Terry Lovat · Ron Toomey

Editors

Values Education and Quality Teaching

The Double Helix Effect

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Introduction: Values Education—A Brief History to Today

Background

Values Education is known internationally by a number of names, including Moral Education, Character Education and Ethics Education. Each variant has a slightly different meaning, pointing to one or other distinctive emphasis. Overriding these differences, however, is a common theme born of a growing belief that entering into the world of personal and societal values is a legitimate and increasingly important role for teachers and schools to play. International research into teaching and schooling effects is overturning earlier beliefs that values were exclusively the preserve of families and religious bodies and that schools therefore functioned best in values-neutral mode. This research is not only pointing out the hollowness of such a belief but the potential for it to lead to diminished effects in all realms of student achievement, including academic advancement.

As a result of such international insights, since the early 1990s, each state and territory education system in Australia has been actively promoting its system and teachers as inculcators of the essential values that define being Australian. The Australian Government captured this movement well, and put its own seal on it, in its "Civics Expert Group" report in 1994 (cf. DEETYA, 1994). Be it under the aegis of civics, citizenship or plain Values Education, it is now commonly accepted that an essential component of public education's responsibilities is to be found in the work of inculcating values in its students. In short, public education is now defined as a comprehensive educator, not just chartered against cognitive and practical skills but as an inculcator of personal morality and cohesive citizenry. Furthermore, curricula related to civics, citizenship and Values Education have been designed and trialled in a variety of forms, both free-standing and integrated into mainstream syllabuses. The above state of affairs has not been without its critics both from within and beyond the realm of public education. Criticism has come in different forms. One criticism comes from the belief that public schooling was designed essentially as a haven of values-neutrality. Another comes from skepticism about the capacity of any school to manage, and have impact in, an area that is commonly seen as being totally subjective and therefore un-testable. These are both common criticisms that this book will challenge on both theoretical and empirical grounds.

Some revision of public schooling history is necessary to challenge the dominant mythology that public schools were established on the grounds of values-neutrality. In fact, those responsible for the foundations of public education in Australia were sufficiently pragmatic to know that its success relied on its charter being in accord with public sentiment. Part of the pragmatism was in convincing those whose main experience of education had been through some form of church-based education that state-based education was capable of meeting the same ends.

Hence, the documents of the 1870s and 1880s that contained the charters of the various state and territory systems witness to a breadth of vision about the scope of education. Beyond the standard goals of literacy and numeracy, education was said to be capable of assuring personal morality for each individual and a suitable citizenry for the soon-to-be new nation. As an instance, the NSW Public Instruction Act of 1880 (cf. NSW, 1912), under the rubric of "religious teaching", stressed the need for students to be inculcated into the values of their society, including understanding the role that religious values had played in forming that society's legal codes and social ethics. The notion, therefore, that public education is part of a deep and ancient heritage around values neutrality is mistaken and in need of serious revision. The evidence suggests that public education's initial conception was of being the complete educator, not only of young people's minds but of their inner character as well.

Recent History

If the move to values neutrality in public education was an aberration, then the efforts of the 1990s and early 2000s could be regarded as a corrective. Responding both to community pressure and the realization that values-neutrality is an inappropriate ethic for any agency of formation, every state and territory has re-stated the original view that public education's charter includes responsibility for personal integrity and social justice. This movement has been evident not only in government reports but in academic and professional literature. As an instance, the 2002 Yearbook of the supreme professional body of teachers, the Australian College of Educators, was devoted to Values Education (cf. Pascoe, 2002). Following this, a pinnacle of the movement was in the 2003 Australian government report on Values Education, *The Values Education Study*, developed by Curriculum Corporation. The Executive Summary in the Final Report re-stated the positions of the nineteenth-century charters of public education in asserting that Values Education "… refers to any explicit and/or implicit school-based activity to promote student understanding and knowledge of values, and to inculcate the skills and dispositions of students so they can enact particular values as individuals and as members of the wider community." (DEST, 2003:2)

The *Values Education Study* commissioned by the Government was initially endorsed by the Ministerial Council on Education, Employment, Training and Youth Affairs (MCEETYA), a group that represents all state and territory Education

ministers in association with the Australian Government Minister. At the meeting that endorsed its terms of reference, MCEETYA noted the following:

- that education is as much about building character as it is about equipping students with specific skills;
- that values-based education can strengthen students' self-esteem, optimism and commitment to personal fulfilment; and help students exercise ethical judgment and social responsibility; and,
- that parents expect schools to help students understand and develop personal and social responsibilities. (DEST, 2003:10)

The Final Report was preceded by 50 funded projects designed, in part, to serve as the case study data for the Report. While these projects differed markedly from each other and functioned across all systems of education, most of them had in common a focus on practical behaviour change as an outcome. The report stated that, for the most part, "… the 50 final projects (which involved 69 schools) were underpinned by a clear focus on building more positive relationships within the school as a central consideration for implementing Values Education on a broader scale." (DEST, 2003:3).

The Study was not designed merely as an intellectual exercise but was aimed at promoting improved Values Education in Australian schools. The preamble to the draft framework and principles which were developed as a result of the study stated explicitly that "… schools are not value-free or value neutral zones of social and educational engagement." (DEST, 2003:12) Among the draft principles was one that speaks of Values Education as part of the explicit charter of schooling, rather than in any way incidental to its goals. Another principle spoke of the need for Values Education to be managed through a "… developmentally appropriate curriculum that meets the individual needs of students" (DEST, 2003:12), while yet another addressed the need for "… clearly defined and achievable outcomes … (being) evidence-based and … (using) evaluation to monitor outcomes." (DEST, 2003:13) The first principle identified above clearly re-established the charter for Values Education as part and parcel of all education, while the latter two principles were directly pertinent to the empirical studies which will be outlined in later parts of this book.

The National Framework and Quality Teaching

With the Australian Government report, the aberration of values-neutrality in public education was finally put to rest in complete fashion at the highest and most representative levels of Australian education. Appropriately, the report did not differentiate between public, private and religious systems of schooling, nor did the case study analyses find any substantial difference in the directionality or outcomes of the projects that operated across these systems. On the basis of this evidence at least, public and private education systems were as one in their charter around Values Education and in their capacity to implement it. At the same time, the report threw down the gauntlet to all education systems to design and implement practical curricular means of effecting and evaluating Values Education.

The gauntlet was strengthened beyond question in the development of a National Framework and the allocation of $29.7 m in the 2004 Federal Budget for a Values Education Programme. *The National Framework for Values Education in Australian Schools* (DEST, 2005) emerged from consultation around a draft version and was endorsed by MCEETYA. This Framework includes the phrase: "Values education reflects good practice pedagogy." (DEST, 2005:7) The Framework rationale furthermore makes explicit reference to the language of quality teaching as both supporting and being enhanced by Values Education. It is these vital connections of Values Education with the national goals of schooling around quality teaching that are expounded and enlarged upon in this book. In a word, Values Education is being seen increasingly as having a power quite beyond a narrowly defined moral or citizenship agenda. It is being seen to be at the centre of all that a committed teacher and school could hope to achieve through teaching. It is in this respect that it can fairly be described as the "missing link" in quality teaching or, moreover, as being in a "double helix" relationship with quality teaching (see below).

A National Commitment

As suggested, this book grew out of the Australian Government's Values Education initiative. The expressed reason for making Values Education a more prominent feature of national educational policy was that public schools were becoming increasingly "values neutral" and parents were unhappy about that development. At the time, the Minister said that "parents are increasingly concerned to know who is teaching their children and what they are being taught":

> Kids being able to read, write, count and communicate when they leave school have always been priorities. But increasingly, parents are concerned to know education is being delivered within a values framework with which they feel comfortable (Age, 23/9/02).

Beyond this, however, the Minister also demonstrated an insightful educational perspective, as distinct from a political one, on the matter. At the time, he also spoke about the importance of schools building "character", about how "character" is more personally and socially fulfilling and beneficial than talent alone and how Values Education might play a role in "character" development.

The National Framework presents a vision for Values Education in Australian schools and identifies nine core values and a process for having schools and their communities engage them in formal, whole school Values Education programs. The nine values for Australian Schooling that are articulated in the framework include:

1. **Care and Compassion**
   Care for self and others
2. **Doing Your Best**
   Seek to accomplish something worthy and admirable, try hard, pursue excellence

3. **Fair Go**
   Pursue and protect the common good where all people are treated fairly for a just society

4. **Freedom**
   Enjoy all the rights and privileges of Australian citizenship free from unnecessary interference or control, and stand up for the rights of others

5. **Honesty and Trustworthiness**
   Be honest, sincere and seek the truth

6. **Integrity**
   Act in accordance with principles of moral and ethical conduct, ensure consistency between words and deeds

7. **Respect**
   Treat others with consideration and regard, respect another person's point of view

8. **Responsibility**
   Be accountable for one's own actions, resolve differences in constructive, non-violent and peaceful ways, contribute to society and to civic life, take care of the environment

9. **Understanding, Tolerance and Inclusion**
   Be aware of others and their cultures, accept diversity within a democratic society, being included and including others

The National Framework envisages the adoption by schools of the values and the development of whole school values programs to involve:

- Whole school planning whereby Values Education is made an explicit goal of school planning.
- The formation of partnerships within the school community whereby schools consult parents, caregivers and families within their communities on values to be fostered and approaches to be adopted.
- A whole school approach in which schools apply their Values Education priorities to their overall curriculum provision, their structures and policies, their procedures and rules, their funding priorities, their decision-making arrangements, their disciplinary procedures, their community relations and their welfare/pastoral care approach.
- The provision of a safe and supportive learning environment whereby schools provide a positive climate within and beyond the classroom to help develop students' social and civic skills and build student resilience and responsibility and to ensure a safe and supportive environment for Values Education. Students, staff and parents are encouraged to explore their own values. Values education reflects good practice pedagogy and is introduced in the curriculum at appropriate times for learners.
- The provision of support for students so that schools develop programs and strategies to empower students to participate in a positive school culture and to develop their local, national and global responsibility. Schools use Values Education to build student social skills and resilience. This includes addressing issues such as behaviour management and discipline, violence and bullying, substance

abuse and other risk behaviour, disconnectedness and alienation, student health and well being, improved relationships and students' personal achievement.

- Quality teaching procedures in that teachers are skilled in good practice Values Education, provided with appropriate resources to support their efficacy as teachers of values within all areas of the curriculum and total school life and to monitor this efficacy on an ongoing basis.

The final dot point of this list is the focus of this book. The book explores the meaning and practice of quality teaching that Australian teachers pursue and the relationship between it and values. The opportunity to do so came with the Values Education Good Practice Schools Project (VEGPS) Stage 1. This project was intended to advance the work of the 2003 *Values Education Study*.

Values Education Good Practice Schools Project – Stage 1

The Values Education Good Practice Schools project (VEGPS) Stage 1 was funded by the Federal Department of Education, Science and Training (DEST) and managed by Curriculum Corporation. It was designed to work towards the vision, as expressed in the *National Framework for Values Education in Australian Schools* (2005), of all Australian schools providing Values Education in a planned and systematic way as a central aspect of their work. More explicitly, the project aimed to fund selected clusters of school communities to explore ways of improving their approaches to Values Education and to identify effective ways of putting into practice the *National Framework for Values Education in Australian Schools*. The most effective strategies for improving Values Education, the good practice identified during the project, was subsequently recommended and disseminated to all Australian schools for consideration. The Australian case studies that follow are an elaboration of some of the findings from the VEGPS Stage 1 work.

The case studies and the related material that follow are intended to promote discussion around the relationships between quality teaching and Values Education. Given the ground breaking position being put in the book about this relationship they are also intended to have all educators consider the implications of what is being claimed for the role of Values Education in quality teaching particularly for pre-service and in-service education.

There is a natural history to the book. DEST's approach to its Values Education initiative was, and continues to be, to promote a "ground-up" approach. The Department wanted to nurture good practice Values Education, learn from it, describe it and recommend it to others. As all of the authors were intimately involved in the effort, the decision was made to take the opportunity to undertake a piece of interpretative research that focused on what some of the schools were doing and see if we could make sense of the notion of "quality teaching" from it. Thus, we decided to pursue, in the Glaser and Strauss (1967) grounded theory tradition, but less elaborately so, the idea of linking values with the notion of quality teaching. Initially, the project teams were encouraged to do this by Lovat's keynote address to the 2005 National

Forum on Values Education which DEST sponsored in the national capital. Chapter 1 of the book expands on some of the thinking that shaped the address. More importantly, the project managers were encouraged to pursue this vital link by the very enthusiastic reception given to this idea by the many teachers at the Forum in their feedback sessions. In short, we felt we had a "theory" that was worth testing.

As John Dewey (1964) said, there is nothing more practical than a good theory. We chose to run with it by "testing it" with the research literature and a set of accounts of practice from selected VEGPS schools, together with two others from international sources. What follows are the results of the test. First, Terry Lovat gives a little more substance to his original keynote address in Chapter 1. Then, in Chapter 2, Neville Clement mines the research literature to see what support can be found for the ideas in Terry's conception of quality teaching. The book then moves to several accounts of the practices of some VEGPS schools and two other international schools' efforts at "best practice" Values Education from which one can infer relationships between values and quality teaching. In Chapter 3, Judith Chapman, Sue Cahill and Roger Holdsworth provide an account of the Manningham (Victoria) cluster of schools involvement in the VEGPS Stage 1. The approach to Values Education in that cluster was around Student Action Teams. Chapter 4 is an account by Colin MacMullin and Lina Scalfino of a whole school approach to Values Education in South Australia. Chapter 5, prepared by Angela Hill and Malcolm Vick, recounts the efforts of a group of North Queensland schools to implement the PEER Support program as a form of Values Education. In Chapter 6, Kathryn Netherwood and her colleagues outline their place mapping approach to Values Education in a Western Australian setting.

As suggested at the outset, Values Education is a truly international innovation based on the best educational research findings and is having impact therefore on teaching and schooling across the globe. As can be seen, the book relies heavily on Values Education developments in Australia, and especially on the directions set by and findings of the VEGPS project. It also includes, however, reference to and details about inspirational Values Education programs to be found across the world, with special reference to an internationally renowned case study from the United Kingdom (West Kidlington School) and an example of the UNESCO endorsed Living Values Education Program (LVEP) from the United States. The seventh chapter therefore is the former Headmaster's account of efforts at West Kidlington school in Oxfordshire, England, to pursue a whole school approach to Values Education. The eighth chapter is an account of the Living Values Education Program at the Aventura School in Miami, USA.

The Double Helix of Quality Teaching and Values Education

The final chapter interprets both the case studies and the review of research, offers an account of the relationship between values and quality teaching based on the case studies and examines the implications of this for teacher preparation and

development. It explores and justifies the title of the book, namely that the relationship between Values Education and quality teaching can be expressed in terms of a "double helix", a particularly powerful conjunctive term borrowed from the field of genetics.

   Thus, we find the case studies very persuasive evidence that Values Education is indeed the missing link in quality teaching as will be conveyed in Chapter 1. In light of the case studies, we have come to think about quality teaching (and its inseparable counterpart quality learning) as one half of a "double helix" (McGettrick, 1995), with the other half being Values Education (cf. Fig. 1 below). In Chapter 9, having laid out the argument and examined the case studies more fully, we will expand on this concept and explain what we believe to be a useful way of understanding the demonstrable role being played by Values Education in transforming the role of teaching and the impact of the school.
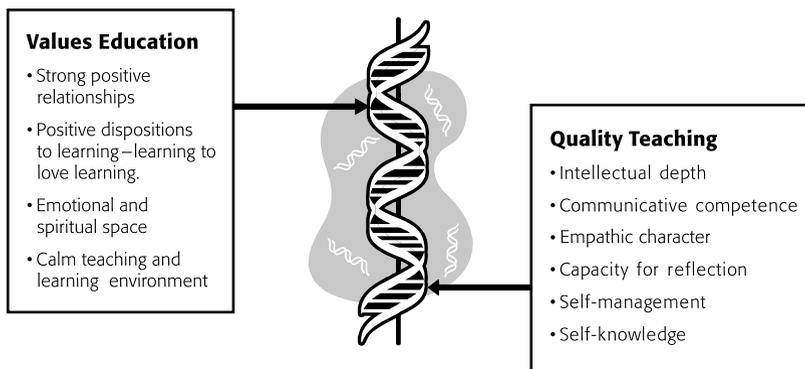

Fig. 1 The "Double Helix' of Values Education and quality teaching

Chapter 1
Values Education and Quality Teaching: Two Sides of the Learning Coin

Terry Lovat

Introduction

Educational research of recent times has uncovered some flaws in earlier thinking about the limited role that teachers and schools could play in effecting change in student achievement. Earlier research seemed to condemn teaching and schooling to a marginal role compared to the overwhelming role played by the home and student background. Researchers like Talcott Parsons suggested that families were "… factories which produce human personality" (Parsons & Bales, 1955:16), to the point that little else counted. In similar fashion, Christopher Jencks concluded that "… the character of a school's output depends largely on a single input, namely the characteristics of the entering children" (1972: 256). Perhaps one of the most powerful forces in confirming this belief was the famous Plowden Report (Central Advisory Council 1967) in the United Kingdom that demonstrated how difficult it was for any child coming from a disadvantaged home to succeed in school. Anyone who has taught in school would resonate with these findings. They tell us little that we do not know or have not experienced. The questions that Parsons, Jencks and Plowden failed to ask, however, include: "Does it have to be this way?" "Could there be teaching regimes that do genuinely make a difference?" "Is there some way in which pedagogy can even things up?"

Without these questions being even attempted, what we were left with was a de facto pessimism about the capacity of the social agency of teaching and schooling. While often couched in the sentiments of compassion and social justice, the effect was that generations of teachers came to believe that there was little use in trying to 'make a silk purse out of a sow's ear', and that, in effect, the role of schooling was limited to enhancing the chances of those who already had plenty while minimizing the damage to those who had few chances. Furthermore, if schools could have such limited impact even on the easily measurable learning

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related to cognitive development, what hope could they have of dealing with the less easily measurable dimensions of personal, social and moral development? In other words, the only sensible stance for teachers and schools to take on the issue of values was one of values-neutrality. This belief was most apparent in the public regime but was not altogether absent in the average private and religious school.

Worldwide, these beliefs are now being re-evaluated. Internationally, one finds huge efforts devoted to matters of civics, citizenship, character education, ethics and Values Education as societies struggle to find new ways forward in the face of persistent and debilitating problems of age-old conflicts, racism, AIDS and new terrorisms inspired by the most explicit of values-based beliefs. As an outstanding example of this re-evaluation, UNESCO sponsors an international Values Education program that functions in eighty-four countries and has recently endorsed an evaluation of this program encompassing all five continents (LVEP, 2005). Australia is a partner to this through the formal involvement of The University of Newcastle and its contribution to the evaluation is woven into other work being done through the Australian Government Values Education Program.

This work is building on important research carried out from the mid 1990s that has contradicted the pessimistic findings of Parsons, Jencks and Plowden. Some key figures in this research are the Americans, Fred Newmann (1996) and Linda Darling-Hammond (1997, 2000), Linda Darling-Hammond and Youngs (2002). Newmann's work centred heavily on the effects of 'pedagogical dynamics' in impacting on student achievement. These dynamics were a mixture of technical craft on the part of teachers through to more subtle features like 'school coherence' and the creation of a 'trustful, supportive ambience'. Darling-Hammond's work built further on these notions to demonstrate the power of pedagogy to make a difference in student potential, including its capacity to overcome disadvantage owing to student background and even disability of sorts. In their own ways, both works overturned the earlier assumptions about the limited capacity of the agency of teaching and schooling to impact on student achievement. At the same time, they demonstrated the vast difference between the teaching broadly described as "quality teaching" and regular, more limited teaching, described as "ineffective teaching". In both Newmann's and Darling-Hammond's work, quality teaching is partly about the teacher's technical competence around issues of content knowledge and strategies, but is also heavily about the teacher's (and indeed the whole school's) capacity to form positive relationships and to provide positive modelling. This is the vital clue concerned with the part to be played by Values Education.

Quality Teaching and Values Education: The Links

The Carnegie Corporation's Task Force on Learning (Carnegie, 1996) represents a watershed in the development of thinking about Quality Teaching. It challenged many of those earlier flawed ideas about the power of teachers and schooling

systems to effect change in student achievement. Among many assertions, it held that:

> One of the problems that has undermined school reform efforts … is the belief that differences in the educational performance of schools are primarily the result of differences in students' inherent ability to learn (or not). This belief is wrong. Schools (and especially teachers=my words) fail … (Carnegie, 1994: 3)

Why do I say "especially teachers"? Certainly it is not to blame but rather to underline the optimism that any teacher, regardless of their school context, might feel about their noble role. It is because the most recent studies in Australia and beyond (cf. Willms, 2000; Rowe, 2004b) show that the single largest factor in student achievement is the teacher, in some studies showing up as statistically three times more likely to impact than the school (cf. Scheerens et al., 1989). This is not to undersell the power of a whole-school approach to quality teaching. Indeed, the same studies can be ramified to show that a quality teacher in a quality teaching school context has at least a 60% chance of impacting on student achievement regardless of the cohort that "entered the school", to use Jencks's famous phrase. At the same time, it has to be noted that 75% of the effect is the teacher rather than the school.

So, the Carnegie Report (1996) was based on solid research evidence when it challenged the conventional wisdom by suggesting that, while heritage and upbringing could make a difference to the ease with which learning could be achieved, they were in no way certain predictors of success or failure. The final responsibility for achievement was placed on the school and especially on its teachers to make the difference. As importantly as anything, the report stretched traditional conceptions of learning, and hence achievement, by defining them as consisting of a broad array of outcomes. While not underselling the centrality of intellectual development as the foundational objective of teaching and schooling, the report spoke explicitly of the broader learning associated with skills of communication, empathy, reflection and self-management. Ultimately, there is a tenour about learning that points to a strong focus on the student self, including student self-knowing.

Hence the notion of "intellectual depth", so central to the regime of Quality Teaching, was from the beginning defined not in instrumentalist, simple and narrow fashion but in the broadest possible way to connote competencies of interpretation, communication, negotiation and reflection, with a focus on self-management. Hence, the teacher's job was beyond the kinds of achievement most easily measured by standardized testing or simple observation to one that engaged the students in learning appropriate to achieving "communicative capacity" and "self-reflection". These are clearly learning outcomes not so easily reduced to instrumentalist forms of measurement and even more clearly outcomes highly pertinent to the goals of Values Education.

In an early clue about the pertinence of such notions to Values Education, it is clear that a notion like "communicative capacity", or being switched on to one's world, has huge potential to inform the dispositions and actions necessary to a highly developed social conscience, while "self-reflection", or being switched on to oneself, has similar potential as a vital tool in the development of a truly integrated and owned personal morality. In summary, the terms of Quality Teaching defined in

Carnegie (1996) imply that it is not just the surface factual learning so characteristic of education of old that is to be superseded but it is surface learning in general that is to be surpassed in favour of a learning that engages the whole person in depth of cognition, social and emotional maturity, and self-knowledge.

In summary, Quality Teaching has alerted the educational community to the greater potential of teaching, including by implication to the dimensions of learning related to personal and social values inculcation. As such, the Quality Teaching regime has huge relevance for the world inhabited by an exhaustive Values Education. Moreover, I would argue that the reverse is the case as well, namely that when properly and comprehensively understood, Values Education has the potential to complement and possibly complete, and at times even to correct, the goals implicit in Quality Teaching.

The Values Dimension in Quality Teaching: An Essential Ingredient

From the beginning, it is clear that Quality Teaching was never conceived of in purely instrumentalist terms. It would have been a denial of everything that the Carnegie Task Force was attempting, and of the profound nature of the research of Newmann and Darling-Hammond, to reduced Quality Teaching to mere craft. Nonetheless, the sophisticated notions that sit behind it have as much potential to be reduced to what is supposedly easily observed and measured, as was the case in earlier times with notions of objectives, outcomes, competencies and indeed intellectual quotient (IQ). If the true benefits of Quality Teaching are to work for student achievement in the comprehensive way conceived of by its architects, it has therefore to be preserved and protected. A focus on values and the complementarity of Values Education is one way in which this might be achieved, for this focus serves as a constant reminder that there is in fact no magic in a formula and that student achievement is a complex notion that defies ease of instrumentalist forms of measurement. Achievement in the broader sense involves whole persons and all their learning capacities, including those concerned with the emotional, social, moral and spiritual, as the Australian National Goals for Schooling remind us.

In turn, whole person learning requires a holistic approach to teaching on the part of teachers, schools and systems. This kind of teaching, represented well in the Quality Teaching criteria, involves craft and technique, as well as modelling and positive relationships. By way of example, in a recent Australian study, Rowe (2004b) noted that, of all the teacher qualities nominated by those students who achieve best at school, it was notions of care and trust that were paramount. While the more predictable measures of demonstrable content knowledge and stimulating pedagogy were as evident as one would expect, they rarely stood alone and appeared to be relative to the greater indicator of student confidence that the teacher was trustworthy and had the student's best interests at heart. Similarly, Louden et al. (2005) concluded that it was difficult to pick likely student effects from simple

observation of teacher practice. Behind the more obvious teaching/learning relationship between teacher and student, was a powerful relationship between two people and it was this latter relationship that often seemed to determine the effects of learning. Similarly, Hattie's (2004) recent work places "respect for students" at the top of the list of those characteristics that mark out the demonstrably expert teachers, while Brady's (2005) work has shown "relationship between teacher and student" to be at least as significant as technical proficiency in teachers drawing the best out of their students.

These findings fit well with international literature concerned with effective organizational change and reform where, similarly, notions of trust and care have emerged as those that define much of the difference between organizations that function well and those that do not (Bryk & Schneider, 1996; 2002). Bryk and Schneider (2002), for instance, note the following:

> Trust relations culminate in important consequences at the organizational level, including more effective decision-making, enhanced social support for innovation, more efficient social control of adults' work and an expanded moral authority to 'go the extra mile' for the children. Relational trust … is an organizational property … its presence (or absence) has important consequences for the functioning of the school and its capacity to engage fundamental change. (p. 22)

Furthermore, Bryk and Schneider spell out the connotations of what they describe as "relational trust" in the "… dynamic interplay among four considerations: respect, competence, personal regard for others, and integrity." (2002: 23) In turn, these considerations comprise the cornerstone of Values Education where it has been demonstrated to have had most impact on whole school cultures, such as in the work of Frances Farrer and Neil Hawkes at West Kidlington Public School in England (cf. Farrer, 2000; Hawkes, 2003, 2005).

In other words, the content and substance of Values Education has the potential to go to the very heart of the power of Quality Teaching by focussing teacher and system attention on those features of their professional practice that have most impact, namely the relationship of due care, mutual respect, fairness and positive modelling established with the student and, in turn, the network of systemic "relational trust" that results.

Values Education and Ways of Knowing

One is reminded, many years on, of the caution against instrumentalist approaches to education that was provided by the eminent John Dewey in the early days of public education. He said that to depend overly on subject knowledge and methods was fatal to the best interests of education. He spoke, rather, of the need for a way of knowing that was about the cultivation of a mindset on the part of teachers that was, at one and the same time, self-reflective and directed towards instilling reflectivity, inquiry and a capacity for moral judiciousness on the part of students (cf. Dewey, 1964). Dewey

would not be at all surprised with the findings of modern research noted above. He would also feel vindicated, I believe, by the priority being given at present to Values Education in the broad and comprehensive way it is being conceived.

Another more recent but equally influential thinker worth mentioning in this context is Jurgen Habermas (1972, 1974, 1984, 1987, 1990). Habermas's theory of knowing has been instrumental in much of the thought that educationists have seized on in attempting to deepen our understanding of learning and stretching conceptions of the role of the teacher. Beyond the importance of empirical-analytic knowing (the knowing and understanding of facts and figures), Habermas spoke, when it was entirely unfashionable, of the more challenging and authentic learning of what he described as historical-hermeneutic or "communicative knowledge" (the knowing and understanding that results from engagement and interrelationship with others) and of "critical knowing" or "self-reflectivity" (the knowing and understanding that comes from critique of all one's sources of knowledge and ultimately from critique of one's own self or, in Habermas's terms, from knowing oneself, perhaps for the first time). For Habermas, this latter was the supreme knowledge that marked a point of one's having arrived as a human being. One might caricature him as saying "There is no knowing without knowing the knower", and the knower is oneself. In a sense, the ultimate point of the learning game is to be found in knowing oneself, and the consequent change of belief and behaviour, that inevitably follows. This change is described by Habermas as "praxis", a practical or communicative action designed to right the wrongs in one's environment.

Habermas's theory of knowing provides a particularly powerful tool for analysing the capacity of Values Education to transform people's beliefs and behaviours, to make the kind of difference that would seem to be its promise. Let us take a particularly contemporary values issue, that concerned with the alleged clash of values between Islam and non-Islam, as an example. If schools really can address this potentially disastrous issue in the way our politicians seem to expect, one would think Values Education would have to be the primary tool for doing this. Let us sharpen the example by considering the fairly common belief throughout much of the non-Muslim population of Australia that Muslims are given to troublemaking and are potential terrorists. This is a growing belief if one can judge by the amount of media that reflects it.

Employing Habermasian theory in analysing how a learner would deal with confirming or disconfirming this belief, first one would explore the level of empirical knowing. Here, one would be faced with an array of facts and figures, or evidence if you like, much of which may well seem to confirm the belief. As suggested, there is currently no shortage of media that would point in this direction and one could build up a nice little case with plenty of apparent evidence confirming that Muslims are indeed troublemakers with links to radical imams sympathetic to the cause of terrorism. There is nothing inherent in this way of knowing that would force the learner to consider seriously any amount of counter-evidence that may exist. After all, no-one can sift all of the evidence so one can be excused for assembling the selective evidence that happens to confirm one's beliefs. Lawyers, politicians, journalists and even researchers are doing this all the time. Sometimes, teachers may do it as well.

At the next level, that of communicative knowing, one could similarly choose to converse and dialogue with those who simply affirm one's own beliefs or at least don't challenge them overly. Again, one could assemble a respectable sample of evidence from conversations and interviews that simply endorse what the selective facts and figures seemed to demonstrate and that, perhaps not coincidentally, conform with one's original beliefs anyway. In other words, even respectable and apparently objective research can be skewed to simply confirm the belief that was there in the first place. In the classroom, very good looking pedagogy, including in Values Education, can function in the same way. It would be possible to have a quite rigorous looking, purportedly evidence-based Values Education that did nothing more than confirm the beliefs and values of the dominant class and keep the majority of staff and students well within their comfort zone. At this point, nothing has really happened to challenge the original belief about Muslims.

It is only at the level of critical or self-reflective knowing that one is forced by the very nature of this kind of knowing to consider whether one has exhausted all the evidence, including opening oneself up to the possibility that one has been on a self-confirming learning path all along, selecting the evidence that fits and filtering out the evidence that doesn't fit, that might invade one's own comfort zones and force some re-consideration of long-held beliefs and behaviours. At the end of this kind of knowing, one is finally forced to consider oneself. Could it be that all of the beliefs I hold and the behaviours that result are not really based on evidence so much as on the preferences and prejudices of my upbringing, my family, my culture and ultimately my very self? Could it be that I take comfort in expressing the belief that Muslims are troublemakers and potential terrorists because it is a safe belief, it reinforces my place in the circles in which I move and may even constitute some of my power base in those circles, be that power base wrapped around being a community spokesperson, an outspoken media commentator, or simply being a member of a family that has a tradition of beliefs around these things? Only when I come to the point of being prepared to receive some of the challenging and discomforting evidence that the majority of Muslims may actually be no different from any other population, and to engage in the inevitable struggle of changing my beliefs and behaviour, can I truly claim to 'know and understand' the truth about Muslims.

Modelling and Teaching: The Two-fold Task of Values Education

While it has to be tailored to the particular age group in question, Habermasian theory captures in precise fashion the two-fold task of Values Education. First, it is to establish an environment of respect, trust and care that, before a word is said, challenges the preconceived beliefs and consequent behaviours that many will bring with them from their heritage and wider cultural "life-world", to coin a Habermasian phrase. Ideally, through this, students will see people being respected by a whole school community that they may have come to regard as not worthy of respect. This is the most powerful lesson of all. So, to further the Muslim example, a teacher and school that goes out of their way to accommodate Muslim expression, be it in terms of dress, food or prayer,

not in a grudging politically correct but celebrating way, is providing an environment that makes it very difficult for anti-Muslim prejudice to go unchallenged. This is the implicit modelling, putting one's money where one's mouth is, side of Values Education. When a whole school embraces this modelling, research would suggest transformation of belief and behaviour is more likely to happen than not.

However, beyond the implicit, teachers are trained to be explicit about the learning they engage in. So, having been established, the task is then to make explicit why this environment of respect, trust and acceptance is so vital to the human community. This is the teaching or curriculum aspect of Values Education and, at whatever age, its essential focus must be to raise those questions which characterize Habermas's critical and self-reflective way of knowing. It is to ensure that the evidence of facts and figures, as well as of human interactions and conversations, is of the broadest and most challenging kind. Ultimately, its task is to push student learning towards self-reflectivity, that knowing of self that allows one to step out of the shadow of one's upbringing and cultural heritage, to challenge not only the preconceived beliefs and behaviours of this upbringing and heritage but, more painfully, one's own deep seated comfort zone of beliefs and behaviours. The task, in other words, is to transform. It is to do the very opposite of what Christopher Jencks held to be the truth about the school. It is to take the input of the entering children and to transform the output. The importance of school-based Values Education in undertaking this task cannot be overstated. While transformation is painful at any stage of life, the longer one stays in one's comfort zone, the harder it gets.

Transforming beliefs and behaviour does not mean imposing a different set of beliefs and values on students than those they came in with. Imposing someone else's comfort zone would be a contradiction of everything implied by critical and self-reflective knowing. It does however mean challenging students to see that whatever beliefs and values they brought with them are but one set, one life-world, and to consider the life-worlds of others. This is the hallmark of what Habermas (1984, 1987) describes as "communicative capacity" and, beyond that, "communicative action". Communicative capacity is when the self-reflective knower comes to see his or her own life-world as just one that needs to function in a myriad of life-worlds, and so comes to possess communicative capacity. In a sense, this is a formula for the modern, globally competent, intercultural communicator. Beyond this, however, is the notion of communicative action. Here, the self-reflective knower takes a step beyond mere tolerance to take a stand both for justice and for oneself because one's new found self, one's own integrity, is at stake. This is a concept about personal commitment, reliability and trustworthiness that spills over into practical action that makes a difference, or what Habermas describes as "praxis". It is the kind of action that can only come from the wellspring enshrined in the notion of self-reflectivity, from one who knows who they are, values the integrity of being authentic and commits oneself to establishing the kinds of caring and trusting relationships that bear the best fruits of human interactivity.

What is important to say, in many ways against the conventional wisdom, is that school is clearly the best place where this can happen. While this is not to pit the school against the other social agencies of home, peers, religion, media, etc., it is to boldly assert that, for most people, these agencies tend towards a narrowing of life-worlds and

towards pressure to conform to those life-worlds, to compound the sense that "we've got it right!". The school's bolder role should be to stretch the comfort implied by this and to open minds to the breadth of life-worlds. Ideally, this will be done carefully and with the support of other agencies, especially the home, but one should not be surprised if there are occasional tensions between the role of the school and the other agencies. Like the other agencies, the school's role is a distinctive one and much of the substance of this role is to be found in a comprehensive Values Education pursuit.

Perspectives like those of Dewey and Habermas help to illuminate why it is that issues of trust, care, respect and acceptance are so vital if Quality Teaching is to have its full effects (cf. Bryk & Schneider, 2002; Louden et al., 2005; Rowe, 2004b). After all, as Nel Noddings (2002) has said, relationships tend to precede learning. Furthermore, these perspectives underline just why it is that the Values Education pursuit must be grasped by teachers, schools and systems as being central and pivotal to their endeavours, rather than being on their margins. Again, it is worth re-stating the central proposition in this chapter, namely that Values Education has the potential to go to the very heart of what it is that teachers, schools and educational systems are about. It certainly has potential to offer the other side of the coin that is Quality Teaching (Lovat, 2005, 2007; Lovat & Clement, 2008a, 2008b).

Testing the Thesis Through the VEGPS Project

The recognitions identified above appear to be settling slowly but surely in a culture that has not only been disposed to be other than with these perspectives but has been actively trained and encouraged to be somewhere else, to see Values Education as a distraction at best to the real business of teaching and schooling. In some very early data to hand from the Australian Government Values Education Good Practices Schools Project (VEGPSP) (cf. www.valueseducation.edu.au), one can see coming through a language about quality teaching, quality leadership, trusting and caring relationships, and the intellectual depth that develops naturally when what is said in the explicit curriculum and what is modelled and lived out in the learning environment are brought together.

At the Project Advisory Committee briefing on 24 February 2006, under the section titled "key findings to date", the project managers from Curriculum Corporation identified some emerging trends among the clusters and schools that are standing out for their "good practice" (cf. Harris & Bereznicki, 2006). Furthermore, on 3 April, 2006, the VEGPS cluster leaders and their University advisors met to discuss their findings to date. Here is some of the language used by people on the ground in schools trying to capture what they have experienced in the way of student learning as a result of Values Education implementation:

- Quality leadership at cluster and school level, especially where understanding of the comprehensive reach of values is clearest and the link with practice is demonstrable;
- Quality teaching and pedagogy;

- Taking a "whole school approach";
- Maximum :"buy in" by all stakeholders;
- Quality relationships within and between the schools of the cluster;
- Modelling, living out and practising the values that are being enunciated in the curriculum;
- Intellectual depth in teacher understanding;
- Intellectual depth among students demonstrated by a willingness to become involved in complex thinking across the curriculum;
- Greater levels of student engagement in the mainstream curriculum;
- Pedagogical approaches that match those espoused by "Quality Teaching";
- Deep knowledge, deep understanding and meta-learning;
- Depth of thinking necessary to ethical reasoning and ethical decision-making;
- Knowing the good moving to doing the good;
- Demonstrations of greater student responsibility over local, national and international issues, greater student resilience and social skills, and improved relationships of care and trust;
- The "ripple" or "trickle-down" effect that Values Education is having across the school.

These findings are now fully available in the Australian Government report (DEST, 2006) on the first stage of VEGPSP.

In terms of the "ripple down" effect, a quote from a school principal engaged in an earlier Values Education project may capture the effect best of all. He said:

> There was the issue of time … some teachers complained of already having too much to do … but for us (Values Education) has meant that we have more time. Our school is a more peaceful place, we have less interruptions and discipline problems now, and this means we can do more teaching in all aspects of our classroom.

These very early findings corroborate other findings to be found across the globe. The UNESCO Values Education project consists of a vast variety of sites, from organized curriculum in systemic sites to education "on the run". One site that brings home in extreme fashion the power of a Values Education approach to engage with the best that teaching can provide is to be found in South Africa, where one of the members of the project works with street children. In such circumstances, most with an educational mind would think of grabbing the opportunity for a little work on literacy or numeracy, or perhaps even some basic health and hygiene, and of course they are features of her curriculum. However, first and foremost, the teacher here describes herself as a Values Educator and her curriculum focus as one of Values Education. Why? Because unless and until these students learn to value themselves, to feel that someone else values them, and to learn and incorporate the language and the art of values, they will never experience the security, the trust and the care necessary to open up to learning anything else. For those who consider that Values Education is something with exclusive fit to the well-resourced and relatively trouble-free upper middle class school, this story offers a powerful antidote.

Conclusion

In conclusion, we live in a time when our understanding of the role of the teacher and the power of Values Education are coalescing. No longer is Values Education on the periphery of a curriculum that enshrines the central roles to be played by the teacher and the school in our society. It is at the very heart of these roles. Unlike the assumptions that seem to underpin so many of our concerns relating to structures, curriculum and resources, Values Education is premised on the power of the teacher to make a difference. While the artefacts of structure, curriculum and resources are not denied, the focus is, appropriate to the insights of the day, on what Hattie (2003) describes as "… the greatest source of variance that can make a difference, (namely the teacher)." In the case of Values Education, the belief is premised on the teacher's capacity to make a difference by engaging students in the sophisticated and life-shaping learning of personal moral development. As the late Haim G. Ginott, renowned child psychologist, once said: "To reach a child's mind, a teacher must capture his heart. Only if a child feels right can he think right." (Ginott, 1969).

I suggest that the nature, shape and intent of Values Education has the potential to re-focus the attention of teachers and their systems on the fundamental item of all effective teaching, namely the teacher her or himself, including naturally the quality of the teacher's knowledge, content and pedagogy, but above and beyond all of these, on the teacher's capacity to form relationships of care and trust, and so establish a values-filled environment and, along with this, to teach about those values and so promote in students commitment to live by those values and to build a society where justice and respect are assured. Values Education and Quality Teaching are cohering. Values Education without Quality Teaching is an oxymoron, of course, but Quality Teaching without Values Education has the potential to suffer from the missing link that promises to strengthen and complete it.

Chapter 2
Perspectives from Research and Practice in Values Education

Neville Clement

Introduction

As we saw in the previous chapter we now know from the school effectiveness research that the single most influential factor regarding student improvement is the classroom teacher. We also know that teachers' subject "content" knowledge and their "pedagogical" knowledge play a crucial role in enabling student improvement. With regard to the latter, the literature suggests that values are not an "added extra" to education, but rather, that values are at the very core of quality teaching in that students learn best in a learning situation consciously structured around positive values of care and concern for student progress.

From a quality teaching perspective the focus of schooling has to be on student achievement and providing those conditions where students are best able to achieve. This implies a role for values in any quality teaching effort. It is self evident that values permeate every aspect of schooling, the selection of content, the way the school is organised, staff selection and many other things. Thus, there is a prima facie case for values playing a part in quality teaching. In considering the relationship between values and quality teaching, this review of research and practice addresses three main questions:

- What is the essence of, and what constitutes, quality teaching?
- How might it be nurtured?
- What is the nature of the relationship between values and quality teaching?

The appeal of these questions grew out of our collective experience with the VEGPSP Stage 1 that was described earlier. They arise from the conception of quality teaching and its relation to Values Education outlined previously and they are designed to "tease out" support for the links that are to be found in the literature.

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Quality Teaching and Teacher Effectiveness Research

The term "quality teaching" has been coined by the teacher effectiveness research community over a period of some time. Factors affecting student achievement have been the object of concerted research since the 1960s. Early reports, like those of Coleman et al. (1966) and Jencks et al. (1972) in the United States of America and the Plowden Report (Central Advisory Council for Education, 1967) in Great Britain, attributed student achievement to socio-economic factors rather than the influence of schools (cf. Reynolds et al., 1980). However, such conclusions were strongly challenged by the likes of the Carnegie Report (1996), and researchers such as Linda Darling-Hammond (1996, 1998, 2000; Darling-Hammond & Youngs, 2002) and Fred Newmann and Associates (1996). The Carnegie report, for instance, asserted that "every child could learn" given the right investment of time and effort. Darling-Hammond drew attention to teacher effectiveness being related to subject knowledge and pedagogical knowledge and observed that student achievement is influenced less by demographics than by variables associated with teacher quality. She also asserts that poor quality teaching has a cumulative and debilitating effect (cf. Fallon, 2003). In short, there is now resounding agreement that what teachers do in the classroom, and the learning environments that they create, does make a difference to student achievement. It is more influential than socio-economic status, the effect of the school, gender differences, principals' leadership and students' backgrounds (Alton-Lee, 2003; Hattie, 2004, 2005; Rowe, 2003, 2004b, 2004a). These findings are confirmed by other research indicating that teacher effect at the classroom level is greater than school effect (e.g. Hayes et al., 2006; Hill & Rowe, 1996, 1998; Radenbush & Bryk, 1986; Rowe, 2004b; Rowe & Hill, 1998; Scheerens & Bosker, 1997, pp. 187–191; Scheerens et al., 1989; Willms, 2000).

Other studies point to the role of the teacher in enabling student improvement. Wright, Horn, and Sanders (1997) for example concluded from their study on the relation between teacher effect and student achievement that "the most important factor affecting student learning is the teacher" (p. 63). Greenwald, Hedges, and Laine's (1996) meta-analysis showed that the quality of teachers' (ability, education and experience) was strongly related to student achievement (p. 384). Nye, Konstantopoulos, and Hedges (2004) concluded that there were differences in the ability of teachers in producing gains in the achievement of students. Teacher effects were found to be higher in low socio-economic schools than higher socio-economic schools (pp. 253–254). A study of the teaching of mathematics by Muijs and Reynolds (2003) showed that teacher behaviours had a greater impact on student achievement than did classroom variables like "setting, size, and in-class differentiation".

Wang, Haertel, and Walberg's (1993) work further elaborates this idea of the teacher's effect on learning to include a values dimension. In their analysis of research into school learning they found that variables closest to students had more impact on student learning than more distant ones of educational policies, demographics and school structures. They observed that learning is enhanced by attending to: the psychological variables of cognition and metacognition; classroom management, as

well as the quality of student-teacher interaction regarding instruction and a positive social environment; and support of the home environment. Hence, the role of values in quality teaching can be inferred in that student improvement is linked to positive student-teacher interaction. This link between positive classroom values and student achievement is also indicated by the research of Willms (2000).

In the Australian context, Rowe (2003, 2004a, 2004b; Rowe & Rowe, 1999; Rowe & Hill, 1998; Hill & Rowe, 1998) has been prominent in the study of school and teacher effectiveness especially with work on the Victorian Quality Schools Project which analysed the results of 270,000 students on 53 subjects between 1994 and 1999. The study was unequivocal about the importance of the teacher regarding student improvement. He states that the quality of the provision for teaching and learning was the most salient factor in accounting for variation in Year Twelve students' achievements, and that teachers make a substantial difference regardless of student characteristics of gender, ability, or other background characteristics. Hence, he claims, "teachers make a difference regardless" of other characteristics of gender or background. He furthermore makes the related point that the most pressing matter in educational reform is the provision of "quality teaching and learning" supported by appropriate professional development (Rowe, 2004b p. 14; Rowe & Rowe, 2002, p. 10).

Thus, having established the case for the importance of the effect teachers have on student improvement, and its possible connection to values, attention will now focus on the nature of quality teaching.

The Essence of Quality Teaching

The development of quality teaching programmes in Australia (e.g. Qld DEA, 2004; NSW DET, 2003) has been considerably influenced by the teacher effectiveness movement. The movement itself and the many government responses to it have in turn given rise to a range of innovative pedagogical propositions. One of the more prominent of these has come from the insights of Fred Newmann (Newmann, Marks, & Gamoran, 1996; Newmann & Associates, 1996). Newman set about the task to determine how to restructure schools so as to produce the conditions that would promote "high-quality student achievement" (Newmann & Associates, 1996, p. xiv). Their work has given rise to the notion of *authentic student achievement*. It has three principal criteria: "construction of knowledge, disciplined inquiry, and value of learning beyond school" (p. 22). The notion of authentic student achievement is predicated upon a constructivist view of knowledge, where new knowledge is assimilated into prior knowledge. Accordingly, learning is not simply a reproduction of prior knowledge. Also, authentic student achievement is defined by disciplined inquiry which uses a "prior knowledge base", strives after "in-depth understanding", and expresses ideas through "elaborated communication". Authentic student achievement is the outcome of "authentic pedagogy" which, in turn, is supported by the commitment of staff to intellectual quality and to professional community, involving collaboration by staff and the deprivatization of teaching

practice. A supportive learning environment is enabled by structures and a culture that values students and their achievement. Support for student learning occurs on a school-wide level where democratic values are practised and cultivated with strong social bonding, and at a classroom level with purposeful and respectful interactions between teachers and students. The thrust of Newman's proposal is that schooling is to be organized in such a way as to optimize student achievement. For Hattie (2004, 2005) and Rowe (2004b), this means focussing on what happens in the classroom.

Alton-Lee (2003) presents a synthesis of the diverse evidence supporting a quality teaching approach that caters for student diversity whether it be personal, social or cultural:

- Quality teaching is focussed on student achievement (including social outcomes) and facilitates high standards of student outcomes for heterogeneous groups of students
- Pedagogical practices enable classes and other learning groupings to work as caring, inclusive and cohesive learning communities
- Effective links are created between school and other cultural contexts in which students are socialised to facilitate learning
- Teaching is responsive to student learning processes
- Opportunity to learn is effective and sufficient
- Multiple task contexts support learning cycles
- Curriculum goals, resources including ICT usage, task design and teaching are effectively aligned
- Pedagogy scaffolds and provides appropriate feedback on students' task engagement
- Pedagogy promotes thoughtful learning orientations, student self-regulation, metacognitive strategies and thoughtful student discourse
- Teachers and students engage constructively in goal oriented assessment (pp. 89–92)

It is evident from Alton-Lee's synthesis that effective quality teaching is values-laden, particularly in relation to the learning climate in "caring, inclusive and cohesive learning communities".

Such a conception of quality teaching is a dynamic notion, in at least two senses, rather than a stayed formula. The underlying concepts and practices continue to be subject to revision from research by teacher-researchers or independent observers. Also the dynamic interplay between subject content, pedagogy and classroom environment (including the interpersonal relationships in it) is worked out in different ways in different classrooms. Moreover, generalizing findings about teacher effect across all subject areas can be problematic because the factors at work can be subject specific (Scheerens & Bosker, 1997, p. 191; Hill & Rowe, 1998).

Brophy (2001), however, proposes that there are "generic guidelines for good teaching" that support a coherent approach to teaching across subjects and situations, but this is not an instructional model to be implemented in a lock-step fashion. He recognises four assumptions in optimising curriculum and instruction. First, instructional methods and processes will vary according to the characteristics of

students and the curriculum area. Second, the instructional needs of students will change with the development of their expertise. Third, in order for students to attain high levels of mastery and steady progression, instruction needs to be focussed within "the zone of proximal development" (Vygotsky & Cole, 1978) so that the challenge is appropriate to their knowledge and skill. Fourth, the relationships between the principles need to be understood in planning a coherent approach to learning where the teaching plan, classroom environment, classroom management, content, materials, learning activities and assessment methods are aligned so as to assist student attainment of the outcomes intended.

Hattie (2004) proposes that the role of teachers is to improve the trajectory of all students (p. 24). Five major dimensions distinguish expert teachers from experienced teachers. Expert teachers:

- identify essential representations of their subject,
- guide learning through classroom interactions,
- monitor learning and provide feedback,
- attend to affective attributes, and
- influence student outcomes. (p. 26)

These five dimensions expand to sixteen attributes. In "identifying the essential representations of their subject" expert teachers are able to organize their knowledge, integrate their knowledge with prior knowledge and other curricular subjects, and be responsive to students' needs. These "deeper representations" of teaching and learning engage a series of reflective skills which enable a teacher to identify what is happening in the learning situation and respond to student needs. They are better able to predict what will happen in a learning situation and employ appropriate strategies. Second, expert teachers have a problem-solving approach, have a flexible approach and are able to integrate new information. Third, expert teachers anticipate and improvise according to the situation, and monitor their perceptions of problems and use feedback. Fourth, expert teachers are better at identifying the important and least important decisions, and balance content-centred and student-centred instruction (Hattie, 2004, pp. 26–28).

Expert teachers "guide learning through classroom interactions". They create an optimal climate in the classroom for learning; their perception of what is happening in the classroom is multi-dimensional; and they possess a greater awareness of the context of learning in terms of student ability, background and experience. Expert teachers "monitor learning and provide feedback" by providing useful and relevant feedback appropriate to a student's understanding; use feedback to develop hypothesises about teaching, ascertain their effectiveness as a teacher and are more meticulous in checking out their hypothesises and strategies; and because their cognitive skills are automatic and optimized, they are free to deal with other complex characteristics present in the situation. They "attend to affective attributes", which means they "have a high respect for students" and "are passionate about their teaching and learning". Expert teachers seek to develop the self-regulation, self-efficacy and self-esteem of students; positively influence the achievement of students; and enhance surface learning, what is needed to pass a grade, and deep

learning, understanding and meaning. The difference between experienced and expert knowledge lies not so much in the area of subject content, but in pedagogical knowledge, knowledge applied to teaching situations (Hattie, 2004, pp. 26–30). Hattie's description of expert teachers highlights the values dimension when he describes their respect for students, their seeking to develop positive characteristics of students; their desire to advance the learning of students in the best ways possible; and their passion for teaching and their own learning.

In a similar vein, Brady (2005) has also highlighted the values component in teaching when he emphasizes that personal relationship is at least as important as technical proficiency and the teacher has a broad range of strategies for teaching to meet student needs. Interpersonal relationship are especially significant for all aspects of teaching practice particularly in the provision of a warm, supportive learning environment, being approachable, being empathic and self aware. Students are to be engaged "through a rich and eclectic variety of strategies", with the strategy appropriate to the nature of the learning, and which is responsive to the different learning styles of students. Because of the constructivist nature of learning, the learner needs to be engaged actively with knowledge, internalizing it through thinking. Referring to the work of Parsons, Hinson, and Sardo-Brown (2001), Brady lists the teaching characteristics relating to "high student engagement" as being: autonomy, responsibility for one's own learning; interaction among students and with the teacher; and exploration promoted through higher order thinking skills. Assessment needs to be "integral to and a celebration of learning" as well as being formative and continuous. This allows teachers to vary their strategies according to student needs. Giving students continuing feedback enables student self-assessment of their strengths and weaknesses. Quality teaching engages learning through problem-posing related to concrete situations. Teachers reflect critically on their action and this reflective process is informed by feedback from students, other teachers, and professional development.

This impact of teacher values on the quality of teaching and learning was identified some time ago. Rogers (1969) recognised the importance of teacher values, of empathic understanding, "realness", acceptance and trust in the creation of a positive classroom climate to encourage student learning. In support he cites the work of MacDonald and Zaret (1966) and Schmuck (1963, 1966), among others. MacDonald and Zaret found that when teachers were facilitative, students took initiative and were creative. Schmuck observed that students with more positive attitudes towards themselves and school were more likely to muster their abilities to achieve at school.

Thus, it would seem that values and teacher effectiveness are interrelated: the significance of caring, trusting relationships between student and teacher for student learning to grow and develop has been observed by several researchers. Campbell et al. (2004), for instance, recognize that teacher effectiveness is influenced by the values of independent learning (the encouragement of students learning for themselves) and inclusiveness (the classroom climate). Values beyond the classroom include: *respect for others, challenge and support, confidence*, and *creating trust*. Deakin-Crick and Wilson (2005) also emphasise the quality of the learning experience and the personal relationships that exist in the classroom and the wider school and their

role in enabling students to acquire dispositions and attitudes that value learning (p. 370). Wentzel (1997) found that when students perceive that teachers care, they are likely to be more motivated to engage in classroom activity. Characteristics of the caring teacher were perceived as: a democratic interaction style; allowing for individual differences in expectations of student behaviour; "caring" about their own work; giving constructive feedback (pp. 415–417, cf. Scanlon, 2004). Khine and Fisher (2004) conclude that the interpersonal behaviour of teachers impacts powerfully on student learning. Teachers need to establish good rapport with students so as to create "an enjoyable and productive learning environment" (p. 109). In their teaching, teachers draw from personal values, general educational values and subject specific values (Bills & Husbands, 2005). Alton-Lee (2003) points to the support for student learning provided by the intentional creation by the teacher of learning communities within the classroom. Student achievement is facilitated when individual views and contributions are valued and encouraged in a mutually supportive and cooperative environment that embraces diversity (pp. 22–31, 89–91; cf. Brophy, 2001, pp. 6–7).

In a similar vein, Hamilton's (2005) study revealed that "connectedness", "empowerment" and "learning" are interrelated. The creation of a learning environment is promoted through a "connectedness" of teachers and students as together they participate in "empowering pedagogies". In her view "connectedness' is a sense of belonging, being supported and being valued by teachers and students alike and feeling part of a "learning community". Implicitly or explicitly, connectedness refers to empowerment where individuals, both teachers and students, have a voice, and are efficacious and confident in directing their lives in the school environment (cf. Leithwood et al., 2004, pp. 53–54). Teachers are empowered and have a sense of identity and purpose as part of a dynamic professional community where teachers collaborate in the exploration of pedagogical issues contributing to high student achievement. Such "empowering pedagogies" are approaches to teaching that engage students and teachers together in a critical and problem solving dialogue within a supportive environment. Within this context, learning is understood as being constructivist and enactivist, with the teacher-student relationship being of paramount importance. Cognitive and affective dimensions are accommodated in learning processes which cater for the varied cultural expressions of learning. Learning is scaffolded in order to provide a pathway for achievement that is both challenging and attainable. Education is understood as being holistic; the curriculum acknowledges and supports the social, spiritual, moral, physical, intellectual, and emotional aspects of the development of persons. Hamilton's model is values-driven, because fundamental to it are dispositions regarding respect for and affirmation of individuals, the exercise of "power with" rather than "power over", a respect for the values of the individual, and a concern that learning is grafted into their experience, rather than being imposed.

Finally, as Lovat points out in Chapter 1, there is potential for "notions of intellectual depth, relevance and supportiveness" to be reduced to uncritical fixed formulas and so be in danger of becoming as instrumentalist as the regime it replaced. Student achievement can never be adequately measured by formulas, because it is

complex and determined by a wide variety of factors, some measurable and others not. With reference to Louden et al. (2005), Lovat emphasizes the powerful influence of a positive relationship between teacher and student on student effect, even transcending instances of questionable teacher practice.

In summing up the relevant findings from the teacher effectiveness research, the notion of quality teaching not only reflects the way the teacher is able to orchestrate the many different aspects of teaching into a coherent whole in order to encourage, guide and facilitate student learning. It also emphasizes the importance of a supportive classroom climate and the significance of positive values in creating an environment where student learning can flourish.

Supporting and Enabling Quality Teaching

Just as values play a decisive role in the creation of the ambience for quality teaching and student achievement, so they are vital to the groundwork to initiate the changes and innovations essential to advancing teacher effectiveness. As a result of their study of elementary schools in Chicago during the 1990s, Bryk and Schneider (1996, 2002) found that "relational trust" is a significant factor in improving student achievement. Relational trust is the strengthening of ties between the various parties which interact as part of the educational endeavour: students, teachers, principals, administrative staff and parents. It reduces the sense of threat and vulnerability especially for those who have less power in the school. Relational trust is increased or eroded through the dynamic interplay of four value laden considerations: "respect, competence, personal regard for others, and integrity" (p. 23). The role of relational trust in school improvement is to reduce the sense of vulnerability and uncertainty with regard to the implementation of the reform; to facilitate joint decision-making; enable individuals to understand more clearly the expectations placed upon them; and to provide a moral resource for advancing the best interests of the children (pp. 33–34).

Bryk and Schneider's (2002) work showed how schools with strong relational trust had a one in two chance of improvement, while for schools with low relational trust it was a one in seven chance. More importantly though, for the purposes of our argument about the nature of quality teaching, the effect of relational trust on student learning is not direct, but rather, "creates the structural and social-psychological organizational conditions wherein activities necessary for the improvement of student achievement can be initiated and sustained" (pp. 111, 116). Bryk and Schneider point to four broad mechanisms that support this. First, student improvement is dependent upon teacher motivation and parental support. Potentially, relational trust facilitates teacher innovation in implementing more effective instruction and the seeking of deeper parental support for student learning. Second, it encourages teachers to work together as a professional community in problem-solving on critical issues of instructional improvement that are school-wide. Third, it provides support for teachers in the implementation of new and often complex teaching practices that demand continuing learning on the part of teachers. The notion of a professional community within the school provides support for teachers as they venture into the

successes and failures of such an endeavour. Fourth, relational trust creates an atmosphere where teachers are more likely to give the extra effort needed for improvement of instruction (pp. 116–117).

Darling-Hammond (1998) also draws attention to the vital influence of the school community on student success:

> For more than 30 years, research has found that successful schools create communities in which students are well known both personally and academically and where common goals and values have been forged. (p. 10)

Her research, furthermore, demonstrates that these types of communities are built through restructuring the school to enable sustained relationships between teachers, students and their families which positively impact upon student achievement, their self-regard, their attitude toward school and their behaviour.

A recurrent theme in the literature is the call for appropriate professional development to advance the quality of teaching in order to improve student achievement (e.g. Brady, 2005; Newmann et al., 2001; Lingard, Mills, & Hayes, 2000; Rowe & Rowe, 2002; Rowe, 2004b). Hattie (2005) also calls for teacher professional development that focusses on improved student learning. Landvogt (2005) sees the need for user-friendly professional development that provides opportunities for teachers to bring together the theoretical and the practical through dialogue about their practice. Ingvarson, Meiers, and Beavis (2005) indicate that teacher professional development programs that are extended over time and strengthen the professional community in the school have flow-on effects for teacher efficacy and student outcomes. The school leadership, and in particular the principal, can create an environment of emotional security for students and a supportive environment by encouraging collegiality among teachers and their continuing professional learning (Cuttance, 2001; Ingvarson et al., 2005; Lingard, Martino, Mills, & Bahr, 2002; Watson, 2005).

A significant aspect of teacher professional development is the notion of teacher professional community (Hattie, 2005). Strong teacher professional communities which give intellectual and emotional support to teachers are seen by Newmann and Associates (1996) as being vital to authentic pedagogy. An observation of Lingard et al. (2000) in relation to the Queensland School Reform Longitudinal Study (QSLRS, 1999) is that the schools where productive pedagogies were most pervasively practised were ones with developing teacher professional learning communities. Watson's (2005) review of the literature on quality teaching and school leadership concludes that the development and sustenance of strong and effective professional learning communities requires the 'active support' of school leaders (pp. 84–85). In summarizing the research on professional communities Halverson (2003) concludes:

> Strong professional communities in schools that promote collective responsibility for student learning and norms of collegiality among teachers have been associated with higher levels of student achievement.

After investigating the creation and sustaining of teacher professional learning communities in Britain, Bolam et al. (2005) conclude that they are a means of

improving student achievement. The eight characteristics of effective professional learning communities are:

> …shared values and vision; collective responsibility for pupils' learning; collaboration focused on learning; individual and collective professional learning; reflective professional enquiry; openness, networks and partnerships; inclusive membership; mutual trust, respect and support. (p. i; cf. NCLS, 2005)

However, Bolam et al. note that while professional learning communities may have common characteristics each community has to be adapted to suit a specific context.

The above review of the relevant research adds substantial credibility to the conception of quality teaching outlined earlier on. The literature demonstrates that the concept of quality teaching takes shape within the concrete situation where it is practised. Quality teaching, optimally, empowers both teachers to teach creatively and effectively, and students to extend themselves in learning according to their capacities. The driving force of quality teaching is the enrichment of the learning relationship which allows students to achieve their potential and teachers to achieve excellence in teaching. Quality teaching implements best practices for teaching, as the research shows, and it structures the learning experience appropriately to the capacities, knowledge and understanding of students. The processes in each class and lesson are likely to differ according to the needs of the students, the approach of the teacher and the curriculum area. Teacher effectiveness is modulated by the particular attitudes, subject knowledge, pedagogical knowledge and the values they bring to teaching. Whilst much of the research into student achievement focuses mostly on teacher effectiveness and the effects of the classroom climate, the literature also indicates that teachers need to be supported by appropriate and effective professional development and the creation of professional learning communities.

The Relationship Between Values and Quality Teaching

To this point, whilst it seems clear from the research that the effect of the teacher on student improvement is substantial, that it involves values in some way and that teachers need support to help them continue to work successfully with their classes, it is still not yet completely transparent what the relationship between values and quality teaching might be.

It is widely accepted that education is not values-free (e.g. Carbone, 1991; DEST, 2005; Elliott & Hatton, 1994; Halstead, 1996; Hooper, 2003; Lovat & Schofield, 2004b; Veugelers, 2000; Veugelers & Vedder, 2003). Aspin (2000) points to the ubiquity of values as they permeate all aspects of education:

> Values then imbue everything done by schools and all other community agencies and institutions committed to the education of the coming generation. (p. 18)

Moreover, Carr (1993, 2003a, 2003b, 2003c, 2003d, 2005, 2006) draws attention to the way that values imbue the whole practice of teaching, and by implication, quality teaching. Beyond the necessary technical competence, effective teaching is guided by the concrete application of personal values, since it requires of teachers a capacity for interpersonal relationships with students. This means that personal values and the practices flowing from them play a key role in teaching and education.

From a different perspective, Lovat's (2005, 2007) adaptation of Habermas' ways of knowing to curriculum practice also addresses the interface between quality teaching and Values Education. He agrees that there is a need for factual knowledge of values, beyond data or surface facts, delving into an "intellectual depth" similar to the extensive investigation of the underlying belief system suggested by Hill (2004). However, he argues, that this in-depth knowledge is incomplete unless accompanied by "communicative capacity" and "self-reflection". Beyond the factual knowledge there is the need to develop a communicative capacity in order to enter into social negotiation essential to a social conscience. Personal morality is founded on the knowing that arises in the capacity for self-reflection. The whole person, cognitively, socially and affectively, is engaged at depth in learning.

From a more practical viewpoint, an account of the West Kidlington Public School in Britain provides an insight to the relationship between values and quality teaching (Farrer, 2000). The school is the subject of the case study in Chapter 7.

Values are taught explicitly and implicitly at West Kidlington and modelled by the school community. Parents are encouraged to participate in the support of their children's learning by extending the programme into their home life. Neil Hawkes, the one time head teacher there and the main author of Chapter 7, sees Values Education not as the creation of skills, but of a community where there is self-awareness in a wider society:

> … West Kidlington aims to create a calm and happy environment for learning, believing that since the effect of the context upon the individual is perceived to be crucial, it is crucially important to get it right. (Farrer, 2000, p. 59)

The emotional state of a child is considered to be an important component in their willingness and ability to learn. Emphasis is on developing a stable emotional life for the children so that they will be able to cope with the demands of secondary education without being stressed. The Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural elements are included in everyday teaching. Expectations of personal discipline and punctuality are the same for teachers as well as students. School community begins with the value of each child to allow them to recognize the part they have in their world and to understand their responsibility to themselves and to the larger community. Teachers and children are asked to be mindful of the part they play in the life of the school. The educational experience of the school is driven by consciously chosen values. Positive interpersonal relationships between staff and students, between staff and with parents and the wider community are a priority. They are central in the creation of a learning environment where students are encouraged to develop their

individual capacities though engagement, support and encouragement. Emphasis is on the child as a reflective learner and providing the environment for supporting and advancing the child's capabilities. For Neil Hawkes (in Farrer, 2000), the forming of a personal relationship with each child in a class is essential for their good progress. Respect for children is fundamental. The anecdotes which Farrer includes in the account of West Kidlington School indicate that the children consciously adopt and enact positive values. The impact on student learning is demonstrated in their emotional development as well as their academic performance, with scores that are uncharacteristically high in national leagues table for such a school.

Recognition of the importance of the affective dimension in learning is supported by Sterling (2003, p. 94) who argues that the highest level of learning is "transformative" because it touches, engages, and changes "deep levels of values and belief through a process of realisation and recognition" (cited in Deakin Crick & Wilson, 2005, p. 361). Similarly, Deakin Crick and Wilson propose that a trusting learning environment is crucial in the development of the individual learner in the formation of those values which will sustain lifelong learning. Such a supportive learning environment depends upon the quality of personal relationships within the classroom, school and wider community.

Notions of "social trust" (Bryk & Schneider, 2002) are evident in Christine Cawsey's (2002) account of the role of values in education. Values were consciously integrated in the various aspects of school life through cooperative interaction between the principal, teachers, students and parents. "Learning Principles", or core values, were negotiated by students, parents and staff, and an analysis was made of the school culture by students and staff. Core values became the regulating influence for the culture, school structures, pedagogy, the manner of reporting of student achievement, and student discipline. Values are perceived to be at the very core of teaching and learning endeavours:

> There is considerable anecdotal evidence … that accomplished teachers recognise that the deepest levels of learning occur at the level of values, at the point where a student takes his of her learning and makes personal meaning from it. Without that connection at the values level, students can master the technical aspects of the curriculum but will be unlikely to value the learning experience or the school that provided it. (Cawsey, 2002, p. 82)

Johnson's (2002) case study of a *metacognitive-affective* approach to Values Education suggests the need for teachers to create an atmosphere in the classroom of listening, openness and trust to ensure a moral dialogue that promotes fairness and an environment for moral development of students. Furthermore, he refers to Greenberg and Snell's (1997) claim that attending to children's emotions will result in academic and personal improvement. Johnson affirms that the values being taught must be modelled.

Finally, Williams (1993) found that modelling by teachers and the positive environment created by quality teaching was the best for teaching the value of respect. Students judged teachers whose actions did not match their intentions to be "insincere and inconsistent", and respect for these teachers was a duty and not deserved. Behaviours characteristic of model teachers include: messages that are sincere, consistent

and clear; they are not authoritarian; they are enthusiastic, communicating high expectations; they "really listen"; their actions communicate commitment; and their actions demonstrate care for student learning and they are hard working. Such actions are consistent with the characteristics of expert teachers identified by Hattie and itemised above.

In conclusion, the review of the literature undertaken provides evidence for suggesting a link between values and quality teaching. Research from diverse sources has been mustered to show that values and quality teaching together provide a teaching and learning environment which enables students from diverse backgrounds to develop to their full potential. The research literature points to the role of values in quality teaching in creating a climate where student potential for learning is engaged through the positive dynamic interplay of intellect and affect.

Chapter 3
Student Action Teams, Values Education and Quality Teaching and Learning — Case Study from the Manningham Cluster, Victoria

Judith Chapman, Sue Cahill and Roger Holdsworth

Introduction

In recent years, increasing emphasis has been placed on the need for an explicit reference to values in the education of young people to help them lead lives of meaning, purpose and responsibility. Sometimes the terminology differs: "moral education", "Values Education" or "character education". Sometimes there is a different emphasis or approach: the character approach focussing on action; the cognitive developmental approach focussing on the process of ethical decision-making; the caring approach, aimed at establishing, restoring, or enhancing relationships (Howard 2005, p. 2). Sometimes initiatives have been linked to quality teaching and learning; only recently have they come to be linked to quality teacher development and renewal.

In this chapter we present an approach to Values Education based on Student Action Teams. We discuss the genesis of this approach to teaching and learning, discuss its application to Values Education, analyze its relationship to quality teaching and learning and discuss its implications for the lifelong professional learning of teachers. We recommend the application of Student Action teams as an effective approach to Values Education.

What is the Student Action Teams (SATs) Approach?

In Student Action Teams, students are engaged and excited by purposeful learning. This learning deals with issues that students see as relevant and important to them, and encourages and enables them to influence and change their communities—as part of their school curriculum.

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This approach is based on an understanding that, as the period of "childhood" and "adolescence" is extended (with school leaving ages raised and increased expectations that students will stay in school for more and more time), we must find ways to develop and recognize important social and community roles for young people. We must look for more productive practices in primary and secondary school classrooms and seek ways for learning to come alive—not just for traditionally successful and academically focused young people, but for *all* young people.

So the Student Action Team approach is:

- *Purposeful:* the learning that takes place is seen by students to have immediately useful purposes; and
- *Productive:* the work that students do produces practical and significant outcomes over and above individuals' own learning and beyond the classroom.

What does this mean in practice? In Student Action Teams, teams of students adopt a community issue that they care passionately about, research it, decide what needs to be changed or improved and take action to achieve their goal(s). They do this as part of their school curriculum.

Student Action Teams began as a state program in Victoria in 1999–2002 that investigated how students might understand and influence "community safety". Subsequently some individual schools and clusters of schools throughout Australia have been developing local examples of Student Action Teams around issues such as safety, the environment, values, recreation, bullying, health and so on (Holdsworth, 2006).

How did this Approach to Learning and Teaching Emerge?

The Victorian Statewide Student Action Team Project established Student Action Teams in 20 Victorian secondary schools between 1999 and 2000. With funding from the Victorian Department of Justice (as part of the then *VicSafe* Community Safety and Crime Prevention Framework), and operating through the then Victorian Department of Education, Employment and Training, students at these schools were challenged to identify and tackle a school or local issue of community safety. All 20 schools set up small teams of students that, in many different ways, researched, planned, proposed and acted on issues such as truancy, road safety, community development, unsafe pathways and skateboarding. In some cases, these Student Action Teams worked as *ad hoc* groups, meeting at lunchtime or in spare classes; in other cases, the Teams were incorporated into electives or core classes, or worked as a sub-group of the Student Representative Council (SRC). Phase 2 of the program in 2001–2002 involved 36 primary and secondary schools across the state in setting up action teams of students around community issues.

A team from the Australian Youth Research Centre at The University of Melbourne worked as "critical friend" evaluators to the Project over the two phases of its development, publishing a *Working Paper* (Holdsworth, Stafford, Stokes, & Tylor 2001) into the processes for setting up and maintaining Student Action Teams, and a later

Research Report (Holdsworth, Cahill, & Smith 2003) on the impact of the Program on students and schools. There was also a "How To" Manual published (by the Department of Education and Training) and this is now available on-line at the following address. (www.sofweb.vic.edu.au/mys/engagement/studentactionteams.htm)

In the evaluation of the Statewide Student Action Team Project, students classified their individual projects as to the "sense of meaning or purpose", the "sense of control" and the "sense of belonging" that characterized them, and also reported on changes they perceived in their connectedness to school, to teachers, and to fellow students, and changes to self-esteem and schoolwork. A strongly significant relationship emerged between student perceptions of the "meaning or purpose" of their projects and all the outcome measures. That is, those students who described themselves as experiencing a high sense of meaning and purpose within their projects also reported high changes in their school, teacher and peer connectedness and in their self esteem and school work. Similarly, students rating their projects low on "sense of meaning" were significantly more likely to report lower changes on all the impact scales. There were also strong links between student perceptions of project "control" (making decisions, having their voice heard) and of project "belonging" (working together) and the impact scales.

Why Adopt SATs as an Approach to Teaching and Learning?

The Student Action Teams approach is pedagogically grounded in a large body of research that has identified student engagement and wellbeing as vital components of program requirements within the middle years of schooling (see, for example, Newmann, Wehlage, & Lamborn, 1992; Lee & Smith, 1997; Australian Curriculum Studies Association, 1996; Benard, 1996; Barratt, 1997; Fashola & Slavin, 1997; Dwyer et al., 1998; MindMatters Consortium, 1999; Walker & Kelly, 2002).

The research evidence over the last 15–20 years points to inter-related factors for engaging students with learning in schools and for developing strong and competent human beings:

- control (feeling in control of one's learning, and a sense of competence);
- bonding (relationships, working in a team and/or with others, sense of connectedness with school and community); and
- meaning (learning experiences that are seen to be authentic, real, worthwhile; feelings of self worth, of value within community and of making a real contribution to others). (based on Phillips, 1990)

Moreover, there is increasing concern about issues of young people's citizenship and community attachment. Initiatives such as Student Action Teams are seen as responding directly to the need to involve young people in community decision-making, in defining and shaping community, and in creating new roles of value for young people. Such models challenge traditional perceptions of young people as "deviant", "trivial", "marginal" or "servants" of adult communities.

What Characterises Student Action Teams?

A Student Action Team has been simply defined as a group of students who identify and work, preferably as part of their curriculum, on a real issue of community interest. The students carry out research on the issue and develop solutions — either proposals for action by others or action that they themselves then take.

Because a variety of practices began to develop and be termed "Student Action Teams", the second report by the Australian Youth Research Centre suggested some criteria that needed to be met in order for an approach to be termed a Student Action Team:

- identification and formation of a student team or teams;
- student engagement from the start with determination of the project focus or topic: either student choice of what this focus is, or substantial student decision-making about taking it on, and how to approach it;
- continued student engagement with project decision-making and implementation;
- a focus within the students' community (geographical, social or cultural), preferably beyond the school; and
- processes of research and action by students that intend to make a difference around the chosen focus or topic within the community. (Holdsworth et al, 2003)

Though Student Action Teams have elements in common with other approaches that also have value within schools, such as "student-centred curriculum", "inquiry methods" and "students as researchers", these criteria were developed to distinguish the particular Student Action Team approach.

In addition to the above criteria, the Student Action Team approach outlined in the State Program and the evaluation reports was based on the following principles or assumptions:

- that students can make serious and important decisions about issues that are important to them;
- that students can do important and valuable things: they have expertise and a knowledge of the needs of their community; and
- that important action can be undertaken as part of students' learning in school: community-focused research and action is an appropriate educational approach for schools to adopt.

The Student Action Team model addresses these requirements by engaging teams of students in:

- real decision-making and action which takes them
- beyond the classroom to work on
- issues valued by students and the broader community, and which are
- linked to other mandated curriculum goals. (Holdsworth, 2006: 8)

The Design of an Approach for Using Student Action Teams in Values Education

The Manningham Catholic Primary School Cluster came together in 2005 as part of VEGPSP Stage 1 to use the framework of Student Action Teams to support students in investigating and implementing Values Education using a whole school approach. The Cluster's aim was to achieve an increased understanding within the school communities of the nature of core values for Australian schools and how these are represented within personal, school, community and national spheres. The cluster aimed to increase school commitment to the expression of these values within the schools' communities and within their teaching and learning.

The Australian Government's *National Framework for Values Education in Australian Schools* provided the starting point for the Manningham project. First, it provided the challenge and structure for the Student Action Teams as they were asked to look at the nine core values contained within the Framework and carry out their investigations and action implementation around these nine values. Second, the Values Education Study and National Framework provided the first data source for the work of the teams as they addressed improving whole-school cultures, inclusion of values in Key Learning Areas, increasing student engagement, fostering student empowerment and encouraging student civic participation.

At the outset of the project, the main objective was to work as a group to look at Values Education in schools: where it was or wasn't seen, heard and felt. Student Action Teams were used as it was believed that: *only when we involve our students in the planning and decision making do we end up with a true and meaningful outcome that is owned by all.*

The six schools that made up the cluster (and the three values they were responsible for investigating) were:

- Our Lady of the Pines (Year 5: Integrity, Freedom, Responsibility)
- St Peter's and St Paul's (Year 5: Respect, Responsibility, Doing Your Best)
- St Gregory the Great (Year 4: Respect, Doing Your Best, Honesty and Trustworthiness)
- St Clement of Rome (Year 5: Honesty and Trustworthiness, Integrity, Freedom)
- St Charles Borromeo (Year 4/5: Fair Go, Care and Compassion, Friendship and Acceptance—which students chose to rename from Understanding, Tolerance and Inclusion)
- St. Kevin's (Year 5: Fair Go, Care and Compassion, Friendship and Acceptance)

Student Action Teams were set up around each of the nine core values identified by the Federal Government. Their task was to explore and take responsibility for:

1. developing options for implementation of action around the value;
2. documenting promoting and blocking forces for implementation of action;
3. developing appropriate products/processes within their area.

While each experience of using Student Action Teams differs in the details of its implementation, the application of SATs to Values Education has used elements

that have emerged as being in common with many other such teams. Overall, the following stages can be identified:

- The identification and choice of the specific issue of values to be worked on, and the engagement of student decision-making around this issue. Students identified particular aspects of the broad topic that concerned them, and made a decision to take on this challenge;
- The conduct of research into the issue of values by students, then the analysis and interpretation of their research findings;
- The identification by students of desired outcomes or changes, and the planning and implementation of action around values (including the identification of strategies, timelines and action plans) to achieve these outcomes.

Specifically, in the application of Student Action Teams to Values Education, the following elements and steps have emerged to characterize the particular approach taken.

Phases and Forums

We have noted above that there were "research" and "action" phases apparent within the Values Education work. In addition, interschool Student Forums were established to mark the key points in beginning and ending the project and in moving from one phase to another. It was initially planned that some student representatives from each of the schools would come together on three occasions during the year. In the Manningham experience these proved to be so important that we finished up adding in two further inter-school workshops for student representatives.

The Forums were designed to create an opportunity for student teams to jointly plan, report and share, to provide the action teams with public validation and feedback on their work, to challenge students to explore and practise a wide range of interpersonal, communication, public speaking and leadership skills, and to form an accountability framework within which school teams had to meet agreed timelines, targets and commitments.

During the project, the following Student Action Team Forums and Phases occurred:

Student Forum 1: Held early in the project (following intensive teacher preparation), this forum was designed to engage students with the issues and initiate the research phase. In their individual schools, students were asked to think about questions such as "What is a value?", "What are our values?", "What actions do we see coming from values?" They were to bring responses to these questions to the forum in reports, displays, songs and other presentations.

The nine values from the National Framework were then introduced and students mapped and compared their values with these, agreeing with some and changing the words of others. Students built physical displays: the names of values on cards that

were linked to other associated values and that were then, in turn, linked to action statements and observations.

So this first Forum set directions, challenged students and asked if they wanted to accept that challenge to investigate the operation of such values within domains of self/home, school and wider community.

When students were prepared to accept this challenge, we posed possible research questions: *Why* is this an issue? *What* are the particular issues within our communities? What do we need to *find out*? This forum started the planning of possible research directions and strategies with each school taking on three of the core values for intensive research and action.

> *Research Stage:* The student research was directed around two large questions: "What is the importance of this value to our community?" (What does it mean?) and "What do we find out about this value's implementation?" Students investigated these questions through surveys and questionnaires, interviews and observations. They used a mix of qualitative and quantitative methods. While issues of sampling were considered (we challenged students about how many people they needed to survey or interview), the nature of the research was generally "introductory" and was used to provide broad information about the issue in order to guide students' discussions and decisions. We constantly challenged the students about the need for data, and emphasized the importance of making decisions based on evidence and logic.

> *Research Workshop:* Part-way through this stage, it was useful to organize an extra research workshop for student representatives to discuss methods used to date, and to provide training around the major research approaches. This also introduced ideas about how to analyze and report on data collected, and responded to students' concerns about "How can we show what we are finding out?"

> *Student Forum 2:* The second (or "hinge" forum—marking the hinge between research and action phases) provided an opportunity for students to report on the results of the research that had been carried out and to think about what action was appropriate. In order to do so, students were asked to visualise a world based strongly on the values that they were considering, and to compare this with their current world. What would need to change if this idealised world were to exist? What could students do to achieve this?

This Forum initiated the action stage of the project. It enabled students to feed information back to each other and to plan possible action directions and strategies.

> *Action Stage:* The action stage of this project began with an extra planning workshop, and it is still continuing. Students looked at their broad objectives and defined the specific things they could do to achieve these. They then began implementing these proposals within their own schools and communities.

> *Action Planning Workshop:* Again, it was valuable to add in an action-planning workshop for school representatives, in which they learned skills about

goal-setting, breaking objectives up into smaller actions, time-lining and developing action plans.

Student Forum 3: The final forum reported on the actions being taken, including any outcomes observed, and planned future directions. It summarized the journey that the Teams had taken. Students made action reports to each other and to external stakeholders (Departments, local government and funding bodies) and celebrated their achievements. In discussing "where to now?", students reported on the continuing action and Values focus within their schools.

In each of these stages, phases, forums and steps, we worked out the critical questions that were necessary to drive students' and teachers' investigations. These are outlined in more detail in current writings on Student Action Teams (Holdsworth, 2006).

It has been particularly important to acknowledge student passions — anger, commitment, disappointment, hope — about what they are finding out about Values within their communities, if they are to take action.

Within the Schools: Listening to the Voices of Teachers and Students

Six project co-ordinators managed the Student Action Teams (SATs) in their respective schools. Each school adopted its own way of implementing SATs, whether it was a whole class approach or individual teams of between 8 and 10 students to investigate the three values chosen to be studied by their school.

The young people in the Student Action Teams took an active role in implementing the nine values through their schools' curriculum, organization, ethos and environment whilst forming partnerships with their local, state and national community. Purposeful and authentic outcomes were achieved by working co-operatively over the year, communicating through student forums, coordinating committee meetings and electronically.

The first two forums and the two workshops were attended by nine representatives from each of the schools' Student Action Teams. These representatives were then responsible for holding workshops back at their school to inform the rest of their teams. The Final Forum was attended by all 150 students from the six schools who had been active members of this project.

All school coordinators report the improvement in trusting relationships which they experienced with the students in the Student Action Teams:

> To see the adults in the relationship give up their position of authority and walk alongside these young people was inspiring. The students led the project and took the staff on a journey that opened their minds, eyes and hearts. To see the students model true values in action has had the school community follow their lead. It has opened up conversation about values around staffroom tables at lunch, parents stopping to discuss the latest forum and how much their child enjoyed feeling so important and the students beaming with pride when they speak at assembly or in a classroom or at a staff meeting.

As all members of the cluster became more comfortable in the Student Action Team framework, and handed over the responsibility of this project to the students, teachers realised that the way they had taught values was not necessarily meaningful to students:

> They have taught us what it is in their world, to hear, see and feel values. They have opened our eyes to how best to embed Values Education in their curriculum, their school culture and their community. More importantly, they changed the way all members of the cluster looked at classroom management and relationships. What we have ended up with is a framework for truly embedding Values Education for students, by students.

The Manningham experience has shown that it is when teachers allow students to have a voice that they can respond and can become true leaders. When the teachers allowed the students the freedom to express themselves, they realised that the students were having their most meaningful discussions. This way of teaching has enabled students to be more resilient and deal with situations in their daily lives. When the Student Action Team was faced with difficulties, they persevered and continued to work towards their goals. The students became more responsible at school level. They made changes in their school by making it a more caring and compassionate place. When students were able to have their own voices, they were observed to have wonderful ideas and insight.

Participating in this project has enriched students' development. The students involved in the Student Action Team have demonstrated that they have acquired a better sense of themselves in respect to their peers. Many of the students have had an improved sense of "self" which has led to an increase in their self-esteem.

One school co-ordinator reports:

> After reflecting, I now realise that it was in my time working with the children in the Values Action Team that often as teachers we spend a lot of time doing all of the talking and reflecting. It is when we step back and begin to listen to the ideas and opinions of the students that we begin to understand and appreciate their opinions. I have now become more comfortable stepping back and allowing the students to lead the conversation during our sessions together. At times I have found it challenging to allow the students to lead the discussions. However, when the students feel that they are being heard, they feel respected and appreciated. I have noticed some children have blossomed throughout their journey. After engaging with the Student Action Team about the values they have researched, I have learnt a lot about these students. They have made me appreciate the interest and understanding they have of current affairs and the news in their daily lives. They could discuss current issues and relate them back to the values we were researching.

Another of the school co-ordinators comments:

> Facilitating a process that empowered all who participated to be better people and lead others to be better people has been a deeply satisfying experience. On reflection, the greatest teaching point in the SAT framework was the continual challenge to actively listen to what the students had to say and allow for the information exchange between students to be the crux of our gatherings, not merely an introduction or reflection at the end. A strong framework enables the students to explore, learn and understand in a variety of ways. It gives students the scaffold they need to take risks and when things don't go exactly as expected; a

soft place to land. As an educator, I have always held as sacrosanct the need to put students at the centre of all I do. That I must ensure I don't teach them the knowledge but teach them the skills to understand the knowledge. That good curriculum allows for this to happen, superficial curriculum allows students to regurgitate facts. It's the connections and relationships that students identify that show us the depth of understanding they have come to. So if this has been my history, then what is my future? The adage, "If you always do what you've always done; you'll always get what you've always got" is so true, but this year we have attempted to ensure that hasn't been the case. Not only have I operated within a completely new structure within the school by drawing students from six different classrooms; working with multi-age action teams; meeting and communicating with five other schools and outside agencies BUT the team of students and me have attempted to effect change in our community by VALUING VALUES. In the years to come, who knows how successful we will be. But in the immediate future, I know it has made me a better teacher and it has made the students believe they have a valid and important voice.

Yet another co-ordinator observed the growth in the development of the students in her particular school:

Because the group worked so well at developing the project, I found at times that I was seeing myself as a little superfluous in the mix! The students drove their own research, developing surveys and questionnaires suited to their audiences. They then organized distribution, collection, collation and interpretation with only minimal guidance from me. It was necessary for me to take a step back and accept that my role as teacher had changed. As with any large group of students (there were 30 involved) there is often someone who has not engaged as much as you would want. Through the action stage I was extremely pleased to see that through allowing the students to take action in many forms, it did, I think, enable all students to choose their strength and run with it. One student in particular had experienced some difficulty in the discussion and planning stages of the project. He had recently come to our school, after having difficulties at his previous school, both in behaviour and academic achievements. He was not particularly eloquent when it came to making suggestions, nor enthused by the written survey process. However when it came to one on one surveys with younger students and the design and production of a classroom poster depicting the value of Respect (again for students in a younger class) he displayed an interest and expertise that had not been shown in any other areas of his school work. Whether or not it was a product of his involvement with the Values Project is impossible to say, but since its implementation he has produced work in other areas far beyond anything that was earlier thought either possible or likely. The Student Action Team process has been an enormous plus to the senior students in our school. They warmed to the format from the beginning and grew tremendously in their mature approach to the project. They are now eager to take on more responsibilities and have grown in their confidence in themselves and their peers. This new awareness of the depth of their abilities has most definitely transferred into other areas of their education. As a teacher I have seen how students can respond given the opportunity, how students can develop real leadership skills, how students are prepared to take full responsibility when they are engaged in the work, how effective working interactively with students from other school can be, how students engage when they feel strongly about something. For me as a teacher, it was a learning experience to allow students to take full control, and for me to support only when needed. For the students this project has allowed them to take responsibility, develop organisation and leadership skills, to work collaboratively in groups within their own school and across the cluster. The greatest outcome of this project has to be the change it has brought about in some of the students who participated. They have had the opportunity to show what they are capable of and through their work, to realise the true meaning of the values they have studied.

Working with the students in the Student Action teams provided a catalyst for one of the school co-ordinators to look closely at what are the attributes of a quality teacher. Here is her reflection:

> What I hadn't anticipated, was how anxious I became when I realised that I had no idea or maybe "control" of what would or could evolve at the end!! It took me ages and many, many hours of debriefing with our cluster co-ordinator and the other school coordinators to allow the seeds that had been sown to slowly shoot. Once I relaxed and took the pressure off myself, I then was much more open to enjoy and develop much better relationships with the children. An insight most definitely for me was I also realised that they had picked up on my "tension" and consequently they became tense and unproductive too. When I relaxed, they relaxed also. I also laughed more, and they laughed too. It set up a ripple effect. Children who were not achieving started to really shine. The children now really do believe that they have a voice and can make a difference. I now believe that too and that if you want to genuinely change the "culture" of your school, it is essential to listen to the children.

Teachers identified a number of important learnings for themselves as teachers arising from the Manningham experience. These included:

- the need for teachers to be able to abdicate control in relationships with students;
- the importance of teachers truly acknowledging that children can make a difference through their contributions to teaching and learning and through their interpersonal interaction in the learning setting;
- the recognition that when children assume responsibility for accountability they can sometimes be more rigorous than teachers themselves;
- the realisation that children are prepared to accept accountability from their peers more readily than from the teacher;
- the realisation that it is imperative to start from where the children are at, and not where teachers perceive they are;
- the need for teachers to ask children what they want to know;
- the acknowledgement that "real life learning" is far more effective than "pen and paper";
- the observation that individual classroom environments are not the only place that good learning and teaching can take place; and
- the experience that "I have personally been challenged to revisit my beliefs and practices on how children learn best."

The student's learning that took place throughout this project was substantial. All school co-ordinators reported that when they were given the opportunity, students developed real leadership skills and were prepared to take full responsibility when they were engaged with their teacher and their peers. Being active members of Student Action Teams further developed their organisational skills and fostered working collaboratively in groups within their own schools as well as across the cluster.

When asked what being a member of a Student Action Team meant to them, the students stated that they had learnt how to conduct interviews, analyse data and improve their speaking, thinking and communication skills. They felt that their

confidence, self-esteem, responsibility, integrity, enthusiasm, motivation and commitment had all improved.

The students involved in the Student Action Teams have demonstrated that they have acquired a better sense of themselves in respect to their peers. When asked at the final forum what they believed their learnings had been, they said:

- Being in the Student Action Team made me feel better because I kept getting more involved
- I became so much more organized
- Making decisions made me feel really independent
- I know I can voice my opinion
- I learnt how to talk to and listen to other people's opinions
- I am more confident
- I felt like I was in control
- I became more responsible
- I realised the students can do things without the teacher
- I feel more mature
- I feel I can do anything if I work hard
- I feel great about the kids making the decisions because it makes us think for ourselves
- I feel like a better person
- I think about what people feel and how they live
- I felt great about learning to be responsible for my actions
- I feel like a new person
- It feels good that other people think you are responsible
- It has made me realise that anyone can improve and make a difference to the world
- I never felt left out or over stressed
- I felt grown up
- It helped me see a difference
- It has affected my body language

These examples of the teaching and learning of both the teachers and students throughout the Manningham Catholic Primary School's Clusters' journey are underpinned by the importance of a trusting, respectful relationship between teacher and student. Student Action Teams provided the canvas for these relationships to be initiated and then strengthened during the course of their lives.

Quality Learning and Teaching, Student Action Teams and Values Education

Lovat (this volume) in his consideration of the relationship between quality teaching and learning and Values Education provides a framework for the examination of specific strategies to Values Education. Student Action Teams provide evidence

of quality teaching and learning when examined using this framework. In regard to each of the dimensions as identified by Lovat, it is possible to highlight, for example:

a. *intellectual depth*—evident in the high level of engagement by students , particularly at Student Forums and in the Research, Investigation and Action phases of Student Action Teams when students work on issues that they had selected around values that they have deemed to be important to pursue in depth, utilizing intellectual skills in conceptualizing problems and issues for research and action; utilizing skills in qualitative and quantitative data collection, analysis and presentation; and conceiving of robust and practical strategies for reform.
b. *communicative capacity*—evident in student's ability to communicate increasingly sophisticated ideas, commitments and concepts using a variety of communicative skills to audiences of increasing diversity, beginning with the first Student Forum attended by student peers and teachers to the final Student Forum attended by federal, state and local politicians, system authorities, academics, school principals and members of the broader school community.
c. *capacity to reflect*—evident in the action research cycle strategies adopted by students of planning, observing, reflecting and if necessary starting again in the interests of solving problems of mutual interest and bringing about outcomes of mutual concern.
d. *self management*—evident in students being able to work with others in the student action teams, being able to share and teach others, confronting what it is to act upon and live out one's values in increasingly complex environments of the school, the home, the broader community and society.
e. *self knowledge*—evident in the linking of values with a sense of personal achievement, a responsibility to share, a sense of self-belief, commitment, self efficacy and confidence.

Student Action Teams, we believe, do provide a strategy for assisting young people to develop an integrated and owned sense of values based on an increasing depth of cognition, social and emotional maturity and self knowledge. The Manningham application of Student Action Teams provides evidence of the ways in which this approach to Values Education can move forward an agenda of reform, making values more explicit in the lives of children within their classrooms, schools, families and communities.

Student Action Teams as a strategy for Values Education also has the potential to impact upon teachers and their approach to teaching and learning. Hooper (2003) in a review of literature on Values Education undertaken on behalf of Curriculum Corporation for the *Values Education Study* points out that the different approaches to Values Education adopted by teachers reflect different underlying beliefs, different views of human nature and different assumptions about teaching and learning and classroom relationships. A range of teaching methods are available to the teacher assuming responsibility for Values Education: large and small group discussions; simulations; personal journals; self analysis workshops; rational thinking and reasoning workshops; action learning activities; class discussions examining of values

conflicts and dilemmas. Different methods may be more appropriate for different teaching and learning objectives. It is important that teachers have available to them a repertoire of methods to select the most appropriate for different goals, be they engaging students, encouraging reflection; changing attitudes or changing behaviour ; or different foci related to the school related environment, the child's real life experience or focusing on more abstract moral and values dilemmas.

As the Manningham experience demonstrated, Student Action Teams have the potential to substantially impact on teachers and teaching, particularly in reference to:

a. *the nature of power and authority* — SATs require that teachers be willing to share power and authority with students, encouraging them to take the lead on many aspects of their own learning. This does not mean that teachers simply step back and let students do whatever they like but it requires that teachers enter into a relationship where they work together with students in identifying areas of concern, addressing complex issues, developing practical strategies for action.

b. *grappling with uncertainty*—SATs legitimizes the asking of questions and the problematizing of issues. Increased autonomy for students in determining the nature and path of their learning can sometimes result in a degree of uncertainty for the teacher. It is important for teachers to respond to this uncertainty with reference to dialogue, discussion, logic, evidence and not by the exercise of control. For some teachers this may present itself as a significant challenge especially when it impacts on classroom and student management. To ensure that teachers maintain their own confidence and sense of efficacy it is important that professional support and guidance is available to teachers, particularly when they are responsible for applying this approach to Values Education for the first time.

c. *achieving congruence between rhetoric and action* — expectations that students will change attitudes and behaviours in accord with talk about values requires that teachers also "walk the talk". The integrity of the teaching/learning experience can be readily undermined if teachers in their everyday interactions with students do not model adherence to the values that are being expected to be exhibited in student behaviour.

d. *linking teaching / learning activities with productive outcomes* — in SATs, every activity has an outcome. At the same time as acknowledging the importance of the learning that is occurring in the mind of each student there is deemed to be an importance beyond individual learning aimed at producing something which will be of interest and value to others. Particularly with primary school students, the thinking and reflecting about values is always orientated towards "doing something". This may be having students getting up in front of a class or wider audience and making a report, doing a summary, preparing a poster for display. At Mannigham an activity was built into the teaching / learning process approximately every 15–20 minutes. This was an important element of ensuring student engagement and enthusiasm.

e. *sharing teaching responsibilities with students* — at Manningham there were different representatives of the student action teams in each school at each forum. After each forum different students had the responsibility to go back to their

classrooms and teach the rest of their class mates about what they had learned and what had taken place so that they could jointly move onto the next step. It was found that students teach the way they want to learn. As a result when different students brought back and disseminated those things that they had learnt and experienced they tended to teach their peers using different preferred methods of teaching and learning and thereby catering for different learning needs.

f. *empowering young people to accept the responsibilities of active citizenship within and beyond the community of the school*—the student action teams approach is based on the premise that young people are part of communities in and beyond their schools. In a democracy these communities are open to all people to participate in decision-making on issues that may be contentious. They require that views and positions are continually being formed and re-formed as part of being an active and contributing member of a community. The learning experiences of those students participating in SATs need to be designed to provide a foundation for active citizenship in the future as well as in the present. The basic core of the pedagogy is that young people can also be powerful people, able to make changes in their world—people able to make a difference now and as adults in the future.

Conclusion: Student Action Teams and the Lifelong Professional Learning of Teachers

The approaches to learning and teaching about values inherent in the Student Action Team approach have wide implication for teacher preparation and renewal. It cannot be assumed that teachers can simply adopt this approach to Values Education without professional support and guidance. In the implementation of the Australian Values Education Framework we might well ask: How can teachers be assisted to reflect critically on their role as values educators? What assistance is most appropriate for reflection on the identification and clarification of values; the philosophical underpinnings of values; strategies for teaching about values? What might constitute a more structured and reflective basis for approaching questions related to the values dimension of the curriculum for incorporation into pre-service and in-service education programs in universities? What strategies are most appropriate for teacher renewal in schools?

Howard (2005) in an examination of the implications for teacher education of recent initiatives in values domain in the USA points out that there has been relatively little attention to this aspect of teaching and learning in teacher education programs. Howard argues that moral issues arise naturally in school settings and should be made explicit and become the focus of critical inquiry in teacher education. Teacher preparation programs should include ethics as part of the curriculum. As discussion of ethical issues is possible in all academic disciplines, teacher educators should learn in their preparation programs how to conduct discussion of ethical issues with young people. Future teachers should learn specific strategies

to teaching and learning about moral and ethical issues in their teacher education programs.

Joseph (2003) provides one example of the way in which such strategies can be integrated into teacher education, through her work designed to introduce the moral and values dimensions of teaching to new and experienced teachers through "The Moral Classroom" seminars .These seminars have focused on topics of moral development and moral education designed to assist teacher education students to develop "a complex view of moral development and education, to characterize themselves as moral practitioners, to use moral language for understanding themselves and their work, and … to engage in critical reflection about their personal beliefs and ethical dilemmas" (p. 9). Her approach is aimed to encourage teacher educators to delve deeply into their moral reasoning—through their own stories and those of others—to more fully understand, contemplate, and feel how moral decisions and actions affect others as well as themselves.

A second example is offered by Stallions and Yeatts (2003) through their Connected Learning Partnership model. This model is designed to provide preservice teachers with the theoretical and practical knowledge as well as skills necessary for the application of learning about core values through curriculum integration, assessment, program evaluation, as well as the development of family, school, and community partnerships. Preservice teachers undertake learning activities around values through a process of *inquiry, reflection, action* and demonstration.

A third example is offered by Marshall (2006, p. 3) who traces the history of the development of one institution's response to the challenge of introducing Values Education in teacher education programs by (a) conducting seminars within the faculty focussed on the perceived needs of preservice teachers to begin investigating the moral beliefs, ethics, and values that support their own sense of personal self (centering upon trustworthiness, responsibility, caring and respect); (b) helping them to understand how these terms are presently being understood and defined, and (c) introducing preservice teachers to possible strategies for incorporating such concerns into classroom teaching and learning.

At Manningham the engagement of an outside consultant, experienced in the application of Student Action Teams in a wide range of educational settings, provided the expertise in the concept, the design, the strategies and the learning activities which was necessary to ensure that teachers participated in a most worthwhile experience of professional learning. The consultant advised teachers at each stage of the journey, distributed detailed outlines of learning materials, engaged teachers in team activities with students and modeled at the Student Forums the teaching/learning approaches that could then inform teachers practice on return to their own classrooms. This school based approach to the professional learning of staff, guided by an external consultant was immensely successful and can be recommended as a way forward for wider application.

Another vital element which accounted for much of the support and confidence of teachers at Manningham was the close and regular co-ordination of teacher meetings by the co-ordinator of the Project. Meetings were held regularly and at these meetings details of all matters, pedagogical and administrative, were openly

discussed. Highly informative and affirming emails ensured that teachers felt fully informed and secure in the process as it unfolded. It is important to note that some of the teachers who so successfully participated in this reform were not "hand picked devotees" of Values Education at the outset. The Manningham experience provided evidence of a highly effective professiona "listening to the student voice".

The experience of professional learning about Values Education associated with the application of the Student Action Teams approach at Manningham highlights the importance and the potential of:

a. *personal exploration about values among teachers*—it was important to allow teachers the opportunity and the space for reflection and exploration of what values they hold individually and jointly, what values mean in their lives and the lives of children, how they can take a concern for values into their professional lives, their classroom, school and broader community.

b. *provision of mentors and coaches from among teachers experienced in action teams made available to a wider group of staff within and across schools*—the learning experiences and activities derived from the Action Team model can now be utilized to disseminate learning about Values Education more broadly. Having experienced Action Teams first hand experienced teachers are in a position to provide leadership to other colleagues in the broader professional setting.

c. *linking school based learning with postgraduate study*—at Manningham, teachers worked in partnership with university colleagues working as "critical friends" and advisors, especially on action research. This school university collaboration could be extended into a more formal arrangement leading to post graduate qualifications. This could involve Action Teams of teachers in the school working with a post-graduate degree course at a university, with some time release, working on a series of tasks within the school and aligning the theory of what was being learnt to the things happening in the school.

Chapter 4
Placing Values at the Centre of School Policy and Classroom Practice—A Case Study of Modbury School, South Australia

Colin MacMullin and Lina Scalfino

Introduction

This chapter tells the story of how one school took up the challenge to embed Values Education in all classroom programs. In particular it focuses on the vision and activities of the principal and the ways the teachers have embraced Values Education in their work. It outlines the introduction of Values Education in the school and the principal's theorising underpinning this work. Today, the work of all teachers in the school is imbued with Values Education and this chapter presents and critiques examples of this work.

Two sets of ideas are used to organise and interpret the policy and pedagogical work of the school: the National Framework for Values Education in Australian Schools, and the outcomes of Quality Teaching suggested by Lovat in Chapter 1. The former proposes that the key elements and approaches that inform good practice include: whole school planning; partnerships with school communities; a whole school approach to the integration of Values Education within all aspects of the school's work; the provision of a safe and supportive learning environment; the provision of support for the development in students of positive skills and dispositions; and quality teaching procedures. The latter suggests that learning in a values-driven program will be characterised by intellectual depth, communicative competence, reflection, self management and self knowledge.

A particular feature of Modbury School is the vision and drive of the principal. The chapter will examine this leader's work and seek to identify the characteristics of leadership that are influencing the endeavours of the school. Finally, the chapter will discuss the implications of this work for: the school itself, and future directions that it might take; other schools that might pursue a similar approach to Values Education; and university schools of education that are charged with preparing teachers to take up Values Education in their future classrooms.

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The School's Journey in Values Education

Modbury is a small school of 200 students from 134 families. It is situated in a middle to low-income suburb of Adelaide. Modbury's journey in Values Education started in 2002 when the newly appointed principal began to develop her vision of creating a community school with connections between student learning and the wider community, encompassing values that would shape the identity of the school and underpin the curriculum framework.

The principal started by seeking the community's views about the school and their aspirations for their children. She wanted to know what they thought the school did well and what areas needed improving. The responses highlighted the need for the school to provide: "an education that was holistic in nature; where students were given the opportunity to learn life skills; where children were engaged in learning and were happy to come to school". Parents were clear that they needed the school to establish a supportive learning environment in order to reduce the incidences of harassment and bullying and re-establish their trust and confidence in the school. The staff shared this concern. It was the feedback from this consultation process that led the school to identify 26 values though further community, staff and student feedback. The values focused on: improvement for learning; individual responsibility; and working together.

Committed to the ideal of empowering parents, the principal promoted a system of governance that offered parents an opportunity to govern in partnership with the school. This included opportunities for parents to take on leadership roles in key areas of the school and provided opportunities for parents to learn along side staff. As a result a number of sub-committees of Governing Council were established. This initiative saw an increase in participation of parents in decision-making across the school, particularly the participation by members of the school's Aboriginal community. This has subsequently led the employment of indigenous workers and community events that strengthen its commitment to Reconciliation.

It became clear to the principal, through her analysis of the school's culture and pedagogical practices, that the school needed to re-establish a culture that would reflect more clearly the values that were articulated by the community through the consultation process. These values were to have a lasting influence in setting the direction for change in a number of key areas. These included: the development of a *School Values Charter* that articulated the values into statements that came to underpin the vision for the school's values based culture; a *Student Wellbeing Policy* that shifted behaviour management from a punishment paradigm to a values and relational model; a notion of *Accountability* that emphasised clearer expectations of individual and collective responsibility for achieving the outcomes identified in the school's strategic plan; and *professional development* and *performance management* practices that focused on the use of data to improve practice.

In 2003, the school was involved in the National Values Education Study. Staff used this opportunity to further their values work through the development of models to explain how the values culture was being implemented in the school. Professional development at that time focussed on pedagogy, the development of social skills and integrating values across the curriculum. The school's 2003 work led to a National Award for Quality

Schooling in Values Education, and in 2005 the school was selected to be part of the Values Education Good Practice Schools Project Stage 1. This involved a focus on teaching children philosophy to enhance their reasoning and capacities for ethical thinking.

The Principal's Thinking

The principal says that her vision to use values as a key vehicle or driver of change: "… stems from my belief that values have the capacity to touch the hearts, minds and souls of individuals and ultimately support the professional development of educators; empower communities and transform organizations at a deep and profound level".

Developing a Model to Integrate Values into Action

The school community consultation process identified 26 values that were important for parents, staff and students. These were organised into core and associated values, with the core values being: Respect; Interdependence; Excellence; Creativity; and, Human Rights. The model (cf. Fig. 4.1 below) demonstrates how a core
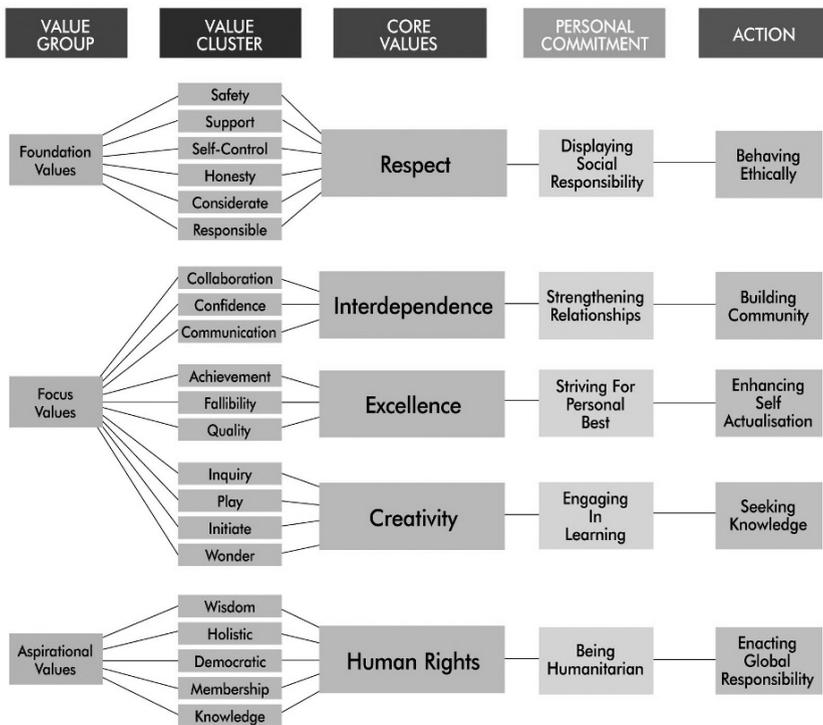
Fig. 4.1 Integrating values into action

value and its associated values support personal commitment and responsibility to action bringing the values to life for the individual within the community and beyond.

The first part of the model represents the importance of establishing *foundational values*. These values, grounded in Respect, form a person's orientation to social responsibility, that is, to behave ethically. The *focus values*, on the other hand, have an emphasis on building relationships with the community and the world around the child. These values involve children enacting their personal best and unleashing their potential for creativity. The final segment of the model, the *aspirational values*, is grounded in the belief that we all have a global responsibility for ourselves, others and the physical world. These values have a humanistic orientation and support educators and learners to always aspire to: "make a difference—be the best they can be". The core value of Human Rights supports the acknowledgement and celebration of difference, and similarities, between , and among cultures providing opportunity for students to explore different world views. One way in which the school is achieving this is through the teaching of philosophy as well as integrating values into the curriculum. Implementation of the defined values requires action from leaders, teachers, students and parents.

Values Framework for Whole School Change

The principal believes that a whole school approach to Values Education is most effective when values reside at the heart of school change. Change is seen as being complex, affecting all aspects of the school's operation. This is depicted in the Values Framework for Whole School Change (cf. Fig. 4.2 over) developed by the principal. At the centre of the model are the core values of the school. Closely connected are the beliefs and world views that shape and clarify the values people hold and are prepared to act on consistently and repeatedly in their lives. The principal maintains that the key to understanding what and why people value certain things over others is closely connected to who we are as individuals. She believes that knowing deeply who we really are supports our ability to be realistic, understand our limitations; bounce back in face of adversity and aspire to excel in our given fields. She argues that this is as relevant to children as it is to adults working within a school community. As a result, teachers at Modbury spend a lot of time discussing identity with their students and inviting them to explore the qualities inherent in each unique individual.

In the principal's model, policies, practices and structures of the school are aligned with the values adopted by the school. The last concentric circle highlights the need for the learning to be based within a culture of inquiry, to support ongoing reflection; to pose questions and to engage the learner. The principal argues that this vision is not fixed, but is dynamic and flexible. She says that it is: "always strengthening a shared sense of purpose for the community to further improve and strive for excellence in achieving its goals".
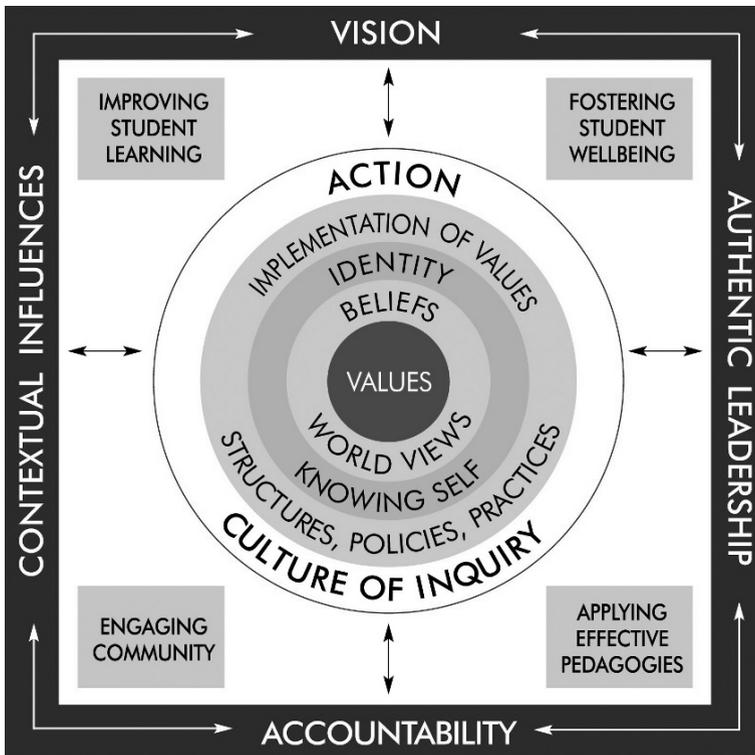
Fig. 4.2 Values framework for whole school change

The four key components in each section of the model highlight areas that need to be developed in order to establish a values-based school. These components are: Improving Student Learning; Fostering Student Wellbeing; Engaging Community and Applying Effective Pedagogies. All of the components are interconnected. This, the principal argues, provides flexibility for the school to foreground areas for improvement. She says that, at any one time, all aspects of the key components could be activated to support the culture of change in the school. For example, the school introduced programs to support the development of social skills (Fostering Student Wellbeing). At the same time the school was working with parents in sharing that learning (Engaging Community) and teachers received professional development that emphasised the development of relationships to improve the learning environment (Applying Effective Pedagogies). This in turn supported improvement and achievement in other curriculum areas, particularly literacy and numeracy (Improving Student Learning).

The outer frame of the model connects the need for ongoing accountability; authentic leadership; and understanding contextual influences to ongoing development of the school's vision. The arrows represents the dynamic interaction of all the

elements of the model, suggesting that this needs to be fluid and flexible, open to emerging influences that impact on change.

This model is aligned to Modbury School's strategic three year plan for improvement.

Action at the Classroom Level

All teachers at Modbury School have embraced Values Education and each has developed activities and processes that pursue at least one of the school's values, with the value of respect being at the core.

Nicole

Nicole teaches the youngest children, those in Reception and Year 1. Along with her junior primary colleagues, Tina and Maria, she starts the school year with an intensive two-week focus on values. The principal value for children in all three classes is respect, operationalised as "getting along together". This intensive program is concerned with relationship skills, particularly listening, seeing the perspective of others, assertiveness and negotiation. It also involves skills in making and maintaining friendships, with a particular emphasis on including others and resolving conflicts. Nicole and her colleagues organise explicit lessons that involve input from stories and videos/DVDs, discussion and the practice of skills through role-play. This is supplemented by activities from established resources such as Program Achieve.

Beyond the intensive start to the year, Nicole integrates learning about values within all of her cross-curriculum activities, as and when occasions arise. This is typical of the approach of all of the junior primary teachers in the school. Also, in common with the rest of the school, Nicole is introducing to her children, ideas and techniques from the field of philosophy. A discussion on the introduction to the teaching of philosophy across the whole school will follow later. However, at this stage, it is interesting to note Nicole's concern that teaching children to be critical thinkers could position them to be critical of the values enacted at home. Nicole's gentle caution was taken up by other colleagues and the issue of school values and home values was also discussed by the members of the governing council who met to comment on the schools values work for this chapter. Again, this will be discussed later.

Nicole speaks of the introduction of Values Education in the school as a journey for the whole staff focussing on the teachers' own values and the ways in which they work with children. The greatest change for Nicole, that has accompanied the introduction of Values Education, has been a movement away from a rules-rewards-consequences approach to behaviour management. Nicole says that her language has changed and that she no longer uses stickers to reward desirable behaviour.

This changed way of working with her children has enriched her life as a teacher. However, this new, values-based approach to teaching has also changed her expectation of others in the school and the education system beyond: "when you take on something like this, it becomes part of you and you expect the system around you to embrace it too. You expect that management and people in leadership will be at the same level."

Tina

Tina shares much in common with Nicole. This is particularly the case with the impact that Values Education has had on behaviour management. Tina says that children and teachers all use the same language when talking about respect, caring and consideration. Rather than applying consequences for behaviour that is seen to be breaking the rules, Tina is now able to call upon children's real interest in being respectful of, and considerate to one another. Of particular significance here is the role that Tina sees being played by the teaching of philosophy. She sees that this teaching is enhancing the children's capacities for ethical reasoning and this, in turn, is contributing to more respectful relationships in the school.

Along with Nicole and Maria, Tina uses the intensive two-week period at the beginning of the year to establish expectations about behaviour and the way people in the school should treat one another. Her teaching is explicit as well as subtlety integrated into the broad range of activities that make up the school day, particularly music, drama and art activities. Tina uses devices such as the Y-chart to make clear to her children what "respect" looks like, sounds like and feels like. She draws on the Teacher Activity books of the Living Values program for ideas to support her weekly lessons that, at the time of visiting, were focussed on social skills.

A change that Tina has noted as accompanying the introduction of Values Education has been the school's capacity to reach out to the local community and beyond. This is seen in activities such as making "Shoeboxes of Love" for victims of the tsunami in Indonesia, participating in Bandana day to raise funds for cancer research and singing for residents of a local senior citizens' home.

Maria

There are two teachers in Maria's room: Maria the teacher and Bob the skeleton. Bob is a life-sized skeleton that Maria found discarded in a cupboard. She has given him a "life" — a personality. He is someone who is portrayed as being good, wise and always doing the right thing. Maria projects the desired values onto Bob and attaches to his "body" artefacts and messages that convey the theme of the moment. The children relate to Bob as a "person" and Maria takes advantage of this to pose questions such as: "What would Bob think about this?" While many junior primary teachers have their own versions of Bob—dolls, stuffed animals or other such devices, Maria's Bob is invested with a major role to play in teaching the children

about values such as empathy, kindness and consideration. Certainly, he helps the children see things from the perspective of another.

Maria's approach to Values Education stems from her strong desire to help the children learn to be good—to be well-mannered, kind and considerate. She regularly reminds her children of the importance of manners, respect and the need to be considerate. In fact, she has now found that the children are reminding each other of these important things. Clearly, this has paid off, for Maria says that she no longer manages student behaviour with stickers and other consequences. This theme emerges time and again in conversations with all of the teachers.

Beyond the initial two-week focus on social skills and the constant highlighting of positive values, Maria explicitly teaches about respectful behaviour and interpersonal skills such as the disclosure of feelings, apologising, and being mindful of whether or not others are being included in or excluded from games and activities. This is accomplished by way of weekly lessons that employ videos, discussions and role-plays.

While heartened by the belief that Values Education at Modbury must be working as evidenced by the skills and sensibilities of the children now arriving to take up places in her classes from the younger grades, Maria nonetheless believes that Values Education is a constant challenge in the face of counter-prevailing forces such a television, and the values of some families.

Clara

Clara's class comprises children in years 4 and 5. Whilst new to the school, Clara has taken quickly to the potential that she sees values-based pedagogy has in transforming the nature of relationships among children and the nature of relationships between teacher and child. She says, in a way similar to her colleagues, that: "Values Education has changed my role from a policeperson to an educator about behaviour". She sees that teachers are no longer there to punish children, rather to help them become more responsible young people: more valuing, more accepting of others, and less angry. In short, Clara says that the function of values-education is: "to produce resilient, happy children".

Clara pursues her goals through techniques such as affirmations and thank you notes. She encourages her children to write to one another, to place short notes in each other's bins, or message holders. She tells the children to: "write it down or get a friend to help you; or do it verbally". She is particularly keen to talk with children about values and quality relationships right at the "teaching moment". In this way, Clara's values program is alive and in action all day long. Beyond this, Clara sets out to introduce children to the values agenda and associated skills through drama and role play, with the latter providing opportunities to practise skills.

A major focus for Clara has been the development of her children's group work skills. She has pursued this by teaching children the skills and behaviours associated with the different roles that members play when working in groups. This is supported by practice as children work in small groups that are changed regularly to give maximum opportunities to work with and learn from other children.

Robert

Robert teaches children in years 5 and 6. Like others, he spends the first few weeks of the year working intensively on "rules in society and rules in the classroom". At this time, he helps his children understand the school's values, and, in particular, he relates this to expectations about student behaviour. He also emphasizes problem-solving at this time. However, he is concerned that the problem-solving work that his children do in the classroom does not appear to carry over to the playground.

Robert uses opportunities, as they arise, to emphasize the school's values and to use values language and terminology. In addition to this, he advances his values work through the teaching of philosophy and through class meetings. The values that are of greatest importance to Robert are: quality relationships, consistency and routine, compassion and fairness. Consistency is of particular importance to Robert and it is a concern to him that, as he sees it, there is a lack of consistency in the yard with regard to rules and discipline. Like other staff, Robert sees the principal's role as crucial to the advancement of values in the school. However, his preference would be for the principal to place greater emphasis on compliance with school policy and rules, and to follow through with the contingencies that he believes should be applied to children for misbehaviour. Here Robert draws attention to the school's changing approach to behaviour management. While some of his colleagues are embracing the move from managing behaviour by managing contingencies, to promoting responsible behaviour from a values perspective, Robert has some reservations.

Loretta

Loretta, on the other hand, has no such reservations. Loretta is passionate about Values Education, particularly, the enhancement of children's ethical thinking by way of the study of philosophy. She teaches the year 6 and 7 class and has also been released to teach philosophy across the school. Loretta's role has been to introduce the teaching of philosophy for children in the school and to equip the class teachers with the skills, knowledge and resources to take over this work with their own classes. It is clear that she has been successful in that class teachers are all looking forward to this teaching. It is equally clear when one talks to her students. They clearly love philosophy. Loretta's children are able to articulate what philosophy is about, the big ideas and the intellectual tools of inquiry and argument. The children really like to grapple with complex ethical questions and are equally keen to determine, what for them, is right and wrong. This emphasis on ethical reasoning is at the heart of the school's strategy for employing a values-approach to what others might call behaviour management. Put simply, the school, led by the principal and Loretta, believes that if you teach children how to reason ethically, and if you make explicit your valuing of respect for one another, and the environment, children will act in respectful ways. This, they see as being much better that managing student behaviour by rewards and punishments.

Loretta would argue that Values Education is far deeper than that, as would the principal and most of the staff. However, the role of Values Education in providing the basis of a respectful, caring community is shared right across the school.

Roslyn

Roslyn is the teacher of students with a disability in the District's special class. She explicitly and implicitly teaches values in her class. She spends the first two weeks of the school year focusing on building relationships and cohesion in her classroom. During this time she teaches about each of the school's core values and invites her children to decide: "what they look like, sound like and feel like". Roslyn models these values which she would argue underpin all practices in her classroom. Her classroom rules are values focused and negotiated with the children. Values are also embedded into all curriculum areas and Roslyn makes the most of situations as they arise to help the children understand the values in practice.

This year, Roslyn used the analogy of the class being on a boat and moving on a journey of values learning. The hull of the boat was the school values. the students were the crew, and Roslyn was the captain. Roslyn taught that for the boat to move forward the crew must work together. The school values of team work and respect were a major focus. The students responded extremely well to this metaphor and were quick to identify when someone was "rocking the boat". They were able to express what value was needed for the boat to start moving again. Roslyn reported that the class were able to reflect on how well they were doing individually, and as a class, in regard to the school's values.

The National Framework for Values Education

The National Framework for Values Education proposes that a number of key elements and approaches inform good practice. These include: whole school planning; partnerships within school communities; a whole school approach to the integration of Values Education within all aspects of the school's work; the provision of a safe and supportive learning environment; the provision of support for the development in students of positive skills and dispositions; and quality teaching procedures. Modbury School is working on all of these dimensions, in varying degrees.

Whole School Planning

At Modbury, Values Education is at the centre of the school's thinking, planning and community practice. In particular, planning for Values Education is a collaborative

exercise, albeit led, with great enthusiasm, by the principal. The school's values — respect, excellence, creativity, interdependence and human rights — are made explicit throughout the school and are apparent when talking to children, teachers, ancillary staff and parents. Posters and other visual displays in foyers and corridors, in classrooms, the staffroom, offices and other public spaces proclaim the values and a myriad of lessons associated with them.

Modbury has a whole-of-school professional development plan and, again, this serves to support teachers' learning in Values Education. The most recent foci for teachers' learning have been the teaching of philosophy and the conduct of action research around values themes. The school allocated flexible staffing to a specialist teacher in philosophy. In the first instance, this teacher took all classes for philosophy lessons while classroom teachers observed and undertook their own training in this subject. More recently, some teachers have been team-teaching with the specialist, while others have taken over the responsibility for teaching philosophy to their children themselves. A central idea of the philosophy program is the notion of *communities of inquiry*. In line with this is the school's work in action research. The whole staff engaged in training in the conduct of action research and then each teacher worked with a member of the leadership team to shape his or her inquiry into some aspect of Values Education. The teachers' research considered topics such as: resilience, autonomy, positive classroom relationships, collaborative learning, self esteem, and respectful language. Each of these projects has served planning at both the level of the individual classroom, and at the level of whole-of-school.

Partnerships with School Communities

Central to Modbury's work in Values Education are the partnerships that have been forged between teachers and parents and other members of the wider school community. From the beginning, this has been a deliberate strategy of the principal. She shared her vision with the broad parent body, the school's governing council and particular sub-groups of parents. She sought parents' views on what they wanted for their children and for the school. In particular, the principal involved parents in the procedures that resulted in the identification of the school's values. Hence, parents in general, and members of the governing council in particular, feel that the school, in the main, is pursuing the values that are important to them. A discussion with council members revealed unanimous support for *respect*, and *excellence*, general agreement about the desirability of fostering *interdependence*, less agreement about *creativity* and some debate about *human rights*. Nonetheless, all were in agreement that the school's initiatives in Values Education had significantly improved the school, particularly for their children. When pressed, parents elaborated on the changes that they had noticed in the general tone in the school, the way in which children treated one another, and the ways in the children behaved.

A Whole School Approach to the Integration of Values Education Within All Aspects of the School's Work

The Values Education initiatives at Modbury do in fact pervade every aspect of school life and are found integrated into the content of most learning areas, but particularly into the practices that make up daily life in the classroom and playground. Teachers say that their pedagogy and their classroom and behaviour management practice have changed significantly. This is associated with quite marked changes, for most, in the nature of the relationships that they enjoy with children, and children with one another. At the centre of these changes is a movement away from a reward and punishments approach to behaviour management to one that involves appealing to children's appreciation of the value of respect and its manifestation in listening, taking the other's perspective, kindness and consideration, cooperation and seeking harmony. Added to this, a number of teachers have abandoned the practice of shaping classroom behaviour with rewards such as stickers or punitive measures such as sending children to the principal. The school is also investigating the use of restorative justice practices that make use of children's awareness of the hurt that their behaviour may have caused others.

The Provision of a Safe and Supportive Learning Environment

The focus on respect, the teaching of social skills that include assertiveness, and the nurturing of personal responsibility and empathy for others are combining to foster a safer and more supportive learning environment for children at Modbury. This was reported by children, their parents and the school staff. Both parents and teachers saw the quality of children's behaviour and the relationships they have with one another as the most noticeable outcome of the school's Values Education program.

The Provision of Support for the Development in Students of Positive Skills and Dispositions

The entire effort of the school's Values Education program is to support students develop positive dispositions characterized by: respect; care and concern for others, both locally and globally; a striving to do one's best; a capacity to bounce back from setbacks, and a sense of optimism. This is achieved, among other ways, by making the desired values explicit, by teaching desired skills and by fostering positive and ethical thinking.

Quality Teaching Procedures

It is an argument of this text that quality teaching and Values Education go hand in hand. In Chapter 1, Lovat has argued that quality teaching can be seen in its

outcomes, and that these outcomes include: intellectual depth, communicative competence, capacity for reflection, self-management and self knowledge.

Values Education and Quality Teaching

Intellectual Depth

Both children and teachers at Modbury School have acquired deep understandings of complex ideas as a result of their Values Education work. Children have deepened their understandings of notions such as: right and wrong, respect, human dignity, human rights, empathy, reciprocity, caring and social action. At the same time, and as a direct result of classes in philosophy, they have developed their capacities to question, analyze and evaluate ideas. Teachers have acquired deeper understandings of teaching and learning, of fostering in children dispositions of respect and caring; and ways of integrating values learning across the curriculum. There is ample evidence of intellectual depth in learning at Modbury.

Communicative Competence

A clear and observable outcome of the Values Education work at Modbury School is a significant enhancement of children's communicative competence. One is struck by the confidence and sophistication of the children as they engage in discussions with one another, as well as with visitors to the school. They appear to be skilful listeners as well as competent exponents of thoughts and ideas. Of particular note is the language of respect, and the respectful questioning of assertions and ideas. Children have been provided models of respectful communication in all classes throughout the school. Added to this is the language of the philosophy classes. Children show a level of communicative competence in advance of what one might expect of students in the primary years.

Teachers too are engaged in sophisticated discussion with students, parents and with their peers. At Modbury, teachers are articulating their philosophical positions and their theories about effective teaching and learning. They talk about ways of promoting children's sensibilities and the role that their practice has in this. Parents, especially those involved with the school's governance and social life, are also active in discussion and debate about the values agenda of the school. An outcome of Values Education at Modbury appears to be enhanced communicative competence throughout the school community.

Capacity to Reflect

Reflection is integral to Values Education and central to philosophy. It is therefore not surprising that children and teachers at Modbury can be seen to be particularly

reflective. Teachers are constantly asking children to examine their ideas, to reflect upon their actions, and to consider the positions of others. The philosophy classes invite children to think about their own positions in relation to big questions and complex dilemmas. Teachers themselves are engaged in reflection on their own practice, particularly their practice around Values Education.

Self Management

As an outcome of quality teaching, self-management refers to the capacity for both children and teachers to manage their own learning, both in engaging with others and working independently. In the context of Values Education, it refers to the capacity "to work with others and eventually on one's own on the intellectual aspects of values and subsequently living them out" (Toomey, Brown, Bereznicki, and Harris, 2006). Evidence of self-management at work at Modbury is seen in the changes in children's behaviour. The principal, teachers and members of the governing council all report significant changes in students' behaviour. It is reported that students are more readily solving interpersonal difficulties on their own, without seeking the intervention of teachers. Teachers also report higher levels of harmony among students, and far less disruptive behaviour since the introduction of the Values Education program. A further indicator of values in action is the interest shown by children and teachers in community and global service. The choir for elderly neighbours, the fund-raising for research into childhood cancer, and the making of relief parcels for tsunami victims are examples of this action.

Self Knowledge

For children at Modbury, the Values Education program has provided opportunities for reflection on the nature of relationships between self and others, and on their own beliefs and ideas about many of the major questions of life. This, one would expect, would lead to enhanced self-knowledge. Toomey et al. (2006) argue that this in turn leads to greater comfort with self thereby giving rise to greater poise in the learning process. The principal and many of the teachers at Modbury report noticing such a change in children's poise. It is associated with the increase in harmony and reduction in tension that was referred to earlier. A number of teachers have observed that children who have been involved in the values program the longest appear to be the most poised. Toomey et al go on to suggest that for teachers, self-knowledge expresses itself in changed relationships with children and a subsequent increase in confidence to try new things. Indeed, one of the dominant themes to emerge from interviews with teachers was that of changed relationship with children and, as a result, increased confidence to try new ways of teaching. In a particular moving conversation, one teacher said that the Values Education program had fundamentally changed the nature of the relationships that she had with her children. She loved children again, loved teaching again, and was so excited about trying new ways of teaching.

Discussion

The core idea at Modbury is that placing values at the centre of the school and subsequently striving to live these values within the school community produces children who are highly ethical and care for those in their lives, in their local community and for the global community and environment as well. The argument of this text is that placing values at the centre of schooling produces quality teaching which is evidenced by intellectual depth, communicative competence, and capacity for reflection, self-management and self-knowledge. The National Framework for Values Education proposes that quality teaching, along with other key elements which are characteristic of quality leadership, is associated with good Values Education practice. Taken together, these three positions suggest a synergetic relationship between quality teaching, Values Education, and positive outcomes for students, the community, both locally and globally, the environment and humankind.

Whilst it is very hard to see progress towards the longer-term and more global aspirations of Modbury's values work, it is certainly possible to see evidence of the outcomes of quality teaching in Values Education that are suggested by Lovat. It is also possible to see at work, the key approaches that inform good practice that are suggest by the Framework.

By these measures, Modbury's work is highly successful. However, a number of questions come to mind. What does the principal see as the future of Values Education at Modbury? What part has the principal's leadership played in the school's success? What comments might an external observer make about this work? Finally, what are some the implications of this work for university schools of education?

The Future for Modbury

The principal places great importance on the school sustaining the Values Education agenda into the future. To this end, she has mentored staff and parents, and as a result, is confident that these leaders will continue to support and embrace further initiatives as they present.

An important on-going focus for the school is teaching philosophy for children, as this is seen as an opportunity for students to "develop ethical reasoning and deeper understanding of issues that affect individuals and the planet, and to develop as global citizens with a clear understanding of their rights and responsibilities in the world". From here, the school is in a position to extend the focus of its Values Education in any number of directions including: work in environmental sustainability; human rights; student wellbeing or service learning. What is encouraging is the vision and support for Values Education that remains firmly embedded in the culture of the school.

As the teachers continue their learning in Values Education, it is expected that they will develop their capacities to link values to all curriculum areas at deeper levels. This, the principal hopes, will lead to students and teachers "developing a genuine desire to take up issues that they are passionate about and connecting

values to action within a global context". Already, the principal is seeing a major shift in teachers in their desire to provide community service learning and to further their understanding of ecological sustainability.

The principal hopes that the wider education community will realise that Values Education can provide a new approach to teaching and learning, that is holistic and that leads to deep learning for students. She believes that Values Education is at the heart and soul of quality teaching and learning and is an approach that can provide everyone "with a compass that will set a course of action to make a difference at the local and global context".

The Role of the Principal

What is immediately obvious at Modbury is the importance of the principal in any significant whole-of-school change. In this case, the principal was the visionary and driver of change. It is therefore important to go beyond the notion of quality teaching as the driver of quality Values Education and add the idea of quality leadership. Some of the features of this leadership are picked up by the Key Elements of the Framework, namely School Planning, Partnerships within the School Community, Whole School approach, Safe and Supportive Learning environments and Support for Students. When it comes to leadership, these last two elements need to be considered with teachers in mind. That is, quality leadership provides support for teachers' learning and support for teachers when they attempt to change their practice. This is where the principal at Modbury has been so successful. Her vision for the school and its community has provided the direction, but it has been her work in including parents and teachers in her vision, and then in encouraging and supporting teachers in changes to their pedagogy, curriculum and ultimately their relationships with their students that have been so crucial. This has been supplemented by support with professional development, in this case, in the areas of Values Education, the teaching of philosophy and action research, and the involvement of mentors and critical friends. Finally, it is quite apparent that the principal's personality plays an important part in the success of Values Education at Modbury. The principal is passionate about Values Education and its place, as she sees it, at the centre of schooling. She is also highly energetic and it seems that her energy and enthusiasm is somewhat infectious, and as such pervades the whole school.

Comments of an External Observer

To the external observer, the success of the Values Education agenda at Modbury is due to both the singer and the song. That is, the song—the Values Education program, delivered with regard to the Key Elements and Approaches that inform Good Practice, and the singer the principal, her vision, skills and energy, are responsible for the observable outcomes.

Whilst the program has indeed been successful, this is not to say it does not have problems. Despite her considerable energy and skill, the principal has still not won over the entire staff. There is however a critical mass of support to ensure significant whole-of-school change. Nonetheless, it does beg a question about the role a principal's personality plays in school change and the sustainability of that change if and when the principal moves on. In this case, the principal is laying a foundation that is highly likely to ensure that the program continue if and when she herself moves on.

Although the vast majority of staff whole-heartedly support the Values Education program, there is quite a wide range of internal consistency between the ideas and the practice. This would not be unusual in any school. What is unusual is the way in which the principal supports every teacher, mindful of the ways in which each is gradually changing his or her practice. So, while the principal and most of the teachers can articulate the aspirations of the school, the big ideas around the values program and the pedagogical practices that are associated with these, it is still possible to see teaching and behaviour management practices that are not consistent with the espoused ethos.

As one might expect in a school that is embracing considerable change, there will be a gap between the articulated vision and the actuality on the ground. Where this is most apparent at Modbury is the extent to which all of the school's five values are advanced. *Respect* is the most clearly understood value, and it is respect that is at the core of the values position of the school. Respect and many of its manifestations is well understood and practised across the school. To a lesser extent the idea of *inter-dependence* is similarly understood and practised, although cooperation might have been a better word to have used. The focus then falls away rapidly in regard to the values of *excellence* and *creativity*. Few children were aware of these as school values and the extent to which they were taken up by the teachers varied considerably. The final value, *human rights*, is somewhat problematic in that there appeared to be a lack of understanding by the parents as to what was meant by the term, and quite some variation among teachers to its place in the day-to-day work of their classroom. The most consistent interpretation of human rights was 'compassion for others who were less fortunate than our selves, where-ever they are in the world', or as one person put it, 'compassion for mankind'. The idea was operationalized in providing aid for the tsunami victims, but many would argue that this is not really a human rights issue.

The school is perhaps tackling a values agenda that is too full with having five foci, or perhaps once the foundations of respect and cooperation are laid, a further emphasis could be placed on the other values. Certainly, the school would need to spend much more time talking through what they mean by human rights and the values, and *politics* that underpin the human rights agenda. This would also mean engaging parents in the notion of human rights which could turn out to be more challenging that first thought.

These criticisms aside, there is no doubt to the outside observer that Modbury School stands as an exemplar of Values Education practice.

The Implications for Teacher Education

The question of how universities should prepare their graduates to teach Values Education is a challenging one. Values education in schools is more than just a number of scheduled lessons about values. Rather, it involves a whole-of-school identification of values and the integration of those value positions throughout the school. These values are lived through pedagogy, policy, relationships and all manner of activities and practices in the life of the school. This suggests that university schools of education that are serious about Values Education might take a similar approach, beginning by identifying their core values and examining how those values are lived across and throughout the school, its curriculum, pedagogy and other practices.

Values education in the university could find a place in a curriculum area such as Society and Environment or in a general methods course such as Development, Learning and Teaching. However, there is a strong case for considering it as an across-curriculum perspective, in the same way as many schools of education are viewing special educational needs, Indigenous perspectives, or integrating ICTs across the curriculum. It is becoming more and more apparent that organizing university education studies into discrete curriculum courses, discrete methods courses, and additional discrete courses concerned with across curriculum perspectives only serves to fragment students' learning. Further, these practices do very little to prepare students to work in holistic or integrated ways when they graduate as teachers. A number of schools of education are starting to integrate curriculum and pedagogical studies and clustering learning areas into groups. The Values Education agenda could well be incorporated, or infused into such an approach.

Of course, a third approach to Values Education at the university would be to offer it to teacher education students as a stand-alone, elective subject. That would be a shame. However, it would be better than nothing.

As one might expect from the enthusiastic support for Values Education evidenced in this chapter, the writers urge university schools of education to take up the challenge of Values Education in their own schools and to incorporate the Values Education agenda and the quality teaching that accompanies it, across and throughout their curriculum. Further, they are urged to connect with the primary and secondary schools that are leading in Values Education in their communities. In this way, graduates will be ready to work at Modbury School and other schools like it across Australia.

Chapter 5
Moving Values Beyond the Half Hour: Peer Leadership and School Vision—A Case Study of the Townsville Cluster, Queensland

Angela Hill and Malcolm Vick

Introduction

This chapter provides an overview of a school cluster's take up of the *Peer Support Program,* a program with the potential to support Values Education in primary and secondary schools. The *Peer Support* program is one of many pre-packaged programs available to schools and in this chapter we argue that such programs can be adopted in a range of ways as Values Education initiatives. As both a cautionary and a celebratory tale, we examine the implementation of the program across the cluster, drawing on seven case studies completed as part of work to benchmark schools against examples of good practice Values Education internationally. The chapter discusses the various levels at which the *Peer Suppor*t program impacted on the life of the schools, transforming broad approaches to social relations within them, through teachers' perceptions of changes in relations within the school and students' accounts of their learning through the program. Here, we note evidence that the program both engaged students in reflection on the actual and desirable qualities in relations and behaviour, and led to transformations of their behaviour in a range of ways.

We then explore the action learning process and in particular two responses developed by the cluster in response to the case studies. Firstly we examine the teaching and learning involved in the program more intimately through fine grained accounts of **three "moments"** in the program: the preparation of the student "peer leaders" to conduct a group session addressing the care of the self, the conduct of their session by one pair of group leaders, and the immediate follow-up to one such session. These vignettes developed on the basis of our observations and in collaboration with teachers from the cluster, highlight aspects of *quality teaching* in the preparation of the student leaders. They also demonstrate elements of quality teaching, including the cultivation of communicative capacity, reflection and self-knowledge among the students in the session itself. As a second response from the cluster, we then turn to the issue of tokenism, and explore ways in which teachers

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in their own classrooms, and school leaders build on the learning taking place in the peer group sessions themselves, to help construct a common language for discussing and shaping values—and the social relations through which they are enacted—across the school community. Finally, we outline a number of implications of the program for teacher education.

Background to the TEACH Cluster Collaboration-State Schools Living Values

The TEACH cluster schools in the Values Education Good Practice Schools (VEGPS) project are a group of seven state (government) primary schools, all in close proximity to a major physical landmark, Castle Hill, in Townsville, a growing regional centre of Queensland. The acronym, TEACH stems from this common physical landmark - "Teachers and educators around Castle Hill". Townsville is characterized by a highly mobile population (almost a third of the population leaves each year as a result of the employment base linked to the defence forces, and major mining companies), and a population of Indigenous peoples (Aboriginal, Torres Strait Islander and South Sea Islanders) well above the state average of 2.1% (Office of Economic and Social Research, 2006). The region boasts burgeoning industrial, tourism and government sectors, and a perfect climate for 8 months of the year, with the remainder punctuated by cyclones and high levels of humidity. The region is currently struggling with the issue of skill shortages, and has lower than average education levels across the population.

The schools in the cluster range in size from 120 students to 600 students. All have well established and interesting histories. The school demographics vary significantly, with one school, Garbutt State School having an almost 80% Indigenous population, while the largest school has a less than 8% Indigenous population. Resource levels in the schools are indicative of the variable commitment of government to state schools and variations in each school's economic base. One school in the cluster for example, is fully air-conditioned following years of parent fundraising, while another has recently had air-conditioners donated by the local newspaper. Yet another has recently moved to new premises where benchmark state education facilities are apparent.

While each school has their particular challenges, the schools are recognised for their commitment to collaboration. Over the years, the schools have worked together on a range of projects—technology, environmental education and general curriculum initiatives. They is also a ready exchange of staff and expertise. Behaviour Management and Learning Support teachers for example, are shared by the schools in the cluster, allowing an easy transfer of expertise and shared experiences.

The lead principal for the *Values Education Good Practice Schools* project, Anthony Ryan is one staff member who has moved around the schools in the cluster. In 1999, as the behaviour management teacher for many of the schools in the cluster,

Anthony introduced the *Peer Support* program to Townsville Central State School. While the program was "sold" to the school as a tool to improve social relations between students, the *Peer Support* program has a long established framework. Originating in NSW as a drug education program, the aim as recorded in the program documentation is to "develop young people who are personally responsible for their own wellbeing, able to manage their lives positively and safely and involved in, and supported by their community" (*Peer Support* Foundation, Primary Teachers' Notes, 2005, p. 1). Within this framework, the program has a set of key principles. Crucially, the program is conceived as a "whole school approach" involving student training and leadership in a structured program of activities designed to explore and develop "key concepts including sense of Self, resilience, connectedness and sense of possibility through specifically designed activities"…"experiential" designed to enable "students to become young people who can take responsibility for their own wellbeing, deal positively, proactively and resiliently with their life experiences [and] be actively involved in, and supported by, their community" (*Peer Support* Foundation, Primary Teachers' Notes, 2005, p. 1).

On purchase of the *Peer Support* program, schools are provided with a set of resources. These resources include a teacher manual, and a black line master series of units of work, including lesson activities. In effect, as we discuss later in the chapter the program provides a "plan of content, activities, methods and outcomes" (Groundwater-Smith, Ewing, & Le Cornu 2001, p. 75) for schools. The program sets out a series of steps in preparing students in Year 7 to take a leadership role with a group of younger students. Year 7 teachers support and prepare their Year 7 leaders to lead their group through a half hour of activities, while other teachers are asked to monitor these groups and support leaders if required.

The VEGPS project for the TEACH cluster then, focused on the implementation of the *Peer Support* program in the first instance, to evaluate the impact of the program in each of the seven schools. The schools were acutely aware of the deliberate positioning of state schools as "value free" by prominent federal politicians, including the cluster's local member Peter Lindsay, Liberal MP for the Queensland seat of Herbert.

> "The figures speak for themselves. The customers, namely the parents are choosing to leave public schools and the reason primarily is what the PM says, namely values," Mr Lindsay said. (The Australian, 22 January 2004).

The schools believed that their work with the *Peer Support* program represented one of a number of ways in which state schools actively engage with the teaching of values and how students lived and experienced the values in the program within and beyond their school sites. In short, the cluster sought to investigate the potential of the Peer Support program as an explicit "school-based activity which promotes student understanding and knowledge of values, […] which develops the skills and dispositions of students so they can enact particular values as individuals and as members of the community" (DEST, 2005 p. 8).

Assessing Impact

As part of the VEGPS, we completed interviews with students and teachers in each school site about a range of aspects of the program. They outlined their understandings of the aims and intentions of the program. They described the activities the program entailed, and offered their reflective evaluative comments on the quality of the teaching and learning those activities offered, and they discussed what they considered to be the strengths and weaknesses. They also talked about what they considered to be the impacts of the program on the school and on themselves. Their comments, supplemented by other *Peer Support* materials and school records reveal at least three distinct layers of impact: social relations at the whole-school level; teacher practices; and students' learnings.

The quality of learning is not open to the sort of validation that applies to claims about transformations in the quality of social relations and behaviour in the school at large. Rather, the students' own comments provide the direct and more pertinent evidence. Students had recently explored the concept of a "special place". One explained that "Its an imaginary place where you feel safe". Another added, "It doesn't have to be imaginary". Others were able to explain its purpose of having a special place: "You have to keep it in your heart … for when you're upset or lonely", and "It's about peacefulness … it helps you be calm".

In many cases, students were able to demonstrate a considerable depth of understanding of even quite abstract concepts introduced in the program, and their application in concrete instances: One Year 3 student explained that "We learned about 'positive self-talk'. If you get something wrong you don't go of and say "damn I hate myself now, you just go off and say well better luck next time. Like if I get words wrong in journal and stuff". Another student, also in Year 3 demonstrated a capacity for applying her understanding in critical appraisal of other students' ideas: she explained that, when asked for a solution to a problem under discussion in the group session, "He'd put up his hand and give a solution, but it's not a *real* solution".

Such understanding is of limited value, of course, unless it is applied. Many student comments indicated that they not only understand the ideas but also use them to reflect on their own behaviour and attitudes and were developing the self-knowledge that such reflection promotes. Students of varying ages commented that they had learned about such issues or aspects of human nature and human relations as:

- Things that help you be friends with others;
- Other people's personalities and how you can hurt them in ways you didn't mean to hurt them;
- Things that are different about us … and things in yourself other people might have and you might not.
- Learn about responsibility and if you care about other people…and if you should treat people the way you want to be treated

In comments that seem to both summarize the broad intent of these comments and captured the way the learning in the program was translated into self knowledge,

one Year 7 Peer Leader explained that "*Peer Support* is like a key to unlock qualities that you never thought you'd have for your life", while another, with a slightly different focus stated that, "We do *Peer Support* … to make kids understand life".

While critical reflection on attitudes and recognizing its implications for how one relates to others is an important part of applying knowledge, the ultimate test of the value of such learning is in carrying it through into action. Teachers commented that they felt the program was already having a visible effect on student behaviour and relationships in the playground, and related a number of incidents that they felt demonstrated this. Students also indicated a range of ways in which they felt their participation and learning in *Peer Support* has translated into their behaviour:

- We have learned how to play games, and how to take care of people when they get hurt (Year 4)
- It's a good way to make new friends, get to know people you wouldn't know before (Year 4)
- Before I was in my Peer Support group I didn't know (X) … X has taught me a lot. (Year 4)
- When I came they were all fighting but the Peer Support leader taught us about cooperation or not participating (Year 6).
- It's stopped people going up to the office a little tiny bit (Year 4).

Taken together, such comments demonstrate a high level of communicative competence to communicate complex understandings clearly and articulately, in ways that reflect own understandings rather than superficial parroting of platitudes. They also indicate that the program engaged students in the richness of understandings, and the capacity to apply those understandings to their own lives and social relationships, that are among the hallmarks of quality teaching, and did so specifically in relation to values such as care and compassion, fair go, respect, responsibility, and understanding, tolerance and inclusion, as enshrined in the nine values for Australian schools outlined in the National Framework for Values Education in Australian Schools (Commonwealth of Australia, 2005). All this seems to demonstrate that in the schools we observed, the *Peer Support program* constitutes a form of Values Education that goes beyond mouthing of moral truisms and good intentions.

Teacher Practices

Not surprisingly, we found a variety of teacher responses to the program. These ranged from superficial engagement with the "black line masters" for the half hour only, to active reflection on concepts to embed the program in the life of the classroom and curriculum. Overwhelmingly teachers were positive in their general comments about the program; the differences lay, in part, in their estimates of its contribution to school life, but especially in the extent to which it permeated and changed their own classroom practice. There is evidently great variety in the ways teachers generate links between learnings in *Peer Support* and their broader curriculum. Part of

the connection is in the preparation of the staff by the school leader and school *Peer Support* coordinator. The preparation may be a minimal distribution of the week's "black line" master to staff, to allocated staff meeting time and high levels of school leader commitment. Teachers commonly articulated their preparatory role as "letting the kids know what the lesson is about and have a little bit of a discussion before they go to the *Peer Support* lesson".

After the lesson, in many cases, teachers simply briefly ask students to review what they did and what they learned, before proceeding with the "normal" planned activities. Some teachers, however, recognise the potential for more extensive and systematic building on *Peer Support* learnings. One, for instance, has children in her Year 1 class keep a *Peer Support* journal, in which they do follow up learning which imperceptibly merges with the "normal" KLA program. In one school, a short period is dedicated to follow up for all classes. In the same school most of the teachers systematically build in a range of ways to draw on the *Peer Support* lesson, partly to develop a consistent language for discussing social behaviour and relations, and partly to capitalise on possible links, especially to English, SOSE and HPE, that might consolidate and enhance learning. And in one school, with a high proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, the *Peer Support* program is seen as a part of, and an extension to, the school's well-developed Cultural Studies program. The Cultural Studies teacher has consistently provided advice in relation to the implementation of *Peer Support* in the school. As one teacher explained,

> A lot of what we wanted to put into Peer Support, came from our cultural background, who we are and who other people think we are, [dealing with] put downs and negatives and [the Peer Support Coordinator] is able to address those issues because of what we do in Peer Support.

Here, the *Peer Support* grouping strategy provides a vehicle to develop and extend concepts related to identity. One example of the link between these programs is an activity referred to as the "language tree" where students were encouraged as part of a *Peer Support* lesson to use a home language and include a word in a community "tree". In such a diverse community, the peer groupings are seen to provide a safe place to explore identity and develop understanding and acceptance of diversity. As one teacher described

> [The] language tree — done in Peer Support groups was more powerful than in class groups. Remembering their ancestors.

The varied impact of the program on teacher practice might best be seen in light of research on teacher responses to "imposed" innovations (Smyth, 2005) for instance indicate that where teachers feel they are confronted with curricular developments to which they do not contribute, or over which they exercise no sense of ownership, they react passively, meeting the requirements in only in a minimal sense. Further, they do so in form only, taking up the new terminology (which they characterise as

"jargon") and portray the new developments as simply the old practices dressed up in new garb.

This evidence of both quality learning on the part of students, and of the permeation of values from *Peer Support* program into teachers' practice beyond the Program itself indicates many of the characteristics of quality teaching. It is not surprising, therefore, that even though in some schools, the program had been in place for only a short time, in almost all cases related a number of staff and students claimed that the program had had a noticeable impact on the quality of life within their school. Teachers commented that they felt the program was already having a visible effect on student behaviour and relationships in the playground. They saw the Peer Leaders as increasingly displaying care of the younger students, and taking higher levels of responsibility for their peers; younger students were described by both students and staff as showing respect for their peer leaders, and there were also outstanding examples of *Peer Support* contributing positively to whole school activities and overall organization. They related numerous incidents that they felt demonstrated this, including the following on the basketball court:

> The little kids were throwing hoops down one end and the big kids were managing to keep down the other end, or there are a couple of older ones showing the little ones. I was on duty and there was one little girl standing right in the middle, and I called her to come off. I turned around and starting to walk off expecting her to follow me. And I turned around and she was still standing there and I said "come on, come on". And the bigger girls said to me "she's been hit on the head", as if to say "Don't be so tough" … and that was that sort of caring protective behaviour that perhaps wouldn't have been seen five years ago. That sort of cross-age behaviour … has come more and more since Peer Support'.

Students related similar instances of acting out the values addressed in *Peer Support*, and promoted by the cross-age organization of sessions. A group of Year 7 students, all Peer leaders, recalled one occasion where a younger student had approached them during lunch, leading an even younger child with a grazed knee.

> "Excuse me … he grazed his knee. Can you help him?" So you give it a wash, give it a rub and he's ok. He really just needed a bit of TLC.

And both in Peer Group sessions and in the focus groups we conducted, we observed several examples of caring, considerate behaviour. In Peer Group sessions, for example, leaders were attentive to difficulties faced by some students, and intervened in low-key but effective ways to encourage or prompt other students to provide them with support. In one instance, when a student from the Special Education Unit spoke in his Peer Group for the first time, the other members of the group responded with evident pleasure that he had finally joined in; their empathetic recognition of just how significant his participation was shown in their decision to award him their "group the member of the week" card. In one cross-age focus group it was noticeable not only that older students listened with respect to younger ones, but that at points where several students all started to speak at once, the older students held back to allow the younger ones to talk.

Teachers also talked about the broader impact of the program on the quality of school life more broadly. One, for example, commented that:

> When I first started here in 2000, we weren't allowed to play in year levels, mixing year levels, … as a result of fights in the playground. […] I would be tentative to do playground duty.

She saw *Peer Support* as having had a dramatic impact on this.

> The best thing for me was that we would have visitors to the school and they would say, "What have you done? What's going on, gee this school feels nice".

We might expect that in the longer term, such changes would show up in such things as formal reports of disciplinary actions within the school. And, indeed behaviour management records for most of the schools—even some of those where the program had been in place in piecemeal fashion and for only a relatively short period—revealed a decline in the number and severity of reported incidents. This can be seen clearly in the disciplinary records of one of the schools over a five/six year period from 1999 to 2004. The school administration team systematically records any behaviour problems that warranted reporting to the school office. A review of these records indicates two clear trends since the introduction of *Peer Support*. The first is a dramatic decrease in the number of problems referred as level 2 offences. The second concerns the nature of the offence. In 1999, the predominant issues recorded related to physical violence or bullying. The record for 2004 reveals almost negligible levels of physical abuse, with most offences related to verbal misdemeanors or mild disobedience such as "not following teacher instructions".

Peer Support: Moving from Rational to Critical Implementation

The TEACH cluster developed a range of responses to the case study findings. Two issues became obvious. The first relates to observations of the program implementation. In most school sites, the program was discussed in terms of being a "deliberate, systematic, planned attempt to change behaviour" (Groundwater-Smith et al., 2001). In the most extreme instances of this interpretation, teachers would seemingly pay little attention to the possibilities for the broader interpretation of the activities outlined in the black line masters and instead view the *Peer Support* half hour lesson as an isolated disconnected segment of the week, often unrelated to other curriculum elements, such as literacy, or indeed related to other activities in the school. In its most rational interpretation, as Habermas (1984) would suggest, the program was being implemented with minimal teacher self-reflection and limited commitment to transformed student behaviour beyond the realm of the classroom. In a sense, some teachers saw the program as a vehicle for minimizing their "problems" in the classroom rather than having any transformative potential in the wider realm.

The second issue related ways in which teachers had expectations for students in relation to the enactment of the values, yet spoke with less insight about how the "volitional elements" or actions consistent with those values related to their work as teachers and in particular, the teacher—student relationships. As Hill (2004) outlines, Values Education requires the clarification of three elements. These are the cognitive element (the decision to endorse a value), the affective element (the attitudinal component), and finally and crucially, the volitional element (the translation of the value to action).

The two issues above became the focus for the action learning process as part of the project and are outlined below.

Response 1—Moving on from Black Line Masters

In developing a more holistic implementation of the *Peer Support* program, the cluster reviewed the implementation of one of the black line masters. The goal was to develop an exemplar that made clear to teachers the ways in which the activities within the *Peer Support* program needed to relate to the curriculum as a whole and in the context of the school communities, needed to be as far as possible a rigorous engagement with elements of the curriculum framework critically, that of literacy. In addition, the exemplar sought to showcase how the value, in this case "Care of Self", could be centred in the life of the classroom and potentially the school community. This vignette is based on the activities outlined in *Session 4 of Unit One—Good Citizens—the passport to our future*. The session is titled, *Taking Time out for Me*. The lesson focuses on the concept of peacefulness and the importance of building self-esteem by actively seeking a 'special' place when stressed, anxious or in need of comfort. The session links to the value "Care of Self"—from the National Framework of Values. The vignette represents a significant shift away from the use of the *Peer Support* material, rather outlining how through critical engagement with the *Peer Support* program's core concepts, the teaching and learning process could become more dynamic and engaging. As is discussed, these vignettes of teacher practice highlight various aspects of quality teaching—in stage 1 the possibilities for promoting intellectual depth; stage 2 communicative capacity; and stage 3 clear examples of reflection and self-knowledge.

Stage 1 Preparation of the Peer Leaders by Year 7 Teacher In preparation for the peer leaders advance briefing, over lunch, Ms Kashin rearranges the room in readiness for this afternoon's session—the focus of peacefulness. The room has been decorated with resources that signify peaceful places—*beaches/rainforests etc.* A recording of ambient style music is playing in the background. In addition, a range of 'special' objects have been placed strategically around the room—painted stones, soft toys, and flowers.

Ms Kashin stands at the door as students re-enter the classroom, consciously greeting each student with a positive calm tone.

"Can you get out your *Peer Support* boxes and remind yourself of what we did last week in our session. Who can tell me what we did in last week's session? How do you think it went—let's have a think about what we might learn from where we were last week. Yes Simon—it was about peacefulness—what does that mean again?" Writing on board—feeling calm, relaxed, in control, not worried. "Did anyone take time this week to practise the quality of peacefulness? Yes—watching TV, kept peace at home, read a book—Yes on Saturday I even spent some time on my own while my son slept in reading and watching the birds on the verandah. This week with your own group, you will need to ask them what they have done to practice peacefulness."

"This week you will take your students through another activity related to peacefulness—it's called *finding a special place.* What do you think a special place might be?" Ms Kashin draws a Y chart on the board—"What would a special place look like, sound like, feel like? Feel—safe/peaceful/happy/ Look—beautiful/ like a beach … Sound—quiet/with music/"

"Let's take a minute to think what our own special place might be … just quietly …"

Ms Kashin pauses for some time and then continues. "Sometimes I think about my special place when I am feeling very anxious or worried or unhappy". She turns to Mr. Wilson, the Indigenous teacher aide—"Do you have a special place you would talk about—I know you have special places that you wouldn't always share, but do you have a place that you would share with a group of students?" Mr. Wilson responds. "Yes, it's a place I have painted on my tile that's now part of the school welcome wall out the front. There's a waterfall with a big pool at the bottom, with lots of rainforest—it's a place we used to go to when we were kids…lovely and cool in the summer. I used to always feel I was in paradise when I was there—especially in summer. When the weather is really hot down here, or when I can't go to sleep because I am stressing about things—I like to imagine I am floating in the pool. I'll draw it again for you on the board"

Ms Kashin responds reminding students of the welcome wall at the entrance to the school. "So, Mr. Wilson, you'd tell us about your waterfall pool—you could even draw that heh—but they'd be other places that you wouldn't talk about—ones you keep to yourself." "That's right" affirms Mr. Wilson—"I wouldn't tell them about other business—other places."

Turning back to the Year 7 class, Ms Kashin continues. "So when you are talking to your groups, you might like to explain to them that there will be special places that might be SO special that they don't want to talk about them. Do you think that all your group will be able to think of a special place?"

"How could you help them imagine something special? What about if it's a special thing—like a toy or something? That's a good idea Leanne, you could ask them if they have a special thing—like for example I have some special things

in the room here today—this is a painted stone that's on my bedside table—I have bought it in today. So you might have to think a bit laterally in relation to thinking about the special place—concrete—when students might need to touch something that is special or helps them find a special place or abstractly when students can imagine their special place."

"Mr. Wilson talked about when he likes to think about his special place—and how it helps him—can you think of times when you might want to think about your special place?" She records some of the responses on the board—anger/loneliness/frustration.

Turning back to the students, she directs a question at one leader. "So what would you say Jamie, if someone in your group couldn't think of a special place … and what about if they didn't want to tell you about the special place …"

"Great—we are now ready to think about the lesson for this week—but let's just remember" (writing on the board).

Think of a special place.

Remember that some places are too special to talk about.

"One way to help everyone think about their special is what we call a visualisation". She writes the word on the board and deconstructs it with the students reminding them to add to their *Peer Support* glossary. " Let's go through that now as a practice—in your lesson—you have to decide whether you would like to read the visualisation or whether you will ask the teacher to do that part".

Ms Kashin turns to the *Peer Support* foundation black line master and distributes to students. "Let's look at the *Peer Support* lesson now. Take out your *Peer Support* notebooks."

"Let's scan the sheet—using your highlighter pen. I'll use the OHT to read with you. Remember how we have learned that the aim or goal of each lesson is written under the first heading. Let's identify some of the words that tell you the aims. Yes, Amy. We have already talked about 'peaceful-ness'—let's highlight that one. Self-esteem—yes—in the second bullet point Shawnee—thanks. What was our definition of that word again?" (The students turn to glossary at back of book.)

"In our lesson plan we need to record the aims—so what will record as this week's aims."

"The aim of this week is: learn more about peacefulness to improve self-esteem". Ms Kashin records this aim on the board.

"Now let's scan the sheet and see what is suggested that we do to help achieve above aim? The class reviews the plan proposed. Ok so that's the *Peer Support* foundation idea—does anyone have any other ideas on who we could do this lesson with your group?" "As usual it will be your choice as to whether you use the format suggested or come up with your own ideas. Remember—if you have other ideas—they have to get you to the same aim and your plan has to be written in your *Peer Support* book today."

Peer leaders now work in pairs, reading the sheet and considering what they will do this week in their lesson.

"If you are following the sheet—look up here—other wise if you want to work out your own activities—work quietly with your partner at the back of the room. In the next 15 minutes you will have to record the procedure for the lesson—so that means …"

identify our resources—Yes we will need paper/pencils and you are right Naomi, you need something called the visualisation sheet—what was that again?

Recording the steps you will need to follow.

Noting the varying literacy abilities amongst the leaders, Ms Kashin asks "Who thinks that that can write their own procedure this week—ok great—10 minutes should do you?" "Anyone who wants help—can take one of these sheets—orange sheet for people who want the start of each step, yellow sheet who want the first and last step."

Ms Kashin then moves around the class checking for completion, as does Mr. Wilson.

"Ok everyone, you should now have your procedure completed. Remember that your group will be producing some drawings of their special places so you will need to bring them back so we can hang them on the *Peer Support* notice board.

From this first stage, the intentions of the teacher can be examined. The lesson context is established though a reworking of the physical environment and addition a range of artifacts. Recognizing the complexity of the concept of "peacefulness" and the challenge the Year 7 leaders might have in working with students as young as 6 years old, the teacher provides a range of models, concrete and abstract, and meta-language that can support engagement with the concept. Using a range of communicative strategies (music, objects, visuals) the teacher models the sorts of capacities the leaders will need to use in their lesson. In addition, the teacher highlights and draws on the teacher aide's narrative to highlight the reflective capacities that will be essential in working in school's context, making explicit the need to acknowledge and engage with the cultural knowledge of many students in the classroom who come with an Indigenous view and sense of place.

In addition, the teacher clearly integrates and weaves the explicit teaching of literacy into the lesson, developing a glossary, genre knowledge and reading strategies thus demonstrating how *Peer Support* preparation lessons can be a key component of the literacy curriculum. Finally the teacher provides opportunities for student control of the preparation phase, allowing choice about the nature of activities to be used with each peer grouping.

In stage 2 the Peer Leaders conduct the Lesson for which they have prepared, with their own designated groups, under the watchful but generally non-interventionist eye of one of the teachers. It is here that the growing communicative capacity, making possible the exercise of leadership and initiative, is on display.

Stage 2-Year 7 Leaders Direct Lesson Immediately after lunch students line up outside their classrooms as usual. One of the Year 1 students asks eagerly, "Is it *Peer Support* today?" "Yes," says Ms Bassett, "But remember, first we have to go to assembly." She settles the class then the two line markers lead the class to the school covered assembly area. After only a short time the whole school is present and the Principal stands at the front of the assembly. It's only a small school and she can easily be seen and heard by all. There is more or less immediate hush. "Good afternoon everyone," she begins. "You all know by now that Thursdays are *Peer Support* days. Who would like to remind us what we did in *Peer Support* last week?" There's a flurry of hands. She picks one, reminding him that he'll need to speak up, then repeats his answer. "Yes, that's right, we did an activity . And what was the lesson we learned from the activity?" Again she repeats the answer for all to hear. "Thank you Alison. Yes it was that …". She pauses. She pauses briefly once more. "This week we're going to find out more about how we can learn to be peaceful, in the ways we feel, in the ways we think about what's going on around us, and in the ways we act, especially when things aren't going very well, by thinking about a special place that helps us feel good… We're going to do what's called a *visualization*—which is a very big word for imagining something in your mind so that it feels almost like it's really there. That's not always an easy thing to do, so when your Leaders ask you to do your visualization, you'll have to be very quiet and still and concentrate very hard on the picture in your mind of your own special place. All right? Good. Now, I'd like you all to go quietly to your *Peer Support* room and wait for your leaders."

On the whole, and with only a handful of exceptions, students move off fairly directly and with minimum of fuss dissolving from the class groups in which they've been assembled and gradually clustering together with others from their peer groups as they head towards the various classrooms. In fact, despite the Principal's injunction to wait for their leaders, most of the Leaders are already waiting at the door, where they greet each individual or small group by name, and ushering them into the room. The Co-leader, also already 'at her station' supervises the seating and settling of the group—This appears a relatively easy task, as most of the group simply come in and sit down in the circle without any fuss. Like the Leaders, the supervising teacher is also already in room observing what is happening, greeting a couple of students who happen to sit nearest her, but not playing any active role in setting up the group.

The Leader, Jemai, stands behind her chair and briefly introduces the lesson. "Like Mrs Cray said, today we're going to be finding out about a special place that we can go to that can help us be peaceful. Does anybody have a special place they go to, like, at home, when they need to get out of the heat? … Yes Simon," she nods in one child's direction. 'I hide under the house behind Dad's workshop." "Julie?" "I've got a sort of cubby house down by the creek down the back." :"Thanks Simon and Julie. Well, it's good to have a

real place you can go to but we're going to be looking at an imaginary place, somewhere you can *think* about even if you can't get to it. It can be a real place, like Julie's cubby house, but it doesn't have to be. Just somewhere you can think about that makes you feel better." She looks at Owen, the co-leader, and he picks up the threads. "To start with we're all going to lie on the floor and close our eyes and listen to Jemai read us something that will help us find our special place. Then we're going to draw it, and then we're going to share our special place with each other. OK. Can you all lie on the floor?" There's a flurry of activity, some laughing and giggling, a couple of complaints— "You're taking *my* space—I was here first"—but not much and Jemai and Owen manage to sort these out by approaching the offenders and quietly but insistently suggesting that there's plenty of room and that they simply move a little further apart without much apparent difficulty.

Jemai begins to read the script. (Evidently Jemai and Owen have decided to take up Ms Kashin's option of reading it themselves rather than have the teacher read it, as recommended in the *Peer Support* Foundation's outline.) Most of the group are compliant, but there are two older boys peeking at each other, making faces and commenting quietly but loudly enough to be heard in the otherwise quite silent space. Loud. Owen sits up and glares at them with little effect, then moves over next to them and mutters something quietly. The distraction is only momentary and Jemai continues reading. The boys subside into silence. At the end of the reading no-one moves for a moment or two, until Jemai breaks the quiet: 'you can open your eyes and sit up now everyone.'

The leadership passes back to Owen again. "Could everyone ' 'see' a special place of their own?" Perhaps not surprisingly, the question falls somewhat flat, and produces only generalized mumble of 'yes'es. He tries again. "Would anyone like to share their special place with the group?" Three hands go up. Thank you Billie, he smiles towards one of the younger members of the group. " … " "Thank you Billie. Was that a real place, or an imaginary one?" "Real" "But even if you couldn't go there and you feel upset, you would be able to think about it and that might help." He looks around and asks one of the older boys. "Mine is a money tree, and when I feel bad I'll just go and pick some money so I can get anything I want." This is clearly not what Owen was hoping for and he casts a glance across at Jemai, who parries with "Well, if that helps you feel better then it's probably an OK special place. Would someone like to tell us how they felt when they thought of their special place?" Two of the younger ones instantly shoot their hands into the air. "Happy?" "Happy, and very peaceful" they answer in turn. She turns to Owen who responds on cue "It makes me feel quiet and calm, and sort of good about myself." "Thank you Owen." It feels as though it was a prepared fallback strategy, but it gives Jemai a basis for the next question. "So if thinking about your special place can help you feel happy and peaceful and good about yourself, what would be some good times to think about it?" ""When

you're not feeling good?" "When you've done something bad and you're in trouble?" "When you've had a fight with your best friend." Gradually more of the group are drawn into responding, including the two year 6 boys who had been involved in the initial distraction and who have until now pointedly not said anything except to offer the evidently facetious example of the money tree. Jemai summarises and highlights the point: "That's right. The important thing is that everyone needs a really special place that makes them feel good when they feel hurt or upset or angry and like they've been treated unfairly." She pauses, then continues, "Can everyone go to the desks and take out their paper and colours and we can all draw our special places."

The movement is surprisingly quick and quiet—a bit of chit chat but no fuss. She and Owen wait till they are all settled, then begin work on their own drawing, too. Within a minute or so, a noticeable silence settles on the room. At the same time as they work on their own drawings, the two leaders have an eye out on the rest of the group, and soon Owen has left his drawing and is dealing with a minor troublespot—one member of the group doesn't have a red pencil and has simply reached over and taken one from the child on the next desk, who has objected. He intervenes quietly, reminding the first boy that "you have to ask … you have to say please"; he does, the issue dissolves and the two get back, to their drawing. Meanwhile Jemai has noticed that one of the youngest girls is looking troubled, her paper still blank in front of her. Jemai goes to one of the other younger girls, and quietly speaks to her. As Jemai returns to her drawing, the girl she has spoken to gets up and goes and sits with the first girl. A brief conversation ensues, quiet enough not to disturb the general silence, and soon the little one is happily engaged in her own drawing.

The quiet is broken by Jemai. 'Listen up everyone. It's nearly time to finish. Can you all bring your drawings and come back into the circle (she's already standing in the cleared space where they had all lain down for the initial reading). This takes a little longer than the initial movement out to the desks, and Owen busies himself with the couple of stragglers who don't want to leave their drawings unfinished.

"We wanted everyone to have a chance to tell about their drawing, but we don't have enough time," Jemai explains, "But we haven't got time. We've only got time for one person. Who wants to be the one to tell us all about their drawing of their special place?" One girl shows her drawing and explains that it's a waterhole out in a gorge and that it's a special Aboriginal place, and that it's where her family comes from, adding, "but you don't have to be Aboriginal to go there." Jemai thanks her, asks the group in general about when they might be able to use their special place, and winds up explaining that they should all make a point of using their special place this week when they are feeling bad about themselves or if things are going wrong or if they think they are going to 'lose it' to help them you 'feel peaceful'.

By now, it's clearly close to time, and Jemai hands over to Owen to organise the group back to their seats to pack up, pick up and paper, put the chairs

back in their original position. It's remarkably orderly with minimal evident reluctance of silliness. He thanks them all for their sharing and their good behaviour, and dismisses them back to their regular classrooms.

Three things stood out throughout the session. One was the high level of engagement and general cooperation. Notably, even the older boys who began displaying a degree of distance or even resistance to the activity and the learnings it entailed, were gradually drawn in, as though they needed to make a point that they were a little too big for this sort of thing, before gradually letting down their defences and simply taking part.

A second was the leadership exercised by the two Peer Leaders, Jemai and Owen. The value of their preparation was evident, especially in the seamless exchanging of roles both in presenting the material and in managing the session, including the occasional difficulties that arose. They effectively drew all members of the group into the sharing of ideas, responded positively to them, even where, as in the incident described, the "contribution" was clearly designed to sidetrack and undermine the lesson. Their exercise of what might be seen as "teacherly authority", in the moments when they were called on to intervene in the disturbances we have noted was subtle, low-key, unobtrusive and non-confrontational. This was even more noticeable in their handling of task-related difficulties, where they were able to draw on the positive relations evident in the group to use another quite junior group member to assist another. One might reasonably expect that as children participated in the program from their earliest school years, such leadership would work to enhance their sense of self worth, and capacity for problem solving, relationship building and supportive leadership.

The third was the communicative capacity, not only of the leaders, but also of other group members. At the most basic level, they were able to explain simply and clearly both the activities and the lessons they were designed to teach. At a more sophisticated level, they demonstrated a capacity to "read" what was happening in their group, and respond appropriately, and relate—and help others to relate—the specific content of the lesson to the daily life matters in which they were all entangled in ways that were calculated to promote self knowledge and self reflection. This entailed both recognizing, and operationalising—and thus modeling—respect for others' views and experiences, as they shared their own special places and their own senses of how they might make use of them in their own lives.

Stage 3 represents the final stage of the cycle for Year 7 teachers, the debriefing of leaders following the lesson. The evaluation process highlighted the variable ways teachers engage in supporting the reflection process with students. Managing a multi-aged group of up to 8 students is no small challenge, and in many debriefing sessions, the leaders tended to focus on the management issues or students behaviour

during the session. While clearly an important aspect of leadership development, there was a tendency to ignore other teaching and learning opportunities the debriefing session afforded. In the following example, the teacher models firstly an effort to engage with a Deweyan notion of reflection (Dewey, 1933) leading to the student exerting increasing control over their lives. Secondly there is an attempt by the teacher to support the student action—in this taking the concept home to discuss with family members. Finally, literacy is again integrated into the lesson, this time with a focus on the genre of journal writing.

Stage 3—The De-Brief (Back in the Classroom with the Year 7 Teacher)
"Well how did it go?" Ms Kashin asks for general feedback, capturing the energy always present following the *Peer Support* time. After a few minutes, she draws the conversation together by suggesting a PMI activity on the board. "OK, what was positive—all students completed a drawing; some of the year 1 students were able to draw something they had that made them feel good; everyone cooperated; the co-leaders were helpful with the Year 1 students. That all sounds great. Now what was negative—some students didn't bring their pencils; you had to ask help from a teacher to keep a student from interrupting all the time (Well done for asking for help). Ok what was interesting-some to the special places were really cool;"

"Well I can see that this week there are fewer concerns about behaviour and more talk about the topic—that's what we want. You all must have used your leadership skills well this week—the groups I was observing did an exceptional job keeping everyone on-task—I saw lots of positive talk—I think that really helps in your group—when the students can see that you appreciate their effort."

"Let's take out your *Peer Support* journals and record our reflection. Remember a reflection has 3 parts—a description; analysis—or why something happened, and then most importantly what you will do next. Let's take 10 minutes to record our reflections from this week." Let's also remember how important it is to talk about members of our group in respectful ways. We have discussed this as the "ethics" of journal writing remember Caleb?

"Ok before we pack up to go home, let's record 2 ideas we could take home to discuss with someone at home. Melanie suggests that one idea could be to ask whether they have a special place they think about when they are worried. Anthony's suggestion is that we take home our drawing of our special place and talk about it with someone."

"I'll look forward to hearing what your families say tomorrow. And remember, we are going to set up a special corner of the room to remind us of the need to have a special place for difficult times in our life. See you all tomorrow …"

The three components above highlight the potential of the *Peer Support* focus topic to create a series of learning opportunities for students, extending their potential to, in this case care for themselves by seeking a metaphorical special place in times of anxiety or stress. Paralleling these Year 7 student experiences, students across the school will be enabled by the Year 7 leaders to discuss with their classroom teachers. Again, a quality teaching framework would require the teachers of other Year levels to engage with a similar by alternate framework of preparation, and debriefing. Further, the teachers need to seek opportunities to engage with the core concept of each student led lesson, seeking opportunities for the knowledge and skills gained in the lesson to be integrated in the classroom.

Response 2 — Centring the Values of *Peer Support*

During the VEPGS project, the Cluster realised that teachers need more that a review of a black line master to engage with the lesson concept and be equipped to work in holistic and critical ways. The case studies revealed the variable teacher engagement with the program—with some teachers in some sites barely acknowledging student participation in the program, and other teachers grounding their classroom management techniques in the work of the program. As a second response to the case studies, the Cluster established a range of actions to embed the program as central to the school. For some schools this meant training for staff in the *Peer Support* foundation framework. For other schools, this involved a critical examination of the values underlying the core *Peer Support* program and a review of how these values established a framework for teacher/student relationships. Using the action learning process, the cluster established a series of learning activities for staff as part of the VEGPS project. The action learning cycle for the group culminated in a whole day professional development program. A range of activities were developed to engage staff with the values inherent in the *Peer Support* program, and refocus the teachers on their own learning as part of the program's implementation.

While the day's activities varied, some of the school leaders wanted to emphasize the need to move teachers "out of their comfort zone" in particular confront staff with the values inherent in the program, and what these might signify for their relationships with students and their responses to students in the classroom. Moving staff to understand the implications of the program for the nature of relationships in the school community, was a priority for some schools in the cluster—the program does not require teachers to reflect on their own learning or actions, this must be inherently part of the teaching cycle

At the end of the VEPGS project, the schools and the teachers are able to see that their values journey has moved beyond tokenistic implementation of black line masters. The teacher comments from the professional development day note the importance of reflection to enable insight on practice. When asked what action would result from the activities of the day their comments included:

- Incorporate Peer Support ethos outside of sessions
- Be more encompassing on how I use Peer Support groups

- Integrate Peer Support and literacy lessons
- Be more positive and take an active role in the program
- Articulate values more in classroom
- Integrate values language across curriculum areas

Perhaps more potently, the reflections of one principal in the project, Helen Morris, at the end of the project suggests how important serious engagement with the potential for programs such as *Peer Support* can ensure create whole school transformation.

It's first break and I'm on playground duty at the play gym under the Moreton Bay Fig. It's February, it's hot and the mosquitoes are dreadful. But you wouldn't know it if the behaviour of the Year 4/5s playing around the play gym is anything to go by. They are, quite literally, in a world of their own; an imaginary world populated by a herd of beautiful and magical horses. They are absorbed in their play and I am charmed by their innocence and naïveté. Then the "teacher" in me kicks in and I really start to focus on the children in this game.

Peter (the obvious game "leader" and the only boy in the group of 7) is quite new to the school and has been diagnosed as having ASD. He has been placed in our Special Education Unit but he functions well in a mainstream 4/5 class. Peter is busy directing the unfolding drama of the imaginary horses—all of whom are clearly beautiful and precious. He calls to his side Jane and leads her off to join her herd in "Cloud Heaven", or wherever, and Jane tosses her wild mane and prances after him. Jane whinnies and neighs and then she contributes an idea to the drama. Someone, a nasty human perhaps, is a threat to the herd and they must flee the basketball court. Peter agrees and urges the other horses to follow Jane back to the safety of the fig tree. Jane leads them all to safety and is heralded a hero.

I am stunned. Jane is also in our SEU and has been ascertained as Intellectually Impaired Level 6. In the twelve months I have worked at Townsville West I have never seen her contribute so much to a conversation. I have only ever observed her hovering on the fringes of the games of our "mainstream" students. By what magic has Jane been transformed into this confident, outgoing, joyful creature?

This year Jane is spending more time in the mainstream Year 4/5 class. Is this why the other children are now so openly welcoming of her in their group? Maybe; probably. But not completely I suspect. In a school where 15% of the student population is children with disabilities "Inclusion" is more than a timetabling issue.

Our Peer Support program fosters the development of effective group work skills, values mutual respect, kindness and tolerance and celebrates the "uniqueness" of each individual. Undoubtedly Peer Support at Townsville West contributes to that greatest of Edspeak clichés—a safe and supportive

school environment. But in real terms its success is there to be seen each day in the play of our students; in imaginative narratives, in turn-taking, in the willingness of "popular" children to include socially "awkward" children in their games and at their lunch table; in the "sacrifice" of playtime by senior students as they escort younger, injured children to the office for the ubiquitous ice pack and in the shared problem-solving it takes to find a lost hat, shoe or lunchbox.

Suddenly it's not quite so hot. Autumn, after all, is just days away and I remember where I left the Aerogard.

For teacher educators, the VEGPSP provides insight into the ways in which state or public schooling can be seen to enact Values Education—a mission that has always been central to public schooling in Australia (Connors, 2002). For teacher educators, there are two crucial questions. Firstly, how to work in partnership with schools to ensure that a cycle of reflection, such as this project demonstrates, is initiated, embedded and sustained in a public education system struggling for funds. Secondly, how to ensure that pre-service teachers recognize the importance of such a cycle of reflection, and are enabled to develop both the capacity and the will to engage in it. Without this cycle of reflection, prepackaged programs such as the *Peer Support* program, are potentially implemented with little engagement with a 'quality teaching' framework. The program itself does not require teachers to reflect on their own learning, self understanding or self-knowledge; such a cycle is either self-initiated or led by others in the school, and in particular the school principal.

As Lovat (this volume) discusses, immersing the "whole person in depth of cognition, social and emotional maturity, and self-knowledge" is required for Values Education to be significant—and these traits need to be first developed in teachers. From this case study, it is clear that a holistic approach to the implementation of Values Education, one that permeates the school culture, requires teacher capacity of 'self-reflectivity', and support from a resourced learning community.

Chapter 6
Valuing Diversity in Children's Voice: A Case Study of Children, Stewardship and Mapping the Care of Special Places in the Western Australian Cluster

Kathryn Netherwood, Jenny Buchanan, David Palmer, Laura Stocker, and Barry Down

> *Last term we had lots of tours and stories and got told about Aboriginal history. We learnt about the Waaguls and the significance of the river … I go fishing with my dad on the river and I didn't know about these spots, but now I can tell him what is what and where all of these important places are and how to respect them. Jackson, Year 6.*

Introduction

In 2005 and 2006 a group of five Western Australian independent schools embarked on a journey to explore not only their own values but also to learn how to respect the values of others. Students from Lance Holt School in Fremantle, Strelley Community Schools in the Pilbara, Kerry Street in Hamilton Hill, Moerlina School in Mt Claremont and Nyindamurra Family School in the southwest joined forces to form the Children and Place Mapping Group to examine how children value and in turn are sustained by their local places.

From the start, this project has been informed by two key premises about the connection between local places, sustainability and Values Education. The first was that "place-based learning"[1] involves the exploration of values in regard to the ethics of stewardship and social responsibility. The second was an acknowledgement of the importance both metaphorically and practically of starting from "where children are at".

What follows is an overview of the project, and a snapshot of the rich work produced by the children involved. The chapter is divided into a number of sections. It begins by offering a background to the project and briefly describing the schools, their shared history and how they see Values Education. Next it turns to an overview

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[1] See Theobold (1997) and Gruenewald, D. (2003).

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of the objectives of the project, the approach taken and how things worked. This is followed by stories about what happened in each of the schools and some of the rich and elaborate activities that were carried out by children, teachers and other members of the school community. Finally, the chapter concludes with a discussion of the main lessons we have learned about Values Education and the potential implications for other practitioners.

There are a number of things that are striking about this story of place-based Values Education. Above all, it is a story about the enchantment and wonderment that comes when people listen to the accounts of children. It is also a story about the power of children's love and care for place. It is a story about the power of respecting people who have different values to our own and about what happens when children, teachers, parents and others work together. Finally it is a story about the beautiful work that children do when they are encouraged to care about their special places.

Background

This story has its roots in a number of places. The schools involved share a similar history having been established between the early 1970s and 1980s as small community-based, independent and "progressive" schools. All were established as a consequence of families, teachers and communities seeing the need to have a quality education based on the core values of social justice and social responsibility, the rights of children to receive respect and care, and the importance of nourishing a spirit of creativity and wonderment as children learn to participate actively in planning for their futures with family and community involvement. In these ways children engage in stewardship of country.

The community of schools was also quite different in a number of ways. Children came from diverse geographical, cultural and socio-economic backgrounds and live in urban, rural and remote settings. The school governance bodies were also quite diverse with one school being managed by an Indigenous organization that represented the interests of three cultural blocks, another operating with a whole of school community management structure and others with elected school councils as the governing body. The schools also had a long history of working with different local groups and interests including Indigenous elders and organizations, academics, artists, businesses, special consultants and other community members.

The project also built on a noteworthy history of involvement in Values Education. All schools had been established by those keen to foreground values in the educative process. More recently the lead school, Lance Holt, has been actively leading Values Education through its involvement in a range of projects. During 1996 the school participated in the NPDP Values Review Project, establishing a committee to reflect on the school's core values by carrying out a series of workshops and articulating its shared core vision. In 2000 and 2001 the school's Ethics Committee ran a series of workshops with parents to explore the rights and

responsibilities of school community members as a means of sharing and sustaining the school's core values. The findings of the Ethics Committee are published on the school's website[2] and have shaped how the school carries out its work. In 2003 a Values Education Study was undertaken around the themes of sustainability, place and children's stewardship. This culminated in students, teachers and parents producing a series of powerpoint presentations, a video and artworks around the theme of values. The older students conducted a sustainability conference for friends and family. A subsequent project with the older students lead to the production of a video on children's experience of local place titled "Kids Guide to Freo".

The Schools

Lance Holt School has been operating for 36 years and is situated on Whadjuk Nyungar country in the historical West End of Fremantle and is uniquely located in the midst of Western Australia's largest port precinct with a strong and vibrant tourist, business and educational activity. It has an enrolment of approximately 100 students from K-7 and a full-time teaching staff of six with specialist art, music, Italian and physical education teachers. The school has consistently focused on values such as social justice, community participation, environmental awareness, peace education, child-centred learning, maintaining a balance between rights and responsibilities, and collegiate relationships between staff, parents and students.

Strelley Community School is an Independent Aboriginal Community School operating in the Pilbara region of Western Australia. There are three campuses that comprise the school: Strelley, which is located 60 km east of Port Hedland, Woodstock, 200 km south of Port Hedland and Warralong, 160 km south-east of Port Hedland, Warralong is the administrative centre of the school. These communities are over 1500 km from Perth. Students in the school are ESL learners, drawn from a language background that is predominantly Nyangumarta, with Warnman and Manyjiljarra spoken by some members of the Community. There are approximately 70 students in the school ranging from pre-school to high school aged children and five key teachers.

Moerlina School is located at Mt Claremont in the western suburbs of Perth. It is a school that initially ran in the Perth Royal Agricultural Showground Members Pavillion, starting in 1974. It is a small, independent community school of approximately 100 students from Kindergarten to Year 7. Like a number of the other schools, it concentrates on creating an environment that uses inquiry based learning to stimulate children's learning. Its central location, between city and coast makes it convenient for exploring and involving the outside community in the life of the school.

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[2] www.lanceholtschool.wa.edu.au

Nyindamurra Family School is situated in Forest Grove in the Vasse Region of Western Australia, approximately 300 km south of Perth. It has been operating since 1981 when it began with one class. The school has a K-7 student population of 50 students and a teaching staff of 8, some of whom are part-time. The school is located in the south west region with its rich ecology, proximity to the beautiful "tall timber country" and extraordinary coastal landscape and complex mix of agricultural, tourism and other small business economic activity. The region also has a long-standing history of being home to a range of 'intentional communities' keen on values such as ecological sustainability, community, landcare and alternative living.

Kerry Street Community School is situated in Hamilton Hill, a suburb south of Fremantle. It is a small family school with a maximum enrolment of 40 children in K-7. It was initiated by a number of parents who wished to be involved with all aspects of their children's education, and has remained very family-centred. This emphasis on family and relationship has been supported by the structure of the school, its small size and the continued involvement of parents. The students of Kerry Street are drawn from the local area with more than half of the families living within 5 km of the school.

The Project and Its Values

The Project occurred because the schools wanted to extend children's understanding, appreciation and practice of caring for their country or place. Those involved were eager to see schools from different places and with different students come together to exchange experiences and investigate how children sustain, share, and connect to their places. It represented a chance for children to think about and share their values in this regard, drawing on various strategies such as excursions, mapping, language and literacy, writing, arts practice and multimedia.

Participants involved in supporting the project started from the premise that an appreciation of the relationships between people, place and community; the diversity and uniqueness of land; and the need for sustainability are important values for students to consider in the early 21st century.

They were also enthusiastic to continue to find ways for students to learn about ethical judgement and social responsibility and more about how their place is managed and looked after. This they believed helps children become more active citizens and better able to participate in a plural and diverse world in ways that are consistent with the core values of care and compassion, respect, responsibility, and understanding, tolerance and inclusion (National Framework for Values Education in Australian Schools, 2005).

They also thought that it is important to encourage children to gain an appreciation of the relationship between themselves, diverse and unique local places, others in their community and how they can care for and sustain this in the future.

Specifically, the project was founded on the following premises (values on values):

- It is important for students to consider how they value and take care of or sustain their local places.
- It is important for students to consider how their places take care of or sustain them.
- Students have a rich stock of lived experiences that have already actively shaped their values.
- Students live in complex social settings and so encounter a plurality of values that are often contested.
- Students values are strengthened when they encounter those with a different set of values.
- Values formation is made more robust when students are encouraged to talk about their own values with others.
- Students are better equipped to be active citizens when they learn how to respectfully encounter those with values different from their own.

Important to this project was the recognition that students are possessors of a rich stock of values and experiences particularly in relation to places they spend time in. Also important was the notion that grounding Values Education in the particularities of children's everyday lives and local settings is an important way to make explicit what are often implicit and unrecognized values.

In addition the project was premised upon the view that this kind of work is best carried out when children participate in activities that encourages them to: (1) get out and into their local places; (2) do things with others in their community; (3) share stories with elders and others; (4) animate and exercise their creative talents; (5) participate in inquiry-based learning; and (6) carry out social action that is driven by what they have learnt.

Finally the project gave students of different ages and from different schools the chance to share and compare their values with others. Important here was the view of those involved that values are often contested both in the way they are articulated and enacted. Therefore Values Education works best when students are given opportunities to compare and contrast their values with others in ways that are respectful and encourage the learning of skills in dealing with people who do not share their own values.

Setting Out to Do the Work

The project started with teachers encouraging children to explore how they are sustained by place through the use of visual, creative, spatial and animated means. Important in helping start this process was the use of conventional and digital mapping as a tool for exploring the importance of place to students.

In many cases the process involved teachers starting with a base map and four overlay maps. Together with the children, teachers chose a base map of the local

area. A range of different maps were used. The base map was either an aerial photo-graph, topographic map, street map, picture, children's paintings, other novel pieces of artwork or a traditional painting of the area. Indeed throughout the course of the project many different forms of "maps" emerged including pleisticine three dimen-sional maps, sculptured models, a vast array of sketches and paintings produced by children, a cardboard tableau and a series of digital maps that feature on the website. Some of the maps were large enough to cover a table so children could walk around together with plenty of room to work. The classes that used the overlay maps represented four dimensions of sustainability: ecological, social, economic and cultural values.

To help children better connect the mapping exercise to the actual areas under investigation (areas that had already been established as familiar and important to them) classes visited the place again, walking, riding, sitting and carefully consider-ing how they and others use the area. This part of the process was very important in helping evoke in children the range of sensory experiences in relation to their important place as well as allowing them to build observation, recording, planning and critical skills.

The next stage involved four clear transparencies being placed on top of the base map one at a time. The class was then asked to use markers to note areas of significance in relation to one of the dimensions of sustainability (ecological, social, economic or cultural). In other words, the class was asked to concentrate on one dimension of sustainability at a time, thinking about the ecological, social, eco-nomical and cultural places of importance to them. For example, the cultural layer could include: Indigenous sites and heritage, market places, theatres, art galleries, town squares, parks, bush land, cafes. The social layer could include: hospitals, libraries, market places, parks, police station, cafes, clubs, pubs. The economic layer could include: malls, port, art galleries, farms, tourist sites, market places. The ecological layer could include beaches, sea, parks, bush land, farms, and the night sky.

This stage was critical in maximizing children's participation in leading the iden-tification of how an area is valued. In addition children were asked to think about how others value these places, comparing and contrasting what they knew about how different people treat important places. Invaluable at this point was the role parents, Indigenous friends of the school and classroom research played in adding to children's values about place.

Next the four overlays were placed over each other helping students to iden-tify hot-spots or extra-special places. The places featuring in two or more of the overlay maps offered an indication of the likely importance of places to students. When the plastic overlays were all laid on top of the base map the children began to see that there are some sites of very special significance, where many cultural, social, economic and ecological values come together. They began to appreciate that although a place may have separate cultural, social, economic and ecological layers, in practice these sometimes interact and combine. Alternatively they noticed that sometimes this does not happen and the various layers do not interact as much as they should or could.

Finally, a composite map was produced by children to help articulate or give public expression to how they thought about these special places. Many of these maps included photos, drawings, paintings, poems and stories, all stuck onto the map.

In some cases, digital representation of the map was prepared using the Image Mapping facility on a web-page making program. This made it possible to use these maps as a means to make further connections to other work carried out during the Values Education Project and allow people using the website to click on a map and access information, stories, pictures and other projects.

For many teachers the mapping exercise was used as a starting point; a way of drawing upon children's experience and own conceptions of values and inspiring other ways of thinking about this by concentrating on the study of place. To help build depth in this exploration of values teachers used a range of other educational tools including various arts-based practice, multi-media production and other inquiry-based activities. Examples of these activities included:

- numeracy work involving building tables and charts on the use of place;
- collecting oral history and interviews with significant people;
- inviting Indigenous people to host excursions, story telling and language work;
- working with ecologists in the detailed study of special places;
- producing art (such as a tableau or silk land/sky/water scape);
- film making and editing; and
- initiating social action activities (such as a letter writing campaign to local council and painting public facilities)

Also critical was the plan to upload children's work on to a website specifically built for the project. Initially plans were made to arrange student exchanges in the later part of the project. The purpose of these exchanges was to help achieve the final project objective, of encouraging students to compare and contrast their own lives and values with those of others. Given the vast geographic distances between schools this became difficult. Instead each school was given web design software, training and space on a project website to create a forum for student's work. This website has subsequently become an important tool, not only for "showcasing" student's work but also for allowing children across schools to begin "virtual" contact.

Examples of What Happened

Each school carried out a variety of educational activities all shaped by the objectives of encouraging children to consider the things that nourish and sustain them and in turn how they can nourish and sustain their places. Indeed there is not a single page on the project website that does not evoke evidence of the beautiful and elaborate work of children who are clearly thoughtfully considering how their place nourishes them.

Nyindamurra's Frog Wetland

Those who visit the website can see Nyindamurra's children involved in range of projects as a way of learning about ecological sustainability.[3] These projects reflected children's many and varied values in relation to their local area. For example, some of the children began to research the topic of worms, using this to write a radio play that was performed out of school hours. This was recorded in a real sound studio with the plan to market it for others outside of the school. In tandem the kindy kids embarked on a project to separate lunch scraps and feed worms daily. The plan was to divide the worm population or get another worm farm in 2006 to cope with the amount of raw material that had been collected. Other children researched 'safe' poisons with Department of Conservation and Land Management (CALM) and had a test area of poisoned watsonia. They then researched frogs/environment/native plants and frog ponds with ecologist and local identity Johnny Prefumo.

During this time, a tree that had been a special place for all kids over the 25 years, fell down in a big storm. This generated much interest in both the history of the school and thinking about what children can do to look after trees that are special and important. What was also discovered was that the school needed the local community to take on the role of stewards because watsonia, an introduced plant species, had gradually taken over the school's bush during the years. When a parent started helping, children became interested in making the school grounds frog friendly because frogs are very good environmental indicators.

This story of children caring for their local school grounds demonstrates the potential connection between Values Education and children's involvement in social action. Indeed this work has prompted a new project in 2006 with children planning to move the school from "watsonia wasteland to frog wetland". As Pam Tuffin, teacher at Nyindamurra said about her project, "we set out to build a habitat and ended up building an ecosystem".

Moerlina's Perfect Market

Alternatively, one could look at the work of Year 3/4 Moerlina students who built their perfect market.[4] This project provides a striking example of how values can be used to offer children opportunities to articulate their responses through language, arts practice, mapping and other mediums appropriate to their age and background.

This project started when children chose to research an iconic and popular market that is located in the neighbourhood. They also chose to do something like this because it involved studying people from other places coming to shop, relax and

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[3] Thanks to Pam Tuffin and Fynn Mueller for writing elements of this account (see www.kidsplacemaps.wa.edu.au)

[4] Thanks to Denise Reynolds for writing elements of this account (see www.kidsplacemaps.wa.edu.au)

enjoy the children's neighbourhood. Children started by using different maps, such as aerial maps, street directories, and self constructed maps, to find the location of the Markets and help others find the easiest way to get there. They then spent time during the following weeks visiting the markets, observing how it was used at different times and interviewing stall holders and others who had detailed knowledge of the place. This provided children, the class teacher and parents with an extraordinarily rich reference point around which to talk about the diversity of ways that people valued and used one place.

Using a variety of "blocks", the students then spent time constructing "The Perfect Market Place". The idea was that they start considering a plan for an ideal market, based on what they had learnt from the research of the Station Street Markets and what they had come to understand about sustaining local places. They worked in groups of 5–6 on a rotational basis adding to what the other groups had made, collaboratively building a plan for the future. Together they used the most basic school building materials to construct a sustainable market place.

The children's plan/model included a playground made from recycled materials and placed next to the coffee shop so parents could have coffee ("because parents need coffee") and children could play ("because children like to play"). That way all the family could come to the markets and the market sellers would have more buyers and be able to sell different things. They also concluded that if the market plan involved building in storeys less land would be lost, saving the natural environment. Finally, their plans were driven by the idea that the train station decreases pollution as people use cars less often. The train was designed to work on magnetic power to save the ozone layer and natural resources. The model was exhibited in the school with lots of labels so passers by in our school community could share our ideas and spread the great things they had learned.

At the conclusion of the project children sat around the model as they discussed what each piece represented and its importance to sustainability. Teacher Denise Reynolds said that by getting students to talk through, build, physically demonstrate and act on what they learnt all were able to get involved. As she said, "if we had got the kids to simply write what they had learnt some would have struggled to demonstrate their learning". She said that this was "the wow factor for me as a teacher … one of the highlights of my career."

Lance Holt's Bathers Beach Tableau and Kahootz Video

Also featured on the website are a series of short films and a description of the whole of school Bathers Beach Tableau carried out at Lance Holt School.[5] This project not only gave children creative ways to visually display and express how

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[5] Thanks to Samantha Wynne, Wendy Gorman, Christine Kennedy, Debra Salahuddeen, Seth Yeoman, Deb Sear and Simon Gilby for providing background to this account (see www.kidsplacemaps.wa.edu.au)

they value their special local place, it also gave them a chance to share their values with others. In preparation for the building of the tableau children exchanged ideas with others in their classroom, met and listened to Indigenous elders, studied the way others used Bathers Beach, discussed their work with family, researched local social, maritime and architectural history, collaborated across classes and exhibited their work in a very public forum. Thanks to the talents of Dad and local sculptor Simon Gilby and the generosity of the owners of a local gallery, teachers, family and a string of the general public got to enjoy the two week exhibition and engage in a very public discussion about valuing the Bathers Beach area in Fremantle.

In this way the project offered children opportunities to share, compare and contrast their ideas and values with those of others (both children and adults). The project represents an excellent example of the part Values Education can play in fostering an understanding of the plurality of values that exist in children's communities and the way whole of school communities can work together.

The work of Lance Holt's Year 4/5 class in the Kahootz video production also sits on the website.[6] Each child in the class used the Kahootz software package as a way to animate and bring to life their ideas about how people use their favourite place. After choosing one of their much-loved 'spots around town' and researching either its ecological, social, cultural or economic use each child prepared a short animation piece. Using digital sound equipment the children then overlayed the animation with a short commentary using their own voice. Each of the short animations was then edited together to form a video that has subsequently been used as a discussion starter at one of the whole of school morning meetings. This offers another powerful example of how the project gave children the chance to articulate their values through different means.

Strelley's Special Links to Country

Students at the Strelley community were very keen on the mapping process used by other schools.[7] This process lent itself well to making the idea of values relevant to different age groups. It allowed children of different ages to examine different dimensions of their relationship to country. For example, secondary students were able to examine the relationship between what happens in classrooms and the region. Younger children were able to map their playground and express how it is an important part of the community.

One important example of this was the exploration of the Mikurrunya Hills as an important place for the Strelley community. These hills mark where visitors turn to go to Strelley when travelling from Port Hedland. The Mikurrunya Hills are steep

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[6] Thanks to Christine Kennedy and Deb Sear for providing background to this account (see www.kidsplacemaps.wa.edu.au)

[7] Thanks to Darren and Bronwyn Smith for writing elements of this account (see www.kidsplacemaps.wa.edu.au)

sloped hills with rocky outcrops. A traditional story explains how these hills were formed through a family quarrel. As this student shows, there are many dimensions to the importance of this place:

> Mikurrunya Hill is a part of Strelley, Warralong and Woodstock. Sometimes we go hunting around Mikurrunya. Lots of kangaroos have a rest beside the hill. From Strelley to the hill is 14 kilometres. Tabba Tabba River is also part of Strelley and is near the old Strelley Station. Most people go hunting at East and West Strelley Rivers and look for goanna or bush turkey. Sometimes people go to the Shaw River for a meeting or church gathering. (Sharona, aged 17)

The country around the different communities that make up the Strelley group of schools appears to the outsider quite harsh. However, teachers used the opportunity to have children think about how their lives are nourished by the country. They took note of how the weather sustains (and challenges) them. In summer the temperature easily reaches 45 degrees Celsius at school. While they were studying the project the community had 28 mm of rain in half an hour. Not long after strong winds and huge thunderstorms raged. Children got to think and write about how the weather is pretty special and rather different from that experienced by many other children involved in this project:

> The weather at Strelley is hot. Big cyclones come near Port Hedland. Cyclones can bring big black clouds, thunder and big rains. Everyone must go people go inside in a cyclone. Do not go outside because cyclones can pull you. Do not eat food in cyclone time and do not go outside because you will get wet and sick. Cyclone Monty came to Warralong two years ago. (Annabell, aged 13)

Students at Woodstock community also began by looking at the four layers of sustainability.[8] They used maps of the area and the surrounding area, got the basic overlays and went through what they valued in their communities. They marked areas from where people came to visit and discussed the landforms in the area and how resources were used by their family. They also looked at how life in Woodstock is different from living in other communities. For example, they explored their distance from others and how they have to drive for a couple of hours just to get to Port Hedland.

The children also took video footage of areas around the school that are important to them. They operated the cameras and filmed each other talking about places that are important to them. As they grew in confidence they started to ask the questions of each other without prompting. According to teachers, the filming worked particularly well, in part because it is such a hands on activity. It gave the older kids the responsibility of taking on the footage. As one teacher said "they weren't just able to learn about their community they were also able to learn about some new

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[8] Thanks to teachers at Woodstock for providing background to this account (see www. kidsplacemaps.wa.edu.au)

technology as well and just being able to take charge of it themselves gave them ownership of the project."

One of the challenges facing kids in this setting comes from the fact that space is used in a very different way from many children in urban areas. Unfortunately the available maps could not accommodate their complex use of land, use that saw them spending time in close proximity to a very small area and at other times travelling great distances. To deal with this challenge the class decided to draw their own maps.

Kerry Street's Neighborhood Project

Those who visit the Kerry Street website are invited to use it to go on a journey around the neighbourhood and the school.[9] Visitors to the site can take a tour of the places in the school's proximity that are important to the kids. They can spend time at Manning Park, a very special place where children are amazed by the tortoises, the trees, the birds and other beautiful and important living things. They can visit Bakers Square, another important community space a short walk from the school, and find out about how children sustain their bodies and physical well-being. These 'tours' mirror the sort of things that children at Kerry Street did as part of their experience of Values Education.

Another part of the project at Kerry Street involved kids doing activities to help others look after their place. Some were small scale and done in class groups, like going to visit one neighbour's house to see her chooks. Others were done by students of mixed ages who shared some kind of common interest. Like the horse-crazy girls who went to the stables or the boys who were fascinated by the willy-wagtails nesting at school and began to think about how to look after them.

Other projects were a little bigger. For instance, children built a debate about the issue of grass in the school-yard. The incentive for the debate came about because the school has quite small grounds. The largest single area, bounded by a pergola, playground equipment, sandpit and shrubs, was for many years home to struggling and mostly dead grass. Two years ago the school decided to put effort into trialing better maintained grass which involved large effort in churning the area, laying turf, buying a bore, installing reticulation, applying top dressing and other regular maintenance. The new grass was an outstanding success and popular with everyone. Kids could do handstands on it, run on it, sit on it, skip on it, pretend to be rabbits on it and generally admire it. Unfortunately, despite all the effort and money, the first year's grass was back to desert by the end of third term. It's not surprising, considering the constant use it had.

Children were determined to give it one more go with a different grass variety and more restrictions on the use of this area. This provoked considerable informal

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[9] Thanks to Fran Ryce and Kath Sugars for writing elements of this account (see www.kidsplacemaps.wa.edu.au)

debate so it was decided to capitalise on the different views and make the grass a subject for the values project. The children started to turn their views into more formal discussions. They wrote down ideas, used in class discussion and active listening and reflecting to attempt to "walk in each other's shoes". It was decided to use a debate as a forum for the different issues about the grass play area and its use. This was arranged and hosted by children who followed it up by trying out some of the solutions. At the end of 2005 the grass was alive and required only a few patches of roll on lawn to help it regroup over the break.

What Else was Achieved?

In part, the breadth of the various projects can be attributed to the decision to use different learning tools at different times, with different children. This gave opportunities for different children to "do values" in different ways. One terrific example of the use of various teaching methods occurred when three younger Lance Holt Pre-primary boys found it difficult to recount their experience of an excursion to the Swan River with a Nyungar friend of the school. Rather than insisting that they use oral means to communicate their teacher encouraged them to work with plasticine to make a 3-D representation of their experiences. This became the basis of a long-term project that they worked on for several weeks. They used the plasticine to show the story of The Wagaarl—the rainbow serpent and how it formed the Swan River. This then enlivened rich conversations between the boys as they sorted through concepts and understandings. There was a lot of talk about whether the scene was from present day or the past as they decided what features to include in the scene. This discussion also helped draw other children into the conversation.

Another important outcome of the project has been the chance for children across the state to begin the process of contacting each other. The recent posting of the project website provides the means through which ongoing contact can be encouraged between the school communities. Children from the Strelley Schools live approximately 2000 km away from others involved in the project. In the past they have visited children at Lance Holt School. Now they are starting to build on the relationships they started through use of the website. The website also provides them with the chance to upload stories and information that they want seen by others at the same time as looking at the shared site seeing how others are examining values in their school. In addition, the possibilities provided by the world-wide web enable children at the five schools to "host visits" from children around the world. In this way the website, with its unique focus on how children care for their place, offer children enormous opportunities to extend their contact with children from very diverse places.

In all of the schools, the project demonstrated a profound respect for Indigenous eldership and stewardship. Children's exploration of their special places have begun with an appreciation of the way local Indigenous people act as stewards and are sustained by land. For example, Kerry Street began their work on Manning Park by inviting a local Indigenous people to work with them on Nyungar knowledge of this

special place. In a similar way students from Moerlina, Nyindamurra, Lance Holt and Strelley began their work by inviting local Indigenous people to teach them about their care for country. In this regard Strelley School provided the leadership, modelling to other schools what children gain when the senior people in a community are respected and involved by sharing their values.

One only has to scan the website to see the extraordinary display of understanding and active seeking out of different perspectives and different ways of understanding a place through a multitude of people such as environmental experts, local government officials, Indigenous elders, migrants, historians, workers in local industries and elders. This has allowed children to move beyond simple understandings and tolerance of others to a much more respectful inclusion of a range of different values and traditions of others.

Not only did the project provide opportunities for children to think about and extend their learning in relation to values. It also prompted children to exercise social responsibility through various student led actions. For example, at Strelley School one project that started as a research project to examine the impact of rubbish on the community very quickly became a long-term project to raise awareness at the same time as raising money by collecting aluminium cans. At Nyindamurra the weeding project has seen the schools involvement in a much larger attempt by a range of groups in the south-west to eradicate weeds. At Kerry Street the bus stop restoration project demonstrates the action of students in identifying social problems and acting to find solutions. Moerlina's website provides a number of examples of student's taking action to sustain places they see as special. In particular Moerlina Student Councils' involvement in a tabloid day demonstrates their role as educators, leading the way in teaching others in their community about sustainability. After spending time investigating the ecological sustainability of a local reserve members of the Student Council planned and carried out a whole day event becoming the educators taking other students, teachers and parents through a series of learning activities. Children in the Year 2/3 class at Lance Holt decided after having carried out research on the Old Jetty Sculpture that they wanted to make others aware of the condition of the Jetty. They wrote letters to the Mayor and local newspaper and volunteered their time and energy to a forthcoming restoration project.

Through the project and professional development sessions teachers have been able to share teaching strategies and extend their repertoire as educational practitioners. For example, during one professional development session teachers working in early childhood education met and talked about how they had approached Values Education. Out of this meeting these teachers continued to maintain contact and support.

What Lessons can Others Learn About What Went on?

A quick 'surf' of the website demonstrates the breadth of Values Education that occurred across the schools. Perhaps part of the reason for this was that there was no single ingredient, no magic methodological device, and no blueprint that led to

the Project achieving such a great deal. On the contrary there were a multitude of conditions that led to the Project accomplishing so much.

At the centre of the Project's success was the relevance of the theme of sustainability and the value of nourishing and being nourished by important local places. There are likely a number of elements of this emphasis on place and its importance to children's future that energised children and learning. For example, literally and metaphorically "grounding" the study of values helps children better grasp what is a rather abstract exercise. As Kindy teacher Samantha Wynne from Lance Holt observes, "values such as respect, tolerance and understanding are very complex ideas, even for adults to get their heads around". Focusing on places that are important to children helps them find practical and experientially relevant ways of thinking about values. As Samantha says, "young children can talk about, draw, visit, touch, see and even taste values when you start from where they are at—their local surroundings, their houses, parks, playgrounds and beaches."

Another ingredient to the success of the project was the central place that Indigenous people and their involvement played. Providing opportunities for Indigenous people and values to be respected both made children's work wonderfully interesting to them and offered many clear examples of how children could see the world in a different way.

Also important to the project is the fact that it was premised on the need to start by giving children "a voice" and listening to what they say and how they say it. In literal and symbolic ways children's voices are present on the website. Those visiting it can see children's artwork, hear them talking about values, read about what they have said and done and watch them do values work on various digitally recorded pieces.

Underscoring the success of the project was also the philosophical approach to values adopted by the schools. What was particularly important was that those involved chose a generative approach to values rather than accepting that values are always inculcated into children. Through approaches such as inquiry-based learning schools enabled children to consider their own sets of values and compare these to how others sustain places that are dear to them. This meant that children were encouraged to start with an exploration of their own values, to learn how to extend their repertoire and capacity to publicly articulate their ideas. This not only modelled respect of children, it also provided the means through which children could compare and contrast their ideas with how others conceptualise values. Important in relation to the National Values Framework for Australian Schooling was that this provided students with the platform around which they could explore the four national values of care and compassion, respect, responsibility, and understanding, tolerance and inclusion. In addition, it allowed children to think about the extra values identified by the schools:

- care and stewardship of the local environment (caring for country)
- social and ecological responsibility (sustainability)
- respect for diverse traditions and cultures of others (going along together)
- comparing and contrasting one's own values with those of others (going along together)

Also critical to the project's success was the basic framework around which schools were encouraged to start working with children and the fact that a series of professional development sessions were hosted by the lead school. Schools found very useful training in the use of the overlay mapping exercise as a means of starting to have students think about what places are special to them and how "sustainability" might be borne out in these places. At the same time this suggested process acted as an important methodological "springboard" giving schools the autonomy and independence to work out what other methods and teaching methods they could use to make the experience unique to children in different places.

Indeed the project gained considerable strength because of the use of mapping as a tool and a metaphor. The use of spatial imagery, maps and other devices that allowed children to take on a "helicopter position" of the world was a powerful means by which children could move beyond the particularities of their own individual lives and values and start to see the "world from a different perspective." Although early childhood teachers discovered that "mapping" was often somewhat abstract for young children it was not long before their professional imagination saw them incorporating things like ground maps, plasticine models, place-based photo mapping and painted and drawn maps.

So, in addition to mapping as an important device for generating Values Education the use of arts practice was important. Arts practice in the project allowed the youngest children to express quite profound understandings about their values. Various mediums were used such as radio plays, musical performances, visuals art such as drawing, sketching, painting and multimedia, sculpture and photography. The use of such diverse mediums also allowed children with different learning styles to participate in the project. The use of various arts practice also encouraged students to learn how to work together.

If there was a central reason for the project's success it was that teachers in all of the schools have considerable experience in the teaching of what has come to be called Values Education. The breadth and quality of the work carried out by all of the schools are a testament to the professionalism of teachers who prior to the project possessed a vast repertoire of teaching practices and a sophisticated approach to values. Indeed in our view, this project achieved so much because Values Education is not new to teachers in the five schools. On the contrary work carried out under the auspice of this project is an extension of practice that is already a part of the core educational business of schools. As a result teachers are highly accomplished values educators.

However, what was novel and important in this project was that it gave five schools with much in common the opportunity to work together. Indeed at each of the professional development sessions representatives from each of the schools frequently commented on how important it was for members of small independent schools, often working in some isolation, to feel a sense of belonging to a group of educators with a shared approach to educational practice.

As many of the teachers involved argue, children need to feel that they have agency and are able to act to make a difference. Social action then is a central

feature of the practices of these schools. This ranged from Kindy kids talking to family members about care to older children planning and carrying out campaigns to recognise wetlands as special places, restore children's playgrounds and eradicate introduced botanical species in local ecosystems.

Clearly a key feature of this project was the use of multi-media technologies and production. The use of digital cameras and recording devices allowed children's voices to be heard in many different ways. They also made it possible for children to become involved in the production process, filming, editing and producing reports in a fashion that is accessible to a broad audience of children, teachers and families. Important here is the capacity of these new technologies to make accessible children's education to people with different levels and layers of literacy.

Another ingredient to the success of the project was that all five schools have considerable community involvement. These are all schools that have a broad network of people involved in their everyday operations. This both contributed to the quality of the project and also led to the strengthening of community involvement in the schools. Parents worked with teachers and students in all of the schools. They helped run and attend various excursions, learnt their considerable expertise as ecologists, local historians, artists, web designers, IT consultants, multi-media producers, researchers and in a multitude of other practical ways.

Most important then to this project was that the schools were provided with the resources to allow teachers to do what they do well. What made much of the achievements of the project possible was that schools were able to call in members of their communities with special expertise, invite Indigenous people to share their knowledge and give teachers time to plan and reflect upon the process of doing Values Education.

Critical Democracy, Community Schooling and Sustainability Education

In this respect, the project outlined in this chapter has much in common with the critical-democratic tradition of schooling. In particular, these projects are rich examples of teaching practice that is:

- Grounded in the lives of our students;
- Critical;
- Multicultural;
- Anti-racist, pro-justice;
- Participatory, experiential;
- Hopeful, visionary;
- Activist;
- Academically rigorous; and
- Culturally and linguistically sensitive (Bigelow, 2006, p. 7; see also Freire, 1997, 1998; Dewey, 1964; Shor, 1987, 1992; Steinberg & Kincheloe, 1998).

The project also has much in common with a number of other recent pedagogical developments of interest to Values Education. First, is the renewed emphasis on what Gruenewald (2003) describes as "place-based education." According to him "… places *teach* us about how the world works and how our lives fit into the spaces we occupy. Further places *make* us: As occupants of particular places with particular attributes, our identity and our possibilities are shaped." (p. 621) Gruenewald goes on to suggest some of the shortcomings of much schooling today that place-based education might help us to address:

> In re-thinking the reason for caring about diversity in the first place schools would need to acknowledge how patterns of spatial organization in schooling, a) limit the diversity of experience and perception; b) cut children, youth and their teachers off from cultural and ecological life; c) reproduce an unquestioning attitude about the legitimacy of problematic spatial forms; d) deny and create marginality through regimes of standardization and control; and e) through their allegiance to the global economy, function to exacerbate the very ecological problems that they deny. Place-conscious education aims to acknowledge and address the problems that the educational neglect of places helps to create. (p. 636)

This means that, in taking the approach they did, the schools involved in this project fostered in children a rich attention to others and cultivated an ethic of being in service to others (Theobold & Curtiss, 2000, p. 106).

Second, is the rediscovery of what Bingham and Sirdokin call the "pedagogy of relation". In their recent edited book *No Education Without Relation* (2004), the authors argue the need to move from "struggling against something to struggling for something." (p. 6). For them, this means inserting relationships as the centre-piece of all aspects of teaching and learning. In the same volume, Margonis (2004) makes the point that "any learning—any relationship between an individual and subject matter—occurs within a context of human relationships." (p. 45). Drawing on the experiences of Eliot Wigginton's *In Sometimes a Shining Moment: The Foxfire Experience* (1986), Margonis advocates the usefulness of "project education" as one important strategy in connecting students with their community in ways that are both socially and intellectually engaging. In a similar vein, Hutchinson (2004) develops the notion of a Pedagogy of Democratic Narrative Relation to sustain what Judith Green has called "deep democracy." In Green's words:

> Deep democracy would equip people to expect, to understand, and to value diversity and change while preserving and projecting both democratically humane cultural values and interactively sustainable environmental values in a dynamic, responsive way. Existentially, deep democracy would reconnect people in satisfying ways, thus healing our currently dangerous pathologies of existential nihilism and ontological rootlessness. It would direct and support collaborative local communities in reconstructing civic institutions, processes, and expectations. Deep democracy is both the goal and the process that can facilitate the emergence of "publics' that can exert effective transformative influence within our democratically deficient world societies." (Cited in Hutchinson, p. 74)

In addition to encouraging children's wonderment of their local places the work carried out provides rich and practical examples of schools as central institutions in community building. Indeed each of the schools report that the project was

important in the development of what educationalists and social scientists have called resilience and social capital. As has been demonstrated in the earlier discussion of the range of projects, perhaps the most astonishing feature of this project was the multiple dimensions to and multifarious effects of the Children and Place Mapping Project. Children's work on values happened in many different settings, with many different groups of people involved, prompted by different interests and challenges, using diverse methods and with an assortment of practical outcomes. As MacCallum et al. (2006) observe, this kind of project operates to encourage intersubjective connections across a broad range of social groups and generations.

This is particularly so in relation to two elements of the practice: the building of relationships and the building of networks. Often these relationships were strong, intimate or what the social capital theorists call vertical social bonds (see Putnam, 2000). These more traditional kinds of links between small numbers of close personal relationships, often with strong attachments to place and kin, with a fairly unitary culture and faith in traditional institutions, values and sanctions. Particular learning activities encouraged this kind of social capital formation. For example, student counsellors at Moerlina built rich and astonishing relationships between members of the school community when they hosted a Tabloid Day to show what they had learnt about a local wetland. At Lance Holt School the Tableau of Bathers Beach built a great deal of intergenerational contact.

As Deveson (2003) concludes, these kinds of close and personal associations across generations are crucial in helping both groups contend with life's challenges. The literature consistently concludes that the conditions that were created in the schools are tremendously important in helping people "spring back from adversity" (Fuller, McGraw, & Goodyear 1999, p. 159). Indeed the international research concludes that the single most important element in building resilience in people is caring relationships across the generations (Laursen & Birmingham, 2003).

In addition, the project also promoted a different kind of social cohesion so that children established "looser" links or what the social capital theorists call horizontal social bonds between people from diverse backgrounds. Particular projects and teaching methods, those that encouraged children to compare their values with those of others, tended to encourage this kind of social capital formation. For example, projects involving Indigenous people educating children saw them build both their values repertoire and their range of social contacts. According to Florida (2002), this kind of social cohesion is critical in building networked communities.

As Delanty (2002) concludes, these kinds of "looser" but diverse links between children and others are equally crucial in helping equip them for the future and encourage the conditions for civics and modern communities. As social scientists like Castells (1996) argue, modern social relations are characterised by networks of association that are more displaced, less familial, instead occurring across a fluidity of networked connections. The skills necessary for surviving in this complex and diverse values environment then are best learnt in a school environment where children are encouraged to contend with difference.

As communications technology, so called "virtual" or "cyber-networking" and globalisation emerges children are better prepared if they have a combination of both traditional and loose social connections to community. A strength of the Children and Place Mapping Project then was that it provided children with both opportunities for close and intimate contact with their immediate local community at the same time as exposing them to diverse relationships across multi-layered, intercultural and globalised communities.

The project is also a rich example of sustainability education in practice. As mentioned earlier, nurturing and sustaining places of importance was the starting point or springboard upon which the project started. Throughout the course of their work children constantly turned their "heads and hearts" to how they can mitigate the negative impact they have in their local environment. They considered how their actions (and the actions of those around them) could reinforce the environments and well-being of others (Fien, 1993).

Elsewhere, educational practitioners have pointed to the critical part that study and interaction with the environment plays in shaping children's education. As one state policy making body argues, "an understanding of our natural, cultural and social heritage is essential for the development of environmentally informed citizens who are prepared to become involved in their community" (Victorian Department of Education, 1998, p. 4). Particularly important in this regard is learning that stretches children to consider the connection between the natural, the built, the spatial, the economic, the social and cultural elements of their lives that determines the state of their future (Davids, 2005, p. 1). To put it another way, sustainability education gives children a chance to begin to appreciate their relationship to community, the diversity and uniqueness of land and the need to take care of tomorrow (Netherwood & Stocker, 2005, p. 41).

Learning for and about sustainability involves children in the study and practice of change (Tilbury, 2005, p. 5). In addition, schools provide elaborate examples of teaching practice with the following features as expressed by UNESCO:

- Interdisciplinary and holistic: learning about values and sustainability is carefully built into the curriculum rather than truncated or separate;
- Values-driven: the goal of looking after the future is made explicit so it can be examined, debated, tested and applied;
- Critical thinking and problem solving: children's work leads to them gaining confidence in addressing dilemmas and challenges;
- Multi-method: uses different pedagogies which model how they can act in their world such as using language, art, drama, debate and experience;
- Participatory decision-making: encourages children to get involved in planning and shaping their learning;
- Applicability: the learning experiences offered are integrated in a way that is relevant to children's lives;
- Locally relevant: learning is understood in language that is meaningful and helps students see and act on things that are connected to where they live (UNESCO, 2005, p. 2).

Conclusion

The Children and Place Mapping project offers a powerful illustration of how teachers, students and communities working together can create schools that nurture and give voice to children's values, particularly values that help them to: care for important places; sustain their futures; respect others; contend with the different values of others; and carry out social action that is meaningful.

By way of summary, this project has illustrated for us a number of important lessons about Values Education:

- Encouraging children to consider the things that nourish and sustain them and in turn how they can nourish and sustain their places;
- Learning about the stewardship of places;
- Involving elders, Indigenous people and other community members;
- Giving children a voice through different means and listening to what they say and how they say it;
- Using generative and inquiry-based approaches to learning;
- Involving members of the school and broader communities;
- Giving children opportunities to share, compare and contrast their ideas and values with those of others (both children and adults);
- Offering children opportunities to articulate their responses through language, arts practice, multi-media, mapping and other mediums appropriate to their age and background; and
- Connecting talk about values with children's involvement in social action.

Students participated in an extraordinary variety of projects with each school producing a combined website so that children (and others interested in the articulation of children's values) could begin to share and compare how others in different geographical and cultural contexts value their local places.

Those schools involved are now at a stage where they can start to build on the previous project, using it to extend children's understanding of the plurality of values that exist in different places. In this way the project will continue integrating Values Education in a range of cultural settings, across learning areas and throughout participating schools. In addition, it will broaden the reach of Values Education so that children begin to learn how to operate across cultural contexts, translate 'talk' and learning about values to social action and act as mentors to those who are novices in this kind of educational practice. As Year 6 student Jackson says, children in these five schools can now begin to tell others "what is what and where all of these important places are and how to respect them."

Chapter 7
Values and Quality Teaching at West Kidlington Primary School

Neil Hawkes

This is an account of the role that values play in quality teaching and learning at West Kidlington Primary School in Oxfordshire in the United Kingdom. It is written from my perspective as the Headteacher there between 1993 and 1999. It draws on my personal experience and other less subjective sources, such as the school's external inspection report, Frances Farrer's (2000, 2006) account of the school's programme in her books, *A Quiet Revolution* and *A Quiet Revolution II*, and my doctoral thesis (Oxford University). The thesis is entitled, *Does teaching values improve the quality of education in primary schools?* and is a detailed study of the impact of introducing Values Education at West Kidlington School. It is important to emphasize that the school continues to be a model for Values Education. Readers may choose to approach this chapter as an international benchmark for the Australian case studies in the preceding chapters. It might also be useful for putting some of the ideas, outlined earlier in the book about the relationship between values and quality teaching, to the test.

The School

West Kidlington Primary School is one of four local authority (Oxfordshire) primary schools situated in the urban conurbation of Kidlington, which is on the outskirts of Oxford in England. It has 480 pupils (5–11), plus 52 pupils (3–5) in its attached nursery. Systematically and explicitly, it began to introduce Values Education from January 1993. Its pedagogy has stood the test of time and the school continues to be seen as an outstanding beacon for Values Education, being visited by educators from around the world.

The school is in a somewhat disadvantaged suburb. The catchment area for the school is a mixture of comparatively low-cost private housing, plus council and association housing. During the 1990s, the social mix of West Kidlington changed. In the Headteacher's report to governors (September 1996), it was noted that families were being re-housed (100 new houses) from "challenging" areas and this was increasing the number of children with special educational needs (SEN) in the school. In the school's submission of information to OFSTED (Office for Standards in Education) in 1997, it

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was stated that the more well-off professional families were able to afford to move out from West Kidlington to more affluent surrounding villages, whilst less well-off families from nearby towns were moving to the area. A high proportion of families needing local authority housing were being located in accommodation in West Kidlington. Demographic changes increased the number of pupils with special educational needs (SEN). The OFSTED school inspection report indicated that, in 1997, this represented 14% of the school population. The range of complex social and behavioural problems in West Kidlington included 20 pupils needing external support for speech, autism and problems with learning, emotions and behaviour. Six children had a statement of special educational needs. There were 39 children from ethnic minorities and 21 who spoke English as an additional language. A year later (1998), the percentage of children with SEN had increased to 20%. In 2001, the percentage continued to increase to 22.3% of pupils with SEN. The attainment of pupils entering the primary school at the age of five (most had been in the adjoining nursery school for at least a year) was judged by OFSTED to be about average (OFSTED, 1997 para 34–36).

These social and environmental factors provided contextual reasons for the need to develop a Values Education policy that would underpin the school's curriculum. The Headteachers's initial audit of the school's curriculum was reported to school governors in February 1993. This audit stressed the extent of the work that needed to be done in terms of curriculum and policy development. The school governors agreed that the social and special needs issues would only be tackled effectively if a school ethos were developed that focused on positive values, good relationships and stressed the individual needs of pupils. The initial priorities included creating a school development plan and mission statement by considering the school's values. Afterwards, in a process of values identification with staff, parents and governors, the school governors endorsed the values and principles of the school at the meeting of the curriculum committee in March 1993. A key principle in the statement was that pupils should develop holistically, with an emphasis on personal moral, social and spiritual values, respect for religious values and understanding of other races, religions and ways of life. The opening paragraph stated:

> The purpose of the school is to provide learning and teaching which responds to the unique educational needs of each child. A calm, happy and purposeful working atmosphere is fostered within a caring community. An active partnership is encouraged between children, parents, governors and teachers. High standards are promoted by expecting pupils to work hard and to persevere in all areas of the curriculum (1993).

These values and principles emphasized raising the social and academic aspirations of the pupils. This was seen as a key element in raising standards.

The Headteacher's Vision

On being appointed to West Kidlington Primary School, I had wanted to bring my two former experiences, as a headteacher and more recently as a county education adviser (latterly as a local authority chief adviser), to the role of headteacher at West Kidlington. As a local authority chief adviser, I had developed a style of leadership

that emphasised the importance of valuing colleagues both for what they do and, more importantly, who they are. This was built on a realisation that the curriculum is so often built on subject content (the what) and implementation (the how), but rarely on the person who teaches it (the who). My philosophy, stressing that there should only be a hierarchy of roles never of relationships, enabled all members of the team to feel equal partners and to share responsibility for the development of the local authority's work. I had developed a philosophy that placed *valuing* at the heart of the school curriculum, meaning valuing self and others, the environment, knowledge and experience. A central tenet of my thinking was the importance of enabling staff and pupils to develop the capacity of self-awareness. As a headteacher and an adviser, I had worked with teachers, governors, parents and pupils to consider whether the quality of education (teaching and learning) could be improved through an explicitly values-based approach to the whole life of a school. I wanted to see whether a methodology that encouraged reflective thinking and personal responsibility, based on the careful consideration of positive values, could be the foundation for personal and school improvement and be a model for quality teaching and learning.

Why should *valuing* be so important? At a practical level, it ensures that the school fulfils the second aim of the English national curriculum: to promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and prepare all pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of life. At a philosophical level, the answer lies in a deep conviction about the purposes of education.

On courses I had organized, teachers had revealed that they became teachers in order to enhance the quality of pupils' lives. They also recognised that their classrooms had the potential to be the microcosm of what the world could become. They wanted their pupils to attain the highest academic standards, in terms of Government required standard attainment tests scores (SATS), but they realized that this is only part of the purpose of education. The other crucial element was to enable pupils to develop a personal ethic that gives meaning and purpose to their lives.

My experience had made me reflect that, all too often, people seem to experience feelings of emptiness, boredom and meaninglessness, which can lead to depression, aggression and addiction. I believed that a curriculum based on positive values would have the potential to liberate both teachers and pupils from this negative spiral. This would be achieved by building an internal capacity to maintain a positive attitude that is independent of external conditions or circumstances.

More deeply still, and counter to the current materialistic culture, was an understanding that personal contentment comes from shifting the fundamental attitude to life. This perception emphasises a proposition, articulated by Victor Frankl in his book, *Man's Search for Meaning* that we should not expect too much from life; indeed, it puts the opposite proposition: that life expects something from us. Such a realization creates meaning and depth of purpose. Thus, the development of Values Education was seen as crucial to giving pupils the opportunity to have access to a vocabulary of positive values such as respect, responsibility and co-operation. Significantly, this methodology gives pupils a values vocabulary that enables them to reflect about, and modify, their own behaviour. There was also the untested belief that giving pupils space and time to reflect inwardly about values would lead them

to an understanding, underdeveloped in schools, about how to control inner experience and thereby determine the quality of their lives. I saw Values Education as a means of inspiring pupils to be the very best human being they could be. Some may argue that this philosophy could be seen as unrealistically idealistic. To counter such accusations, I decided to work as a headteacher to implement Values Education in an urban local authority primary school, whilst studying its impact on the quality of education through my doctoral research based at Oxford University.

The School's Values Education Philosophy

West Kidlington Primary School's philosophy about Values Education is best described in the revised statement of the school's philosophy that was written in 1996 after three years of development:

> At West Kidlington, a great deal of thought is given to the values that we are promoting in school. The school regularly considers the appropriateness of a group of core values. Also, how the school can sustain an ethos that supports the pupil as a reflective learner. The school aims to promote quality teaching and learning by underpinning its life and work with Values Education … Children are constantly bombarded with negative messages that adversely affect their mental, emotional and spiritual development … They are generally encouraged to experience life in a world totally external to their inner-selves: a world that is full of noise and constant activity …
>
> To counter such negativity, the school community believes that the ethos of the school should be built on a foundation of core values, such as honesty, respect, happiness, responsibility, tolerance and peace. These values to be at times addressed directly through activities, such as the acts of worship programme, whilst at others to permeate the whole curriculum. Either way, they are the basis for the social, intellectual, emotional, spiritual and moral development of the whole child. We encourage pupils to consider these values, thereby developing knowledge, skills and attitudes that enable them to develop as reflective learners, achieving their full potential, as they grow to be stable, well educated and civil adults. The school firmly believes that, besides making a positive contribution to social education, such an approach contributes directly to the raising of academic standards.

> Therefore the school's aim is:

> To raise standards by promoting a school ethos, which is underpinned by core values that support the development of the whole child as a reflective learner.

The Core Values

In order to achieve its aim and thus promote quality teaching and learning, staff in the school worked together to impart core values (universally accepted principles that guide behaviour). These values were based on the qualities or dispositions that the school considered were important for the pupils to understand and develop. The values were selected through a process of careful discussion, involving staff,

parents and governors. The school reflected on the qualities, such as respect and care, which it wished to help the pupils to develop. These qualities became the values that would be considered in Values Education. Twenty-two values were chosen to provide a value a month for every month, except August (a holiday month), on a two-year cycle. The values are:

	YEAR 1	YEAR 2
September	RESPECT	QUALITY
October	RESPONSIBILITY	UNITY
November	TOLERANCE	PEACE
December	THOUGHTFULNESS	HAPPINESS
January	FRIENDSHIP	HOPE
February	LOVE	PATIENCE
March	COURAGE	CARE
April	APPRECIATION	HUMILITY
May	HONESTY	SIMPLICITY
June	UNDERSTANDING	TRUST
July	CO-OPERATION	FREEDOM

The values create a common vocabulary for pupils and staff to explicitly consider ethical issues concerning the self and others. The pupils cannot be assumed to naturally have such a vocabulary, although some may. During the six years of primary schooling, a pupil revisits a value three times, gaining a deeper understanding each time. The value of the month is introduced during assemblies and a lesson a month is devoted to developing understanding. The monthly value is the subject of a display in the main assembly hall and in each classroom. Besides the explicit consideration of each value, the value is an implicit feature of the whole curriculum.

Staff and pupils reflect on the practical implications that these values have for the school community. Pupils are encouraged to reflect on their behaviour in the light of the values. They are helped to understand that, if they think carefully about the values, their behaviour will then be more positive and the quality of their learning enhanced.

As the programme developed, staff gradually appreciated that time for stillness and reflection empowers pupils to take responsibility for their own learning and behaviour. All staff became conscious of the impact that their own attitudes and behaviour had on the pupils. They worked to maintain a calm, purposeful and happy ethos.

A key aspect of Values Education at West Kidlington School is its attention to the development of the inner world of the pupil. According to Professor Bart McGettrick, the crucial philosophical question of the 21st Century will concern how we can educate the inner-self. The school's thinking about this was enhanced by the work of Professor McGettrick (1995) in his paper for the Scottish Consultative Council. He states that the purpose of educating the inner-self *is to help people to be*

better suited to life. Without this dimension, education becomes a one-dimensional enterprise, merely concerned with achievement targets and outcomes such as league tables, SATS and external inspection. There is therefore a need to have a balance between the two dimensions.

At West Kidlington, the deeper inner (spiritual) needs of pupils are recognized. To address these needs, pupils (and staff) are encouraged to give time to periods of silent reflection/contemplation, value themselves, be aware of the development of their inner-selves and become aware of the aspects of the world that cannot be seen in the physical sense, such as love and truth.

To support the development of the inner self, pupils are encouraged to:

- respect themselves, other people and the world;
- care about the environment and the welfare of other people;
- think about community needs as well as their own;
- develop a sense of self-identity and integrity;
- reflect on social, moral, spiritual and religious choices;
- seek peace, justice and truth in all areas of life.

Staff promote these elements by living the school's values, by working hard to be good role models. When pupils join the school, they are introduced to an induction programme associated with the culture of the school. Emphasis is given to reinforcing good manners, to routines that support the good management of the classroom, and to giving lots of positive reinforcement. Staff emphasize the positive by showing pupils respect, caring and never putting down a child—only his/her inappropriate behaviour. Pupils are introduced to the negotiation of ways of behaving and living at school (based on the school's values) that make the classroom a happy and purposeful place to be — one where standards and the quality of education can be exemplary. The staff set high expectations for academic achievement and clear boundaries for behaviour. The foundation of Values Education requires good self-discipline and high expectations by all.

Values Education is best facilitated in a calm, reflective atmosphere. This gives space for inner reflection, which allows pupils to develop self-awareness, conscience, creativity, and self-will. These four aspects help pupils to take responsibility for their own actions, rather than being at the mercy of reacting to events and circumstances.

The school found that quiet reflection, often using simple visualization techniques, allows children and adults to contemplate and get to know themselves better. Time is given for class and school reflection (silent times for thinking). Silence is considered an important element of the school's reflective practice and is encouraged during assembly and lesson times. The perceived outcome is that pupils gain self-awareness and a sense of responsibility for their own lives and happiness. Also, staff are encouraged to take a few minutes, at regular intervals, to be still and silent in order to allow the "traffic" of the mind to settle. These regular times of stillness have the effect of reenergising the mind and teachers report that they maintain their energy levels better and are less tired at the end of the day. Such techniques support what research is finding out about how the brain works. For instance, Dr. Derek

Sankey stresses the importance of the subconscious nature of our thinking and its link with Values Education. He states:

> Values … not only influence the conscious choices and actions of students, they also contribute to the making of each individual brain and influence what each self will do when actions and choices are initiated subconsciously. This seems to me to put a strong case for the centrality of values in the whole educational process … highlighting, the school itself has to become a values-based learning environment. (Sankey, 2006)

Furthermore, at West Kidlington a conscious effort is made by all adults to give close attention and listen carefully to the pupils, thereby establishing mutual respect. Time is set aside for staff (teaching and non-teaching) discussions to ensure that all adults in the school are consistent in both their own behaviour and their expectations of pupil behaviour. Consistency, across all staff (walking the talk), in upholding the key principles of Values Education is a major key to ensuring the effectiveness of the work. Listening to, and active involvement of, the 'pupil voice' is also an important aspect of the values programme, thus ensuring that expectations are seen as fair. Pupils are expected to be involved actively in shaping the school's policy about how the school's community can live in harmony. The pupils know that positive behaviour is expected of them, because boundaries are clearly defined within the expectations of the school's behaviour policy. These expectations are shaped too by governors, parents and the community.

The school avoids making exaggerated claims regarding the beneficial effects of Values Education. Staff members are only too aware of the complex range of social issues that impinge on the life of the school and their tentative steps to address them. However, the school's experience suggests that if the wider school community supports the school's values approach to teaching and learning then the benefits for pupils can be seen in their positive behaviour and in their achievements. Indeed, the Office for Standards in Education (OFSTED) endorsed this point in its 1997 report of the school. The inspection found evidence that led to the Report stating that Values Education positively affected behaviour, relationships and significantly standards. The Report's main finding was:

> That West Kidlington School is a very good school with outstanding features. The underpinning of the school's work with Values Education contributes significantly to good standards, good pupil behaviour and excellent relationships (OFSTED, 1997).

The school's educational philosophy was further endorsed in the detail of the Report and is significant evidence of its effectiveness. In the section that reported on the spiritual, moral, social and cultural aspects of the curriculum, the inspection team reported that provision was an outstanding feature of the school. The Report supported the school's belief that if the adults in the school provide excellent role models then this will have a significant impact on standards, relationships and behaviour. In paragraph 23 of the Report, OFSTED noted:

> Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is an outstanding feature of the school. The consistent and successful implementation of the school's values policy, enhanced by

the excellent role models provided by the staff and adult helpers, contributes significantly to standards and results in high quality relationships and excellent pupil behaviour. There is extremely effective provision for pupils' moral and social development, with pupils helped to develop effectively as citizens through their participation in the School Council. There are excellent opportunities for pupils to develop and express moral values and extend their understanding of right and wrong.

The effectiveness of the school's leadership was totally sanctioned by the OFSTED team of Inspectors. The inspection evidence led to the school's style of leadership and staff commitment being praised:

> The Leadership provided by the headteacher is outstanding, creating a peaceful, caring and purposeful school ethos, based on high expectations, openness, effective teamwork and respect for individuals. There is total commitment to the school's values by all who work in the school and this contributes significantly to the school's success.

OFSTED maintained an interest in the school. Chris Woodhead (then Chief Inspector of Schools) visited the school in March 1999, observing classes and speaking with pupils and staff. He later wrote to the headteacher,

> I was very interested to see the school for myself. The children are very confident and clearly take a great pride in their work. It is hard to know what I can add to your very positive inspection report, but many congratulations on what you are achieving.

The OFSTED Inspection is clearly important external evidence about what is happening in the school and endorses the clear link between Values Education and the quality of education, in terms of teaching, learning, relationships, behaviour and standards.

The staff had decided that there were certain elements of teaching and learning that would need to be established to enable the pupils to gain the maximum benefit from Values Education. The key to this was maintaining a climate for learning in the classroom that was positive, calm and all-inclusive, with a feeling of equality. This would help pupils to gain most from values lessons. It was considered important that any approach to class management was in line with the values being taught. Pupils soon feel secure and able to share their thoughts, feelings and experiences when they know that these are always welcomed and valued. Also, pupils will respond quickly when the teacher is aware that he or she is an important role model, as values are very much "caught".

In creating a values-based approach to teaching and learning, it is considered vital that pupils are given basic information about appropriate behaviour as soon as they begin school. Aspects of training include:

- how to be calm, sit still and give attention to the teacher;
- how to be relaxed, yet alert, in order to learn effectively;
- understanding that we all use body language to express ourselves;
- how to use the imagination through visualisation;
- to be aware of emotions and to develop emotional literacy;

- how to behave in the school in a quiet, purposeful and peaceful way;
- showing respect for the self and others.

As a young infant needs to be toilet trained, so all children need to be enabled to develop an attitude to learning that is positive and encourages high personal achievement. Boundaries of behaviour need to be set, otherwise the child is not free to develop self-discipline.

Understanding the subtleties of this work is important, as it could be misunderstood as a crude control mechanism. The basic training in values-based behaviour comes about, not by Draconian imposition, but by teachers giving positive reinforcement to pupils who are displaying satisfactory behaviour. Paying attention to inappropriate behaviour has negative consequences. Instead, the teacher concentrates on using positive language and gives positive reinforcement. For instance, a teacher does not say, *Why can't you at the back line up properly?* Instead she points out the pupil who is lining up properly. Time invested in this basic training is time well spent, as it creates a school climate that is calm, purposeful and happy. Moreover, pupils report that such a school climate helps them to feel secure, happy and free to express themselves appropriately.

Developing good relationships between pupils, and between adults and pupils, is vital in creating the climate for pupils to take responsibility for their learning. The teacher's responsibility is to focus on developing an attitude of mind in the pupil that encourages them to take responsibility. Both pupils, and staff, need positive affirmation. The ideal atmosphere in the classroom supports the notion that teacher and pupil are joint partners in the learning process. This attitude creates a feeling of equal respect and a relationship of working together.

Formative assessment plays a key role in developing responsibility in the pupils. For instance, in marking work, research suggests that placing a few appropriate comments on a piece of pupil work has more effect on developing learning than giving a grade to a piece of work. Also, teachers find that they are most effective when they give pupils appropriate questions to consider that extend their thinking. Sufficient time to reflect on questions, before being required to answer, is found to be very important as it gives time for reflection. If not given, the pupil searches for a quick answer that they think will satisfy the teacher. If the answer is incorrect, then the teacher is more likely to ask another simpler question, and so on, until the pupil answers a question correctly. This standard classroom practice is found to be of limited value in helping the pupil to develop appropriate thinking skills.

Staff agreed on the importance of acting as a positive role model for the pupils in the classroom. Pupils copy the attitudes and behaviour of the teacher. It is therefore considered important for teachers to think about how they sit, their tone of voice and the degree to which they are authentic in their interactions with pupils. In adopting a values-based approach, there is no doubt that the ability of staff to model preferred pupil behaviour is the key to the development of positive behaviour and the raising of achievement. For instance, it is considered that there is little point in talking about the value of respect if staff experience difficulty in respecting pupils. For

instance, are staff comfortable in holding a door open for a child or do they always expect the child to be the one to hold the door?

At West Kidlington Primary School, it was found to be important to create quiet reflective times in the classroom, in order to support the development of values. These times were when the pupils were expected to sit still and silent for anything from one to four minutes, sometimes with some soft music and perhaps facilitating words from the teacher. This has proved to help children in a variety of ways. It regulates breath and heartbeat, and so calms and relaxes the body. It quietens the mind, focuses attention and increases concentration. It helps to develop awareness and intuition, and the children are more able to get in touch with their own feelings. A period of silence, at the beginning of a lesson, followed by a simple reflection, when the pupils are asked to consider and reflect on the work that they are about to do or have completed, is an excellent technique to develop positive thinking skills. The use of visualisation appears to develop the imaginative side of the brain that promotes creativity and problem solving. Periods of stillness help to create a learning-centred atmosphere that allows each child to have the opportunity to achieve success. The classroom's quiet and reflective atmosphere is not something that is imposed, but is found to grow out of the expectations and behaviour of the teacher (a noisy teacher often has a noisy class). A more reflective atmosphere can be promoted during working periods, especially in more challenging classrooms, by using appropriate calming music that helps to develop a peaceful atmosphere.

Assemblies (times when part or all of the whole school assembles) act as a way of helping both pupils and staff consider positive thoughts and feelings to use during the day. The school assemblies are special times to reflect and celebrate things that are of worth in the school's community and central to Values Education. The school's aim was that all should feel valued and appreciated through the experience.

The value of the month was introduced during assembly time and the quality of the assemblies was thought pivotal to the success of Values Education. The role and methodology of assembly have been detailed in *A Quiet Revolution* (Farrer, 2006) and *How to inspire and develop values in your classroom* (Hawkes, 2003).

West Kidlington's philosophy of teaching and learning is rooted within an historical philosophical tradition. It demonstrates that education is primarily concerned with the moral process of helping students to be "better" people and by so doing foster a more civilised society. Within the school's philosophy can be seen a strong philosophical theme, rooted in Aristotle's thinking about the notion of *virtues*, which highlighted the importance of feelings, intuition and the development of *good* habits as the route to the development of the virtuous life, happiness and fulfilment. Also, another strong theme can be identified, the development of reason, which sought clarity about what words mean (e.g. justice considered by Socrates). Importantly, the school can be seen to reflect the philosophical thinking of Dewey, Buber, Noddings and MacMurray, who all stressed the importance of the development of caring positive relationships.

West Kidlington challenges any conception of a school as being inherently values-free or values-neutral. The value of education and schooling as a social

agency designed to achieve a multiplicity of purposes, including some which might be contestable, is stated in explicit terms. Among these purposes is a role concerned with values formation and inculcation that goes beyond the bounds of values clarification to encompass demonstrated forms of moral attainment. In other words, among the school's stated aims and purposes are those designed to make a difference to students' personal integrity and social relations. Indeed, this aim and purpose is considered to be so important as to be paramount. This is why *Values* and *Values Education* stand at the centre of the school's philosophy of teaching and learning.

As a statement of beliefs and values, curriculum must be internally consistent and saturating in its effects. Saying one thing and doing another will not suffice, no matter how eloquent the "saying" nor how well supported it might be with smart pedagogy. If the school is primarily a social agency around values, then every aspect of the explicit and implicit curriculum must be geared towards that. There are two implications for this. First, every curriculum area must be used in exploring values themes and providing opportunities for the instilling and practice of values. Second, the explicit curriculum must be supported by the implicit, or hidden, curriculum that sees teacher and school modelling as a primary form of education. In other words, the witness of teachers, other school personnel, parents and stakeholders as models of ethical behaviour is held to be at the heart of what the school is about. Paramount in this modelling is the behaviour of care and trust. It may be argued that only in a caring and trusting environment can values inculcation be attained effectively. Of interest is the research that has illustrated that the same is true in relation to all learning. This is one of the many important connections to be made between Values Education and quality teaching that is illustrated in the following paragraphs.

As stated, a growing number of children beginning school at West Kidlington had special educational needs, particularly problems related to poor or inappropriate behaviour. It is a school in an insalubrious environment. However, West Kidlington School has had considerable success at integrating pupils from other schools with various special educational needs (SEN). For example, a boy was transferred into Year 6 who had been excluded from a neighbouring primary school. The child's father wrote to the school on 4 September 1994 giving thanks for the way his son had been received into the school. He said: *After 5 months out of school…the patience, understanding and time given by* (teacher's name) *gave* (child's name) *a new found confidence in himself and an appetite for wanting to learn*. This is an example of how Values Education promoted intellectual depth, not only positive self-image. The school activity promoted the acquisition of thinking skills, including perceptiveness, analysis, evaluation and intuition in its quality teaching programmes. Another example is illustrated when the school was asked to accept two boys with autism, as it was considered that the school's calm and purposeful ethos, with an emphasis on high aspirations, would be conducive to integrating them into the main stream of schooling. The school's academic and social success made it a target for parents outside the school's immediate catchment area, who wanted their children to benefit from the school's growing reputation for fostering quality teaching and learning.

	English	Maths	Science
Nationally	64.1%	57.9%	68.6%
West Kidlington	86.0%	61.0%	86.0%

Fig. 7.1 Comparative attainment levels of performance for West Kidlington pupils. *(Source: Primary School Performance Tables. 1998 Key Stage 2 Results)*

Attainment of pupils at age 11 in the 3 core subjects (English, maths and science), as measured in standard assessment tasks 1996–1998, was well above the national average in English and science, and above the average in maths. Percentages for those gaining level 4 or above in 1998 are shown in Fig. 7.1 above.

The figures demonstrate the significant value added element that the school produced given the general low attainment of pupils on entry to nursery. Comparisons between schools are invidious, as they do not reveal contextual factors, but the averaged results for the other 4 primary schools in the West Kidlington Partnership of schools in 1998 was English 65%, maths 56% and science 71%. Whilst these figures do not provide enough evidence to claim that sats results improve because of Values Education, nonetheless, they demonstrate that the school was considered to have been achieving well in terms of academic attainment during the period when Values Education was being developed (1993–1999).

Evidence from Pupils

In July 1997, Year 6 pupils were asked to write about their perceptions of Values Education. This was because the school had been asked by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA) to write about the school's values work. Katherine Smith (aged 10) wrote about her perceptions of Values Education emphasising, in her words, the school's emphasis on quality education:

> At West Kidlington School we have a values policy. It consists of a different value each month, which we concentrate on and learn about to help us with our futures. I believe it has taught us to be well behaved, good mannered, anti-racist and to have a good attitude. Some of the most recent values have been care, kindness, happiness and humility, which is our current monthly value. It teaches us to be humble and to be a good loser. Another of our values was quality and Mr. Hawkes, our Headteacher, insists that our work is of a high quality and we think and act with thought. So far this is what is happening, or so say all the visitors we get, which I agree with. From my point of view, the change in our school has been phenomenal. We have had no serious behaviour problems; actually there have been no problems at all. Also there has been no vandalism, racism or any other problems. So the values work we have been doing at our school has helped us a great deal, so we should turn out to be good law abiding adults.

An outcome of such teaching can be seen in the communicative capacity of the pupils, such as Katherine at West Kidlington. The research evidence, gathered in

1999, shows that eleven-year-old pupils are able to talk about the process of being engaged in Values Education, what they learned and their ability to reflect on its benefits. They demonstrated a confidence in articulating their views and showed ability to analyse their thinking and construct meaningful arguments to support their views. An example of this ability can be seen in Nicholas's answer to the question, *Why does the school teach values?*

> I would tell them that they (values) improve our life, you become a kinder pupil. We listen and can concentrate. We can really think about what we do in different circumstances. The whole school can be united, really. I have spoken to visitors to school and told them all our about our assemblies and how we try and relate to the value of the month.

What is demonstrated here is the pupil's intellectual capacity to reflect (being able to think back to an event and consider its impact). Pupils were also asked to consider if they were aware that they thought about things differently because of Values Education. It may be argued that it is a measure of the influence of Values Education that the pupils are able to frame answers to such comparatively difficult questions. Periods of silent reflection appear to develop self-discipline and thinking skills. The practice appears to have helped pupils, who describe a number of ways that they now think they think differently and how new thinking has affected their behaviour. These include having empathy; sensitivity to the feelings of others; awareness of self; behaviour modification. Madeline, for instance, has learned not to retaliate when she is upset by others and says that she is sensitive to the feelings of others and has empathy. In her own words:

> … if someone said something horrible to me, I would have thought that I have got to retaliate because that person has been horrible. Now I have been taught about values, I have just learnt to understand that there might be something that has upset them. I now try to find out why they said that and to say that I will help them with their problem and we will forget about what you said. If you find out there is something wrong and they did not mean to say that, it was how they were feeling inside. Examples of this are that when Emma and I were at Atlantic College (school residential visit), we got into an argument and I sat in a cupboard and closed the door! Libby started laughing and Madeline asked why I said that and I explained that I did not mean to say it that way. She said she thought I was being a goody-goody. I did not mean it that way and we learnt to understand what other people were thinking before you spoke out.

Nicholas too thinks more about his behaviour, the result being that he is less argumentative with others. Whether this is as a result of the general maturing of Nicholas cannot be said, but his reflective, self-awareness is arguably a result of the values programme. He says:

> I used to have a go at people from time to time and I do not do that any more. I don't argue any more because I do not like arguing.

Tristan perhaps sheds some light on why the pupils of West Kidlington gain above average results in the Key Stage 2 national tests. The teachers think that Values Education develops concentration in the pupils and Tristan agrees:

Yes, it has helped me to concentrate and look at the deep meaning of things, like looking at the values of stories and look deeper into things.

Tristan's remarks also provide evidence that Values Education promotes pupil self-management, which empowers the pupil to work with others, and eventually on one's own, on the intellectual aspects of values and subsequently in living them. Madeline suggests that she is aware of the difference in attitude of the current Year 6, of which she is a member, and the Year 6 when she was in Year 2 as a seven-year-old and suggests that it is because of values. The important point is in her belief that values make a difference to behaviour. She says:

Yes, if you take someone who is being horrible and they said something they did not mean to and just walked off to the playground, they would actually, after a while, turn round, come back and explain why they said that to my friends. In the playground, if you look, you can see other people getting along better than when we were little. When I was in Year 2 the older Year 6's did not really get on because they had not learnt about values — but now our Year 6's get along much better than the others used to.

Tristan, talking as an eleven-year-old in 1999, was interviewed in 2005 to gain his views on the longer-term effects of having attended a values-based school. As a seventeen-year-old, he attends the local Secondary School. Tristan was asked what he remembered about Values Education at West Kidlington Primary School:

Well, it was a big part in the school curriculum. There was always a focus every month that would be discussed in class, in assemblies, with friends and teachers, and these were associated with values. And the way that they were taught was very kind of involving so that you would actually take it on. When you would think about it, you would believe it, you would really kind of integrate it to life and … one of the things I remember most is the way that these things kind of fell into place. It seemed right; it seemed that you should … because it helps you in life. Early on in your life, when you first question boundaries and rules and you do think, "Where are they?" then values come in … in a very good way, in an honest way that is helpful to others. And you think, "Yes, that's brilliant, that's how I want to live" and, because you catch it at such an early age, you do want to continue it, you think it's fantastic — it does really affect the way you are as a person.

Tristan was asked if he had noticed anything about the teachers at West Kidlington. His answer powerfully endorses the importance of teachers' modelling the values.

The teachers were kind of the embodiment of values in a way. They worked values themselves so you thought, "I want to be like that teacher, I want to be just like that." And the teacher would talk about values in assembly and class and you really want to know that person because you want to be like that. That helps because you really do want to listen and you take it in because you want to and because you respect that person for being that way, being values educated.

Tristan now acts as a student mentor and notes differences between pupils coming to his secondary school from West Kidlington and from other feeder primary schools.

Yes, certainly … There is a striking difference between people who come from here (West Kidlington) where Values Education is taught and people from a place where that's not available. In their behaviour…people who come from here are a lot more patient, a lot more caring, and there is an approachability about them … Those are the people I don't have to take aside and chat with because they question themselves and they kind of say, "That's wrong I am not going to do that." There are other people (from other feeder primary schools) who don't have the ability to do that. Those are the people you talk to, who coincidentally have not had Values Education. It's that striking that you can actually tell who has been to West Kidlington.

Finally, Tristan commented on what he thought our world would be like if Values Education were instituted in all schools:

Yes, I honestly think it will, because it is giving people a chance and guidelines to do something different with their lives in a harmonious way with people, which is also enriching for themselves. I think that everybody should get a chance to do this.

Tristan and the other pupils make a strong case for Values Education. They endorse the school's pedagogy and provide evidence that establishes the link between quality teaching and learning and the establishment of a values-based school environment. Indeed, it can be seen that pupils can only be really educated if their school is underpinned by positive values that are made explicit. If this is the case, then it has serious implications for teacher education.

Conclusion

The importance of West Kidlington as a model for Values Education lies in it being the first school community to systematically and consistently to underpin its curriculum with a values-based approach to teaching and learning over an extended period. Its *blueprint* has become an inspiration for other schools world-wide and may be summarised as follows:

1. The whole school community (staff, pupils, parents and community representatives) is involved in shaping the Values Education policy.
2. The school identifies why it wants to introduce values-based education—making clear the school's educational philosophy.
3. A process of values identification takes place involving the school's community. A meeting/forum is set up to facilitate this process.
4. Core positive values (e.g. respect, honesty and co-operation) are identified, as well as the period of time over which they are to be introduced. These are chosen through a careful process, which involves thinking about what qualities (values) the school should encourage the pupils to develop. The West Kidlington model has twenty-two values introduced over a two-year cycle—one value each month. Schools may decide to have fewer values and they may also need to take account of values contained in Country/State guidelines.

5. In the light of the values identified, the school decides the principles that will guide the way adults behave. Elements will be discussed to determine these such as:

    - how adults will care for themselves and each other
    - the emotional literacy of adults
    - the needs of the pupils
    - the way pupils are treated

6. Adults in the school commit themselves to work towards being role models for Values Education.
7. The school's institutional values (i.e. how the school is perceived by the community through aspects such as how parents are welcomed) are reviewed to ensure consistency with the Values Education Policy.
8. The school considers how it will encourage reflective practices that will lead to values-based behaviour, such as silent sitting, active listening and the consideration of ethical dilemmas.
9. A programme is established for learning about values, which may include:

    - introducing values in a programme of assemblies;
    - one value being highlighted each month;
    - each class teacher preparing one value lesson each month;
    - the value of the month being the subject of a prominent display in the school hall and in each classroom;
    - newsletters to parents, explaining what the value of the month is and how they can be developed at home.

    Aspects of the curriculum (everything the school does) are identified that could make a specific contribution to Values Education. The range of skills, knowledge, attitudes and understanding to develop in the pupils is established. Crucially, ensure that the process of developing Values Education is well planned, monitored, evaluated and celebrated in order to keep the process alive and constantly under review.

10. The school agrees a Statement of Values that may be prominently displayed in school and included in the school's prospectus.

Chapter 8
A Perfect Match: Living Values Educational Program and Aventura City of Excellence School, USA

Kathleen Shea and Katherine Bray Murphy

Introduction: A Perfect Match

In 2003, the City of Aventura recruited Dr. Katherine Murphy to be the Principal of their soon-to-be-built charter school, asking that she create a world-class educational model for Aventura, known as the City of Excellence. Meeting with parents, community members, leaders and teachers, Murphy brainstormed and researched to find answers to target the needs of all involved. Together they created a vision for Aventura City of Excellence School (ACES) which is "to join together with the community to become the premier charter school in the nation where academic excellence coexists with the promotion of social responsibility grounded in an atmosphere of human dignity." Put simply, the teaching of values has equal importance to academic "press."

Involved in the school from the design/build aspect to the choice of curricular materials was just the encouragement Murphy needed to take on this daunting task. Note also that the school's alluring location on the Intra-coastal Waterway, with the backdrop of the Atlantic Ocean in the distance, presented an impressive vista, ideal for attracting teachers and staff during a time of teacher shortage in the USA.

Having recently completed her dissertation with her research focus on transforming teachers through care, empowerment and community, and having been informed by the works of Noddings and Palmer (care), Purpel, Freire, Hooks, Miller (empowerment) and Irwin, Moffit and Sergiovani (community), Murphy accepted the leadership challenge, armed with questions designed around issues such as:

1. Can public schools be places where teachers feel cared for?
2. Can re-designing staff development, and pre and in-service training, help teachers reconnect to the impulse to risk caring relationships?
3. Can a school be designed around the latest "best practices" and "best developing practices" format to affect the best possible results in teaching and learning?

K. Shea (✉)
Living Values: An Educational Program, Inc., Miami, FL, USA

4. What are the shared values and commitments that enable a school to become a community of mind?
5. How will these values and commitments become practical standards that can guide the lives community members want to lead, what community members want to learn, and how community members treat each other?

All of these questions, as mentioned in previous chapters and proposed in the VEGPS Project, involve Values Education because at the heart of teaching and learning are relationships. People do not live and learn in isolation. We live and learn in relation to others and identified common values support relationship building.

The school facility was planned to cluster teachers' rooms together to allow for maximum time for planning and to enhance building relationships between teams of educators. Teacher meeting areas were created as places to retreat for contemplative moments. The master schedule was built around the latest educational reform efforts to allow for two-hour literacy blocks and one hour of uninterrupted mathematics instruction. In neighboring schools and around the nation, recess was eliminated. It took time away from the vital skills teaching. The stakeholders at ACES, students included, felt otherwise and recess time remains a valuable time for play, replenishing and socializing.

The latest in technological advancements such as SMART boards, interactive white boards, ceiling mounted projectors, and surround sound speakers were included in the design plan. Curricular resource materials to support core content areas were researched and chosen by highly skilled teams of teachers newly hired by the principal and assistant principal. It was time to choose the character education program to support the ACES culture. Charter Schools USA had written into its charter agreement with the City of Aventura and the Miami-Dade County Public Schools that each of its schools would have a character education program component. In 2003, this was a newly emerging choice for public schools in the USA, and almost non-existent.

Dr. Katherine Bray Murphy met Dr. Kathleen Shea after being moved by reading a copy of the Living Values Activities Guide authored by Diane Tillman, a former school psychologist for the California public school system. Shea and Murphy met in the spring of 2003 for three hours to discuss their mutual interest in Values Education and the Living Values Educational Program. They found their belief systems to be "a perfect match." The ACES Living Values Program was not going to be a purchased "package" from an educational store shelf, but a vibrant new way of life for the stakeholders at ACES to "*live* and *be* their values." A friendship and relationship was forged that continues to this day. Imagine the excitement of creating a climate of care among staff members, students, family and the community in a new school facility, with hand picked teachers and a state of the art building, with every academic best practice that's been identified by the Association of Supervision and Development (ASCD) put into place, built upon a foundation of common core values identified by Tillman, and introduced to ACES staff, students and parents by LVEP facilitators.

What they could not choose were the students. Admission to ACES requires a lottery system that allows anyone in Florida to participate, but limits enrollment to

100 students per grade level. The student population ranges from 20% at or below the USA poverty level (identified by students receiving free and reduced lunch) to students having every advantage. The ACES student body also includes representation from over 30 countries, making it a rich multi cultural environment. What has been clear is that all students, parents and teachers benefit from Values Education. It cannot be bought or parachuted in. It is an inside job.

Introduction

Parents and students have always known—and research has now confirmed—the importance of quality teaching in developing students who are both academically excellent and of strong personal character. As important as quality teaching is however, it is only one aspect of a larger social system that has values at its core. "Closing the loop" in Values Education by recognizing the interplay of quality teaching, parenting, and civic engagement is critical to providing the environment in which deep learning can occur and opportunities exist for "practising the values that are being enunciated in the curriculum" (DEST, 2006).

This chapter describes how Aventura City of Excellence School (ACES) in Miami, Florida, USA demonstrates best practice findings of the Australian Values Education Good Practices Schools Project (VEGPS): namely "quality teaching and pedagogy"; "taking a whole school approach"; "affording maximum buy in by all stakeholders"; and "modeling, living out" values. We describe how, taken together, these elements foster and support both academic excellence and an understanding of, and responsibility for, making positive personal and social choices that benefit not only the students themselves but the school, community, and the world.

Like the chapter on West Kidlington Primary School, this account may also serve as an international benchmark confirming findings of the Australian studies. It is also important, however, to view this chapter in light of the system of public education in the USA. Schooling is the responsibility of the states forming the United States of America. Without a national curriculum, states, districts within states, and even individual schools decide upon whether and which Values Education curriculum to include in their academic programs. As the USA's "flagship" Living Values school, ACES represents the personal commitment of parents, the local government, community, and business leaders as well as the educational leaders within the school, to provide children with the academic, social, emotional, and spiritual skills required for the next generation of global leaders.

Quality Teaching and Values Education at ACES

In Chapter 2, Neville Clement aptly summarized the basic premise of this book. Quality teaching is the "dynamic interaction of subject content, pedagogical strategies and values to provide an optimal environment for student achievement." This section

describes Aventura City of Excellence School, the Values Education program implemented at the school, and its approach to three important elements of quality teaching discussed by Lovat in Chapter 1. These are, namely, teaching and modeling, creating a values-based atmosphere, and fostering deep versus surface learning.

The School

ACES is part of one of the most important reform movements of public education in the USA during the 20th Century—the charter school movement This movement was a product of growing public dissatisfaction with schooling, coupled with increased calls for accountability and choice during the 1980s and 1990s. Today there are over 3,500 public charter schools in the USA, enrolling over 1 million students (National Alliance for Public Charter Schools, 2006). Still, this represents only about 2% of all public school students. Florida however, is one of the chief states where charter schools are thriving, with 333 public charter schools, enrolling nearly 100,000 children (Florida Department of Education, 2006). Aventura City of Excellence School enrolls 800 students in Kindergarten through Grade 7 (ages 5–13). The school is in its fourth year of operation, and in Fall 2007 will enroll another 100 students in Grade 8. ACES has a fully certified staff that includes teachers, a school counselor, media specialists, art teacher, coaches and physical education instructors and other classroom support personnel including five literacy specialists.

The school is located in a relatively affluent suburb of Miami, Florida. The City itself is new, incorporated in 1995. Tall condominiums line the beach about 30 miles north of downtown Miami. Smaller, well-constructed homes are further inland. Homes of the earlier "snowbird" retirees who spent the winters in Florida now attract young families. Shopping malls and office complexes compete for scarce land with congregate living facilities for the elderly. Aventura is a dynamic little city caught on the cusp of demographic change. The city's population of about 25,000 is becoming younger as the older generation of retirees yields to the influx of working professionals and families with young children. Aventura has taken its slogan to be "The City of Excellence"; thus the school's name. City leaders recognized the need for an elementary school and in partnership with Charter Schools USA as the management company, and Miami-Dade County Public Schools (the local school district with legal authority to grant a "charter") developed the first municipally controlled charter school in Florida.

ACES opened its doors in Fall (Autumn) 2003 with 600 students. The school now enrols 800 with a waiting list of 1,000 and ultimately will top out at nearly 1,000 students. Families from 33 countries enroll their students at ACES, representing all varieties of cultural, religious, and linguistic backgrounds. The school has been the recipient of two national awards for promising practices in character education by the Character Education Partnership, the USA premier association dedicated to Values Education. Teaching values at ACES is one of the goals listed in the State required school improvement document that focuses on every facet of

school life related to student achievement. ACES uses a Plan-Do-Study-Act model of continuous improvement to check for progress towards goals. ACES is an academically excellent school based on a series of performance indicators used in Florida and the USA. In 2006, it was named one of the top 10 schools in Florida among schools enrolling students from Kindergarten through Grade 8.

Living Values Educational Program

At Aventura City of Excellence School, the teachers know that effective character education uses a comprehensive, intentional, and proactive approach to character development integrated into students' experiences. This includes a meaningful and challenging academic curriculum that respects all learners, develops their character, and helps them to succeed. For these reasons, ACES chose to implement the Living Values Educational Program (LVEP) as an essential part of its character education curriculum.

Living Values Educational Program (Tillman, 2000a, b & c) is a comprehensive Values Education program. This innovative global program offers training, a practical methodology, and a wide variety of experiential values activities so educators, facilitators, parents and caregivers can help provide the opportunity for children and young adults to explore and develop universal values. The curriculum includes Living Values Activities for peace, respect, love, cooperation, happiness, honesty, humility, responsibility, simplicity, tolerance, freedom and unity. This set of five books by age level was published 2001. The series was awarded the 2002 Teachers' Choice Award, an award sponsored by *Learning* magazine, a national publication for teachers and educators in the USA. Designed to address the whole child/person, Living Values activities build intrapersonal and interpersonal social and emotional skills as well as values-based perspectives and behaviors. Students are engaged in reflection, visualization, and artistic expression to draw out their ideas. Cognitive and emotional skills grow as they are engaged in analyzing events and creating solutions. The approach is child-centered, flexible and interactive; adults act as facilitators.

Living Values Educational Program Method

The Living Values Educational Program is distinguished by its emphasis on reflection, on *living* the values, and attention to Values Education at a deeper level. A lesson on values can be launched easily in many learning settings. Often the subject matter leads into an interesting discussion about values. Alternatively, a lesson on values can be launched when there is a conflict between students. Instances such as these provide stimuli for the exploration of values.

However, one must be cautious about doing values activities only at the awareness level. For this reason, LVEP advocates using the full range of activities found in the Living Values Activities books. Students are more likely to develop a love for values and be committed to implementing them if they explore values at all levels

and develop the personal and social skills that allow them to experience the benefits of living those values.

The values stimuli noted in the following schematic are Receiving Information, Reflecting Internally, and Exploring Values in the Real World. Each Living Values Activities lesson begins with one of these values stimuli. Each kind of values stimuli are used in most of the Living Values Activities units. As the schematic shows, setting a safe space for discussion and exploration of ideas are important parts of the Values Education process. According to Tillman (2005), "one reason LVEP can be used in many different cultures is that the questions are open." The questions allow students to discuss values and the ways in which values are expressed in different cultures.

Developing Values Schematic: The LVEP Method
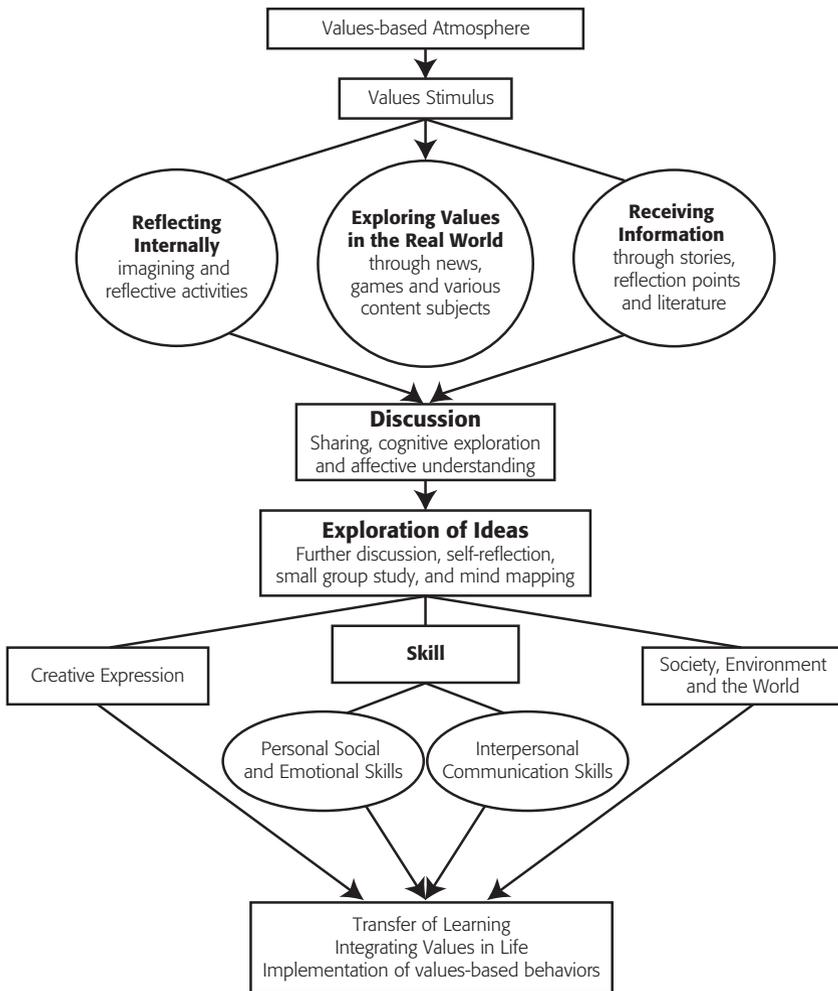
Teaching & Modeling

Quality teachers as well as quality teaching is foremost at ACES. Prospective ACES teachers are interviewed beyond the standard set of credentials, licenses, and educational experience. Each candidate is asked "What special gift would you bring to ACES?" By inquiring about teachers' personal passion, interests, and life experiences, ACES teachers bring value-added teaching to their classrooms. Teachers include lawyers, artists, professional musicians, advertising executives, and others who have chosen to become teachers and are committed to Values Education.

Teachers experienced a three-day Living Values Education Program training in 2003 that included values awareness, values development in children, creating a values-based atmosphere, the LVEP approach, and values activities. During the training, teachers were asked to reflect upon their own values and create a values-based atmosphere where all students feel respected, valued, understood, loved and safe. Through guided imagery, teachers imagine being a child in the "school of their dreams."

> Think about the atmosphere in the school of your dreams …
> … the things you do in the morning … or during free time …
>
> What does your teacher look like? … How does the teacher look at you?
> … What is her or his tone of voice? … What does he or she say to you?
>
> What is the atmosphere in the school? How do you feel as a young student?
>
> See yourself interacting with other students … What kinds of projects do you get to work on? … How do you feel in that classroom?

Inevitably, when teachers were asked to put themselves in the role of children, they described the experience of a school with a values-based atmosphere. From this, teachers engaged in discussion about quality teaching practices that help create and sustain a values-based atmosphere. Those included establishing a climate of mutual trust and respect; affirming the positive qualities of children; communicating high expectations; treating mistakes as a starting point for new learning; and asserting that no one is allowed to hurt others, and no one will be harmed. At the start of each subsequent school year, new and returning teachers received additional LVEP training coordinated with the ongoing professional development activities of the school.

A fundamental premise of the Living Values Education Program is that "Children are naturally curious, eager to learn, and have many beautiful qualities. They are creative, caring, and can think for themselves. In a values-based atmosphere they bloom and thrive" (Tillman & Colomina, 2000). Children bloom in ACES classrooms. They begin their day in "homerooms": a space of 20 minutes where teachers take attendance and students watch the morning announcements and write in their journals about values. The importance of helping children identify feelings or emotions and find language to express those feelings at an early age provides a

foundation for Values Education. A recent study found that journaling about one's values for a little as 15 minutes each morning reduced the achievement gap between African-American and white Grade 7 students by 40% (Cohen, Garcia, Apfel, & Master, 2006).

A Living Values Emotion Landscape hangs in classrooms. Several times each day children use sticky-notes to identify their feelings and place themselves on aptly labeled sections such as "Peace Pond," "Winds of Change," and "Weeds of Crabbiness." Recognizing the need for relevance in their instruction, teachers can be seen using Question/Concept boards to begin language arts lessons. The teacher uses this technique to connect to student's background knowledge in order to further the lesson objective. Teachers are becoming skilled at "active listening" and use this time to pose "values questions."

A peek into another classroom might find students walking around the room with a paper taped to their back while their classmates write adjectives describing the student on it. The teacher collects the papers, puts them on the floor, and asks students to walk around and try to find the paper describing them.

The Art teacher is busy with her group of second graders drawing a depiction of their favorite value to be sent to the Governor of Florida in a contest to design his holiday card.

A school wide event such as International Peace Day finds the science teacher and her group of sixth graders behind the school plotting where the Mahogany Tree will be planted on Peace Day as the music teacher writes an original Peace Day song for the International Peace Day Assembly. The middle school Language Arts teachers are collecting essays to be read and preparing to accept a proclamation from the Mayor of the City recognizing September 21st as Peace Day in the City of Aventura. Teachers are modeling their values and the intended message is not lost on students who are coming up with a petition to the principal on what other ways the student body would like to join in the Peace day activities.

Student and teacher voices are valued. Student petitions to their teacher or the administration to rethink a school policy or practice are not uncommon and never ignored. This furthers the sacred connections between all in the school family and positively affects the culture of shared responsibility.

Educators, facilitators, parents and caregivers are important role models and the creation of a values-based atmosphere is the first step for values-based education and Values Education itself. Part of ACES and LVEP educator excellence is viewed as modeling the values, respecting student opinions, and empowering children to enjoy learning and implementing values projects.

According to Hawkes (2003), modeling "is the single most important feature of the relationship between teacher and pupil. Your state of being is more important than your state of doing." He urges educators to consider exactly *why* they want to introduce values in their school or classroom, and to pay attention to caring for themselves. Teacher resistance to Values Education can occur when educators realize the higher standard to which they are being held by students.

Strong academic leadership at ACES supports teachers in professional, ethical, and values-based teaching. Teacher in service at ACES is called "teacher renewal."

Renewal models are better equipped to deal with opening the heart and mind toward one another. Once a month ACES provides teacher renewal opportunities for teachers to add depth to their repertoire of teaching and learning strategies. The school has teamed up with the business community so that teachers can choose to meet at ACES, in a local bank's boardroom, in the enclosed viewing room of a local zoo, or at a local resort in their banquet conference rooms. In every setting, teachers are shown care. Quality food is served and time is given for teachers to unwind. Reflection time is paramount and praxis, the actions arising out of one's reflection are key.

Parent Involvement and Parenting

> We know that parents are children's first and most important teachers—and yet they seldom receive the training and support that allow them to be aware of the importance of their parenting actions, stay aware of children's needs, cope with the challenges of child-rearing, and become aware of the beauty of their own inner resources (Tillman, 1998).

The relationship between parents and schools has changed along with various reforms in American public education. For example, the role of principal has gone from being a "buffer" (that is, to protecting teachers and the school from parental interference) to a "bridge-builder" between school, parents, and the larger community. The current emphasis on "school choice" provides the logical footing for parental involvement by empowering parents in decision-making. Whatever the case, parents whose children attend a school they chose, and from which they can withdraw the child at any time, do experience a certain degree of self-efficacy (Raywid, 1990, p. 190). Current research also suggests that parents whose children attend choice schools such as ACES are more involved than parents whose children attend more traditional public schools (Smrekar & Goldring, 1996). Moreover, parents who choose schools for values reasons are even more likely to be involved with the school (Hausman & Goldring, 2000).

Parental involvement has also been shown to have an association with student achievement. However, despite the intuitive appeal of this notion, a meta-analysis of quantitative data reveals the association to be modest and stronger with overall achievement than with any individual subject matter (Fan & Chen, 2001).

ACES parents are highly involved parents. ACES has a Parent Advisory Council that provides consultation to the school administration. Like many charter schools in the USA, ACES requires 20 hours per year of volunteer service by parents in order to maintain a child in the school (30 hours if there are two children). Volunteer opportunities include staffing special events, coordinating fundraisers and assemblies, working one-on-one with children, and attending Living Values Parent Workshops. While not without controversy, this practice of providing an incentive in the form of volunteer hours has boosted attendance at the monthly Living Values Parent Workshops.

Living Values Parent Workshops

> I can't thank you enough … you have been so special all these weeks. I don't want these gatherings to end … I have learned so much! I feel that this is MY time … all the rest of my day is for the family, but this time is mine! (ACES Parent, May 2006)

As the primary source of Values Education, parents' best intentions can be easily upset when confronted by situations in which they feel inadequate to respond. ACES' Living Values Parent Workshops were taught in the context of real-life situations experienced at home. Over time, parents felt free to express feelings of inadequacy and share details of their concerns. Parents expressed fears about issues large and small: from maintaining good communication with their children and handling peer pressure, to getting children to do a specific homework assignment. Living Values Parent Workshops "offer a forum for parents to share their wisdom and challenges, to explore their own values, and to increase their knowledge of sensible, practical and positive parenting skills" (Tillman, 2001).

One of the greatest challenges to the success of Values Education initiatives is closing the loop between school and home. Building on the in-school implementation of its Living Values Education Program, ACES helped to bridge that gap by providing a series of Living Values Parent Workshops. These monthly workshops are designed to develop parenting skills, complement activities children experience in school and foster parents' participation in character education.

Specific goals of the ACES Living Values Parent Workshops were to:

1. acquaint parents with 12 universal values included in the Living Values Education Program: Peace, Respect, Happiness, Cooperation, Freedom, Honesty, Love, Responsibility, Simplicity, Tolerance, Humility, and Unity.
2. offer parents the opportunity to experience the values through a series of reflections, discussions, and sharing activities.
3. provide instruction in at least nine parenting skills which are useful to parents as they seek to cultivate positive values in their children.

During the course of the past two years, an increasing number of parents have chosen to spend 1½ hours each month meeting with Living Values volunteer parent educators. At the request of parents, a companion series of more intimate weekly discussions provided an opportunity for deeper concentration and practice on specific parenting skills. Workshops were held at the school in the morning from 8:30 a.m. to 10:00 a.m. to attract parents who were bringing their children to school. The school provided a quiet and comfortable space for parents to gather. Guests from the community as well as other schools were invited to participate along with ACES parents. With an average of 35–50 parents participating per workshop, interest and enthusiasm continues to grow for this initiative.

At the beginning of the school year, a letter introducing the Living Values Education Program was distributed to parents.
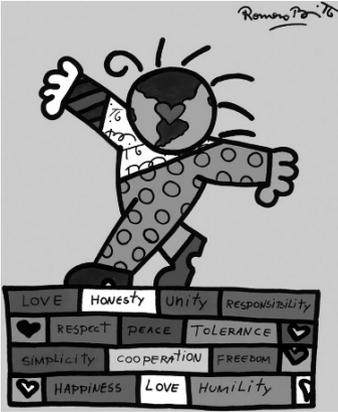
Living Values
An Educational Program, Inc.
Local Coordinating Office
4160 SW 4th St.
Miami, FL 33134
Email: lv.miami@livingvalues.net

Dear ACES Parents,

We'd like to introduce you to the ***Living Values Educational Program**** which is presently incorporated into your child's ACES education curriculum in order to model and teach the universal values of PEACE, COOPERATION, UNITY, RESPECT, LOVE, HONESTY, FREEDOM, HAPPINESS, SIMPLICITY, RESPONSIBILITY, TOLERANCE, AND HUMILITY.

Each month there's a value of the month, beginning with Peace in August. That value is taught through many activities including: Living Values Thought for The Day each morning on the televised announcements; monthly Kids of Character from each class; weekly activities to enhance learning, including stories, interactive demonstrations, sharings, etc.

We are a group of educators, counselors, parents, and grandparents who volunteer at ACES to promote the LIVING of VALUES. We believe that the primary source for values and character education is the family, and that schools and parents working together build better communities.

Please watch for invitations to attend ACES / Living Values parent workshops throughout the year. We call them "Knock Your Sox Off Parent Workshops — Complete With Recipe."

(This is in honor of a special cookie created by one of our volunteers.) Last year we addressed such topics as "How to Talk So Your Kids will Listen," "How to Say No with Love," and "Don't Worry if Your Kids Don't Listen … They are Always Watching You." In addition to getting tips on Living the Values and nine parenting skills essential for developing character in children, you will also receive volunteer points for attending. These workshops are usually held on early release days from 8:30 am–10:00 am at the school.

Living Values is an international program, and we invite you to visit our web site at ***www.livingvalues.net*** to learn more about it. Be sure to notice that you can download ***Living Values*** posters, similar to the one that is attached. Notice that there are two different sets of posters, age appropriate — age 3–7 or age 8–14. We

hope you'll keep the poster of the month handy and discuss some of your thoughts on that value with your child. Keep in mind the importance of modeling values … your children are watching!

For many of our volunteers, our children are grown; but if they were young like yours, we would be happy and proud to have them enrolled in ACES. We look forward to Living Values with you.

Sincerely,
Living Values Volunteers

* Living Values: An Educational Program is a partnership among educators around the world. This program is supported by UNESCO, sponsored by the Spanish Committee of UNICEF and is in consultation with the Education Cluster of UNICEF, New York. LVEP is part of the global movement for a culture of peace in the framework of the International Decade for a Culture of Peace and Non-violence for the Children of the World. Living Values is currently operating in more than 70 countries worldwide. ACES is a demonstration site for Values Education in the USA and in October 2005 ACES will receive national recognition from the Character Education Partnership.

The first workshop of the 2006–2007 school year included an orientation to the Living Values Education Program; what it is, how it operates, where it has been implemented and with what results. A guided commentary encouraged parents to reflect on values themselves, and in an imaging exercise about the school of their dreams they were asked "*As children, what would you like to tell the adults of the world*?" This question elicited responses that included such things as "*Pay attention to me,*" "*Love me,*" "*Let me play*". What the parents did was to describe for themselves the elements of a values-based atmosphere in school, one of the primary goals of the Living Values Education Program.

Going further into reflection, parents were asked to imagine their children grown up: "*Now, I'd like you to use your imagination … Picture in your mind's eye your children—but they are all grown up. All your hopes for them have been realized. What values do they have*?" Parents participated in a discussion sharing their hopes and dreams for their children and identified practical ways in which they could model the values they hoped to see in their children when they were grown.

During the school year, parent workshops focused on topics such as "How to Raise Happy, Healthy and Confident Kids", "How to Talk So Your Children Will Listen, and How to Listen So Your Children Will Talk, "Designing Appropriate Consequences" and "The Importance of Play." One special workshop included a "Panel of Experts" from Grades 4 and 5 who presented their ideas for appropriate consequences when rules at home were broken. The children demonstrated in dramatic fashion the principles of balancing discipline with love, and designing "punishments that fit the crime." In this manner, Values Education and parenting skills worked in support of one another.

The Living Values Parent Workshops have a basic process framework that can be replicated in various settings with parents. After providing an introduction and

discussing which values the group would like to explore, the following framework was applied. This includes six steps:

1. Discussing the value
2. Discuss how that value is communicated / experienced at home
3. Play with the value — find creative and fun ways to enjoy values
4. Focus on parenting skills to support the value
5. Adjourn the session with "homework"
6. Begin the next session with "*What Worked*" successfully at home

The facilitator also made the workshops fun by using audiotapes, videotapes, and many role-play situations. Workshops also included positive discussions framed through the use of Appreciative Inquiry (Cooperrider et al., 2003), a strength-based approach to organizational change using reflection and stories. Using AI, the facilitator was able to establish a relationship of trust with the parents. Appreciative Inquiry (AI) has been used successfully with both children and adults. For example, the following questions were posed to children who formed another "Expert Panel" for a parent workshop. *Tell us about a time when you did something that you were incredibly proud of … Something that helped someone else or helped the world …*

> What was it? What did **you** do? Did anyone else help you?
> How did you feel? What did you learn?
> (Following up on the child's experience …)
> What would it be like if everyone in the world did this?)

Children eagerly shared their stories of working on school-wide projects to raise funds for charity, volunteer work, and participating in a letter exchange with Living Values Education Program students in a rural school in India.

Parenting Skills

The Living Values Education Program teaches certain parenting skills in response to specific parent concerns.

The Living Values parent curriculum at ACES was enhanced with additional lessons and materials from the Systematic Training for Effective Parenting (STEP). STEP added exercises and practical suggestions for meeting the challenges of parenting; from dealing with irrational beliefs about perfect parenting, to understanding the goals of misbehavior. (Dinkmeyer, McKay, & Dinkmeyer, 1997). A special topic was featured for the final workshop of the school year. "The Importance of Play" offered practical suggestions for maintaining focus on values during the summer vacation. Playtime was also discussed as "us time" for parents and children together, fostering improved family relationships and as a prevention strategy for future peer pressure.

Parent Concern	Parenting Skill
"Í don't have enough time."	Cooperation
"He always does things to get my negative attention. She doesn't like praise."	Encouragement & Positively Building Behaviors
"All they want to do is watch TV"	Balance of Discipline & Love
"She gets so angry with her teachers."	Active Listening
"There's been so much change and the kids feel so insecure."	Establishing a Ritual
"I say 'NO' and he keeps at me until I give in"	Think Before Saying NO
"I want my child to be peaceful, but I'm not so peaceful myself."	Time to Be
"They don't do anything I ask them to do."	Staying Stable, Loving, and Communicating
"They're always fighting."	Conflict Resolution

Parents reported satisfying results from the workshops.

Best School of Life I ever had! Every topic is always good. Each time we have a great lesson.

Today was my first parent workshop and the information that I have gotten is excellent.

I believe that we need "reinforcement" on how to be a good parent and we have been getting it through the Living Values Parent Workshops. Its hard work to be a good, loving and respectful parent, but it is worth it!

This was the first time I came to the Parents Workshop. The information was clear and very practical.

I learned how to do conflict resolution with my children!

Grandparents also attended the workshops:

Very helpful! Great for parents and it works for me too! I enjoyed every session. Glad that there are parents thinking the same way I do. We all have the same aim — to raise a future generation.

According to the Living Values Parent Workshop facilitator:

The parents felt safe to admit their imperfections! They found out they are not alone, and that the experts have come up with some simple solutions.

Parenting workshops proved to be essential to parents' understanding that children are developing and practicing values. Sometimes children experienced a major disconnect between they were learning and doing at school and what they were seeing doing, learning, and seeing modeled at home. The request for weekly meetings further attests to this growing need. Still, despite good attendance at the monthly meetings, approximately 90% of ACES parents have yet to take advantage of this important opportunity at their school. There are still isolated incidents of parents screaming at teachers,

failing to tell the whole truth to administrators, and/or showing poor sportsmanship. After one such encounter, an ACES teacher summed it up this way… "We're a Living Values school, and that means we have to have some place to practice!"

Overall, however, the opportunities for parent involvement and the focus on parenting skills at ACES have strengthened the link between school and home, increased parent satisfaction, and provided a values-based framework for communication at all levels.

Values Education and Civic Engagement — The Big Picture

Although Values Education is broad in its scope and defies easy definition, Values Education is as old as education itself. The two broad purposes of education in virtually every society are to "help people become smart, and to help them become good" (Lickona, 1993). From the earliest days of Western civilization, Values Education took the form of stories and mentorship. Plato learned from Socrates not only through their engaging conversations, but also by traveling and living with Socrates and embracing the qualities he observed in his teacher. Stories have formed the basis for transmitting culture and history, as well as providing examples of positive traits and moral lessons (for example, Aesop's fables, and a variety of fairy tales). Today, while stories are still powerful vehicles for Values Education, the process intensifies in schools, where the majority of children spend the greater part of their days.

At ACES, over 150 flags from the United Nations grace the middle school media center. These flags were presented to a group of Grade 6 students who visited the UN in Spring 2006 following a series of human rights lessons developed by teachers at the school. During this four-week study of human rights, students learned about the creation and the importance of the United Nations as well as to recognize the functions and significance of human rights on local, national and global levels. Students identified with the needs and nature of human rights as they relate to the individual, to society, and to the nations of our world. The culminating school activity was a student developed and led mock United Nations general session. Middle school teachers implemented this program integrating the goals and objectives of ACES' Living Values Education Program, to demonstrate ethical behavior and the content objectives of State standards and grade level expectations.

The curriculum included various hands-on learning activities; writing assignments, community service involvement, technology-based activities, utilization of the United Nations educational publications, and community educational experts to teach human rights perspectives. Technology-based "Achieve 3000" (a program that provides differentiated learning instruction based on local, national and world events delivered through the Internet) offered students the opportunity to reflect on a values-based Reuters news article and then discuss the ramifications of it within a safe, closed email environment with classmates and "worldmates" (email pals in other nations).

ACES' human rights curriculum was designed to give students a clear understanding and sensitivity to the rights and responsibilities of citizens, governments, and

nations. It was also designed to take students out of the "comfort level" of their own gender, race, class and religion and expose them to customs, concepts and traditions that were foreign to them, thus helping the unfamiliar to become more familiar. It also enabled students to more readily accept differences among our world's people. Activities were designed to provoke students' critical thinking skills and apply them to raise their social consciences. Representatives from a nongovernmental organization (NGO) who participated with the children at the UN reported that they had never seen a group of children as knowledgeable and prepared as the ACES students. ACES received a national award for this project from the Character Education Partnership, the premier professional association for Values Education in the USA.

In 2004, fifty ACES students ages 8–10 participated in a letter exchange with 50 Living Values students of similar ages in rural Rajasthan, India. Students in both schools wrote about their favorite values, school happenings, and life in their respective countries. In a real-life lesson about what mail was like before the internet, letters took several months to travel each way, having to be hand carried by willing volunteers on both sides of the globe. When letters finally arrived back at ACES, children received a cultural introduction to India from a native-born parent. They learned to find India on maps and globes, understand traditional customs, see pictures of the school in India, and ultimately read their letters. For some students it was a most memorable experience despite the time it took to accomplish: over a year later, several students asked if they could do it again.

The idea of helping students understand their world is a generally accepted aim of education, but at times this clashes with the preoccupation with individual rights and freedoms seen in the USA[1]. Proponents of Values Education in the USA must inevitably answer the question *Whose Values* when attempting to begin a Values Education program. (This question is generally answered with a statement about universal values that everyone can agree upon such as peace and respect.) Even those who support Values Education acknowledge that there are powerful points of resistance. Especially problematic is the nexus of school, home, and community.

Balancing

Revisiting the work of Emile Durkheim, acknowledged as a founding father of Sociology, Yates (1998) asked "How, in any given pluralist and multicultural society, might schools engender a collective solidarity or spirit that can respect these differences, but yet form a sufficiently energized basis for continued democracy?" Etzioni (2006)

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[1] Example of this can be seen throughout Western systems of education: Individual Education plans (IEPs) for special needs students in the USA; small class sizes predicated upon the notion that smaller classes mean that teachers can give individual students more attention, and discipline as a classroom management tool to control unwieldy students, as opposed to trait to be cultivated for its own sake.

states: "Schools should be viewed as nascent communities," where school leaders can use behavioral (or mis-behavioral) opportunities to help in "rebuilding community in the adult world, which children often emulate." This is in concert with one of the aims of the Living Values Education Program: "To help individuals think about and reflect on different values and the practical implications of expressing them in relation to themselves, others, the community, and the world at large."

While many communities look to schools to solve societal problems, Etzioni suggests the reverse: "Parents and other community members and institutions should see themselves as partners rather than as outsiders." Following the implementation of the California Public School Accountability Act in 1999, researchers conducted a follow-up study of "what good schools do" (Benninga et al., 2003). They discovered that schools with a high academic performance index (representing achievement at all levels of performance), "promoted a caring community and positive social relationships." ACES takes seriously its theme of "One World, One Family" and has taken great care to involve the various constituencies and stakeholders in its programs and activities. Hundreds attend the annual Family Picnic held on the school grounds. Parents and grandparents are treated to a literacy breakfast each year. Parents and friends are recruited as volunteers and contribute thousands of hours annually.

Another characteristic of good schools in the California study was that "students contribute in meaningful ways." At ACES, students are encouraged to participate in a variety of volunteer opportunities including community and business programs, food drives, charity fundraisers, and others. During the 2006–2007 school year, the school will participate in the "Read to Feed" program of Heifer Project International (a global program to end world hunger and care for the earth.) Each year on International Peace Day, September 21, ACES joins institutions around the world in committing to a global ceasefire and day of harmony. This UN sponsored initiative counted more than 1200 events in 180 countries in 2006. ACES students requested and received an official proclamation from the city government, and hosted a series of activities for students, parents and community leaders on the designated day. At 12 noon, the Principal called for a moment of silence so that everyone could "Add their Peace" to the world. For the five weeks leading up to September 21, teachers focused on Living Values peace lessons, a parent workshop conducted by Living Values volunteers addressed "Peace at Home," students wrote in their journals about Peace, and the library featured books about Peace for reading lessons.

Whole School Approach

Perhaps what makes ACES successful in its Values Education program is its whole school approach. Various studies reported in Chapter 2 have suggested that academic achievement and quality teaching are most likely to be found in a whole school values-based environment such as that espoused by the Living Values Education

Program: i.e. an environment where all the participants feel valued, respected, loved, understood and safe. In this environment, values are modeled by adults, and children have an opportunity to develop the self-confidence and self-efficacy to make positive personal and social choices throughout their lives.

Other studies in the USA have pointed to the effectiveness of a whole school approach. The Character Education Partnership (2006) has as one of its Eleven Principles for effective character education: "Creates a caring school community" (Lickona, Shaps, & Lewis, 2007). The authors go on to describe what that means:

> A school committed to character strives to become a microcosm of a civil, caring, and just society. It does this by creating a community that helps all its members form caring attachments to one another … These caring relationships foster both the desire to learn and the desire to be a good person. All children and adolescents have needs for safety, belonging, and the experience of contributing, and they are more likely to internalize the values and expectations of groups that meet these needs. Likewise, if staff members and parents experience mutual respect, fairness, and cooperation in their relationships with each other, they are more likely to develop the capacity to promote those values in students. In a caring school community, the daily life of classrooms and all other parts of the school environment (e.g., the corridors, cafeteria, playground, school bus, front office, and teachers' lounge) are imbued with a climate of concern and respect for others.

Each morning a cue of buses, cars, trucks and children line the two-lane road that ends on a cul-de-sac where the school and local community center are located. An observer can feel the excitement building as you approach the school. Safety is paramount with so many vehicles and children converging on the same street, so local police officers are directing cars, parents and children in an orderly way. With a bright Florida sun foretelling a hot day ahead, teachers and volunteers meet the buses and cars as they drop off the children. The front door to the school is wide open. Teachers are standing there greeting each and every child as if to say … "*Hi … we're soooo glad you're here today!*"

On one particular morning, a Mexican Mariachi band was among the morning arrivals; a birthday surprise for the Principal organized by parents. Children, teachers, parents, and others filled the street for an early and festive start to the school day. Birthdays, even the Principal's, are special at ACES. Children are recognized by the Principal or Assistant Principal during the televised morning announcements. A child was asked, "*Do you feel like seven yet … or do you still feel like you're six?*" He shyly said he still felt six, and the Principal validated him by saying, "*That's alright … it's still early in the morning … maybe later you'll begin to feel seven!*"

At the front desk, sundry sorts of business matters take place: questions answered, parent special requests, volunteers arriving, security checks; a deluge of activity during the first 30 minutes of opening. The school's receptionist proudly declared that she know all the students' names within the first few weeks of school.

The reception area, although small, shares a large glass window to the art room where student work is displayed and where a small TV stage is set for the morning announcements. Students are the newscasters for the morning announcements, and must audition and be trained for this on-camera role. It is one of the most sought-after positions at the school! Seated upright behind the table was a team

of youngsters along with the Assistant Principal who brought the morning news. Typically this 10–15 minute program includes the American Pledge of Allegiance, "Who's In and Who's Out (a roll call of teachers out for the day and the substitutes who will be filling in). Children are honored in the "Caught Caring" section as one student describes the actions of students' caught caring. Another student panelist provides "words of wisdom" usually dealing with interaction with the self or others. A final panelist provides the Living Values message (based on Living Values reflection points) and leads the school in a quick moment of reflection. The student may be asked to explain that thought in his/her own words; or to explain it as if s/he were explaining it to a Kindergarten child. Learning never stops; a Kindergarten child, Emily, had the important role of announcing what number day it was in the school year. Each day she would report "… *Today is the 89th day of school …" "Today is the 90th day of school*." During the course of her appearances, she learned important concepts such as when "half" or "three-fourths" of the school year were past. Two years later, she has reappeared on the morning announcements, now with another role to discuss the Living Values messages with her "co-anchors" on the show.

Visitors to the school are amazed at the atmosphere in the school. Hallway and classroom bulletin boards feature values-based activities. An eight-foot rendition of the Living Values logo has been painted on the wall in the entrance to the middle school complex. Pictures of ACES "Kids of Character" are displayed at the front entrance. Each month students are chosen from each classroom for this honor. They receive a T-shirt with the Living Values logo which they proudly wear. This program was conceived and is sponsored by a local civic organization. ACES' administrators take particular care to provide healthy lunch choices for their students. Their whole child approach extends to a thoughtful menu that includes salads, grains, and good protein sources. Because sugars and fast foods are kept to a minimum, children with particular behavior problems that may be alleviated by proper diet are easily identified and needed resources are made available. ACES is invited to be involved in every City event. They take their values "on the road" to showcase values-based education. Veteran's Day and Founder's Day are held every year in November. ACES students sing original peace songs written by the music teachers. At Founder's Day, the City celebrates its incorporation from a town into a city. A city festival is held where the ACES Art teacher displays a stenciled "values" canvas and children are encouraged to drop by and paint on it. In 2003, the canvas that developed was a cornucopia with values words flowing out of it. The past year's canvas was to honor the tenth anniversary of the city. The evolving canvas depicted city buildings with values words in the windows and doors. Both works are on display at ACES. A local bank had a company retreat to choose the values defining their role in the community. The bank president reached out to collaborate with ACES staff and students recognizing the school's role in "values searching." ACES students were asked to paint a mural of the defined values for display in their bank front hall.

Values at ACES have also been infused into what has been described as the "hidden curriculum" (Snyder, 1970). This book introduced the notion that what goes on in the classroom is essentially a sociological process of transmitting norms

and values. At ACES, values are infused into the hidden curriculum as well as the academic lessons. This includes physical education and sports, discipline practices, and clubs. All practices and policies promote and support teacher-student relationships. "Discipline with dignity" was adopted as the framework for school's disciplinary plan. Even the teachers' lounges, the quiet room for parent workshops, the hallways, bulletin boards, school social events, all are designed to create a values-based atmosphere. Overnight field trips promote connections between students and teachers, and teachers and administrators in ways that are impossible during the normal school day.

Summary: The Magic of Living Values Education

Like the 69 schools in the Australian Values Education Study, ACES used similar approaches to implementing Values Education, namely, reviews of educational processes, building students' resilience, and incorporating a specific values teaching and learning focus (Australian Government, Department of Science, Education, and Training, 2003). ACES also brings to life four key findings of the VEGPS school leaders about Values Education implementation. Namely, that good practice includes quality teaching and pedagogy, taking a "whole school" approach, affording "maximum buy-in" by stakeholders, and modeling, living out the values. What seems to set ACES apart from other schools however, is the systematic way in which quality teaching, parenting/parent involvement, and civic engagement are aligned around a set of core values. As Lovat has stated, values are the "missing link". In the end, those involved in Values Education at ACES often describe the experience as "magical". There are many stories about situations that have been transformed at home and at school because of attention to values. Individuals have found purpose and meaning in their own lives and improvement in their relationships with others.

Public schools in the USA are under increasing pressure to perform at high levels on high stakes tests and "what gets measured gets taught." ACES has demonstrated that putting formal education and values teaching together is working. The measure of its worth can be seen in relationships of mutual respect and a trusting and safe environment in which to work and learn. There is a commitment of personal and shared responsibility toward ACES vision where the teaching of values has equal importance to academic excellence. When media representatives ask what the school is doing to reach such accomplishments, ACES teachers, staff, parents and students respond "We are a Living Values School."

Chapter 9
The Double Helix and Its Implications for the Professional Lifelong Learning of Teachers

Ron Toomey

Introduction

In this chapter, we look at the fit between the hallmarks of quality teaching proposed in Chapter 1 and the case studies. Having concluded there to be a neat fit, we then spell out the relationship as we see it between Values Education and quality teaching. We then propose a set of questions and issues that are raised by this relationship. This set of questions and issues comprises an agenda for action that is required if we are to see the potential of the notion of quality teaching outlined in this book more broadly realized.

What the Case Studies Say

In Chapter 1, we proposed that Values Education was the missing link in quality teaching. We ventured the view that, by making values an explicit and central part of the curriculum and our day to day work with our students, we can produce improved student outcomes in terms of intellectual depth, communicative competence, capacities for reflection, self management and, most importantly, self knowledge. Any tentativeness one may have felt after reading that chapter must surely now be dispelled. The case studies literally reverberate with accounts of how so many of the teachers and students involved in the Values Education enterprise of the VEGPSP Stage 1 have experienced such outcomes.

The Manningham case study, for instance, describes how many of the students developed an improved sense of "self" which led to an increase in their self esteem. One of the teacher's accounts in that case study about the boy "who has produced

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work in other areas way beyond anything that was earlier thought possible" links Values Education with improved standards. A similar account in the West Kidlington case study underscores this possibility. Some of the improvements in student outcomes are associated with the quality of the relationships that developed during the project:

> I also laughed more. It set up a ripple effect. Children who were not achieving started to really shine.

Other teachers ventured views about the way the program "developed (students) organisational skills and fostered (the practice of) working collaboratively in groups", a view reiterated in the case study of the Western Australian schools.

The voices of the students in the West Kidlington and Manningham case studies speak about the way the program improved their confidence, self-esteem, responsibility, integrity, enthusiasm, motivation and commitment. The relationship between values and self knowledge is also revealed in the words of the students in the Townsville case study:

> Peer Support is like a key to unlock qualities that you never thought you would have for your life" and "We do Peer Support to make kids understand life.

Neville Clement's interpretation of the research about the relationship between values and quality teaching in Chapter 2 as providing an "ambience" that produces improved interpersonal relationships which, in turn, yield higher standards also finds support in the cases. The experience of the Townsville case was that:

> Even though the program had been in place for only a short time … it had had a noticeable effect on the quality of life in the school and a visible effect on relationships.

There are also other inferences that can be drawn from the case studies that fit well with our thesis about quality teaching. These include the links that are made between concentration, values and improved academic performance in the West Kidlington case. In several cases, self awareness and student capacity for reflection are also linked to Values Education. The communicative competence that is reflected in the children's comments towards the end of the West Kidlington case study are quite directly attributed to the school's Values Education program. In other cases, teachers attribute the use of positive language and positive reinforcement that is associated with effective Values Education to their students' improved performance. In the Manningham case, links are made between listening to "student voice", the emergence of mutual respect and improved standards. Thus, we feel that the case studies generally support our "missing link" theory.

Nonetheless, we understand that some may still have lingering doubts about the role of Values Education in such outcomes. After all, Values Education has been such a marginal part of education for so long that a natural reticence to any proposal for mainstreaming it is to be expected. Some may argue that intellectual depth is not the

sole province of Values Education. Of course, they would be correct. It is nurtured in many other circumstances apart from Values Education. Similarly, others might question the extent to which communicative competence or any of the other hallmarks of quality teaching are exclusively fashioned within Values Education. They, too, would be right. However, such responses to the way we are describing the intersection of Values Education and quality teaching, and the impact of the intersection on teaching and learning miss the point. We are not claiming the hallmarks of quality teaching as exclusive products of Values Education. Rather we are suggesting that by making the teaching of values a very explicit and central part of our work we:

1. create what Neville Clement in Chapter 2 calls an ambience within which intellectual depth, communicative competence, reflection, self management and self knowledge flourish more easily, naturally and organically than in other circumstances; and
2. when we make values so central we are introducing a capacity for our teaching to be genuinely transformative. The hallmarks of quality teaching become potentially available to all.

This notion of transformation also reverberates within the case studies. For instance, the school resistors discussed in both the Manningham and West Kidlington come to mind to say nothing of the many teacher accounts of their professional transformation that are found in all the cases.

The Double Helix of Quality Teaching and Values Education

Thus, we find the case studies very persuasive evidence that Values Education is indeed the missing link in quality teaching as was mooted in Chapter 1. In light of the case studies, we have come to think about quality teaching (and its inseparable counterpart quality learning) as one half of a double helix (McGettrick, 1995)—the other half being Values Education. We have tried to represent this in Fig. 9.1 below.

Values Education
- Strong positive relationships
- Positive dispositions to learning—learning to love learning.
- Emotional and spiritual space
- Calm teaching and learning environment

Quality Teaching
- Intellectual depth
- Communicative competence
- Empathic character
- Capacity for reflection
- Self-management
- Self-knowledge
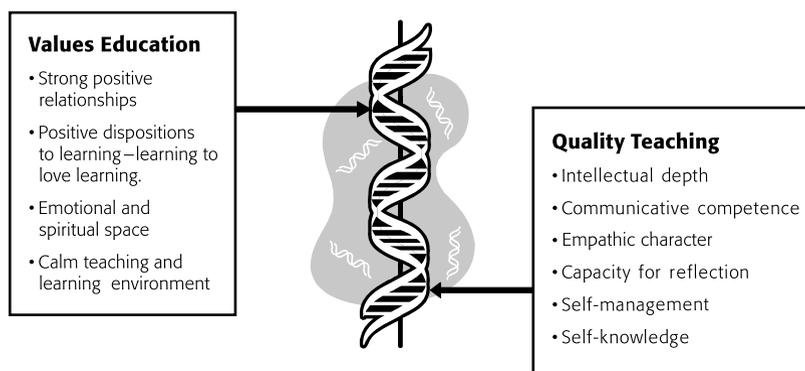
Fig. 9.1 The double helix of quality teaching and values education

The relationship between quality teaching and Values Education is represented in terms of outcomes in Fig. 7.1. We have chosen to take this approach because teaching, other than its technical, managerial and strategic aspects, largely defies easy and accessible description. Certainly, we know that certain things teachers do in their classrooms can help to produce good results. We know, for instance, from the teacher effectiveness research (for example, King-Rice, 2003; Hill & Crevola, 2000; Kemp & Hall, 1992, Taylor, Pearson, Clark & Walpole, 1999) that teachers are especially effective when:

- they employ systematic teaching procedures
- they spend more time working with small groups throughout the day
- they use systematic feedback with students about their performance
- they run more orderly classrooms
- they adjust the difficulty level of material to student ability
- they have more students in their classes on task and engaged.
- they have higher levels of student cooperation and task involvement
- they clearly articulate rules and include children in discussions about rules and procedures
- they provide a variety of opportunities for students to apply and use knowledge and skills in different learning situations
- they are able to pace the amount of information presented to the class, check student progress continually by asking questions of all students, and relate new learning to prior learning.

However, such a list reads more like a set of technical or managerial skills than a description of effective teaching in the sense of the energetic and highly interpersonal engagement that we know is so much a part of it. Similarly, Values Education largely defies description for similar reasons. At the same time, the case studies reported earlier show us the products, or outcomes of quality teaching in the form of Values Education, thereby making the understanding of true quality teaching somehow more accessible and tangible, perhaps even more so than a list of managerial skills.

The case studies indicate that Values Education can make a very significant contribution to:

- Fashioning very positive interpersonal relationships in classrooms
- Producing a calm and contemplative environment in the classroom
- Giving people their emotional and spiritual space and, very importantly
- Creating positive dispositions towards learning and enabling people to come to love learning

They also show us that, in such an environment, everyone, teachers and students alike, can grow in terms of intellectual depth, communicative competence, capacity for reflection, self-management and self-knowledge.

So, in our minds, quality teaching and learning flow naturally from placing values at the centre of school activity and school community life and subsequently trying to live out these values on a day-to-day basis. Our use of the metaphor from genetics is an attempt to capture the nature of the relationship between Values Education

and quality teaching—that the relationship between values and quality teaching is somewhat like a double helix—when we identify good practice Values Education we are, in our view, also identifying quality teaching practice.

This is such an important point that it is worth going to some length to clarify it. One way to do so is to draw again on the case studies. In the Manningham case study, for instance, an approach to teaching and learning called Student Action Teams (SATs) is described and its capacity to enhance learning argued. It is well documented that such an approach, whether it be SATs or one of its close cousins, "students as researchers", "inquiry methods" or "student-centred curriculum" in the hands of a skilled teacher makes intellectual depth, communicative competence, reflection and self management very accessible to students. However, its capacity in and of itself for enabling student access to what in Chapter 1 is called "critical or self-reflective knowing" is problematic. This requires an ethical dimension. In this case, the ethical dimension is added to the teaching and learning mix by having the SATs focus their inquiry and subsequent social action very specifically on values.

Importantly, "classroom activity", whether it be in a classroom or elsewhere, is at the centre of this conception of quality teaching. When the school places values at the centre of its work and purposefully tries to live those values the changes in student and teacher behaviour that follow naturally from this decision gradually edge students and teachers into quality teaching and learning activity. In a phrase, the decision changes the nature of the personal and interpersonal relationships in the school. When everyone in the classroom exchange, teachers and students alike, is consciously trying to be respectful, trying to do one's best, trying to be honest, trying to be tolerant and the like the dynamic of the classroom changes.

In an environment where values like respect, tolerance, doing your best and others are constantly shaping classroom activity, and where the classroom activity is structured to consolidate the practice of the values, quality teaching and learning comes naturally. Children, adolescents and young adults alike all strive to do their best. Or ideally at least, they try to do their best.

Quality teaching and learning, thought of in this way, naturally gives rise to a range of questions about how it can systematically and consistently be brought into play, what the students should be taught and how teachers might teach it. In our view, the meaning of the value concepts and ways of detecting their practice need to be taught, and opportunities offered—on multiple levels—to engender their practice. This does not preclude teaching the local mandated curriculum however. Rather the local mandated curriculum might be taught in ways that enable teachers to get its content across as well as the meaning of the values. The West Kidlington case study demonstrates how this can be achieved by approaching all the mandated content from an ethical perspective. Similarly, in teaching a unit on Australia's settlement, for instance, the teacher would almost instinctively in this day and age seize on the opportunity to discuss the moral and ethical implications of the settlement especially with regard to the traditional landowners but also in regard to such things as the nature of punishment and justice, the use of arbitrary rule and attitudes to the land and environment in the convict colony. Similarly, as Farrer (2000) points out, studying Frances Hodgson Burnett's classic *The Secret Garden*

is a golden opportunity to discuss some of the characters from a values viewpoint. Thus, approaching the local curriculum more from a values perspective by providing ways of examining the "meaning" of values, using open, explicit and reflective explorations of values, clarifying values, and examining choices and actions, provides an answer to the question of what should be taught.

Moreover, preparing the class for such explicit explorations in values is also an important part of this content issue. Before content is tackled from this values perspective the students need to be able to use appropriate language and to talk about them in terms of being seen/not seen, heard/not heard, felt/not felt, put into action or not in their personal/family lives, their school environment and in their community. Such a shift of emphasis can move the student from "*knowing* the good to be desirable" to "*desiring to do* the good thing" (Hill, 2004). In a phrase, this shift of emphasis enables members of the school community to identify a personal code of conduct and the ability and commitment to act in accord with it so that in common parlance "one's actions speak louder than one's words". Tolerance, trust, respect and a whole range of positive dispositions thereby become routine practice within the school. The practice of such dispositions naturally leads, in turn, to people within the school doing things in ways that produce quality teaching which hopefully results in quality learning. Thus, our conception of quality teaching in good practice in Values Education imagines it more in terms of a dynamic and ongoing relationship than a classroom episode or set of episodes.

Implications

Such a conception of Values Education raises a raft of issues that will have to be addressed if the potential of this notion of quality teaching is to be realized. Some of these include the following.

What Approaches to Teacher Education Are Needed if the Potential of This Concept of Quality Teaching Is to Be Realized?

The research reported earlier in the book makes it clear that Values Education requires that teachers have content knowledge, pedagogical knowledge specific to Values Education, and communicative competence. As with quality teaching, Values Education needs to be supported by teacher education, pre-service and in-service, in order to better understand values formation, moral agency and pedagogical dimensions of Values Education, to develop communicative competence and to reflect on their own values (cf. Carr, 2003d; Haberman, 2002; Halstead & Taylor, 2000; Johnson, 2002; Ling et al., 1998). How might teacher education accommodate such needs?

The research also suggests that quality teaching is the dynamic interaction of subject content, pedagogical strategies and values to provide an optimal environment for student achievement. How might teachers be assisted to regularly enable such an interaction?

The exploration of Values Education research also pointed to the influence of the personal values of the teacher as being crucial in culturing the intellectual and affective ambience of the classroom for cooperative learning and its effective scaffolding. Moreover, the literature suggests that a positive learning environment and the positive modeling of values are even more critical for Values Education. How can teachers be helped with such modeling practices?

The research literature also establishes a link between the emotional climate of the classroom and the quality of student learning and achievement. Students' capacity to learn is optimised in an environment where due attention is focussed on their emotional development and to provide emotional security and stability (e.g. Alton-Lee, 2003; Cawsey, 2002; Farrer, 2000; Hamilton, 2005; Hattie, 2004; Johnson, 2002; Wang et al., 1993; Willms, 2000). How can appropriate skills be developed in teachers?

The literature is optimistic that values can be taught, and that it is most effective with a whole-person and a whole-school approach. Values are to be clarified, modelled, imitated, discussed objectively and negotiated, and one's values formation is to be the subject of critical reflection with a view to modifying values accordingly. The cognitive, affective and conative elements of values judgments are each to be the subject of reflection in order to understand the social influences in their development and present behaviour. This suggests that Values Education requires far more than a surface approach to knowing. As with other instances of quality teaching, Values Education requires an in-depth knowledge that penetrates below surface understandings to reach conceptual clarity as to the nature of values and a reasoned approach to the way that they are applied, enacted and expressed in concrete, practical situations. Values education will induct students into the skills and arts of communicative competence, where they are able to negotiate values and their concrete enactment in social life. A well-rounded Values Education will provide an environment for the development of the confidence and self-efficacy required for critical reflection to know the values which impel one's actions. Values education requires depth of knowledge, induction into communicative competence and action, and the knowledge of oneself and one's actions that arises from sustained reflection. How can teacher education accommodate such things?

How Might Teacher Education Curriculum Better Accommodate the Double Helix of Values Education and Quality Teaching?

The same curriculum implications that were spelled out in the case studies for effective school education in Values Education apply equally to teacher education. The curriculum of teacher education is as much a statement of beliefs and values as any other curriculum. The scope and intentions of a teacher education programme will speak volumes to its candidates about the entire role and purpose of being a teacher and, furthermore, what an entire schooling regime is designed to achieve. If teacher education focuses exclusively on the instrumentalist goals of acquiring content

knowledge and pedagogical skills, then the purpose of being a teacher will be spelled out in those terms. The importance of the work of the case study schools is in the disruption of this purpose and the reappraisal of teacher education and development it requires. Hence, a teacher education that is inspired by such a reappraised role will focus much attention and energy on the acquisition of values by students and on the essential role of teachers as modellers of these core values. Notions of teacher roles, limited by the restricted nature of teaching, will be eschewed in favour of notions that hold up the teacher's role as one with the capacity to make a difference in areas of personal morality and social conscience. Moreover, teacher education programs need to get beginning teachers committed to the process of "reflectivity" (in the Habermas sense) that one finds plays such an important role in the quality teaching described in the case studies. How might this be done? One approach might be to have teacher education adopt the ethical orientation to the curriculum that West Kidlington does. Also as Chapman and her colleagues remind us in Chapter 3, as discussion of ethical issues is possible in all academic disciplines, teacher educators should learn in their preparation programs how to conduct discussion of ethical issues with young people. Future teachers should learn specific strategies to teaching and learning about moral and ethical issues in their teacher education programs.

What Else Needs to Be Done?

The approaches to learning and teaching about values inherent in the Student Action Team approach, the PEER Support approach, the Place mapping approach and the Modbury approach and the whole school Values Education approach at West Kidlington have wide implications for teacher development. As the authors of the Manningham case study point out, it cannot be assumed that teachers will be able to simply adopt such approaches to Values Education without professional support and guidance. As Chapman, Cahill and Holdsworth argue in Chapter 3, this raises important questions:

> How can teachers be assisted to reflect critically on their role as values educators? What assistance is most appropriate for reflection on the identification and clarification of values; the philosophical underpinnings of values; strategies for teaching about values? What might constitute a more structured and reflective basis for approaching questions related to the values dimension of the curriculum for incorporation into pre-service and in-service education programs in universities? What strategies are most appropriate for teacher renewal in schools?

A Concluding Note

Those with professional responsibilities for pre-service and in-service teacher education need to start wrestling with the above questions and issues. There are at least three reasons for this assertion. First, in many places, both in Australia and abroad, the study of values is now an expectation on the part of policy makers. Most States

and Territories in Australia, for example, have formulated policies requiring schools to incorporate Values Education into programs of study. Values education programs in the guises of character education and moral education are increasingly common in the USA. Values education is also a required study area in the UK. In short, there is increasingly a policy imperative for more attention to be given to Values Education.

Second, as the case studies reveal there is another trend, in Australia at least, that is adding pressure on educators to be more informed about Values Education and to play a role in the way teachers are adopting commercial programs with a Values Education orientation. As the Townsville case study demonstrates, teachers are gravitating towards certain commercial products, often with something of a Values Education orientation, in their quest to address student behaviour problems in their classes. In the Townsville case study this involves the PEER Support program. In our experience, they are also turning to a range of such programs including Tribes, others with restorative justice practices as a focus and others adopting a philosophy in the classroom approach.

Third, and most importantly, there is a growing band of educators who now recognize Values Education as the "missing link" in quality teaching. The case studies reported earlier are testimony to that. So Values Education can no longer be treated as if it is marginal. It needs to become a core part of the curriculum in order that the transforming work of teachers and schools can be achieved with greatest effect.

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