Επιστολή Συναίνεσης Συμμετέχοντων

Παρακαλώ βάλτε X στο απαραίτητο κουτί

	Ναι	Όχι
Σας έχει εξηγήσει ο ερευνητής τη φύση της έρευνας και τι θα χρειαστεί από σας κατά τη διάρκεια της συνέντευξης;	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Είχατε την ευκαιρία να συζητήσετε θέματα που άπτονται την ανωνυμία και εμπιστευτικότητα των δεδομένων που θα συγκεντρωθούν;	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Έχετε κατανοήσει ότι δε θα αναφερθεί το όνομα σας σε καμιά δημοσίευση της έρευνας;	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Έχετε βεβαιωθεί ότι είστε ελεύθεροι να αποχωρήσετε από την έρευνα οποιαδήποτε στιγμή το αποφασίσετε χωρίς να δώσετε εξηγήσεις;	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Συμφωνείτε να πάρετε μέρος σάντι την έρευνα με δική σας και μόνο θέληση;	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>


Υπογραφή Συμμετέχοντος.....

Ημερομηνία.....

Όνοματεπώνυμο (Κεφαλαία).....

## Appendix 5: Letter of approval for the research from the Ministry of Education

ΑΡΙΘ. ΠΡΩΤ. : 615/1095  
ΑΡΙΘ. ΕΞΕΤΡΕ : 3196/08

  
**ΕΛΛΗΝΙΚΗ ΔΗΜΟΚΡΑΤΙΑ**  
ΥΠΟΥΡΓΕΙΟ  
ΕΘΝΙΚΗΣ ΠΑΙΔΕΙΑΣ  
ΚΑΙ ΘΡΗΣΚΕΥΜΑΤΩΝ

Όλα είναι θέμα Παιδείας

**ΕΝΙΑΙΟΣ ΔΙΟΙΚΗΤΙΚΟΣ ΤΟΜΕΑΣ  
ΠΡΩΤΟΒΑΘΜΙΑΣ ΚΑΙ ΔΕΥΤΕΡΟΒΑΘΜΙΑΣ  
ΕΚΠΑΙΔΕΥΣΗΣ  
ΔΙΕΥΘΥΝΣΗ ΣΠΟΥΔΩΝ Π.Ε  
ΤΜΗΜΑ Α'**

Ανδρέα Παπανδρέου 37  
151 80 Μαρούσι

Πληροφορίες : Ρ. Γεωργακόπουλος  
Τηλέφωνο : 210.34.42.248  
Fax : 210.34.42.241  
e-mail : [spudonpe@ypreph.gr](mailto:spudonpe@ypreph.gr)

Να διατηρηθεί μέχρι  
Βαθμός ασφαλείας

Μαρούσι, 26-09-2008

Αριθ. Πρωτ. Βαθμός Προτερ.  
Φ15/ 1205 / 107611 / Γ1

Προς: κα Αίλινα Γκοράτσα  
28 Pentose House  
16 Newsholme Drive  
London, N21 1TW

Κοιν: 1. Παιδαγωγικό Ινστιτούτο  
Μεσογείων 396  
153 41 Αγ. Παρασκευή  
2. Αρμόδιους Σχολικούς Συμβούλους  
( Μέσω των Δ/σεων Π.Ε Α' Αθηνών,  
Β' Αθηνών, Γ' Αθηνών & Πειραιά)  
3. Δ/ντές Εκπ/σης Π.Ε Α' Αθηνών,  
Β' Αθηνών, Γ' Αθηνών & Πειραιά

ΘΕΜΑ: Έγκριση έρευνας

Απαντώντας σε σχετικό αίτημά σας και έχοντας υπόψη την αριθμ. 8/2008 πράξη του Τμήματος Ε.Τ.Ε.Τ. του Παιδαγωγικού Ινστιτούτου, σας κάνουμε γνωστό ότι εγκρίνουμε τη διεξαγωγή της έρευνάς σας με θέμα: " Η επίδραση των εκπαιδευτικών μεταρρυθμίσεων στους δασκάλους, μαθητές και γονείς. Η περίπτωση του Ολοήμερου Δημοτικού Σχολείου στην Ελλάδα ", η οποία θα πραγματοποιηθεί στα σχολεία του συνημμένου πίνακα με τις ακόλουθες επισημάνσεις:

1. Η άδεια χορηγείται για μια τριετία.
2. Πριν από τις επισκέψεις σας στα σχολεία να υπάρχει συνεννόηση με τους Διευθυντές τους, τους Σχολικούς Συμβούλους και συνεργασία με το διδακτικό προσωπικό, ώστε να εξασφαλίζεται η ομαλή λειτουργία των σχολικών μονάδων.
3. Τα αποτελέσματα της έρευνάς σας να κοινοποιηθούν στο Παιδαγωγικό Ινστιτούτο και στη Δ/ση Σπουδών Π.Ε.
4. Η συμμετοχή των εκπαιδευτικών και των γονέων στην έρευνα είναι πάντα προαιρετική, γίνεται με δική τους ευθύνη και εφόσον το επιθυμούν

1



5. Εργαλεία της έρευνας για τη συλλογή δεδομένων από γονείς και εκπαιδευτικούς θα είναι οι ημιδομημένες συνεντεύξεις και τα ερωτηματολόγια και από τους μαθητές η ημιδομημένη συνέντευξη.

6. Στο ερωτηματολόγιο των δασκάλων: α) να διαμορφωθεί το ερωτηματολόγιο στο σύνολό του με τρόπο που να σημειώνει τις επιλογές του ο δάσκαλος και όχι να τις κυκλώνει, β) η ερώτηση 5 να γίνει ερώτηση 2 και γ) στις ερωτήσεις 6 και 7 να καταγραφούν οι δραστηριότητες, ώστε να μπορεί ο δάσκαλος να τις κατατάξει σε σειρά προτεραιότητας προσθέτοντας και κάποια δική του

7. Για την διεξαγωγή της έρευνάς σας στους μαθητές θα πρέπει να προηγηθεί ενημέρωση των γονέων και των εκπαιδευτικών, ώστε να υπάρχει **γραφτή** συγκατάθεση των γονέων έχοντας υπόψη ότι για όλες τις περιπτώσεις η συμμετοχή στην έρευνα δεν είναι υποχρεωτική.

8. Οι διευθυντές και οι εκπαιδευτικοί των σχολείων να ενημερωθούν για το περιεχόμενο και τους σκοπούς της έρευνας με γραπτή επιστολή. Η απασχόληση κάθε εκπαιδευτικού στην έρευνα δε θα υπερβαίνει τα 15 λεπτά της ώρας και σε χρόνο που οι δάσκαλοι δεν ασκούν τα διδακτικά τους καθήκοντα.

9. Πριν από την συνέντευξη με τους μαθητές θα υπάρξει συνεννόηση με το διευθυντή και τους δασκάλους κάθε σχολείου για το χρόνο συνάντησης μαζί τους. Οι συνεντεύξεις με τους μαθητές να γίνουν σε ώρες εκτός διδακτικού ωραρίου Δεν επιτρέπεται σε καμία περίπτωση η βιντεοσκόπηση, η ηχογράφηση και η φωτογράφιση των μαθητών.

10. Τα ερωτηματολόγια είναι πάντα ανώνυμα και κωδικοποιημένα. Σε κάθε περίπτωση να τηρηθεί η ανωνυμία των μαθητών και των εκπαιδευτικών.

Οι Διευθυντές Πρωτοβάθμιας Εκπαίδευσης στους οποίους κοινοποιείται το έγγραφο αυτό, παρακαλούνται να ενημερώσουν σχετικά τα σχολεία στα οποία θα πραγματοποιηθεί η έρευνα.

Συν.: 1 φύλλο

**Εσωτ. Διανομή**  
Δ/νση Σπουδών Π.Ε.  
Τμήμα Α



Πιστό Αντίγραφο  
Από τη Διεύθυνση Διοικητικού  
Τμήμα Διοίκησης & Πρωτοκόλλου

Ο ΔΙΕΥΘΥΝΤΗΣ

ΚΟΤΖΑΜΠΑΣΑΚΗΣ ΚΩΝΣΤΑΝΤΙΝΟΣ ΑΛΕΞΑΝΔΡΟΣ ΚΟΠΤΣΗΣ

## **Appendix 6: Interview questions for teachers, parents, students**

### **INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR TEACHERS**

- Have you ever worked in an ‘all-day’ school? (What is it like? / What do you think it is like?)
- What do students tell you about the ‘all day’ school (morning/afternoon zone)?
- Has the ‘all-day’ school affected the school curriculum? In what way?
- How do the morning and afternoon curriculum relate to each other? Is there any continuity between the two?
- Who is responsible for the management of ‘morning and afternoon’ zones (record keeping, continuity, communication)?
- What kind of new subjects and activities does the ‘all day’ school include? (Give examples)
- Which new subjects and activities of the ‘all-day’ school are most preferable from your students? Why do you think this happens?
- Is students’ attendance compulsory? Can parents opt out? What is your opinion about it?
- From what you have heard/your experience is there any difference between the ‘all-day’ schools operating in different peripheries of Athens?
- In what ways does the establishment and operation of ‘all-day’ school meets the needs of students and their parents?
- From your daily contact with the parents what is your feeling about their acceptance of the ‘all day’ school?
- From your daily contact with the students what is your feeling about their acceptance of the ‘all-day’ school?
- What do you think is the impact of the ‘all-day’ school on your professional life?
- What would you change in the operation of the ‘all-day’ school? Why?
- Do you perceive the institutionalization of the ‘all-day’ school as important for the Greek Primary Education? Why?

## INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR PARENTS

- What is your opinion about the operation of the ‘all-day’ school?
- For how long do your children go to this school?
  
- What do students tell you about the ‘all day’ school (morning/afternoon zone)?
  
- Has the ‘all-day’ school curriculum affected your children lives? In what way?
  
- How do the morning and afternoon curriculum relate to each other? Is there any continuity between the two?
  
- Who is responsible for the management of ‘morning and afternoon’ zones (record keeping, continuity, communication)?
  
- What kind of new subjects and activities does the ‘all day’ school include? (Give examples)
  
- Which new subjects and activities of the ‘all-day’ school are most preferable from your children? Why do you think this happens?
  
- Is students’ attendance compulsory? Can you opt out? What is your opinion about it?
  
- From what you have heard/your experience is there any difference between the ‘all-day’ schools operating in different peripheries of Athens?
  
- In what ways does the establishment and operation of ‘all-day’ school meets the needs of students and their parents?
  
- From your daily contact with the teachers what is your feeling about their acceptance of the ‘all day’ school?
  
- From your daily contact with your children what is your feeling about their acceptance of the ‘all-day’ school?
  
- What do you think is the impact of the ‘all-day’ school on your working and personal lives?
  
- What would you change in the operation of the ‘all-day’ school? Why?
  
- Do you perceive the institutionalization of the ‘all-day’ school as important for the Greek Primary Education? Why?

### INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR STUDENTS

- Do you like your school? Why?
- For how long are you coming to this school?
- Which zone of the 'all day' school (morning/afternoon zone) do you like more? Why?
- What kind of new subjects and activities are you doing in the 'all day' school? (Give examples)
- Which new subjects and activities of the 'all-day' school do you like most? Why?
- Who is your most favourite teacher? Why?
- Who is responsible for the 'morning and afternoon' zones?
- Is your attendance compulsory for both zones? Can you opt out? What is your opinion about it?
- From what you have heard from your friends going to other 'all-day' schools is there any difference between the 'all-day' schools operating in different areas of Athens?
- In what ways do you think the 'all-day' school is different from other primary schools?
- In what ways do you think your school helps you?
- Are your parents pleased with your school? Why?
- Are you pleased with your school? Why? Can you say the same for your teachers?
- What would you change in your school? Why?

## Appendix 7: Questionnaire for the teachers

### Questionnaire for the teachers of the “All-day” school

#### Part 1: General Details

*Please indicate or circle the most appropriate:*

1. Are you?  
 Male  Female
2. What is your age range?  
 Under 30  30-45  Over 45
3. Have you ever worked in an “All-day” school?
  - a. No
  - b. Yes. For how many years.....
4. How many years teaching experience do you have?  
 0-5  6-10  11-15  15-20  Over 20

#### Part 2: Pedagogical aims of the ‘all-day’ school

The following matters relate to the aims and purposes of the ‘all-day’ school. Please indicate your position in respect to the following:

*Please indicate or circle the most appropriate:*

1.....2.....3.....4.....5

1=completely agree

5=completely disagree

5. The ‘all-day’ school provides for enrichment of the curriculum with teaching additional learning subjects and activities. 1 2 3 4 5
6. The ‘all-day’ school provides for redefinition of teaching with the renewal of teaching practices in order teaching methods to become collaborative and explorative. 1 2 3 4 5
7. The ‘all-day’ school provides for better co-operation between teacher and student. 1 2 3 4 5
8. The ‘all-day’ school provides for inter-scientific approach of the taught subjects. 1 2 3 4 5

9. The 'all-day' school provides for completion of learning procedures and schooling preparation at school. 1 2 3 4 5

**Part 3: Social aims of the 'all-day' school**

*Please indicate or circle the most appropriate:*

1.....2.....3.....4.....5      1=completely agree      5=completely disagree

9. The 'all-day' school provides for limitation of 'para-paideia' and financial relief especially of those of the lower class. 1 2 3 4 5

10. The 'all-day' school provides for limitation of educational imparity with the induction of new learning subjects in order the low-ability students to be more supportive. 1 2 3 4 5

11. The 'all-day' school provides for cover of the need of the working parents 1 2 3 4 5

12. The 'all-day' school provides for responsible and affective supervision of the students 1 2 3 4 5

13. The 'all-day' school provides for creation of an essential interaction among students in order to be supported to accept the variation of others through a better understanding of their culture differences 1 2 3 4 5

14. The 'all-day' school provides for fighting off inequality and social discrimination 1 2 3 4 5

15. The 'all-day' school provides for limitation of negative forms of child behaviours 1 2 3 4 5

16. The 'all-day' school provides for parental and local authorities' activation in order the school to be the heart of the local community life 1 2 3 4 5

**Part 4: 'All-day' school and curriculum**

17. To what extent do you think the 'all-day' school has affected the morning and afternoon school?

- a. Very much
- b. A lot

Explain in what ways.

.....  
.....

- c. Little
- d. Very little
- e. Not at all

Why? Please explain.

.....  
.....  
.....

18. Do you think that the morning teachers liaise effectively with the afternoon teachers?

- a. Very much
- b. A lot
- c. Little
- d. Very little
- e. Not at all

19. Who is in charge for the afternoon zone of the "All-day" school?

- a. The class teacher
- b. The head teacher
- c. The specialist teacher
- d. Other (Indicate).....

20. Which are the main activities of the afternoon zone of the “All-day” school? Put them in an order on the basis of the time spending for each of them.

- a. ....
- b. ....
- c. ....
- d. ....
- e. ....

21. Which are the main subjects of the afternoon zone of the “All-day” school? Put them in an order according to your opinion.

- a. ....
- b. ....
- c. ....
- d. ....
- e. ....

**Part 5: The ‘all-day’ school, the parents, the students and the teachers**

22. Are the parents supportive of the aims and purposes of the ‘all-day’ school?

- a. Very much
- b. A lot
- c. Little
- d. Very little
- e. Not at all

23. Are the students supportive of the aims and purposes of the ‘all-day’ school?

- a. Very much
- b. A lot
- c. Little
- d. Very little
- e. Not at all

24. What is your opinion for the “All-day” school?

It fulfils the students’ needs	Yes	No
It fulfils the teachers’ needs	Yes	No
It fulfils the parents’ needs	Yes	No
It fulfils the needs of all the above	Yes	No



25. Do you consider the institutionalization of the “All-day” school necessary for the elementary education?

a. Yes. Why?

Please state

.....  
.....  
.....

b. No. Why?

Please state

.....  
.....  
.....

26. Do you think that the “All-day” school needs to be reformed?

a. Yes. Please indicate why?.....

.....  
.....

b. No. Please indicate why?

.....  
.....  
.....

***Thank you*** for taking the time to fill out this questionnaire

*Αιλίνα Γκοράτσα*

## Appendix 8: Questionnaire for teachers in Greek

### ΕΡΩΤΗΜΑΤΟΛΟΓΙΟ ΓΙΑ ΤΟΥΣ ΛΑΣΚΑΛΟΥΣ ΤΟΥ ΟΛΟΗΜΕΡΟΥ ΣΧΟΛΕΙΟΥ

#### ΜΕΡΟΣ I: Γενικές Ερωτήσεις

*Παρακαλώ επιλέξτε ή κυκλώστε την καταλληλότερη για σας απάντηση:*

1. Φύλο:

Άνδρας  γυναίκα

2. Ηλικία:

Κάτω των 30  30-45  46 και πάνω

3. Έχετε ξαναεργαστεί στο Ολοήμερο Σχολείο;

α) Όχι

β) Ναι. Για πόσα χρόνια.....

4. Πόσα χρόνια εκπαιδευτικής εμπειρίας έχετε;

0-5  6-10  11-15

15-20  περισσότερα των 20

#### ΜΕΡΟΣ II: Παιδαγωγικοί σκοποί του Ολοήμερου Σχολείου

Οι ερωτήσεις που ακολουθούν σχετίζονται με τους στόχους και τους σκοπούς του ολοήμερου Σχολείου. Παρακαλώ παρουσιάστε τη δική σας θέση σε σχέση με τα ακόλουθα:

*Παρακαλώ επιλέξτε ή κυκλώστε την καταλληλότερη για σας απάντηση:*

1= απόλυτα διαφωνώ

2= διαφωνώ

3= ούτε διαφωνώ, ούτε συμφωνώ

4= συμφωνώ

5= απόλυτα συμφωνώ

Απόλυτα

Απόλυτα

διαφωνώ

συμφωνώ

- |  |   |   |   |   |   |
|--|---|---|---|---|---|
| 5. Το Ολοήμερο Σχολείο με τον τρόπο που λειτουργεί πετυχαίνει τον εμπλουτισμο του αναλυτικού προγράμματος με τη διδασκαλία επιπρόσθετων μαθησιακών αντικειμένων και δραστηριοτήτων | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 6. Το Ολοήμερο Σχολείο δίνει έμφαση σε νέες μεθόδους διδασκαλίας με σκοπό η διδασκαλία να γίνεται περισσότερο συνεργατική και διερευνητική   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 7. Το Ολοήμερο Σχολείο πετυχαίνει την καλύτερη συνεργασία δασκάλου και μαθητή  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 8. Το Ολοήμερο Σχολείο αποσκοπεί στη διεπιστημονική προσέγγιση των διδακτικών θεμάτων  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 9. Το Ολοήμερο Σχολείο παρέχει τη δυνατότητα στους μαθητές να καλύπτουν τις μαθησιακές τους ανάγκες στο σχολείο  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 10. Το Ολοήμερο Σχολείο βοηθά τους μαθητές να προετοιμάζονται στο σχολείο για την επόμενη μέρα   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

### ΜΕΡΟΣ ΙΙΙ: Κοινωνικοί σκοποί του Ολοήμερου Σχολείου

*Παρακαλώ επιλέξτε ή κυκλώστε την καταλληλότερη για σας απάντηση:*

1= απόλυτα διαφωνώ

2= διαφωνώ

3= ούτε διαφωνώ, ούτε συμφωνώ

4= συμφωνώ

5= απόλυτα συμφωνώ

- |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 11. Το Ολοήμερο Σχολείο πετυχαίνει τον περιορισμό της ‘παραπαιδείας’ και την οικονομική ανακούφιση των κοινωνικά ασθενέστερων στρωμάτων                                       | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 12. Το ολοήμερο Σχολείο στοχεύει στον περιορισμό της εκπαιδευτικής ανισότητας με την εισαγωγή νέων μαθησιακών αντικειμένων δίνοντας έμφαση στην ενίσχυση των αδύνατων μαθητών | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 13. Το Ολοήμερο Σχολείο καλύπτει τις ανάγκες των εργαζόμενων γονέων   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 14. Το ολοήμερο σχολείο παρέχει υπεύθυνη και αποτελεσματική επιτήρηση στους μαθητές   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 15. Το Ολοήμερο Σχολείο δίνει έμφαση στη δημιουργία ουσιαστικής αλληλεπίδρασης μεταξύ των μαθητών και τους βοηθά να κατανοηθούν και αποδεχτούν τη διαφορετικότητα των άλλων   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 16. Το Ολοήμερο Σχολείο πετυχαίνει την κατάργηση ανισοτήτων και κοινωνικού αποκλεισμού  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 17. Το Ολοήμερο Σχολείο δίνει έμφαση στον περιορισμό μορφών αρνητικής συμπεριφοράς μεταξύ των μαθητών   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 18. Το Ολοήμερο Σχολείο στοχεύει στην ενεργοποίηση των γονέων και της τοπικής αυτοδιοίκησης ώστε το σχολείο να αποτελέσει το κέντρο της τοπικής κοινότητας                    | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

**ΜΕΡΟΣ IV: Ολοήμερο Σχολείο και Αναλυτικό πρόγραμμα**

**19. Σε ποιο βαθμό νομίζετε ότι το ολοήμερο σχολείο έχει επηρεάσει την πρωινή και απογευματινή λειτουργία του σχολείου;**

- a. Πάρα πολύ
- b. Πολύ

**Εξηγήστε με ποιους τρόπους**

.....

.....

.....

- c. Λίγο
- d. Ελάχιστα
- e. Καθόλου

**Γιατί; Παρακαλώ εξηγήστε**

.....  
.....  
.....

**20. Πιστεύετε ότι οι δάσκαλοι της πρωινής ζώνης συνεργάζονται αποτελεσματικά με τους δασκάλους της απογευματινής ζώνης;**

- a. Πάρα πολύ
- b. Πολύ
- c. Λίγο
- d. Ελάχιστα
- e. Καθόλου

**21. Ποιος είναι υπεύθυνος για την απογευματινή ζώνη του ολοήμερου σχολείου;**

- a. Ο δάσκαλος της τάξης
- b. Ο διευθυντής
- c. Ο δάσκαλος ειδικότητας
- d. Άλλος (δηλώστε).....

**22. Ποιες είναι οι κύριες δραστηριότητες του ολοήμερου σχολείου; Βάλτε τις σε σειρά προτεραιότητας με βάση τον χρόνο που αφιερώνεται στην κάθε δραστηριότητα.**

- a. ....
- b. ....
- c. ....
- d. ....
- e. ....

**23. Ποιες πιστεύετε ότι θα έπρεπε να είναι οι κύριες δραστηριότητες του ολοήμερου σχολείου; Βάλτε τις σε σειρά προτεραιότητας σύμφωνα με την γνώμη σας.**

- a. ....
- b. ....
- c. ....
- d. ....
- e. ....

**ΜΕΡΟΣ V: Ολοήμερο Σχολείο, γονείς, μαθητές και δάσκαλοι**

**24. Στηρίζουν οι γονείς τους σκοπούς και τους στόχους του ολοήμερου σχολείου;**

- a. Πάρα πολύ
- b. Πολύ
- c. Λίγο
- d. Ελάχιστα
- e. Καθόλου

**25. Ανταποκρίνονται οι μαθητές στους σκοπούς και στους στόχους του ολοήμερου σχολείου;**

- a. Πάρα πολύ
- b. Πολύ
- c. Λίγο
- d. Ελάχιστα
- e. Καθόλου

**26. Ποια η δική σας γνώμη για το ολοήμερο σχολείο;**

*Παρακαλώ επιλέξτε ή κυκλώστε την καταλληλότερη για σας απάντηση:*

**1= απόλυτα διαφωνώ**

**2= διαφωνώ**

**3= ούτε διαφωνώ, ούτε συμφωνώ**

**4= συμφωνώ**

**5= απόλυτα συμφωνώ**

Καλύπτει τις ανάγκες των μαθητών	1	2	3	4	5
Καλύπτει τις ανάγκες των δασκάλων	1	2	3	4	5
Καλύπτει τις ανάγκες των γονέων	1	2	3	4	5
Καλύπτει τις ανάγκες όλων	1	2	3	4	5

**27. Νομίζετε ότι το ολοήμερο σχολείο είναι απαραίτητος θεσμός για την πρωτοβάθμια εκπαίδευση**

A) Ναι. Γιατί;

Παρακαλώ εξηγήστε

.....  
.....

B) Όχι. Γιατί;

Παρακαλώ εξηγήστε

.....  
.....

**28. Νομίζετε ότι ο θεσμός του ολοήμερου σχολείου χρειάζεται αλλαγές;**

a. Ναι. Γιατί;

Παρακαλώ εξηγήστε

.....  
.....  
.....

b. Όχι. Γιατί;

Παρακαλώ εξηγήστε

.....  
.....

*Σας ευχαριστώ πολύ για τον χρόνο σας*

*Αιλίνα Γκοράτσα*

## Appendix 9: Questionnaire for parents

### Questionnaire for the parents of the students of the “All-day” school

#### Part 1: General Details

1. Are you?  
 Male  Female
2. What is your age range?  
 Under 30  30-45  Over 45

#### Part 2: Pedagogical aims of the ‘all-day’ school

*Please indicate or circle the most appropriate:*

1.....2.....3.....4.....5      1=completely agree      5=completely disagree

1. The ‘all-day’ school has enabled my child to feel happier about his/her learning
2. The ‘all-day’ school has helped my child to learn better with the new teaching practices and methods
3. The ‘all-day’ school has enabled my child to develop new skills with the induction of the additional learning subjects and activities
4. The ‘all-day’ school provides for completion of learning procedures and schooling preparation at school.
5. The “All-day” school fulfils the learning needs of my child?

#### Part 3: Social aims of the ‘all-day’ school

*Please indicate or circle the most appropriate*

1.....2.....3.....4.....5      1= completely agree      5= completely disagree

6. The “All-day” school fulfils the social needs of my child
7. The ‘all-day’ school has increased the friendship circle for my child
8. The ‘all-day’ school provides for better co-operation between teacher and student
9. The ‘all-day’ school provides for limitation of ‘para-paideia’ and financial relief for my family
10. The ‘all-day’ school provides for creation of an essential interaction among students in order to be supported to accept the variation of others through a better understanding of their culture differences
11. The ‘all-day’ school provides for limitation of negative forms of child behaviours
12. The ‘all-day’ school provides for responsible and affective supervision of the students



**Part 3: ‘All-day’ school and teachers**

In the ‘all-day’ school some teachers may have a greater practical impact.

*Please indicate or circle the most appropriate:*

1.....2.....3.....4.....5      1=completely agree      5=completely disagree

- 13. The morning teacher has the most important role
- 14. The afternoon teacher has the most important role
- 15. The specialist teacher has the most important role
- 16. They are all of them important

**Part 4: ‘All-day’ school and your daily routine**

- 17. How much has the “all-day” school affected your daily routine?
  - a. Extremely
  - b. Very much
  - c. Very
  - d. Little
  - e. Not at all
- 18. In case that the ‘all-day’ school has affected your daily routine

*Please indicate or circle the most appropriate*

1.....2.....3.....4.....5      1= completely agree      5= completely disagree

- I have more time for my work 1 2 3 4 5
- I have more time for my self 1 2 3 4 5
- It hasn’t changed. 1 2 3 4 5

Please state any other impact of the ‘all-day’ school on your daily routine

.....

.....

.....

.....

- 19. Do you consider the institutionalisation of the “All-day” school necessary for the elementary education?

Yes. Why? Please indicate

.....

.....

.....

No. Why? Please indicate

.....  
.....  
.....

20. Do you think that the “All-day” school needs to be reformed?

Yes. Please indicate why?

.....  
.....  
.....

No. Please indicate why?

.....  
.....  
.....

***Thank you*** for taking the time to fill out this questionnaire

*Αιλίνα Γκοράτσα*

## Appendix 10: Questionnaire for parents in Greek

### ΕΡΩΤΗΜΑΤΟΛΟΓΙΟ ΓΙΑ ΤΟΥΣ ΓΟΝΕΙΣ ΤΩΝ ΜΑΘΗΤΩΝ ΠΟΥ ΦΟΙΤΟΥΝ ΣΤΟ ΟΛΟΗΜΕΡΟ ΣΧΟΛΕΙΟ

#### ΜΕΡΟΣ Ι: Παιδαγωγικοί σκοποί του Ολοήμερου Σχολείου

*Παρακαλώ επιλέξτε ή κυκλώστε την καταλληλότερη για σας απάντηση:*

1= απόλυτα διαφωνώ

2= διαφωνώ

3= ούτε διαφωνώ, ούτε συμφωνώ

4= συμφωνώ

5= απόλυτα συμφωνώ

**Απόλυτα  
διαφωνώ**

**Απόλυτα  
συμφωνώ**

1. Το Ολοήμερο Σχολείο δίνει τη δυνατότητα στο παιδί μου να αισθάνεται πιο χαρούμενο με τον τρόπο που μαθαίνει

1      2      3      4      5

2. Το Ολοήμερο Σχολείο βοηθά το παιδί μου να μαθαίνει καλύτερα με τις νέες μεθόδους διδασκαλίας

1      2      3      4      5

3. Το Ολοήμερο Σχολείο δίνει τη δυνατότητα στο παιδί μου να αναπτύξει νέες δεξιότητες με την εισαγωγή των επιπρόσθετων μαθησιακών αντικειμένων και δραστηριοτήτων

1      2      3      4      5

4. Το Ολοήμερο Σχολείο δίνει την ευκαιρία στο παιδί μου να ολοκληρώνει το διάβασμα της επόμενης μέρας στο σχολείο

1      2      3      4      5

5. Το Ολοήμερο Σχολείο καλύπτει τις μαθησιακές ανάγκες του παιδιού μου

1      2      3      4      5

## ΜΕΡΟΣ II: Κοινωνικοί σκοποί του Ολοήμερου Σχολείου

*Παρακαλώ επιλέξτε ή κυκλώστε την καταλληλότερη για σας απάντηση:*

1= απόλυτα διαφωνώ

2= διαφωνώ

3= ούτε διαφωνώ, ούτε συμφωνώ

4= συμφωνώ

5= απόλυτα συμφωνώ

**Απόλυτα  
διαφωνώ**

**Απόλυτα  
συμφωνώ**

6. Το Ολοήμερο Σχολείο καλύπτει τις κοινωνικές ανάγκες του παιδιού μου

1      2      3      4      5

7. Το Ολοήμερο Σχολείο έχει βοηθήσει το παιδί μου να κάνει περισσότερους φίλους

1      2      3      4      5

8. Στο Ολοήμερο Σχολείο το παιδί μου ενθαρρύνεται να συνεργάζεται καλύτερα με τους δασκάλους του

1      2      3      4      5

9. Το Ολοήμερο Σχολείο δίνει την ευκαιρία στο παιδί μου να συμμετέχει σε περισσότερες δραστηριότητες στο σχολείο

1      2      3      4      5

10. Το Ολοήμερο Σχολείο βοηθά το παιδί μου να συνεργάζεται καλύτερα με τους άλλους μαθητές

1      2      3      4      5

11. Το Ολοήμερο Σχολείο δίνει έμφαση στη βελτίωση της συμπεριφοράς του παιδιού μου

1      2      3      4      5

12. Στο Ολοήμερο Σχολείο το παιδί μου νιώθει ασφαλές και προστατευμένο

1      2      3      4      5

13. Στο Ολοήμερο Σχολείο το παιδί μου περνά την ώρα του ευχάριστα

1      2      3      4      5

14. Στο Ολοήμερο Σχολείο το παιδί μου περνά την ώρα του δημιουργικά

1    2        3        4        5

**ΜΕΡΟΣ ΙΙΙ: Ολοήμερο Σχολείο, μαθητές, δάσκαλοι και γονείς**

Στο Ολοήμερο Σχολείο μερικοί δάσκαλοι πιθανόν να έχουν σημαντικότερη επίδραση στους μαθητές

*Παρακαλώ επιλέξτε ή κυκλώστε την καταλληλότερη για σας απάντηση:*

1= απόλυτα διαφωνώ

2= διαφωνώ

3= ούτε διαφωνώ, ούτε συμφωνώ

4= συμφωνώ

5= απόλυτα συμφωνώ

**Απόλυτα**

**διαφωνώ**

**Απόλυτα**

**συμφωνώ**

15. Ο πρωινός δάσκαλος έχει το σημαντικότερο ρόλο στο Ολοήμερο Σχολείο

1        2        3        4        5

16. Ο απογευματινός δάσκαλος έχει το σημαντικότερο ρόλο στο Ολοήμερο Σχολείο

1        2        3        4        5

17. Ο δάσκαλος ειδικότητας έχει το σημαντικότερο ρόλο στο Ολοήμερο Σχολείο

1        2        3        4        5

18. Όλοι οι δάσκαλοι του Ολοήμερου Σχολείου είναι σημαντικοί

1        2        3        4        5

**19. Πόσο το ολοήμερο σχολείο έχει επηρεάσει τις καθημερινές σας δραστηριότητες;**

- a. Πάρα πολύ
- b. Πολύ
- c. Λίγο
- d. Ελάχιστα
- e. Καθόλου

**Σε περίπτωση που το Ολοήμερο Σχολείο έχει επηρεάσει την καθημερινή σας ρουτίνα**

*Παρακαλώ επιλέξτε ή κυκλώστε την καταλληλότερη για σας απάντηση:*

- 1= απόλυτα διαφωνώ  
 2= διαφωνώ  
 3= ούτε διαφωνώ, ούτε συμφωνώ  
 4= συμφωνώ  
 5= απόλυτα συμφωνώ

20. Έχω περισσότερο χρόνο για τη δουλειά μου 1 2 3 4 5  
 21. Έχω περισσότερο χρόνο για τον εαυτό μου 1 2 3 4 5  
 22. Δεν έχει αλλάξει τίποτα στη καθημερινή μου ρουτίνα 1 2 3 4 5

23. Παρακαλώ δηλώστε οποιαδήποτε άλλη επίδραση νομίζετε ότι έχει το ολοήμερο σχολείο στη ζωή σας

.....  
 .....

24. Ποια είναι δική σας γνώμη για το ολοήμερο σχολείο;

*Παρακαλώ επιλέξτε ή κυκλώστε την καταλληλότερη για σας απάντηση:*

- 1= απόλυτα διαφωνώ  
 2= διαφωνώ  
 3= ούτε διαφωνώ, ούτε συμφωνώ  
 4= συμφωνώ  
 5= απόλυτα συμφωνώ

	Απόλυτα διαφωνώ				Απόλυτα συμφωνώ
Καλύπτει τις ανάγκες των μαθητών	1	2	3	4	5
Καλύπτει τις ανάγκες των δασκάλων	1	2	3	4	5
Καλύπτει τις ανάγκες των γονέων	1	2	3	4	5
Καλύπτει τις ανάγκες όλων	1	2	3	4	5

25. Νομίζετε ότι το ολοήμερο σχολείο είναι απαραίτητος θεσμός για την πρωτοβάθμια εκπαίδευση

Ναι. Γιατί;

Παρακαλώ εξηγήστε

.....  
 .....

Όχι. Γιατί;

Παρακαλώ εξηγήστε

.....  
.....

**26. Νομίζετε ότι ο θεσμός του ολοήμερου σχολείου χρειάζεται αλλαγές;**

Ναι. Γιατί;

Παρακαλώ εξηγήστε

.....  
.....

Όχι. Γιατί;

Παρακαλώ εξηγήστε

.....  
.....

*Σας ευχαριστώ πολύ για τον χρόνο σας*

*Αιλίνα Γκοράτσα*

## **Appendix 11: Personal motivation for the research and context**

I started working as a teacher in a primary school in Athens in 1988. I had attained my degree in Education only a year prior to finding this job. I recall feeling extremely fortunate at that time as the number of unemployed teachers in Greece was very high and vacancies particularly in the private education sector were very low. By the mid 90s the appointment of teachers in public schools was determined by their place on a seniority list, called ‘epetirida’.

This seniority list was a traditional system used for employment of teachers in public schools, and was based on the date candidates graduated as teachers and the submission of their degrees. These determined their priority on the seniority list when a vacancy was to become available. In practice, this system was very ineffective, because there was a long time lapse from when teachers graduated to their actual appointment in a school. With the gloomy prospect of facing unemployment for the next ten years, I decided to seek opportunities within the private sector. I was fortunate enough to find a job. I started my teaching career in a small private school with limited experience and limited training. It was not long in my new role before I realised what I studied in University was very much theoretical and that I had to rely on my enthusiasm and real passion for teaching in striving to become a good teacher. This was indeed the most challenging period of my teaching career. During these early times I had to build my professional identity exploring different methods of teaching, establishing which teaching approach was more effective for my students’ progress, and learning through interaction with my students. It was a true journey of discovery that provided me with good skills for teaching.

After five years in teaching, I decided to attend a two years postgraduate training course in primary education. With this degree I sought to improve my individual skills, learn new methods of teaching, and obtain any information on educational changes and innovations. The course also gave me the opportunity to test and share my experience with other primary teachers and learn from their experiences. In addition to the benefits the course had for my self improvement, as a teacher, the postgraduate degree upgraded my professional status. Acquiring more qualifications would provide me with more and better opportunities and empower me in my profession.

In 1999 following a ten year career in the private education sector, I decided to leave and move into the public education sector. Working in a number of different public schools in Athens I had the opportunity to work in some of the ‘all-day’ schools right at the beginning of their operation.

The establishment and operation of the ‘all-day’ schools in Greece brought about the need for more teachers within primary education and saw a long awaited decline in unemployment across the teaching profession. Whilst these ‘all-day’ schools gave new teachers the opportunity to start their teaching career it presented me with a real dilemma. Was I to stay in the public sector with all these new changes and challenges or return to the private sector where I first started my career? At this time, I was working in one of Athens best primary schools where I was extremely happy thoroughly



enjoying my work. My relationship with my colleagues, my students and their parents was excellent. I adored my students who flourished in what I believed was a very creative and rewarding environment to learn and teach in.

Without dwelling too long, I decided to stay in the public education sector and be part of the large changes within education. Moving back to the private sector would not be challenging enough and could restrict me in future opportunities. I therefore do not regret my decision irrespective of the problems facing Greece today with the economic crisis and impact on the whole public sector including the public schools.

Whilst working in different 'all-day' schools in Athens, I saw improvements such as better equipped classrooms with more interactive boards and new desks and chairs in the classrooms. However teachers found the changes and new ways of working difficult because there was limited information and inadequate training provided to prepare them. The teachers were trying to adjust and put into practice the theoretical aims of the 'all-day' school without really understanding how to implement these.

The 'all-day' school commenced operation as a pilot scheme too soon and before the appointment of the specialist teachers. This resulted in problems with the application of the enhanced new curriculum causing frustration and disappointment with the teachers, students and their parents. However once this was overcome teachers, for the first time, had the flexibility to decide and select subjects from the curriculum, and plan and prepare school programs according to the particular needs of each 'all-day' school.

I found myself in a complicated situation with mixed feelings, when I first started working in an all-day school, even though I was an experienced teacher. However, I was excited to be given the opportunity to work in this new type of school with the extended school hours, the enhanced curriculum with new subjects and activities. Having worked in a private school, which offered all these opportunities to the students and their parents, I had high expectations from the all-day schools. As time went by, it appeared that this was very different and complicated compared to a private school. The 'all-day' schools started operating thanks to the enthusiasm and effort of some teachers, even though this new type of school was not well-received by the whole community of teachers and parents.

As is the case with any kind of educational and social reform opinions may be divided as peoples' expectations and needs are different. In the case of the 'all-day' school in Greece, in my opinion the majority of teachers' and parents' boards reacted negatively. Teachers were not prepared to work in schools with extra responsibilities and expectations without having previously received any training or any previous familiarisation with the concept and organisation of the all-day school. I found myself in the middle of continuous disputes amongst teachers complaining about the teaching hours and the formation of a long hours school program. All teachers were requesting flexible working hours for

both morning and afternoon teachers. The morning zone teachers wanted to be able to work for the same convenient hours that they used to work in the mainstream schools, from 8.30 to 13.30. The afternoon zone teachers argued that it is impossible to work in an 'all-day' school, which operates in two separate zones without having the interaction and cooperation with the morning teachers.

At the time, I had to work as an afternoon teacher and I had witnessed from first hand a new working environment arising between morning and afternoon teachers. I personally remember the frustration I experienced working as the only afternoon teacher in an 'all-day' school in Athens having to cope with more than 45 students from different years (Year 1-Year 6) in the same classroom. I had to find innovative and creative ways to help all students complete their homework for the next day.

I could not collaborate or at least liaise with the morning teachers as when I was due to start the afternoon zone they would have already left from the school. In the event that I was able to meet some of the morning teachers, they would not collaborate as they felt that after completing their daily school hours they did not want to have any involvement in the afternoon zone.

My experiences as described above urged me to get involved and contribute, if possible, towards the improvement of the 'all-day' school by voicing the thoughts and experiences of all the stakeholders, teachers, students and parents. This decision led me to start my research about the 'all-day' schools in Greece and to study the impact of this reform on teachers', students' and parents' lives.