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Project to Test and Measure the Impact of Values Education on Student Effects and School Ambience  

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Executive Summary

Background
The current study aimed to provide quantifiable and defensible data about links between Values Education practices and quality teaching outcomes. The research was designed to build upon previous work undertaken for the then Department of Education Science and Training (now Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations -DEEWR) funded project, the ACDE Values Education Partnerships Project, in order to elaborate and strengthen, in an empirical sense, the findings of the study that argued that Values Education and quality teaching are closely linked. Its sites and case studies were drawn principally from schools that had engaged in the DEEWR-funded project, Values Education Good Practice Schools Project (VEGPSP) -Stage 2 (DEEWR, 2008).

Research Questions
The research addressed the following main question:

Can the impact of values education on teaching and school ethos, as well as student achievement and behaviour, be tested empirically and observed reliably?

Ancillary questions included:

1 How is values education being implemented in ways that elicit positive change in teacher practice and student response?

2 How do we find evidence for the many claims based on teacher testimony that values education has a positive effect on:
   a) student academic diligence;
   b) school ambience;
   c) student-teacher relationships;
   d) student and teacher wellbeing; and,
   e) parental and family participation?

3 What added impact does the explicit teaching of values have on relevant student effects?

Research Methods
The current study involved a more rigorous scrutiny of data which were being collected and reported in a 'bottom up' fashion by a representative sample of schools from the VEGPSP-Stage 2 project. This deeper, ‘top down’ investigation aimed to examine whether the results from disparate values education programs could be tested empirically, through a mixed-methods approach, to provide converging evidence to support the often-reported links between values education, quality teaching and improved student effects.

The quantitative methods included:
1. Pre-post comparisons and multiple regression analyses using data obtained from student, staff and parent surveys to investigate any changes after one year of implementation of a values education program and to assess the relative impacts of individual, class and school factors on student behaviours, school climate, classroom ambience, pedagogical practices, student-teacher relationships and school/family involvement.

2. Comparison of extant data from Stage 2 schools on a range of aspects including student behaviour, attendance, parental satisfaction with school, student wellbeing, teacher morale and student performance on state wide tests.

The qualitative methods included unstructured survey questions, participant observation, focus groups and interviews.

**Research Sites**

Twenty representative schools from eight VEGPSP-2 clusters constituted the research sites. They were chosen to provide a range of types of values education projects and to ensure fair representation across states and territories, across educational systems and across educational levels.

Nine NSW schools from one cluster in the VEGPSP-2 project yielded quantitative and qualitative data from student, staff and parent surveys on the pre-implementation and post-implementation of values education. These schools are referred to as the Group A schools. Each school distributed and administered the surveys to all students, staff and parents in November and December 2006, and again in November 2007. Parent surveys were anonymous, while all staff and student surveys were coded and de-identified prior to data entry.

The data from the Group A schools were complemented with additional data from eleven intensive case studies which were used to explain and elaborate on any relationships that emerged in the quantitative phase of the study between values education, quality teaching, student academic diligence, student-teacher relationship, student wellbeing, and parental and family participation. The case studies are referred to in the report as Group B schools and provided a further body of evidence to assist the investigators in explaining the connections between values education, quality teaching, improved student behaviour, teacher practice and school ethos.

**Findings**

The findings are presented in two parts. The first part reports a summary of the findings from the Group A schools in relation to the three ancillary research questions, that is, the effective implementation practices, the evidence concerning the positive impacts of values education on schools and students, and the additional effects when values are taught explicitly. The second part describes the main conclusions drawn from the case studies of the Group B schools in order to further explore these questions. Finally a summary of the converging evidence arising from the study results is presented and the main research question regarding the feasibility of testing and measuring the impact of values education is discussed.
Findings from the Group A schools

Group A comprised nine primary schools from the Wallsend South Cluster, Newcastle, NSW. This cluster was one of the 25 clusters of schools engaged in Stage 2 of VEGPSP in 2006/2007. Although there were variations between the schools in the daily practices of implementing the explicit teaching of values, the purposes of the VEGPSP and the key implementation factors were common across the nine sites. Common across the cluster was the emphasis on the explicit teaching of values and on connecting values to whole school rules and student behaviour management.

1. Effective Implementation Practices

There were a range of cluster-level and school-level initiatives that contributed to the success of values education as it functioned in VEGPSP-2 in the Group A schools. Cluster-level initiatives refer to the combined networking activities among the nine schools. This collaborative and supportive infrastructure appeared to play an important role in maintaining commitment and enthusiasm for the project by providing a forum for solving problems, sharing ideas and resources as well as celebrating success. Values education teams were created within each school to lead the coordination of the project and the liaison with the other schools. Staff development opportunities were provided through regular meetings among the school teams as well as inter-school visits, and student networks were developed through a student forum day.

The school-level initiatives refer to the practices employed within each school to implement the program. The effective practices in terms of creating values-focused school environments varied across the cluster but were all based on the explicit teaching of values. Strategies included a common belief in the importance of staff modelling the values, the promotion of respectful relationships with and among students, a commitment to involving families and ensuring that the values were clearly explained and understood across all grades, a focus on strengthening students’ capabilities and confidence, the creation of authentic learning experiences where students could put the values into practice, songs, school displays and Values awards at assembly, and the utilization of reflective practices by students to gain greater insight into their own actions and the actions of others.

The need for strong leadership and a depth and breadth of commitment amongst school staff became evident when some of the principals transferred or went on leave during the 12 months of the project. While, initially, the existing staff teams provided an ongoing direction for the schools in situations where the new principal did not give the same emphasis and priority to values education, the commitment by the remaining staff appeared to wane. Without the explicit endorsement of the school executive, the dedication of a small team of committed teachers was not enough to carry the whole school focus. In schools where the principals were distracted by other demands, there appeared to be a fragmentation of the program and a ‘class-level’ rather than a ‘school-wide’ approach ensued. Thus, a whole school approach and strong leadership appear to be crucial to effective implementation.

2. Measuring the Impact of Values Education

A critical issue in evaluating the impact of values education is the lack of validated instruments to measure many of the psychological constructs associated with the implementation and outcomes of quality teaching and values education. The challenge
presented by this current investigation lies in the linking of quality teaching with values education and the devising of suitable measures to examine this link.

In the current investigation, survey data from students, teachers and parents were employed to provide measures of a range of student behaviours, classroom ambience, school climate, teacher beliefs and practices, parent perceptions and participation, and relationships between and among students, staff and parents. Because these constructs and the underlying items previously had not been validated, it was important to establish the reliability and validity of the measures that were developed. Exploratory factor analysis procedures were used to ascertain the reliability and validity of the survey instruments. The resultant student, teacher and parent scales were then employed in paired and independent samples t-tests to investigate whether there were any significant changes in the outcomes being measured. The quantitative data were supplemented by qualitative data gained from unstructured questions on the post-implementation surveys. Thus, the voices of the students, staff and parents provided a range of perspectives and produced triangulated evidence about the impact of the project.

a) Impact on student academic diligence

The pre-post comparisons of teacher perceptions of student behaviour showed statistically significant improvements across the three aspects measured, that is, Student engagement, Inclusive behaviour and Responsible behaviour. In the current investigation, student engagement encompassed elements of academic interest (more attentive in class), personal endeavour (more likely to try their best and take responsibility for their own learning) as well as interactions between students (more likely to listen to each other and cooperate with each other) and adherence to class routines (more likely to carry out instructions and keep the class rules). The teacher comments also confirmed that students were putting greater effort into their work and ‘striving for quality’, ‘striving to achieve their best’ and even ‘striving for perfection’. The aspect of students’ taking greater pride in their work and producing quality outcomes for their own pleasure was also mentioned by both teachers and parents.

Inclusive behaviour referred to the students' willingness to act kindly towards other students who were not their friends and to include children with special needs or who were from different cultures. Teachers’ and students’ comments also suggested that improved relationships between students contributed to a more cooperative and productive learning environment.

Responsible behaviour referred mainly to utilitarian tasks such as keeping the classroom tidy and putting rubbish in the bin. Student comments also indicated that there had been an increase in student responsibility which meant that teachers could ‘hand over’ some aspects of classroom control and that students could assume greater ‘ownership’ over their learning activities.

Thus, there was substantial quantitative and qualitative evidence suggesting that there were observable and measurable improvements in students’ academic diligence, including increased attentiveness, a greater capacity to work independently as well as more cooperatively, greater care and effort being invested in schoolwork and students assuming more responsibility for their own learning as well as classroom ‘chores’. However, teachers also emphasized that there was still considerable variability
between classes and students and that the teachers’ role in directing student learning and in facilitating the acquisition and demonstration of values was an ongoing one.

**b) Impact on school ambience**  
As recommended by previous researchers (e.g. Hoyle et al. 1985), the perceptions of the students, staff and parents were canvassed in order to provide an accurate and comprehensive understanding of each school’s ‘personality’.

**Student Perceptions of School Ambience**  
While there was no single discrete measure of ‘school’ ambience obtained from the students, the pre-post comparisons of the three scales from the Kindergarten and Year 1-2 surveys and the five scales from the Year 3-6 surveys provided information from the students’ perspective about pertinent factors affecting school ambience, such as the classroom learning environment (*Classroom ambience*) and student behaviour (*My behaviour* and *Peer behaviour*).

At each stage, including Kindergarten, there was a statistically significant decrease in the students’ ratings of their own behaviour (*My behaviour*) but no commensurate change in students’ ratings of their peers’ behaviour (except in Years 1-2 where students reported a significant improvement in *Peer behaviour*). While, on the surface, the decrease in students’ ratings of their own behaviour could be interpreted as an actual decline, the fact that there was no significant change in the students’ ratings of their peers’ behaviour, and that in Years 1-2, the perceptions of *Peer behaviour* actually improved, suggests that students were being more self-critical in the post-implementation survey. One of the effects of values education appeared to be an increase in ‘self-reflection’ and students were more likely to evaluate their own behaviour in a more critical light.

Contrary to the lower scores on students’ self-reported behaviour, the teacher ratings of student behaviour and the Year 3-6 student responses to the open-ended questions, which asked for an example of an occasion when the student had demonstrated or observed one of the values, indicated that there was considerable evidence that students were in fact demonstrating many of the values they had been learning about, and that the school climate had improved in a number of aspects owing to the changes in social dynamics emanating from the values education program. Some of the changes noted by the students included improved self-regulation and a new awareness about personal integrity, including honesty and truthfulness. There were also numerous comments to suggest that the playground was a calmer, more caring and more cooperative environment than before the values program. Synchronous with the teachers’ perceptions that students were demonstrating more inclusive behaviour, the student comments also contained frequent reference to very deliberate actions to make peers who were not necessarily a student’s ‘best friend’ feel accepted and included. In addition to the many examples provided about improvements in their own behaviour and in their interactions with others, students also identified that there was greater ‘respect’ shown by themselves and others in regard to listening to teachers and looking after their belongings, school property and the school environment.

Student ratings of *Classroom ambience* improved in Kindergarten, did not change in Year 1-2 and declined in Year 3-6. The decrease in satisfaction among the older students could be owing to a growing disenchantment with school as students mature.
or might reflect the same more critical stance that students took in relation to their own behaviour. Once again, the student comments about their classrooms appeared to contradict the drop in scores on the quantitative measure. The student comments confirmed what the teachers reported in both their survey ratings and comments, that is, that students were taking greater responsibility for their learning and working together more co-operatively.

Teacher Perceptions of School Ambience
There were three sources of information used to explore teachers' perceptions of school ambience. These included the pre-post comparisons on the three scales measuring aspects of school climate (Leadership and policy, Relational trust and Professional learning) as well as the three scales measuring teacher perceptions of students' behaviour. Responses to the open-ended questions concerning whether teachers had observed any changes in playground behaviour or in the school climate were also used to interpret the results from the quantitative analysis.

The pre-post comparisons on the three scales measuring aspects of school climate showed that there were no statistically significant differences in teachers’ perceptions on any of these measures at the end of the particular values education intervention in question, although on the Relational trust scale there was a tendency for teachers to report increased feelings of belonging and connectedness with school, and an improvement in relationships among staff and with families. The teacher comments however indicated that there were some noticeable changes evident in the playground where students were observed to be “more settled”, “talking before fighting”, “playing sensibly together”, “more caring”, and “more considerate of each other” with such improvements resulting in a “calmer” environment with less conflict and with a reduction in the number of referrals to the planning room.

Students were also described as being more patient, more honest and more responsible, with teachers providing examples of students waiting quietly in line at canteen, handing in money, admitting to "wrong behaviour", and looking after school gardens and equipment. As well as an improvement in students' behaviour in the playground, a number of schools noted that assemblies had “dramatically improved” and were "much calmer" and that there was "more ordered movement around the school", all of which helped to "set a better tone". Staff in all schools described the school climate as “positive” and many noted that school was a "kinder", "more harmonious" and "happier place to be" and that this was not only owing to improvements in student behaviour, but also to the fact that staff were now “working together” and “working towards a common goal”. There appeared to be a consistent feeling in the schools that the explicit teaching of values had “unified the school” by making both staff and students aware of the expectations for behaviour so that all “were on the same page”.

Parent Perceptions of School Ambience
The results of the pre-post comparisons of the three parent scales measuring parent perceptions of their child’s behaviour and attitude to school and also parent perceptions of school climate showed that there were no statistically significant differences on any of the parent scales. However, there was a trend for improved scores on the two scales measuring parent perceptions of their child’s Social behaviour and Attitude to school.
The parent comments generally supported the view that there had been some improvements in their child’s willingness to go to school and in children’s playground behaviour, but most parents noted that the school had always provided a safe and welcoming environment for both students and families, and thus there was little room for improvement. The overall perception of parents was that, even at the beginning of the VEGPSP-2 program, the school ambience was very positive. Teachers, principals and administrative staff were universally acknowledged as being caring and committed professionals. The lack of significant change on the pre-post survey comparison is likely owing to the high levels of satisfaction expressed at the inception of the program. Some parents perceived a slight improvement in their child's attitude to school and significant changes in other children’s behaviour, although there were some concerns about on-going, though isolated, incidents of bullying.

While the results from the preceding analysis do not provide a simple answer to the question of what impact values education has on school ambience, the perspectives from the three different groups of stakeholders provides some common agreement. Positive relationships among staff and between staff and families, while not increasing significantly on the measures employed in the current study, remained strong and were ‘affirmed’ by unifying the school community in a common approach. The impact on student behaviour appeared to be the most significant aspect with teachers, parents and students observing more incidents of caring, honest, respectful and responsible behaviour leading to more cooperative student interactions and contributing to a safer and more harmonious playground environment. While values education was not an instant panacea for student ‘misbehaviour’, the explicit teaching of values provided clear expectations about how students should treat each other and a ‘common language’ through which students could resolve their own disputes or through which teachers and parents could assist children to analyse and redirect their behaviour.

c) Student-teacher Relationships
While no quantitative data were collected on student-teacher relationships, there was some evidence from the student, parent and particularly the teacher responses to the open-ended survey questions suggesting that both students and teachers were behaving more ‘respectfully’ towards each other. Teachers described improved student behaviour towards teachers, including a “rise in levels of politeness and courtesy”, “open friendliness”, “better manners”, “offers of help”, and students being “more kind and considerate”. Students also appeared to be monitoring each others’ interactions with staff and reprimanding fellow students who interrupted teachers or were not listening.

The impact of teachers modelling appropriate behaviour and applying a restorative approach to student misdemeanour appeared to create a climate of trust, fairness and justice. Students appeared to perceive that their ‘side of the story’ would be heard and there were numerous examples provided of occasions when teachers had treated students ‘fairly’.

The main impact of values education on student-teacher relationships appeared to be a greater understanding of each other’s perspective or at least to have a greater respect for each other’s position. Students seemed to feel they had more opportunity to
express their opinions and teachers appeared more willing to listen. While previously, teachers might have been able to establish caring and positive relationships with ‘well-behaved’ students, the explicit teaching of values meant that teachers now regarded instances of ‘misbehaviour’ as teaching opportunities whereby students could be assisted to identify their mistakes and practise the value that they hadn’t yet ‘learned’.

d) Student and Teacher Wellbeing
In the current study, while there was no single instrument employed to measure ‘wellbeing’, the pre-post comparisons of the student and teacher scales and the analysis of the open-ended questions on the student, teacher and parent surveys provided converging evidence to imply that both student and teacher wellbeing were impacted on in a number of ways.

**Student wellbeing.** The analysis of the quantitative data showed that there were measurable and significant improvements on the three scales measuring teacher perceptions of student behaviour (*Student engagement*, *Inclusive behaviour* and *Responsible behaviour*) after 12 months of the values education program. The comments of parents, teachers and the students themselves corroborated this finding and further suggested that the school ambience had improved in a number of ways, thus promoting student wellbeing through the provision of a safer and more cooperative playground where students were taking better care of each other and of the school grounds.

The student comments also indicated evidence of self-regulation and awareness that implementing values was not always easy. A number of examples showed that students were grappling at a deeper level with the ‘moral choices’ that confronted them. The students were reflecting on their first impulses, evaluating their behaviour and then attempting to act in accordance with the values they had learned. Such ‘internal struggles’ may not be visible to others, nor measurable, but appear to represent a growing ‘wisdom’ that ultimately leads to more self-regulated behaviour. In the current study, the one significant finding from the student surveys that was consistent across all the grades was that student ratings of their own behaviour decreased. Because there was no commensurate decrease in the students’ ratings of each other’s behaviour, the declining scores on self-assessed behaviour suggest that the students were engaging in a more critical and reflective analysis of their own actions. It could be the case that the declining scores in children’s previous ‘over-estimates’ of ‘good behaviour’ represent a growth in self-appraisal, self-awareness and moral development.

The ways in which values education was implemented also appeared to have positive effects on students’ self-esteem. As part of the explicit teaching of values, teachers took every opportunity to reinforce instances where values were being shown. Thus, some of the impacts of values education on student wellbeing appeared to be the creation of a safer and more caring school community, a greater self-awareness, a greater capacity for self-appraisal, self-regulation and enhanced self-esteem.

**Teacher wellbeing.** The only scale in the pre-post comparison of the teacher surveys that approached statistical significance was the scale measuring Relational Trust where scores on this scale increased over the 12 months of the values education
program. This suggests that there was a trend for teachers to feel more accepted at school, to feel more valued by colleagues and to have improved relationships with families. Teacher comments also indicated that the whole school approach to teaching values gave them a greater sense of teamwork and being in a unified school community.

While the measures of teacher perceptions of student behaviour showed a significant improvement, teacher reaction to the change was not directly assessed. However, a number of teachers commented that improved student behaviour had created a more inclusive and harmonious environment. Teachers noted that students were now more likely to smile at or greet them and offer help when it was needed. It appeared that the increased respect given to teachers by students contributed to the school being a “happier”, “friendlier” and more enjoyable place to work. Finally, the requirement to discuss, explain and model values often resulted in teachers examining their own behaviour and attitudes and perhaps engaging in self-evaluation and self-improvement.

e) Parental and Family Participation

While the schools made efforts to involve families in the development and ongoing implementation of the VEGPSP-2 program, family involvement did not appear to be a prominent feature in either the teacher or parent surveys. Most of the teachers felt that parents supported the program and that the common focus and common language shared between home and school was mutually beneficial.

From the parents’ perspective, the majority appeared happy with what the schools were already doing and the introduction of values education did not appear to change parents’ positive perceptions of the school or the teachers. Some parents strongly endorsed the explicit teaching of values and appreciated the school’s efforts to ensure that the children were getting a ‘consistent message’, while there did appear to be some ‘resentment’ from a few parents who felt that schools were attempting to teach children what they had already learned at home.

Overall, the parent responses indicated a long-standing satisfaction with the schools and their respective staff and a general though not unanimous support for values education. However, only about a third of the parent population responded to the pre- and post-surveys and thus it is difficult to know whether the other two-thirds of the parent body were in ‘passive support’ of the program or were unaware of it. Teachers welcomed collaboration with parents when it was forthcoming but expressed some frustration when they felt that the onus to teach values rested solely with the school.

3. Explicit Teaching of Values

The current investigation of the implementation of values education at the Wallsend South cluster has provided limited, though converging, evidence about the impact of values education on student effects and school ambience.

The way in which values education is conducted has important implications for the outcomes. When values are taught explicitly and given equal status with other areas of the curriculum, values education becomes an integral part of a school’s ‘core business’ and a number of ‘whole school’ aspects are affected. First, there is a clearly articulated and school-wide understanding of how people should treat each other and
the school environment. Though contexts and personalities vary, the best way of endorsing the importance of this new approach is for the principal to give it his/her imprimatur and to embed values education in school policies. Ongoing commitment to values education is also facilitated by staff collaboration and opportunities for professional development. The constant visual and verbal reminders as well as incidental acknowledgement of appropriate actions and ‘placing values on the stage’ by presenting Values awards at school assemblies means students are provided with consistent and positive guidelines. Parent involvement appears to facilitate and enhance the outcomes of values education, but this involvement is not always obtainable.

When values education is treated as an ‘implicit’ part of a school’s role, there is not always the same unified and consistent approach to student-staff relations and student welfare issues. Explicit teaching exposes the ‘hidden curriculum’ in regard to expectations about student conduct. The results of the current investigation provide limited, though consistent findings that values education changes teacher-student relationships so that rather than enforcing minimum standards of behaviour or school work, teachers are more likely to support and encourage students to strive for higher ideals. Instead of a focus on ‘correcting what is wrong’, teachers are providing models and visions of ‘what can be’. The explicit teaching makes these positive outcomes tangible to students.

Findings from the Group B Schools

Overwhelmingly, the strongest inference that can be drawn from the case studies, when taken together as a collective case study, is that as schools give increasing curriculum and teaching emphasis to values education, students become more academically diligent, the school assumes a calmer, more peaceful ambience, better student-teacher relationships are forged, student and teacher wellbeing improves and parents are more engaged with the school. However, there are important differences between some of the case studies. The levels of academic diligence vary across cases. Approaches to implementation vary from implicit to explicit teaching. There are substantial variations across case studies of parental involvement in the school community. Moreover, the case studies suggest that any relationship between values education programs and the quality of student attitude, parent involvement, interpersonal relations and the like is much more complicated than simply being the case that values education in and of itself produces such quality teaching effects. Rather, it seems clear that the fit between values education and quality teaching is better described not as one having an impact on the other, but rather as the two of them being in harmony. That is, values education, academic diligence, school ambience and coherence, student and teacher wellbeing, the quality of interpersonal relationships and, up to a point, parental participation harmonise in some way. The closer the attention a school gives to explicitly teaching a set of agreed values, the more the students seem to comply with their school work demands, the more conducive and coherent a place the school becomes and the better the staff and students feel. The extent to which parents become more engaged remains problematic, at least within the limitations of the data available from this study.

Explicit teaching of values certainly had a settling effect on the case study schools by providing a common language for talking about interpersonal behaviour. It also
provided a mechanism for self-regulated behaviour. A more settled school circumstance can only enhance quality teaching and enable teachers to raise expectations for student performance. It is difficult to imagine most teachers and students not feeling good about such things.

Of course, this situation begs the question implied in the title of the study, about whether or not improvements in academic diligence, school ambience and coherence, student and teacher wellbeing, the quality of interpersonal relationships and the like would occur without values education being such a prominent aspect of schooling. Clearly, it is not the sole contributor to such outcomes. Schools can be quite settled places without emphasising values to the extent that these case study schools have done. Students can try harder without being involved in values education. However, the unique contribution of Values Education in these schools seems to have been in its effecting a situation where such occurrences became natural and school wide phenomena.

Summary
In summary, the triangulated evidence derived from both Group A and B schools coheres around the demonstration of values education impacting on student effects. The evidence emanates from a variety of research methodologies dispensed in a variety of settings and within a range of different projects. There is little deviation nonetheless in the coincidence of effects reported on. These effects match those that were targeted in this study and are summarised under the ancillary research questions.

Ancillary Question 1. The effective implementation of values education in both the Group A and Group B schools was characterized by a number of common elements.
  • Values education was regarded as a school’s “core business”, given equal status with other areas and embedded in policies and student welfare practices;
  • A ‘common language’ was developed among staff, students and families to describe values and the school’s expectations of student behaviour;
  • Staff endeavoured to ‘model’ and demonstrate the values in everyday interactions with students;
  • Values were scaffolded by supportive school-wide practices including teacher facilitation of student reflection and self-regulation of behaviour;
  • Values were taught in an explicit way in and out of the classroom and through other media (e.g. assemblies, sport and cooperative games, drama, songs etc.);
  • Values education was allied to ‘real world learning’ involving deep personal learning and imbued both planned and unplanned learning opportunities;
  • Values education was reinforced through positive visual media as well as consistent, verbal encouragement and acknowledgement;
  • Values education was allied to expressed high standards for overall participation, performance and achievement; and
  • Values education was optimally introduced under the guidance of the principal and/or a team of committed staff.

Ancillary Question 2. The assessment of the impacts of values education on student and teacher effects in both Group A and B schools also revealed common findings.

  a) The impact on student academic diligence was demonstrated by students:
• showing increased attentiveness in class and a greater capacity to work independently;
• assuming more responsibility for their own learning;
• asking questions and working together more cooperatively;
• investing greater care and effort in their schoolwork; and
• taking more pride in their efforts.

b) The improvements in School ambience included:
• conflict among students decreasing or being managed more constructively;
• students demonstrating greater empathy, honesty and integrity;
• more tolerant and cooperative student interactions;
• safer and more harmonious classrooms and playgrounds;
• greater kindness and tolerance among students;
• students actively seeking to include peers without friends;
• students taking greater responsibility with school equipment and routine tasks; and
• students treating the school buildings and grounds ‘with respect’.

c) The impact on student-teacher relationships was evidenced by:
• “more trusting” relationships between staff and students;
• the establishment of more ‘democratic’ classrooms;
• teachers giving students more ‘power’ by allowing them choices in learning activities;
• teachers being more conscious of scaffolding students to manage their own behaviour or resolve conflict with others;
• teachers seeking opportunities to acknowledge and reinforce appropriate behaviour;
• teachers ‘listening’ to students and responding to their concerns and opinions;
• students perceiving that teachers treat them fairly;
• students behaving “more respectfully” towards teachers; and
• students showing greater politeness and courtesy to teachers.

d) The positive impacts on student and teacher wellbeing included:
• students feeling a greater sense of connectedness and belonging;
• students gaining a greater capacity for self-reflection and self-appraisal;
• students developing a greater capacity for regulating their own and their peers’ behaviour;
• teachers receiving collegial support and strong leadership;
• teachers obtaining confidence and knowledge through opportunities for professional development and through staff collaboration;
• teachers re-examining their practices and role; and
• the fostering of relational trust among staff and between teachers and families.

e) The impact of parental and family participation was variable. Although the impact of values education appeared to be enhanced when parents understood
...and shared the school values and reinforced these at home, in general, the successful implementation of values education did not appear to depend on parental support or participation nor did the introduction of values education per se, engender greater collaboration with families.

Ancillary Question 3. The added impact of the explicit teaching of values was also consistent across both groups of schools. When values education was explicit, a common language was established among students, staff and families. This not only led to greater understanding of the targeted values but also provided a positive focus for redirecting children’s inappropriate behaviour. Teachers perceived that explicitly teaching values and developing empathy in students resulted in more responsible, focused and cooperative classrooms and equipped students to strive for better learning and social outcomes. When values are explicitly endorsed, acknowledged and ‘valued’ within a school culture, it is incumbent on schools to ensure that staff, as well as students are both benefactors and recipients in respectful and caring interactions. The common focus draws teachers together to create a collaborative and cohesive school community which supports teachers to do their job more effectively. This has important ramifications for students’ academic progress and wellbeing.

The current investigation has employed a range of methods in an attempt to measure the impact of values education on student effects and school ambience. While the Group A surveys yielded valid and reliable instruments by which to acquire quantitative data, the quantitative evidence, on its own, did not provide the ‘full story’. The case studies and the student, teacher, and to a lesser extent the parent, comments provided important insights that helped to explain both the significant and non-significant quantitative findings. The current attempt to measure the impact of values education has revealed that values education produces consistent effects that are often observable but difficult to isolate and quantify. The limitations and strengths of the methods employed in the current study have implications for future research in the field and indicate that quantitative analyses need to be supplemented by and interpreted in the light of qualitative data. Furthermore, when conducting research into interactions that occur within complex organisations such as schools, and that seek to investigate the relationships between students, teachers and families, it is important to include the ‘voice’ of all three groups of stakeholders. Finally, because ‘causes take time to exert their effects’ (Gollob & Reichardt, 1987, p. 86) longitudinal investigations should ideally, be conducted over at least 2 years and yield three data collection periods so that the origins of reciprocal causal effects can be traced.

Within the inherent limitations of a study carried out in multiple complex environments, using a variety of methods, and across less than a calendar year, quantitative and qualitative evidence has become available that a well-crafted and well-managed values education intervention can impact positively on student academic diligence, school ambience, student-teacher relationships, student and teacher wellbeing, and, less significantly, parental and family participation. Again, within the limits imposed by the nature and timing of the study, it is evident that the central question that drove the study, namely, Can the impact of values education on teaching and school ethos, as well as student achievement and behaviour, be tested empirically and observed reliably?, has been answered in the affirmative.
Project to Test and Measure the Impact of Values Education on Student Effects and School Ambience

Report Introduction

Research in Australia and overseas seems to suggest that the effects of well-crafted values education programs extend to a transformation of student behaviour, teacher-student relationships, classroom ambience, teacher and student resilience, staff satisfaction, and perhaps most surprisingly, student academic diligence. In Australia, the recent raft of research began in 2003 with a call for schools to show what they were doing around a wide set of parameters that might broadly be defined as capturing a commitment to an emphasis on values in education. With little direction other than some guidelines about the importance of the relationships, ambience and holistic discourse that characterises values pedagogy, teachers and schools were asked to provide the actual shape and form of such pedagogy and, with a little financial help, to develop it to the point that it could be showcased. Sixty-five programs were showcased in the report on the ‘Values Education Study’, most of them illustrating that a fairly routine approach to education could be transformed to something more satisfying and effective across the range of measures for students, teachers, principals and parents.

The findings of the 2003 Values Education Study (DEST, 2003) became the basis of the foundational thought behind the 2005 National Framework for Values Education in Australian Schools (DEST, 2005). Prime among these was the idea that Values Education both relies on and enhances good practice pedagogy. The importance of this dualism is captured in the twin idea that: first, values education must rest on best practice. That is, it cannot be an ‘add-on’ nor break the conventions of good teaching as identified in educational research, including most importantly in the research that normally goes by the title ‘quality teaching’; and, second, that well-crafted values education has its own enhancing effect on best practice. That is, it both builds on and strengthens the criteria that characterize best practice as identified, as an example, in Newmann’s pedagogical dynamics for effective quality teaching (Newmann & Associates, 1996). For instance, Newmann’s concept of ‘school coherence’ as the school that is committed holistically and unswervingly to the good of the student is a values-rich concept that connotes dedication, responsibility, generosity and integrity on the part of teachers, principal and stakeholders. It is a dimension of quality teaching that impacts positively on all other dimensions, including those around academic diligence. Similarly, Newmann’s notion of ‘trustful, supportive ambience’ is about the ethics and aesthetics of the relationships that surround the student, most centrally the relationship with the teacher(s). It is one of the less instrumentalist and less easily measurable features of quality teaching that, Newmann suggests, is so indispensable to the more instrumentalist and easily measurable that it will render these latter mute and futile ventures if it is not attended to. These are the dimensions of quality teaching that are too often neglected by stakeholders who insist that the answer to student success lies in more linear instruction, more persistent testing and teachers who are content-driven rather than people-driven. Ironically, they are sometimes forgotten even by the self-proclaimed artisans of quality teaching itself.
Since the mid 1990s, there has been a concentration of effort aimed at maximizing student achievement in school education and rectifying the debilitating effects of failure. In 1994, a Carnegie Corporation Taskforce on Student Achievement (Carnegie, 1996) drew on new research in the neurosciences to show that effective learning requires a response that is as much about affect and social dynamics as about cognition. In so doing, it re-defined the notion of learning to include matters of communicative competence, empathic character, self-reflection and self-knowing as being as central to intellectual development as the recall of facts and figures. In effect, Carnegie pre-figured the new values education agenda by illustrating that effective learning is inherently values-filled. The new values education agenda differs from the old in that the latter was largely regarded as a moral imperative, whereas the new values education agenda is increasingly seen as a pedagogical imperative that incorporates the moral, but also the social, emotional, physical, spiritual and intellectual aspects of human development. Herein, a values approach to learning is seen to be an indispensable artefact to any learning environment if student wellbeing, including academic success, is to be maximized. The innovative and possibly revolutionary thought contained in this proposition is that, in a sense, academic success becomes a by-product of a ‘whole-person’ approach to learning, instead of being the linear focus in learning that Carnegie implied had led too often to failure.

In the intervening years, a number of learning paradigms, incorporating research and practice, has attempted to address the challenge provided by these new insights. These have varied in their particular emphasis but have been united by the belief that learning is holistic and that the maximum effect can only be achieved through a more comprehensive pedagogy than has been characteristic of school education in the past. These paradigms go variously by the titles of authentic pedagogy, quality teaching, service learning and values education, to name a few. The proposition that underlies the ‘New Values Education’ is that all of these can be subsumed in effective and complete values education pedagogy. The chief investigators of this current DEEWR study have already had published a text on the Australian Values Education projects titled, *Values Education and Quality Teaching: The Double Helix Effect* (Sydney: David Barlow Publishing) (cf. Lovat & Toomey, 2007), a title that highlights the essential interface between effective learning and values education.

As a result of these insights, there has been across the world a resurgence of interest in values education at school education, research and policy levels. In Australia, the Federal Government has initiated a range of large scale curriculum development and resources projects as part of its expressed policy to have all Australian schools, public and private, introduce comprehensive values education programs as part of their charter. In each of the state systems of education, values education is a mandated part of the curriculum. In the United Kingdom, there have been similar policy shifts towards values education. In England, for instance, following a national forum on the topic, the National Curriculum was revised to integrate values. This takes the form of an explicit aim concerned with the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils, and personal wellbeing is named as the ultimate goal which these aims should serve. In the USA, twenty five states have mandated values education programs, sometimes referred to as ‘character education’ and service learning has become a major way in which values education is manifested at both school and post-school levels of learning. In other parts of the world, such as China, including Hong Kong
and Taiwan, Europe, including Russia and Iceland, South Korea, Taiwan, Singapore, Vietnam, Malaysia and parts of Africa, values education is either a mandated part of the curriculum, with teachers in training being required to prepare for teaching it, or is at least a focused part of policy development. In Russia, for instance, the Government has initiated a number of forums concerned with values education, referred to more often as moral education, as a means of reforming and enlarging the scope of its schooling system. Furthermore, UNESCO reports that its own sponsored values education program, titled Living Values, functions in 84 countries. The parameters of Living Values capture well the comprehensive agenda foresighted above for values education in that they aim to apply to it a range of measures, including teacher-student relations, the ambience of the educational site, the personal and social development of students, and their academic success. In many of these sites, research has demonstrated the effects foreshadowed of values education on all matters pertaining to student wellbeing, including academic success.

The above is pertinent background to the study being reported on here. This study was commissioned by the Australian Government to test with stronger methodology some of the more pronounced effects that were noted in Stages 1 and 2 of the Values Education Good Practice Schools Project (DEST, 2006; DEEWR, 2008). The study was quite comprehensive and bold in the sense that student effects were proposed for study that have rarely if ever been exposed to such direct scrutiny against the impact of just one factor. For example, the effect of improved academic diligence, which had been referred to in one way or another so often in anecdotal teacher testimony as a perception on the part of teachers involved in values education programs, was included as one of the terms of reference for the study. This was done not in the naïve and unlikely hope that simple linear evidence would be found for this link but rather in order to explore the foundations for the persistent teacher testimony about this effect. Less controversially but still optimistically, student effects around enhanced behaviour, resilience and contentment were also proposed for appraisal against the impact of a fairly short values education intervention. Again, the study was not proposing to establish simple linear relationships of the sort that rarely if ever exist in education, but rather to test the volumes of teacher testimony about such effects, emanating from Stages 1 and 2 of VEGPSP. In a word, it needs to be remembered that the effects of values education have been tested herein in a way that rarely obtains in major educational research, where inherently complex effects are attributed and then appraised against the impact of just one factor. The terms of reference, methodologies and results of the study are outlined below.

Methodology

Research Design

The current study aims to provide quantifiable and defensible data about links between values education practices and quality teaching outcomes. The research is designed to build upon previous work undertaken for the Australian Government funded project, the ACDE Values Education Partnerships Project, in order to elaborate and strengthen, in an empirical sense, the findings of the study that argues that values education and quality teaching are closely linked. Its sites and case studies were drawn principally from schools that had engaged in Values Education Good Practice Schools Project (VEGPSP) Stage 2 (DEEWR, 2008).
One of the problems in evaluating the effectiveness and impact of values education programs is the lack of established instruments for measuring the school and class-level factors that contribute to the well-being and performance of students, particularly those in the primary years (Bowen, 2006). The current study employed a mixed-methods approach in order to obtain both quantitative and qualitative data on a range of teacher and school-related variables and on student outcomes. Quantitative data obtained from student, teacher and parent surveys were used to develop reliable and valid measures of student, class and school effects associated with quality teaching and the VEGPSP-2 programs. These scales were then employed in pre-post analyses to investigate any statistically significant changes in student outcomes and teacher practice. Multiple regression analyses were also conducted to identify the relative influences of class and school-level factors on student outcomes and teacher practice.

A number of qualitative techniques were also used to gather data including unstructured survey questions, participant observer, focus groups, interviews and document analysis. Data yielded from such techniques were used to construct eleven separate case studies. The evidence emerging from the case studies confirmed and elaborated upon the same aspects as those addressed through the quantitative analysis.

**Research Questions**

The research addressed the following main question:

> Can the impact of values education on teaching and school ethos, as well as student achievement and behaviour, be tested empirically and observed reliably?

Ancillary questions included:

1. **How is values education being implemented in ways that elicit positive change in teacher practice and student response?**

2. **How do we find evidence for the many claims based on teacher testimony that values education has a positive effect on:**
   - a) student academic diligence;
   - b) school ambience;
   - c) student-teacher relationships;
   - d) student and teacher wellbeing; and,
   - e) parental and family participation?

3. **What added impact does the explicit teaching of values have on relevant student effects?**

**Research Methodology**

The current project involved a more rigorous scrutiny of data which was being collected and reported in a 'bottom up' fashion by a representative sample of schools from the VEGPSP-Stage 2 project. This deeper, ‘top down’ investigation aimed to examine whether the results from disparate values education programs could be tested empirically, through a mixed-methods approach, to provide converging evidence to
support the often-reported links between values education, quality teaching and improved student outcomes.

The quantitative methods included:

1. Pre-post comparisons and multiple regressions analyses using data obtained from student, staff and parent surveys to investigate any changes after one year of implementation of a values education program and to assess the relative impacts of individual, class and school factors on student behaviours, school climate, Classroom ambience, pedagogical practices, student-teacher relationships and school/family involvement. Qualitative survey data were also collected in the post-surveys.

2. Comparison of extant data from Stage 2 schools on measures of student behaviours, attendance parental satisfaction with school, student wellbeing and teacher morale.

3. It was intended that classroom observations of explicit values education methods and techniques, as well as quality teaching practices, would be conducted in a number of VEGPSP Stage 2 schools. However, it was not possible to collect these observations owing to the fact that the schools and their respective research colleague’s institutions had pre-existing ethics agreements which did not cover this aspect.

The qualitative methods being applied through VEGPSP-2 included:

1. Thematic coding of focus group discussions with students and teachers to identify recurring elements in participants’ responses to values education and perceived changes in self, others and school climate;

2. Thematic coding of interviews with principals to identify effective implementation aspects and changes in parent attitudes or school involvement.

Research Sites
20 representative schools from 8 VEGPSP-2 clusters constituted the research sites. They were chosen to provide a range of types of values education projects and to ensure fair representation across states and territories, across educational systems and across educational levels.

The Schools Engaged in Mixed Methods with Emphasis on a Quantitative Study
1. Merewether Heights Public School
2. Hamilton North Public School
3. Fennell Bay Public School
4. Booragul Public School
5. Speers Point Public School
6. Wallsend South Public School
7. Jesmond Public School
8. Mayfield West Public School
9. Kahibah Public School
These nine NSW schools are referred to as the Group A schools and yielded data from student, staff and parent surveys on the pre-implementation and post-implementation of values education regarding its impact on:

- a) student academic diligence;
- b) school ambience;
- c) student-teacher relationships;
- d) student and teacher wellbeing; and,
- e) parental and family participation.

**Data Collection**

At the Group A schools, each school distributed and administered the surveys to all students, staff and parents in November and December 2006 and again in November 2007. Parent surveys were anonymous, while all staff and student surveys were coded and de-identified prior to data entry. The Group A schools data analysis was conducted by Dr Kerry Dally and Dr Neville Clement, The University of Newcastle.

**The Schools involved in Mixed Methods with Emphasis on Qualitative Aspects**

The data from the above aspect of the study was complemented with additional data from a number of intensive case studies which were used to explain and elaborate any relationships that emerged in the quantitative phase of the study between values education, quality teaching, student academic diligence, student-teacher relationship, student wellbeing, and parental and family participation. The case studies provided a further body of evidence to assist the investigators in explaining the connections between values education, quality teaching, improved student behaviour, teacher practice and school ethos.

The case studies adopted a range of mixed methods drawn from the quantitative and qualitative methods listed above. The research sites are referred to in the report as Group B schools and the schools and their UAN colleagues (or other suitable academics), who coordinated the research effort at each site, are listed below. The researchers were also selected for their suitability to participate in the respective aspects of the quantitative and qualitative aspects of the study.

1. Seaford 6-12 School, SA (Emeritus Professor Robert Crotty)#
2. Rasmussen PS, Qld (Dr Angela Hill)#
3. Preston South PS, Vic (Professor Ron Toomey)#
4. Lance Holt School, WA (Dr Laura Stocker and Ms Kathryn Netherwood)
5. Lanyon HS, ACT (Dr Thomas Nielsen)
6. Townsville HS, Qld (Dr Angela Hill)#
7. Toowoomba HS, Qld (Dr Marian Lewis)
8. St Charles Borromeo PS, Vic (Professor Ron Toomey & Ms Sue Cahill)#
9. Townsville Central PS, Qld (Dr Angela Hill)#
10. Boddington HS, WA (Emeritus Professor Brian Hill and Mr Garry Butcher)#
11. Airds HS, NSW (Dr Leonie Arthur)#

Those schools marked with # also yielded some data for the quantitative aspect of the study either by interrogating state wide extant data about such things as student absence, parental satisfaction and student wellbeing or using pre-post test measures of student and/or teacher perceptions about the effects of values education.
Findings

The findings are presented in two parts. The first part reports the findings from the Group A schools to address the main research question regarding the feasibility of testing and measuring the impact of values education, followed by the three ancillary research questions, namely: how values education can be implemented effectively; what impact values education has on a range of student and school effects; and, what additional impact ensues when values are taught explicitly. The second part employs the case study data from the Group B schools in order to further explore these questions. Finally, conclusions are drawn from the findings of both the Group A and Group B schools about the impact of values education and insights gained from the current attempt to measure the factors influencing the implementation of values education, as well as its effects, are discussed.

SECTION A: Findings from the Group A schools

Group A comprised nine primary schools from the Wallsend South Cluster, Newcastle, NSW. This cluster was one of the 25 clusters of schools engaged in Stage 2 of VEGPSP in 2006/2007. Although there were variations between the schools in the daily practices of implementing the explicit teaching of values, the purposes of the VEGPSP-2 project and the key implementation factors were common across the nine sites. The key goals of the VEGPSP-2 project are listed below and Appendix 1 provides a brief description of each school and some individual differences in school size, school communities, prior and current programs that were complementary, values focus and implementation practices.

Common across the cluster was the emphasis on the explicit teaching of values and on connecting values to whole school rules and student behaviour management.

The key goals within the cluster were:

- The raising of expectations in terms of student and staff behaviour, student and staff leadership, and the profile of the school in its local community;
- The development of consistency of language and expectations within each school and clear understandings about how values may be used to describe standards for student behaviour;
- A focus on the promotion of quality relationships as a key factor in promoting quality teaching; and,
- The placement of values at the very core of positive school culture.

The project was evaluated by a comparison of pre- and post- implementation surveys administered to students, teachers, principals and parents at each school. The surveys contained both closed and open questions and provided quantitative and qualitative data pertaining to the effects of values education on a range of outcomes relating to student behaviour, school climate, classroom ambience and parent involvement.
Major Research Question:
The main question that the research sought to address was:

*Can the impact of values education on teaching and school ethos, as well as student achievement and behaviour, be tested empirically and observed reliably?*

A critical issue in evaluating the impact of values education is the lack of validated instruments to measure many of the psychological constructs associated with the implementation and outcomes of quality teaching and values education. There has been considerable agreement in the research literature about the factors linking quality teaching with student achievement, including school climate, classroom ambience and student-teacher relationships (e.g. Schreens, 1997; Creemers, 1999; Osterman, 2000; Wentzel, 2004; Gadeyne, 2006). Additionally, research has been conducted to gauge the impact of values education on student achievement, some with positive effects (e.g. Abbott et al., 1998; Benninga, Berkowitz, Kuehn, & Smith, 2003, 2006) and others with mixed effects (e.g. Solomon, Battistich, Watson, Schaps, & Lewis, 2000; Skaggs & Bodenhorn, 2006). The challenge presented by this current investigation lies in the linking of quality teaching with values education (Lovat, 2007a, 2007b; Lovat & Clement, 2008) and the devising of suitable measures to examine the link because there has been considerable variation in the definition of the terms and the means by which such constructs are measured (Bulach, Malone & Castleman, 1995).

Reliability and Validity of Measures
In the current investigation, survey data were employed to provide measures of a range of student behaviours, classroom ambience, school climate, teacher beliefs and practices, parent perceptions and participation and relationships between and among students, staff and parents. Because these constructs and the underlying items previously had not been validated, it is important to establish the reliability and validity of the measures that were developed. Validity refers to the accuracy with which an instrument measures what it has been designed to measure (Pallant, 2001), while reliability refers to an instrument’s ability to measure a construct consistently. In the current investigation, the validity of the constructs was determined by factor analysis procedures. Factor analysis indicates the strength of the relationship between questionnaire items purporting to measure the same underlying construct with optimal mean inter-item correlation values ranging between .2 and .4 (Briggs and Cheek, 1986). The reliability of the instruments was determined by examining the internal consistency of the factors emerging from the factor analysis. Internal consistency refers to the degree to which the items making up a scale are all measuring the same underlying construct (Pallant, 2001, p. 6). Cronbach *alpha* values greater than .7 (De Vellis, 2003) generally indicate acceptable levels of internal consistency.

Group A School Surveys
A set of surveys was developed for measuring the impact of the VEGPSP-2 programs at the Wallsend South cluster. The surveys were administered to students, staff and parents at each school at the commencement of the VEGPSP-2 project, and after 12 months of implementation, in order to obtain triangulation about the impact of the project. The pre-implementation surveys included closed questions only, while the post-implementation surveys contained the same closed questions with the addition of some open-ended questions. The open-ended questions asked teachers to describe the
ways that they had been teaching values and their impressions of the effectiveness of
the project and how it had or had not influenced their own behaviour, teaching
practices and the climate of the school. Students were asked to describe how they had
been learning about values and to name a specific value and provide an example of
when they had observed or demonstrated that value. Parents were asked to describe
their impressions of any changes in their child, in their relationships with the school
staff and in the school climate. The open-ended questions for the staff, student and
parent post-surveys are included in Appendix 2.

**Student Surveys.**
The student surveys were designed in three formats, Kindergarten, Years 1-2, and
Years 3-6. A major aim of the VEGPSP-2 project in the Group A schools was to
improve student behaviour and thus the student surveys were originally designed to
measure ‘values-specific’ behaviour as well as student perceptions of their classroom
ambience. The survey format and some of the items were based on the ‘Positive
Action’ (2008) surveys with additions and modifications provided by the researchers
and school staff. The Year 3-6 surveys contained 41 questions which were designed to
capture actions and behaviours related to the six core values identified by the cluster
schools. The six values included: Respect, Responsibility, Acceptance, Care, Integrity
and Fairness. A seventh aspect, classroom ambience, was included in order to assess
student-teacher relationships and the students’ satisfaction with their learning
environment. This construct was measured by an additional 11 questions. The Year 1-
2 surveys comprised a subset of 34 questions from the year 3-6 surveys regarding
student behaviour, as well as 6 questions regarding classroom ambience. The student
surveys relied on student’s self-reported behaviour, (for example, ‘How often do you
do kind things for others?’) as well as students’ perceptions of their peer’s behaviour
(for example, How often do other children do what the teachers ask?). Classroom
ambience comprised questions regarding student/teacher relationships (How often do
you like to be with your teacher?) as well as children’s satisfaction with teaching
practices (How often does your teacher give you interesting work?). A 4-point (Years
1-6) Likert response scale was employed with higher scores indicating a more positive
response. In response to questions beginning with “How often do you…” the response
options were: None of the time (scored 1); Some of the time (scored 2); Most of the
Time (scored 3); and All of the time (scored 4). The kindergarten surveys comprised
14 questions, with 4 questions about Classroom ambience and 10 questions
canvasing the students’ perception of their own behaviour. The questions were based
on the stem “Do you….? (for example, Do you wait for a turn?) and were answered
with a 3-point Likert scale response: No (scored 1), Sometimes (scored 2) and Yes
(scored 3).

Using the data sets from the pre-implementation surveys, the proposed scales for the
three sets of surveys were tested using one-factor congeneric models as the method of
Confirmatory Factor Analysis. The analysis of the student surveys indicated that, with
the exception of Classroom ambience, the appropriateness of the six proposed student
scales in measuring discrete aspects of values-related behaviour was generally found
to be inadequate to the task (Goodness of Fit Index < .95 and RMSEA > .05). The
reason for this seemed to be that items in the student surveys were chosen by the
researchers to reflect behaviours that seemed to them to relate to the schools’ six
targeted values. For example, ‘helping others even if they are not your friend’ was
included as an indicator of ‘acceptance’. It was anticipated that the items would
cluster according to the underlying values which the behaviour was proposed to represent. However, even during the design phase in consultation with the teachers, it was often difficult to differentiate unique behavioural measures of each value because of their overlapping nature. For example, while ‘helping others even if they are not your friend’ was considered by the teachers and researchers to be a measure of ‘acceptance’, such behaviour could also represent either ‘respect’ or ‘care’. This problem drove the researchers to a new level of analysis, described below.

Since the proposed factors were not confirmed by the data, the pre-implementation surveys were subjected to exploratory factor analyses. The extraction method was by Principal Component analysis in SPSS. The number of factors was determined by examination of the scree plots and items with factor loadings less than .4 and items that cross-loaded on scales were omitted from the subsequent Varimax rotation. The post-implementation surveys were also subjected to the same exploratory factor analysis procedure. Both the pre and post implementation data yielded almost identical factor structures for each set of surveys – suggesting the construct validity and invariance of the scales over time.

Although it was not possible to differentiate unique factors representing separate values dimensions, the factor analyses of the Years 1-2 and Years 3-6 student surveys (Appendixes 3B-3C) were consistent across the grades in providing three clear-cut factors measuring student perceptions about their classroom (Classroom ambience), student perceptions of their own behaviour (My behaviour) and of their peers’ behaviour (Peer behaviour). The kindergarten surveys also provided three factors, including Classroom ambience, My behaviour and a scale measuring Belonging (Appendix 3A).

As indicated in Table 5 (Appendix 3C), students’ perceptions of their own and other children’s behaviour appeared to become more discerning in Years 3-6 compared to the Years 1-2 responses. The scales My behaviour and Peer behaviour each branched into separate sub-scales in the Years 3-6 survey responses. In terms of their own behaviour (My behaviour), the older students differentiated between how they treated others (Treat Others) and their own integrity or work habits (Personal Responsibility). Similarly, in their perceptions of their peers’ behaviour, older students distinguished between their personal relationships with peers (Peer impact on me) and how their peers behaved in the playground (Peer impact on school). Once again, the older students clearly discriminated between how peers treat them and how peers respond to school rules and teacher instructions. These distinctions ensured that there were reliable measures of students’ perceptions of their own and their peers’ behaviour in two different capacities.

Teacher and Principal Surveys.
The teacher surveys contained two sections. The first section included 51 items based on the questions from the student surveys pertaining to student engagement and values-related behaviour. Respondents were provided with a statement e.g. ‘Students in my class cooperate with each other’ and rated the frequency of each behaviour using a 4-point Likert scale: Rarely/Never (scored 1); Sometimes (scored 2); Mostly (scored 3); and Always (scored 4). The items in the second section were developed from a review of the literature and comprised 60 items exploring aspects of quality teaching and school climate including: teacher attitudes towards values education;
perceptions of leadership in the school; relational trust among staff and between staff and parents; professional development issues; and, current teaching practices in regard to pedagogy and quality teaching. The principals completed the same questions as the teachers in the second section but did not complete the first section regarding children’s classroom behaviour. Respondents were provided with a statement e.g. ‘Using problems students face in their daily lives is important for teaching values’ and the same 5 point Likert-scale response options were employed on teacher and parent surveys, that is, Strongly Disagree (scored 1), Disagree (scored 2), Undecided (scored 2.5), Agree (scored 3), Strongly Agree (scored 4). Higher scores indicated a more positive response.

The results of the Confirmatory Factor Analysis of the staff surveys were mixed, with some of the proposed factors indicating a good fit to the data. However, because of the inconsistent results and the exploratory nature of the research, the staff and parent survey data were also subjected to the same exploratory factor analysis procedures as the student survey data and the resulting scales were used for further analyses (see Table 8 in Appendix 3D). The factor analysis of the first section of the staff surveys revealed three scales measuring teacher perceptions of student behaviour. One factor measured students’ academic diligence (Student engagement) and two factors measured values-related behaviour (Inclusive behaviour and Responsible behaviour). The student engagement scale contained 11 items and encompassed student-student relationships (for example, cooperate with each other, care for each other), personal endeavour (for example, try to the best of their ability, take responsibility for their own learning) and classroom behaviour (for example, are attentive in class, keep the class rules). Inclusive behaviour contained six items, most of which were originally designed to measure ‘Acceptance’ and referred to the students' propensity to accept differences and treat children who are not their friends with care and respect (for example, help others even if they are not their friends). Responsible behaviour contained four items and referred mainly to 'pragmatic' behavioural issues such as 'looking after school property' and 'keeping the classroom tidy'.

The exploratory factor analysis of the second section of the staff survey revealed five distinctive factors (see Table 10 in Appendix 3D). Two factors related to teaching practices and beliefs about values education (Teacher practice, and Beliefs about values education) and three factors related to the school climate (Leadership and policy, Relational trust, and Professional learning). The items in these factors were selected to reflect the aspects identified in current literature as being important for the successful implementation and uptake of values education within school communities. The Teacher practice scale reflects the conviction that quality teaching requires teacher subject and pedagogical knowledge (Darling-Hammond, 2000), ‘authentic pedagogy’ that is intellectually engaging for students (Newmann & Associates, 1996) (e.g. “Students should be encouraged to think about the way they feel and why they feel that way”), and the creation of an environment where students experience and practise the values to be learned (Farrer, 2000; Hawkes, 2005, 2007) (e.g. “It is important to provide opportunities for students to put values into practice”). Additionally, items such as “Values need to be modelled by teachers and school staff” measured the personal demeanour and approach that teachers bring to the task of teaching values (e.g. Carr, 2003, 2005, 2006). Beliefs about values education reflects the self-efficacy that teachers bring to the task of teaching values (e.g. Milson & Mehlig, 2002) and included items such as “Teaching values makes a difference to
how well students achieve”. *Leadership and policy* indicates the degree to which a school-wide approach is used and includes the important role of school leadership (e.g. Newmann, Smith, Allensworth, & Bryk, 2001; Bryk & Schneider, 2002). Items in this scale focused on the principal’s role in supporting the staff to implement the VEGPS-2 program as well as the extent to which values education was integrated into the school’s policies (“The school goals are based on clear values”). The *Relational trust* scale draws on the pioneering work of Bryk and Schneider (2002) who see relational trust as vital for initiating changes in school structure and pedagogy to enable student improvement. This scale covered relationships among staff, as well as between staff and parents and also included items addressing teachers’ feelings of personal wellbeing. *Professional learning* has been identified as a crucial component in the effective introduction of new initiatives (e.g. Louis, Kruse, & Marks, 1996; Louis, Marks & Kruse, 1996; Lingard, Mills & Haynes 2000; Bryk & Schneider, 2002) and this scale measured satisfaction with professional learning opportunities as well as staff collaboration during the implementation of the program.

**Parent Surveys.**

The parent surveys were designed to provide a measure of parent perceptions of their children's behaviour in the home context as well as parent attitudes towards values education, their perception of the school environment and their involvement with the school and relationships with the staff. Hunt’s (2004) study of values education in a religious school indicates that a component of effective values education was the support of parents for the school’s core values. Other effective values education programs in the public sector have components that involved parents (Farrer, 2000; Hawkins, Smith, & Catalano, 2004; Hawkes, 2005).

The exploratory factor analysis of the pre-implementation parent surveys revealed three factors relating to parents’ perceptions of their child’s behaviour (Social behaviour, Personal responsibility, and Attitude to school) and three factors relating to parent beliefs about values and their perceptions about the school (Beliefs about behaviour and learning, School values and climate, and Negative attitudes). The post-implementation surveys confirmed only four of these six factors. The scale measuring Personal responsibility split into two separate scales in the post-implementation analysis with four of the eight indicator items cross-loading on a separate factor. The four items (tries to do his/her best, does his/her homework without prompting, helps with jobs and controls anger) appeared to measure a separate construct, perhaps better named as 'Self-Regulation'. Similarly, all three items from the pre-implementation Negative attitudes scale cross-loaded substantially on other scales in the post-implementation factor analysis, suggesting that these items were not providing a consistent measure and the scale was neither valid nor reliable. Consequently, these two scales were omitted from further analyses.

Apart from the parent surveys, the structure arising from the exploratory analyses of the pre-implementation student and staff surveys was confirmed by the subsequent factor analysis of the post-implementation surveys. Both the pre and post-implementation scales also met the criteria for being valid and reliable measures of the underlying constructs. Validity was assessed by the mean inter-item correlations on each scale and as required, these ranged from .2 to .5. Furthermore the individual items on each factor, including the four parent scales, all had loadings above the recommended cut-off of .4 (Tabachnick and Fidell, 1996). The factor loadings for the
items on each scale ranged from fair to excellent according to Comrey and Lee's criteria (cited in Tabachnick and Fidell, 1996) which classifies loadings of .45 to .54 as 'fair', .55 to .62 as 'good', .63 to .70 as 'very good' and .71 and higher as 'excellent'. With the exception of the kindergarten factors, the scales all had acceptable levels of internal consistency with the Cronbach alpha coefficients for each of the factors above the recommended cut-off value of .7 (De Vellis, 2003). While the reliability of the Year 1-2 and Year 3-6 factors was confirmed by both the pre and post implementation data, the reliability coefficients for the kindergarten surveys ranged from $\alpha= .43$ to $\alpha= .63$. However, Pallant (2001, p. 6) indicates that values less than .7 but exceeding .5 are often considered acceptable when there are small numbers of items in a scale and when the inter-item correlations are moderate, as was the case for all the kindergarten scales apart from the post-implementation Belonging scale. Thus, the results from the exploratory factor analyses indicated that the surveys provided a range of valid and reliable measures that could be used in further analyses to determine changes in student behaviour and/or teaching practices and to assist in identifying the aspects that influence the effective implementation of values education.

A summary of the results from the factor analyses for both the pre and post implementation data is provided in Appendix 3 along with the items and loadings for each scale. Table 16 in Appendix 3 contains a summary of the criteria used to determine the reliability and validity of each scale. Appendix 4 contains the correlations among the scales for both the pre and post survey data as well as the correlations between scales in the pre and post surveys.

Before proceeding to employ the validated instruments in an assessment of the impact of values education in the Group A schools, it is important to understand the way in which values education was being implemented. The following description of the effective implementation aspects was derived from staff consultation, school visits and attendance at staff and cluster meetings by one of the researchers during her involvement with the Group A schools during the VEGPSP-2 project. Responses to the open-ended questions in the post-implementation surveys were also drawn upon to supplement the description of the program implementation and its effects.

Ancillary Research Questions: Question 1

*How is values education being implemented in ways that elicit positive change in teacher practice and student response?*

There was a range of cluster-level and school-level initiatives that contributed to the success of values education in the Group A schools. Cluster-level initiatives refer to the combined networking activities among the nine schools, while school-level initiatives refer to the common practices employed within each school to implement the program.

**Cluster-Level Initiatives**
At the commencement of the VEGPSP-2 project, the Wallsend South cluster established a collaborative and supportive network across the nine schools. This network appeared to play an important role in maintaining commitment and enthusiasm for the project by providing a forum for solving problems, sharing ideas.
and resources as well as celebrating success. Values Education Teams were created within each school to lead the coordination of the project and the liaison with the other schools. Staff development opportunities were provided through regular meetings among the school teams as well as inter-school visits, and student networks were developed through a student forum day.

The creation of ‘Values Education Staff Teams’ to coordinate the implementation of the project within each school meant that there was a breadth and depth of commitment among staff within the schools. A strong and committed body of staff appeared to be an important element in the continuing implementation of the Values project. The advantage of this broad-based approach was evident in four of the schools where the principals either transferred or went on extended leave during the project. While initially, the existing staff teams provided an ongoing direction for the schools, in situations where the new principal did not give the same emphasis and priority to values education, the commitment by the remaining staff appeared to wane. Without the explicit endorsement of the school executive, the dedication of a small team of committed Values teachers was not enough to carry the whole school focus. In schools where the principals were distracted by other demands there appeared to be a fragmentation of the program and a ‘class level’ rather than a ‘school-wide’ approach. The ‘lapse’ in a values focus appeared to be obvious to some of the students at Wallsend South, “This year we have not learnt that much about values, but last year we did”. While the teachers may have lost interest and moved their priorities to other areas, the students were aware that something was missing “Year six hasn’t been learning much about values but the younger classes do games and worksheets to learn about them.” Thus a whole school approach and strong leadership appear to be crucial.

Inter-school visits were organized so that staff had an opportunity to directly observe classroom and teaching practices and the ways in which different schools were teaching, modelling and communicating about values. The student forum day provided an opportunity for student representatives from each school to meet each other and showcase what their school had been doing to establish a “Values Based” environment. The presentations were largely prepared and delivered by the students. Apart from providing an opportunity for students to take responsibility for documenting their school’s ‘Values Journey’ and enhancing their leadership skills, the forum allowed students to develop their own inter-school networks and to share and compare stories. Documentation from the students at the conclusion of the forum indicated that, similar to the staff network, a sense of community and excitement about a combined purpose also existed among the students. One student wrote “I think that if we put all of the schools’ ideas together we can be sensational on values. VALUES WORK!”

The regular face-to-face meetings among the school teams allowed for open discussion of problems and achievements in the project. The meetings provided opportunities for staff to discuss with colleagues what was working well and any difficulties that were encountered. Sharing of ideas and resources occurred along with stories of success. From these meetings, staff members gained new ideas, acknowledgement of their efforts, and a renewed sense of optimism and purpose.
While attendance at the cluster meetings dwindled over the duration of the project, there remained a core of schools that continued to stay connected. The schools with the greatest level of commitment were typically those which retained their original principal or which were from communities with high proportions of families from low socio-economic backgrounds. In these latter schools, teachers reported greater changes in children’s behaviour and perceived that their ‘core business’ was to promote children’s social and emotional development alongside academic outcomes. The desire for change and evidence of change appeared to be important factors in determining a schools continuing commitment to values education. Also important is the ongoing support of the principal and school executive. It appears that unless values education is endorsed by those in positions of power, the implementation of a whole school approach may be compromised.

School-Level Initiatives
School-level initiatives refer to the practices which were implemented within the schools to ensure that values were being effectively taught and that staff were being adequately supported. These practices varied from school to school and included:

1. explicit teaching of values;  
2. reviewing or rewriting school policies to incorporate a values focus;  
3. the discussion of values at whole-school assemblies;  
4. staff modelling and demonstrating values;  
5. displays of values around the school;  
6. family involvement and the use of a ‘common language’ to discuss values;  
7. reflective practices;  
8. promoting positive relationships;  
9. linking values education to service learning; and,  
10. integrating values education into existing school structures.

1. Explicit teaching of values.
At the commencement of the VEGPSP-2 project, the nine schools in the Wallsend South cluster identified a core set of six, consistent values across the cluster. Often based on parent input, schools also identified their own ‘local’ values relevant to their communities and contexts. Initially, it was planned to teach values explicitly in three week cycles based on the West Kidlington model (cf. Hawkes, 2007). However, after the first semester, all schools felt that the three-week cycle was too short for students to understand, practise and acquire the value. Subsequently, the schools changed to introducing only one new value per term. Each value formed a whole school focus involving children, teaching and support staff, and parents. Values were taught specifically in the classroom and reinforced through whole school assemblies, school and classroom displays and incidentally throughout the day in spontaneous situations.

Values cycles commenced with whole staff meetings at each school to develop commonality of understanding and consistency of approach. The targeted values were reinforced by whole school assemblies and information provided to parents through school newsletters and display boards. Classrooms and common areas in each school displayed consistent themes and student work.

In the post-implementation surveys, Year 3-6 students were asked to respond to the unstructured question: How have you been learning about values at your school? A
tally of the student responses was conducted in order to gauge what students perceived to be the most influential teaching and learning strategies. The categories are not discrete as some students included mention of more than one strategy. Of the 948 (of 995 surveys collected) students who responded to the question, half (49%) indicated talking and/or discussing. This included discussing values in class or teachers talking about values at assembly (23%). Assembly activities also included receiving awards, singing, and performing plays. Other modes mentioned by more than 10% of respondents were learning (18%), teaching (18%), artwork (15%), songs (13%) and drama (11%). Activities nominated in the 5% to 10% response range included: making books, writing, reflecting on values by various methods, craftwork, pictures, and peer teaching. Peer teaching was predominantly conducted by Year 5 and 6 students through vehicles such as Student Representative Councils or parliaments. Least mentioned methods included receiving awards, modelling, activities, use of a wall for displaying values charts or words of a song, Values Day, games, cooperation activities, brainstorming, mindmaps, stories, charts, journals, movies/video (either watched or made), silence and/or meditation, discussion circle, speeches, solving problems and slideshows. While most examples were factually stated, out of the 948 responses, there was one negative comment "We have been learning about values in a pretty lame way as no one really cares when the students talk" and 18 comments indicating that students enjoyed the activities. “We do fun stuff that goes with it like make books and songs and chains of co-operation.” The tally of the student responses indicates that there was a great variety of activities employed with discussion and verbal interchange being the dominant mode of explicit teaching.

Explicit teaching about values was also supplemented by the reviewing, and in some cases re-writing, of school policies and rules to include specific mention of the school values and how these should be demonstrated, not only in classrooms but also in the playground. A major incentive for this focus was to ensure that the schools were providing a safe and supportive environment for all students at all times. One of the early comments made by staff was that classroom behaviour appeared to be improving after the introduction of the Values project but the same changes were not as obvious in the playground. The use of Y charts to define the values (what does the value look like, feel like, sound like?) and describe desired behaviours and their impact was a helpful tool in assisting students to generate their own suggestions for enacting the values. The new approach to dealing with incidents of inappropriate behaviour was underscored by the aim of transferring control of student behaviour from teachers to students. Rather than using rules and ‘consequences’ to prohibit undesirable behaviour, the new focus of the policies was to use the values as a benchmark for desirable behaviour and to enhance students’ capacity to regulate and evaluate their own behaviour. The teachers facilitated this growing awareness by discussing playground incidents and engaging students in reflections about how to increase positive outcomes.

2. Whole-school assemblies
Whole-school assemblies were very effective forums for communicating with the entire school community about values and also for demonstrating the effect of values education within the school. At the beginning of the project, a number of the schools specifically targeted the daily or weekly school assembly as a routine that needed drastic improvement. Assemblies were often characterised by disruptive behaviour
and students talking. The schools introduced new expectations for both staff and students in terms of the type of behaviour that was required in assemblies. Respect and responsibility were strongly emphasised and these values were demonstrated by students and teachers maintaining silence during the assembly and paying attention to the speakers. The assembly areas were identified as ‘Silent Zones’ where no speaking was permitted and staff also complied with this requirement. In some schools, the teachers developed ‘sign language’ to communicate with their classes about when it was time to stand and leave. The changes were immediate and, as well as being maintained in the assemblies, were also transferred to other daily routines such as entry and exit to the assembly area and to classrooms. The improvement in the tone and conduct at assemblies has meant that students are now more attentive and receptive to the information being presented.

Having the whole school assembled together in a calm and receptive state also allowed for effective school-wide communication about values. Typically, the targeted value for each five-week cycle was introduced at the school assembly. The methods of introducing the values included the use of posters, displays, songs or poems, classroom presentations, and skits or plays written and performed by students. The message about the importance of the value and how students can demonstrate related behaviours was presented in a range of formats so that students from Kindergarten to Grade 6, as well as students from integrated support classes, had a common language to describe the value and an understanding about how they can apply this value to themselves, to others and to their environment. Songs about values appeared to play an important role in ‘putting good messages’ into children’s minds with 133 references to songs in student responses to the open-ended questions.

3. Staff modelling
Staff modelling of values was an important component of the project. The preparedness of staff to adopt or demonstrate more explicit values-related behaviour appeared to have a positive impact on student behaviour, staff-student relationships and staff-staff relationships. When teachers were willing to ‘follow the same rules’ as students, or treat episodes of student misconduct with a caring rather than a punitive attitude, the students were reassured that values, such as ‘fairness’ and ‘caring’, apply to everybody. The influential role that the teachers played in shaping student behaviour and attitudes was obvious in the presentations and responses from the student forum. As well as noting that “your parents won’t teach you values so its good for schools to (teach you)”, students commented that it was important to “teach others values”, “practise these values” and “change the way people act” so that we can “create a better future”. The teachers at one school spent recess and lunch times playing games with children so they could provide meaningful opportunities for students to practise behaviours such as cooperation and turn-taking. In their survey comments, many teachers mentioned that they were more conscious of being role models for children and made greater efforts to model appropriate behaviour. “I try to model the values that I would like the students to have and use them in most teaching and learning situations” (T1104). The willingness of teachers to model behaviours, and maintain consistency between what they say and do, appeared to be a critical element in establishing respectful and trusting relationships with students and in transforming school cultures.
4. Explicit visual prompts
The use of photos, posters and displays around the schools made values a prominent feature for students, staff and visitors. The displays serve as a reminder to students about appropriate actions and also help communicate to families the school’s priorities as well as the language and concepts that are being used to teach the values. Photos and powerpoint presentations of students demonstrating the values communicates expectations and acknowledges individual efforts. Staff at Fennell Bay School reported that the use of public displays and ongoing communication with parents helped to create an “agreed body of knowledge” and a “common language” so that a more cohesive and consistent learning experience across home and school contexts could be provided.

5. Communication with families
Communication with families was evident at all stages of the project. First, in identifying the values that the schools should address, and subsequently, through regular communication channels such as parent committees and school newsletters. Parent feedback regarding student behaviour and the impact of the project was actively sought and used to develop ongoing strategies. Parent involvement remained an important focus, with most schools identifying that the task of teaching values was facilitated when parents understand and share the school values and reinforce these at home. However, efforts to involve parents were not uniformly reciprocated across all schools, and in some schools, teachers noted that the task of teaching values was often made more difficult when the same values were not evident in the home environment.

6. Common language
The responses to the staff, student and parent surveys indicated that the acquisition of a common language across the school community was a major feature of the program. The use by teachers, students and often parents of this common language not only led to greater understanding of the targeted values but also provided a positive focus for reflecting on and redirecting children’s inappropriate behaviour. “It is a very useful tool when working through poor behaviour choices in school situations. The shared vocabulary and understandings are very helpful in assisting children to reflect on, and change behaviour” (T1014); “It gives staff and students language to use in the analysis, correction and prevention of problems” (T1124); “Children now have a language to discuss values. It helps with negative behaviour as I can ask - is that kind, respectful etc. and the child really thinks about it and understands” (T1079). There was a perception among most teachers that the introduction and adoption of a shared ‘values vocabulary’ and the explicit articulation of expected behaviour helped staff to treat incidents of ‘misbehaviour’ in a more positive and constructive manner. Parents also commented on the benefit of the shared language in addressing problem behaviours as this comment from a parent at Wallsend South School indicates: “I have found that values education has given us a common language, so we can talk about good and bad behaviours in terms of values. Previously, I was not sure how to relate these to the kids or communicate to them about it” (P6094).

7. Reflection Time
Many of the schools introduced ‘Reflection Time’ – periods of quiet contemplation where students spent a few minutes sitting in silence and reflecting on what they learned throughout the day, their own actions or on positive encounters they may have had with their peers or teachers. This process, which Neil Hawkes (cf. Hawkes, 2007)
refers to as “stilling”, was often incorporated into the assembly times or at the beginning or end of the day. Teachers reported that this practice resulted in calmer and more peaceful classrooms, and helped children to be more settled and attentive.

The schools also introduced ‘Reflective Journals’ in which the classes recorded incidents where the students observed others applying the values or, in some cases, not applying the values. As well as providing opportunities for identifying and acknowledging appropriate behaviour, these ‘authentic’ examples were also being used to develop students’ higher order thinking skills, such as, analysing problems, understanding and debating different perspectives, and developing solutions. The student surveys revealed that since learning about values, 96% of students understood why values are important and 97% of students try to be a better person (at least some of the time). Thus, the reflective practices are being utilised in supporting students to connect with their own thoughts and feelings as well as helping to create a quality learning environment which recognises effort and encourages critical thinking.

8. Positive Relationships
Underlying the implementation of the Values Education project in the Wallsend South cluster was the belief that the development of positive relationships among students and between staff and students would lead to improved self-esteem and better learning outcomes. Proactive attempts to promote student relationships and assist students to work together and resolve differences were used, rather than reactive or punitive strategies and teacher-directed interventions. The ‘Star of the week’ initiative was helpful in improving how students perceived themselves and in changing their responses to others. In this strategy, each week a different student in a class is nominated as the ‘Star of the Week’. This student then becomes a focus for class writing activities and letters are written by peers describing the ‘Star’s’ strengths and positive characteristics. The letters are compiled into a booklet and sent home for parents to read. This process helped many students develop a more positive self-image and created a greater sense of belonging to the class.

9. Service learning
The notion of service learning was implicit in many of the activities which schools introduced to develop students’ responsibility and respect for others and the environment. Some schools introduced schemes in which students assumed responsibility for taking care of plants (Mayfield West) or animals (Booragul has a ‘school cat’). Kahibah had an extensive network of ‘tribes’ who take care of distinct environmental aspects such as water and electricity conservation, litter reduction and keeping the corridors, playground areas and paths neat and uncluttered. Thus, students were able to put the values into practice in functional and purposeful ways while making a meaningful contribution to the school environment.

10. Integrating values education into existing school structures
A number of schools also integrated values education into existing school structures such as the Student Representative Council, School Parliament, peer support and peer mediation programs and buddy systems. Through these mechanisms, older students are taking responsibility for modelling the values and monitoring peer behaviour as well as designing and developing peer-directed lessons focused on teaching values to younger students. Teachers typically worked with the older students to assist in developing the lessons. Teachers transferring some of the responsibility for lesson
planning and delivery has created respectful partnerships among staff and students as well as generating new ways of teaching values. This form of peer modelling and tutoring has a number of benefits for both the older and younger students. The peer leaders are being equipped with organizational and management skills, and gaining confidence in their ability to communicate their ideas. The younger students look up to the peer leaders as role models and are often more receptive when the values are explained by peers who are ‘on the same wave-length’. The presentations at the student forum showed how articulately even the youngest students in the school could explain what the values meant to them, with a Year 1 student commenting that learning about values “made us different people inside”.

Overall, the implementation of the VEGPSP-2 project in the Wallsend South cluster revealed a number of good practices. The early benefits of the collaborative network among the schools did not continue to the same extent as the project neared completion, but the waning support for the program in some schools highlighted the need for strong leadership and a depth and breadth of commitment amongst school staff. The effective practices in terms of creating values-focused school environments varied across the cluster, but included a common belief in the importance of staff modelling the values, the promotion of respectful relationships with and among students, a commitment to involving families and ensuring that the values were clearly explained and understood across all grades, a focus on strengthening students’ capabilities and confidence, the creation of authentic learning experiences where students could put the values into practice, and the utilisation of reflective practices by students to gain greater insight into their own actions and the actions of others.

Ancillary Research Questions: Question 2

How do we find evidence for the many claims based on teacher testimony that values education has a positive effect on:

- a) student academic diligence;
- b) classroom and school ambience;
- c) student-teacher relationships;
- d) student and teacher wellbeing; and,
- e) parental and family participation?

For the Group A schools, the evidence provided to address this question comes from a series of comparisons of the survey responses by the students, staff and parents from 2006 with survey responses from 2007. The results represent the combined data from eight of the nine schools in the Wallsend South Cluster. Hamilton North Public School was re-located for several months after the Newcastle floods in June 2007 and this school did not complete the follow-up survey at the end of 2007. Consequently, the pre-implementation data from this school were omitted from the pre-post comparisons.

Owing to the fact that some of the schools changed their system of student and staff de-identification and coding, there was a problem in tracking individual students and staff across the two surveys. Thus, the sample size for the planned paired comparisons was much smaller than anticipated. Independent samples t-tests were used to compare the teacher and parent 2006/2007 responses, since only a small number of teachers could be matched and the parent surveys were anonymous in order to ensure that unfavourable responses were not discouraged owing to the fear of being identified. It
was not possible to conduct paired comparisons for the Kindergarten students since
the survey format changed in Year 1 and the responses were not comparable.
Therefore, independent samples t-tests were also used to compare Kindergarten
student responses in 2006 with Kindergarten responses from 2007. Paired-samples t-
tests were conducted with the reduced number of students (approximately half) who
could be tracked in the Years 1-2 and Years 3-6 cohorts. For example, the responses
of students who were in Year 1 in 2006 were compared with the same students’
responses the following year, that is, when they were in Year 2 in 2007. Independent
samples t-tests were also conducted with the larger ‘unmatched’ samples for these two
cohorts and an almost identical pattern of findings emerged, suggesting that the
results were generalizable across the larger sample. One of the problems of
conducting the surveys over two years was that the students had changed classes and
thus student and teacher responses were based on different classes for the pre- and
post-intervention surveys.

The results of the pre-post comparisons are reported beneath the descriptions of the
respective student, staff and parent scales in Appendix 3. Composite scales were
calculated using a unit-weight addition of the component items. The total score for
each factor was then divided by the number of items to provide a total score for each
factor with a maximum score of four, apart from the kindergarten surveys where the
maximum score was three. A score close to one indicates that the respondent rated the
identified behaviour as occurring ‘almost never’ (or strongly disagreed with the
statement), while a score close to four indicates that the respondent rated the
behaviour as occurring ‘almost always’ (or strongly agreed with the statement).
Negative questions and statements were recoded so that higher scores indicated more
positive responses. For all analyses, the criterion for statistical significance was a p
value < .05. In order to assist with interpreting the magnitude of any statistically
significant differences between pre- and post-intervention scores, effect sizes were
calculated using the eta squared statistic. According to Cohen (1988) the value of the
eta squared statistic can be interpreted as .01 = small effect, .06 = moderate effect and
.14 = large effect.

a) Student academic diligence
The independent samples t-tests for the teacher pre-post surveys (reported in Table 9
in Appendix 3D) revealed a statistically significant difference in teacher ratings of
student behaviour on all three scales, that is, Student engagement, Inclusive behaviour
and Responsible behaviour. As indicated in Figure 1, the scores on all three scales
were significantly higher in the post-surveys than in the pre-surveys.
**Student engagement.** After 12 months of the Values Education program, teachers perceived students to be more academically engaged \( (t = -3.89, p = .00) \). The eta squared statistic (.07) indicates that this is a moderate effect size (Cohen, 1988). In the current investigation, student engagement encompassed elements of academic interest (more attentive in class), personal endeavour (more likely to try their best and take responsibility for their own learning) as well as interactions between students (more likely to listen to each other and cooperate with each other) and adherence to class routines (more likely to carry out instructions and keep the class rules). The survey responses spanned all grades and reflected that, across the grades, teachers perceived a noticeable improvement in these aspects of student behaviour and students’ application to learning.

**Inclusive behaviour.** As well as the significant difference in student engagement the pre-post comparison revealed a statistically significant difference in teacher perceptions of students' Inclusive behaviour after the 12 months of the Values Education program \( (t = -2.313, p = .02) \). Inclusive behaviour referred to the students' willingness to act kindly towards other students who were not their friends and to include children with special needs or who were from different cultures. Teachers’ comments suggested that improved relationships between students contributed to a more cooperative and productive learning environment.

*More co-operative and caring approach within the classroom between students (T1135).*

Generally, teachers’ responses to the open-ended survey questions also indicated that discussion of values helped the students to understand the teacher’s expectations for appropriate classroom behaviour and the reasons underlying these expectations.
Students apply themselves well as we discuss if it is ‘fair’ and ‘showing respect’ to other students if we distract them from their learning (T1008).

The responses by the Years 3-6 students to the open-ended survey questions also confirmed that a heightened awareness of values such as respect, responsibility and cooperation resulted in a more harmonious and enjoyable learning environment for all students.

Everyone knows that Mr M. wants everyone to have lots of respect so we can get along with each other (S040044).

We have seen co-operation within other people by seeing them co-operate with each other and by being able to learn quietly whilst working in small or large groups and have lots and lots of fun (S030039).

Responsible behaviour. As indicated in Figure 1, results of the pre-post comparison revealed a statistically significant increase in the post-intervention teacher ratings of students’ Responsible behaviour \((t = -2.15, p = .03)\), though the magnitude of the effect size was small \((\eta^2 = .02)\). On this scale, Responsible behaviour referred mainly to utilitarian tasks such as keeping the classroom tidy and putting rubbish in the bin.

Student comments also indicated that there had been an increase in student responsibility which meant that teachers could ‘hand over’ some aspects of classroom control and that students could assume greater ‘ownership’ over their learning activities.

In our class we show responsibility by handing out and collecting class work and activities (S020010).

The teachers’ comments also indicated that, overall, students appeared to be taking more responsibility for classroom routines and this appeared to be contributing to more independent learning and greater self-motivation.

Responsibility for one’s own work seems to be becoming more important and something the children can now express personally (T1037).

Students have a better understanding of what a ‘responsible’ learner means (T1128).

The teachers also reported that students were putting greater effort into their work and “striving for quality”, “striving to achieve their best” and even “striving for perfection”. The aspect of student’s taking greater pride in their work and producing quality outcomes for their own pleasure was also mentioned by a number of teachers, “students understand what feeling ‘proud’ is” (T1112).

While parents generally indicated that their child’s attitude to homework had not improved, some parents felt there was a change in their child’s inherent interest in their school work.
My child has always been fairly motivated with his school & homework but his latest project shows a new pride in his work (P1020).

This shift to a more internalized motivation appeared to prompt some teachers to adopt more student-directed approaches to learning and assessment.

Students have been encouraged and are usually taking ownership of their own work. Self-evaluation is also encouraged (T1043).

While the post-intervention teacher ratings on the student scales indicated a significant improvement in teachers’ perceptions of student engagement, inclusive behaviour and responsibility, and while this finding was supported by the majority of teacher comments, some teacher responses to the open-ended questions belied scepticism about apparent improvements in student outcomes. Not all of the teachers believed that students were more diligent in their approach to their school work or that a student’s inherent values and intrinsic interest in learning was enhanced as a result of the program.

(Students’) application to work is more linked to teacher’s expectations than internal values (T1034)

Although the teachers are using the values prompts there is no noticeable difference to the way they (the students) are applying themselves to their work (T1139).

A number of teacher comments about perceived improvements in student application were prefaced by the qualification that these improvements were evident in “some” or “most” but, by implication, not all students. This variability in the students’ capacities to acquire the values and demonstrate productive work practices meant that there was an ongoing requirement for teachers to retain a ‘directive’ role to ensure that all students remained on task.

Starting to see a difference. It varies from class to class. Depends on class climate, rules, teacher input (T1029)

This (application to task) varies. It works best for all students with constant verbal reminders (T1041).

Thus, there was substantial quantitative and qualitative evidence suggesting that there were observable and measurable improvements in students’ academic diligence including increased attentiveness, a greater capacity to work independently as well as more cooperatively, greater care and effort being invested in schoolwork and students assuming more responsibility for their own learning as well as classroom ‘chores’. However, teachers also emphasized that there was still considerable variability between classes and students and that the teachers’ role in directing student learning and in facilitating the acquisition and demonstration of values was an ongoing one.

b) Classroom and School Ambience
Numerous attempts have been made to identify and define the characteristics of schools which produce effective academic outcomes for students (Bulach et al.,
Terms such as school climate, school environment, and school ambience have been used to describe a range of elements associated with student success. Some of the elements that are typically evident in effective schools and inferred in these terms include teacher efficacy and high expectations for student success, harmonious relationships between and among students and staff, effective leadership, and parent involvement. Hoyle et al. (1985) considered that it is important to obtain the perceptions of the students, staff, and parents in order to determine an accurate and comprehensive measure of a school’s “personality”. In the current investigation, this range of stakeholders was consulted and each provided input from their own perspectives about different elements constituting the ambience at their respective schools.

**Student Perceptions of Classroom and School Ambience**

While there was no single discrete measure of ‘school’ ambience obtained from the students, the three scales from the Kindergarten and Years 1-2 surveys and the five scales from the Years 3-6 surveys provided information from the students’ perspective about pertinent factors affecting school ambience, such as the classroom learning environment (*Classroom ambience*) and student behaviour (*My behaviour* and *Peer behaviour*).

*Classroom ambience:* At each grade level, the scale measuring *Classroom ambience* reflected students’ perceptions about their satisfaction with their learning environment (for example, *teacher gives you interesting work*) and the students’ feelings about being at school (for example, *look forward to coming to school*). The pre-post comparisons for the three different stages (Kindergarten, Year 1-2 and Year 3-6) revealed different effects at each stage of schooling.

*Kindergarten:* The results of the pre-post analysis of the Kindergarten student surveys are presented in Table 2 (Appendix 3A) and are depicted in Figure 2. The results revealed a positive trend, though no statistically significant change on the *Belonging* scale ($t = -0.67, p = .50$). However, Kindergarten children’s ratings of their own behaviour (*My behaviour*) showed a statistically significant decline over this period ($t = 2.128, p = .03$) while children’s ratings of *Classroom ambience* showed a statistically significant improvement ($t = -6.09, p = .00$).

The *Classroom ambience* scale was the most reliable of the kindergarten measures ($\alpha = .60$) and was comprised of four items regarding the student’s satisfaction with school (Do you like school?), attitude to learning (Do you like to learn new things, work hard at school?) and peer relationships (Do you have friends at school?). The pre-post analysis compared the 2006 kindergarten student responses with the 2007 kindergarten responses (Independent samples t-test) and the results indicated that kindergarten students in 2007 were significantly more satisfied with their learning environment than the students from the previous year, though the effect size was small ($\eta^2 = .01$).
An improved kindergarten environment appeared to be corroborated to some extent by the parent post-surveys where four parents specifically mentioned their child’s very positive transition to school. In addition, a number of responses in the Year 3-6 student surveys described examples of values-related actions targeting kindergarten children. These included acts of kindness – helping a child who was hurt; caring behaviour – playing with a lonely child; and acceptance – letting younger children join in games.

Acceptance. *When I play marbles with the year sixes and we let kindies up to year six play and we all have fun (S06066).*

As indicated in Figure 2, while the kindergarten Classroom ambience scores increased significantly over the 12 months of the values education program, the kindergarten scores on the scale measuring student behaviour (*My behaviour*) showed a statistically significant decline over this period. This finding could be owing to the fact that the kindergarten data reflected changes across two different samples of kindergarten children. However, the same significant decline in scores on the ‘*My behaviour*’ scale was also apparent in the Years 1-2 and Years 3-6 survey responses and in these grades the pre-post comparisons were conducted using paired samples t-tests, meaning that individual students were reporting on changes in their own behaviour over the 12 months.

*Year 1-2*: The results from the pre-post analysis of the Year 1-2 student surveys are presented in Table 4 (Appendix 3B) and illustrated below in Figure 3.
The analysis revealed that there was no significant change on the scale measuring *Classroom ambience* \( (t = 1.65, p = .10) \). However, there was a statistically significant and moderate decrease in scores on the scale measuring *My behaviour* \( (t = 8.98, p = .00, \eta^2 = .22) \) and a statistically significant though small increase in scores on the scale measuring *Peer behaviour* \( (t = -5.49, p = .00, \eta^2 = .10) \). Since this analysis was conducted using a paired-samples t-test it is reflecting individual changes within a student. Thus, a Year 2 student’s response in 2007 was being compared to the same student’s response in 2006. The results show that students were reporting that, compared to the previous year, their classroom had not changed, and that their own behaviour had deteriorated but their peers’ behaviour had improved.

**Year 3-6.** The pre-post analysis of the Year 3-6 student surveys are presented in Table 6 (Appendix 3C) and are illustrated in Figure 4. The results revealed that there was no statistically significant change on the two scales measuring *Peer behaviour* (*Peer impact on me and Peer impact on school*), though there was a trend for scores to increase. However, there was a statistically significant decrease in scores on the scale measuring *Classroom ambience* \( (t = 5.35, p = .00) \) and the two scales measuring *My behaviour*, that is, *How I treat others* \( (t = 6.06, p = .00) \) and *Personal Responsibility* \( (t = 3.13, p = .00) \).
These findings seem to suggest that the behaviour of Years 3-6 students declined over the 12 months along with their satisfaction with school. However, the findings need to be understood in the context of the other significant changes in the students reporting of their own and their peers’ behaviour. At each stage, including Kindergarten, there was a statistically significant decrease in the students’ ratings of their own behaviour (My behaviour) but no commensurate change in students’ ratings of their peers’ behaviour (except in Years 1-2 where students reported a significant improvement in Peer behaviour). While, on the surface, the decrease in students’ ratings of their own behaviour could be interpreted as an actual decline, the fact that there was no significant change in the students’ ratings of their peers’ behaviour, and that in Years 1-2, the perceptions of Peer behaviour actually improved, suggests that students were being more self-critical in the post-implementation survey. If there was an actual deterioration in student behaviour, it would have been reflected in the ratings of Peer behaviour, since each student who rated their own behaviour more negatively was also being evaluated by their peers. As discussed in Question 1, one of the effects of the values education program appeared to be an increase in ‘reflection’ and students were more likely to evaluate their own behaviour and, perhaps for the older students, their classroom climate also, in a more critical light.

The teaching ratings of student behaviour and the Years 3-6 student responses to the open-ended questions, which asked for an example of an occasion when the student had demonstrated or observed one of the values, indicated that there was considerable evidence that students were in fact demonstrating many of the values they had been learning about, and that the school climate had improved in a number of aspects owing to the changes in social dynamics emanating from the values education.
program. Some of the changes noted by the students included improved self-regulation:

[I show] respect by not yelling out in the classroom like I used to (S060038).

People don’t push in line at the canteen as much anymore (S040034).

Other changes involved a new awareness about personal integrity. At every school, there were frequent examples given of students handing in money as an example of ‘honesty’. Honesty was also perceived as ‘being truthful’ about one’s own behaviour and a number of students appeared to have come to a new understanding that there were positive consequences for ‘telling the truth’.

I and others were taught to own up and we don’t get in as much trouble and that’s what I usually do (S020095).

There were also numerous comments to suggest that the playground was a calmer, more caring and more cooperative environment than before the values program.

Care. More children have been nice to each other in the playground (S000066).

Care, because if someone is hurt or upset someone would be straight over to the person to see if they are ok (S05064).

I have learned respect. I used respect in the playground when we were playing football there [sic] team lose I went over and said good game (S020092).

Fairness. Since we have been learning about fairness people haven’t even tried to cheat in a game. Also everyone gives everyone a chance to learn (S020033).

Just one of them would be cooperation. e.g. if I was playing before we did values if someone got out it would cause a huge argument, after doing values everyone is happy to play (S116227).

Synchronous with the teacher’s perceptions that students were demonstrating more inclusive behaviour, the student comments also contained frequent reference to very deliberate actions to make peers who were not necessarily a student’s ‘best friend’ feel accepted and included. The terms ‘kindness’, ‘care’, ‘acceptance’ ‘fairness’ and even ‘empathy’ were often used in connection with actions towards children who previously might have been treated as ‘outsiders’.

Care. My friends and I have been trying included [sic] and be nice to Ethan because he is so annoying (S06043).

Acceptance. A new kid came to my school and he is from France, at first I didn’t like him but after a day or two we became friends (S01009).
Fairness, let people you don’t like join in your game and even though you
don’t like them still treat them the way you treat your friends (S600701).

Acceptance because I’ve seen new kids and people with disabilities come and
join our school and our kids have totally accepted them (S601018).

In addition to the many examples provided about improvements in their own
behaviour and in their interactions with others, students also identified that there was
greater ‘respect’ shown by themselves and others in regard to student belongings,
school property and the school environment.

Respect – people do not steal other people’s stuff as much and we look after
other people better (S115826).

Respect. We respect others property and themselves and we don’t fight as
much as we used to (S601126).

Respect. We have had our gardens repaired and we show respect by not
walking or using them as a thoroughfare (S600508).

Thus, in the younger grades, the significant improvements on the Kindergarten scale
of Classroom ambience and the Year 1-2 student ratings of Peer behaviour provide
some evidence that school ambience had improved for the better. The Year 3-6
student comments appeared to indicate that a number of aspects of school climate,
particularly playground behaviour and respect for the school environment, had also
improved. The Years 3-6 student comments also indicated that there were some
changes occurring in the classroom learning environment, with students taking greater
responsibility for their learning and working together more co-operatively, although
this improvement was not reflected in the pre-post comparison of the Classroom
ambience scale.

Teacher Perceptions of School Ambience

There were three sources of information used to explore teachers' perceptions of
school ambience. These included the pre-post comparisons on the three scales
measuring aspects of school climate (Leadership and policy, Relational trust and
Professional learning) as well as the three scales measuring teacher perceptions of
students' behaviour. Responses to the open-ended questions concerning whether
teachers had observed any changes in playground behaviour or in the school climate
were also investigated.

The pre-post comparisons on the three scales measuring aspects of school climate are
presented in Table 11 (Appendix 3D) and illustrated in Figure 5. The results showed
that there were no statistically significant differences in teachers’ perceptions on any
of these measures at the end of the particular values education intervention in
question. The trend on the Leadership and policy scale, though not statistically
significant (t = 0.02, p = .99) was in the negative direction, suggesting a slight decline
in confidence in the principal’s involvement and leadership. This result may be owing
to the fact that there was a change in principal at four of the schools during the 12
months of the program.
The difference in scores on the *Professional learning* scale, though not statistically significant (t = -0.95, p = .35), indicated a positive trend towards teachers’ satisfaction with the amount of professional development they had received and an increased feeling of competence in teaching values. The comparison on the scale measuring *Relational trust* approached significance at the .10 level (t=1.60, p = .11), and indicated that there was a tendency for teachers to report increased feelings of belonging and connectedness with school, and an improvement in relationships among staff and with families.

The teacher comments also suggested that relationships among staff and with families were generally strong to begin with but, in some cases, had been ‘reinforced’ as a result of values education. Some of the positive aspects noted about staff relationships included the benefits of ‘team work’ involved in the whole school approach and in developing the teaching modules for each value. Staff also felt that their opinions and efforts were appreciated and a number of teachers mentioned the positive feedback and ‘morale boosting’ they received from staff discussions about the program implementation. In regard to relationships with families, the main issue that teachers raised was that the ‘language of values’ provided consistent expectations and a common language for both home and school and also a positive focus for talking about children when discussing with parents any incidents concerning their child’s inappropriate behaviour.

*Values education provides a strong support when discussing ‘issues’ with parents. It is developing a common language between teachers- parents and students. Results: stronger home/school partnerships (T1043).*
While there were no significant differences on the three scales measuring aspects of the broader school context, there were measurable differences in teachers’ perceptions of student behaviour, particularly Inclusive behaviour. As discussed in the previous section, this aspect of behaviour was cited frequently by the students as an example of 'values in practice' and the teachers’ comments implied that improvements in this regard had led to a more peaceful and harmonious playground environment.

The playground has been the place to notice children caring for others, e.g. consoling a sad child. It has also shown many examples of honesty, and also much acceptance of others e.g. letting children join in games (T1038).

Students are more understanding of others – in particular when there are behavioural incidents in the classroom – they are able to act responsibly and are more aware of why some students act/behave in a particular way (T1156).

[Children are] far more tolerant of each other’s differences and abilities (T1043).

The majority of schools reported that the most dramatic changes to be attributed to the values education program were evident in the playground where students were observed to be “more settled”, “talking before fighting”, “playing sensibly together”, “more caring”, and “more considerate of each other” with such improvements resulting in a “calmer” environment with less conflict and with a reduction in the number of referrals to the planning room. At one school, however, staff reported little or no change in the playground and, at this school, it was felt that the number of playground incidents remained unchanged. Nonetheless, even the staff at this school acknowledged what the staff at every other school observed, that is, that the students were taking greater responsibility for resolving their own disputes and were using the 'language of values' to achieve this end.

Children are more considerate of each other. [There are] fewer instances of students needing assistance in resolving conflicts. These conflicts are resolved more easily (T1018).

Values ‘statements’ assist the children to try and solve minor problems/disputes. Values education gives all students a practical framework to follow, which is also in line with our student welfare policy. The playground is a calmer place to be (T1041).

Students were described as being more patient, more honest and more responsible, with teachers providing examples of students waiting quietly in line at canteen, handing in money, admitting to 'wrong behaviour', and looking after school gardens and equipment. As well as an improvement in students' behaviour in the playground and their interactions with each other, staff in three schools commented that assemblies had “dramatically improved” and were "much calmer" and that there was "more ordered movement around the school", all of which helped to "set a better tone". Staff in all schools described the school climate as “positive” and many noted that school was a "kinder", "more harmonious" and "happier place to be" and that this was not only owing to improvements in student behaviour, but also to the fact that staff were now “working together” and “working towards a common goal”. There
appeared to be a consistent feeling in the schools that the explicit teaching of values had “unified the school” by making both staff and students aware of the expectations for behaviour so that all “were on the same page”. Teaching values explicitly also meant that both students and staff understood and shared a ‘common language’.

*Values education has given staff a common vocabulary to use with all students. Interactions can all begin positively by acknowledging values followed rather than focusing on the negative (T1041).*

While the use of a common language and shared understanding was generally acknowledged as a positive step forward, some teachers appeared frustrated that “awareness” was not enough and felt that little had changed in their schools and that there was “still a way to go” before students were able to translate the ‘language of values’ into appropriate actions. A number of teachers’ comments implied that children were still in the process of learning to consistently ‘demonstrate’ the values, “Changes are happening slowly in my classroom” and “Children can tell you all about values but I am not convinced that this is always put into practice” (T1151). In some schools, teachers attributed this slow ‘uptake’ to differences between values in the home environment and those expected in the school environment.

*[Teaching students to demonstrate values is] difficult at times, as school is for some students, the only place where values are important. So it can be conflicting at times with what they see at home and what we try to teach/model (T1008).*

While there were no significant changes in teachers perceptions of the three aspects of school ambience that were measured in the current investigation, that is Leadership and policy, Relational trust, and Professional learning, there was converging quantitative and qualitative evidence to suggest that there was a significant and noticeable improvement in student behaviour and interactions. Teacher perception of improved social dynamics, particularly in the school playground was also corroborated by testimony from the Year 3-6 students. As with issues of classroom management, teachers identified that some playground conflict was still occurring, however, the students were now assuming greater responsibility for resolving their own disputes, and instead of a punitive approach staff were using the ‘positive’ language of values to facilitate self-reflection by students and to redirect inappropriate behaviour.

**Parent Perspectives on School Ambience**
An independent samples t-test was employed to investigate whether parent beliefs about values education and parent perceptions of school climate or their child’s behaviour and attitude to school had changed over the 12 months of the values education program. The results of the pre-post comparisons are presented in Table 15 (Appendix 3E) and illustrated in Figure 6 (below). There were no statistically significant differences on any of the four parent scales. However, there was a trend for improved scores in the post-intervention surveys on three of the four scales, with the p-values for two of the scales (child’s Social behaviour and Attitude to school) achieving significance at the .10 level. Social behaviour was comprised of items measuring parent perceptions of their child’s interactions with others (My child … does kind things for others, shares belongings), while Attitude to school measured
parent perceptions concerning their child’s feelings about going to school (looks forward to going to school, feels safe at school). The scores on the scale measuring parent's perceptions of school climate also increased slightly and approached significance at the .10 level ($t = -1.41, p = .16$). Though not attaining statistical significance, these results suggest that any change in parent perceptions of school climate or their child’s behaviour and attitude to school, were at least in a positive direction. There was virtually no change in parent beliefs about behaviour and learning. This scale included items such as “Schools and parents should teach children how to get along with each other” and “Children behave and learn better if they feel good about themselves”. The high scores in both the pre- and post-surveys (3.63 and 3.62 respectively) indicate that even at the commencement of the program, parents strongly agreed that social and emotional aspects are important for children’s academic progress and that schools have a role in addressing these.

**Figure 6. Parent beliefs, and perceptions of school and child’s behaviour and attitude**  
* Significant at $p < .10$

The parent comments generally supported the view that there had been some improvements in their child’s willingness to go to school and in children’s playground behaviour, but most parents noted that the school had *always* provided a safe and welcoming environment for both students and families, and thus there was little room for improvement.

*School climate* has *always* been good- haven’t noticed a change (P8004).

Some parents were optimistic about changes in relationships between students and attributed this to the impact of values education, with students being described as more caring and interactions between students more positive.
"I feel this has had an impact. I hear words such as 'kind', 'care', 'share' when my child talks about interactions with other children (P6053).

Synchronous with teacher and student survey responses, parents also noticed an improvement in children’s acceptance of differences in other students.

I have noticed great supportive interactions between children at the school and greater understanding and support for children with additional needs (P6095).

Other parents had not noticed any changes in playground interactions, and felt that their child was the subject of unfair treatment or that the values taught had not translated into concrete actions:

Playground behaviour...

Has not changed I think

I don't think the values affected this. We had to work on this at home. My child was the victim during the 1st half of this year

Teaching values is extremely important, at home & school. I just don't know if they're working through.

I've found bullying at school a real problem as my children have been a victim as well as being a bully at times.

While there were isolated comments about the continued existence of bullying in three of the schools, parents at the other schools either did not mention bullying (three schools) or indicated that bullying had decreased (two schools) and that the methods of dealing with such incidents had improved.

He and other friends are no longer being bullied by a peer during breaks. The teacher supported a resolution to the issue. The boys seem more confident in working through situations with the student who was instigating the situations (P6056).

In addition, there was a statistically significant difference on the individual question on the parent survey referring to bullying, indicating that at the end of the program parents believed that bullying was less of a problem \( t = -1.99, p = .05 \).

The other aspect of school climate addressed in the open-ended questions on the parent survey related to the parents’ relationship with staff at school. The responses to this question were overwhelmingly positive. Both teaching and administrative staff were described as “caring”, “helpful”, “approachable”, “great”, “fantastic”, “excellent”, “family-focused”, “compassionate”, “attentive” and “professional”. Of the 260 responses to this question there was only one ‘complaint’ which was, that 15 minutes for the parent-teacher interviews was “not long enough”.
Thus, the overall perception of parents was that, even at the beginning of the values education program, the school ambience was very positive. Teachers, principals and administrative staff were universally acknowledged as being caring and committed professionals. The lack of significant change on the pre-post survey comparison is likely due to the high levels of satisfaction expressed at the inception of the program. Some parents perceived a slight improvement in their child's attitude to school and significant changes in other children’s behaviour, although there were some concerns about on-going, though isolated, incidents of bullying.

While the results from the preceding analysis do not provide a simple answer to the question of what impact values education has on school ambience, the perspectives from the three different groups of stakeholders provides some common agreement. Positive relationships among staff and between staff and families, while not increasing significantly on the measures employed in the current study, remained strong and were ‘affirmed’ by unifying the school community in a common approach. The impact on student behaviour appeared to be the most significant aspect with teachers, parents and students observing more incidents of caring, honest, respectful and responsible behaviour leading to more cooperative student interactions and contributing to a safer and more harmonious playground environment. While values education was not an instant panacea for student ‘misbehaviour’, the explicit teaching of values provided clear expectations about how students should treat each other and a ‘common language’ through which students could resolve their own disputes or through which teachers and parents could assist children to analyse and redirect their behaviour.

c) Student-Teacher Relationships

While no quantitative data were collected on student-teacher relationships, there was some evidence from the student, parent and particularly the teacher responses to the open-ended survey questions suggesting that both students and teachers were behaving more ‘respectfully’ towards each other. Teachers described improved student behaviour towards teachers, including a “rise in levels of politeness and courtesy”, “open friendliness”, “better manners”, “offers of help”, and students being “more kind and considerate”. Students also appeared to be monitoring each others’ interactions with staff and reprimanding fellow students who interrupted teachers or were not listening, by saying “you are not showing respect” (T1117).

Respect for teachers, mostly demonstrated by students listening to teachers, also featured prominently in the examples provided by the Year 3-6 students. Students seemed to be more aware of the impact of their behaviour on teachers and that teachers ‘have feelings’.

"Most of the class respects the teacher and respects the other people in the class/school. E.g. most of our class uses their manners and makes the teacher feel the way she wants to feel (S300388)."

Parents also observed that children were aware of the ‘challenges’ facing teachers and the need for ‘respect’ within the classroom.
She speaks respectfully of her teacher and displays understanding that sometimes keeping 30+ children satisfied at one time can be a challenging task (P9027).

As well as referring to being attentive in class ‘respect’ was also interpreted by students in the sense of adhering to school rules and acting in accord with teacher requests. Students appeared to perceive that the rules were there for a purpose and that teachers were ‘asking’ for reasonable behaviour rather than ‘telling’ them what to do.

Respect. We do what teachers asked- respect other people. Stay in bounds and we pay full for excursions (S300443).

The notion of ‘mutual respect’ was also evident:

Respect. Respect is when you behave good in front of people and look them in the eyes and listen to what they’re saying and you do what they ask you to do. That’s respect. You respect people and they will respect you (S300432).

The teacher responses to the question regarding the way that staff related to students highlighted two common changes in this regard among the schools. First, as implied in the preceding quote, teachers indicated that they were more conscious of modelling the values, and second, teachers were more likely to adopt a compassionate and positive approach when dealing with “difficult students”. Rather than reprimanding students for poor behaviour, teachers were looking for ways ‘to fix the problem’.

The values program has given the staff an increased springboard from which to approach the children. There is a common dialogue, and it has given people a more approachable and human starting point when dealing with issues (T1038).

Majority of staff have a very positive relationship with students. This has always been the case however, I do feel that the staff are thinking more carefully about the way they address situations that arise (T1030).

I think most staff are calmer in their approach to students that may have broken rules, realising this approach results in better outcomes. There seems to be less ‘yelling’ (T1040).

The impact of teachers modelling appropriate behaviour and applying a restorative approach to student misdemeanour was to create a climate of trust, fairness and justice. One of the individual questions that reached statistical significance (t = -4.70, p = .00) in the pre-post comparison of student responses was ‘How often do you say when something is unfair?’ In the post-survey, students indicated that they were likely to speak up about injustice ‘Most of the time’, compared to only ‘Some of the time’ in the pre-intervention survey. Students appeared to perceive that their ‘side of the story’ would be heard and there were numerous examples provided of occasions when teachers had treated students ‘fairly’.
Fairness, my teacher showed fairness to another boy, when he broke the school rule he got in trouble and when another boy broke that rule, he’s someone who doesn’t get in trouble, he got in trouble (S600526).

Teachers noted that putting the values into practice in their interactions with students did not always come naturally and required conscious monitoring.

It (teaching values) does make me stop and think when I say/do something (T1147).

The end result though, appeared to be a greater empathy and connection with students.

I have noticed that some staff relate to children in their class with more warmth and genuine care now. I think generally we are all trying to model the core values of the school in front of students (T1083).

This (how staff relate to students) becomes obvious when we have casual teachers in the school who do not treat the children in the same way that we do – I hear them boss/bully/yell at students and that is in stark contrast to how we usually do things around here! Our own teachers are far more caring (T1095).

Parent comments also identified warm and caring relationships between staff and students with many variations proffered of “My child (absolutely) likes/LOVES (adores) his/her teacher”. The many positive teacher attributes listed by the parents included “listening to children”, “valuing children”, “caring about children”, “understanding children” and “knowing the child’s interests as well as who they are”. The impact of the values education program and the strong influence that teachers exerted obviously extended beyond the children and the classroom, and into families lives.

He adores her. Our lives live by the word of his teacher. She is an incredible teacher and an amazing example of the values education taught within the school (P6096).

The main impact of values education on student-teacher relationships appeared to be a greater understanding of each other’s perspective or at least to have a greater respect for each others position. Students seemed to feel they had more opportunity to express their opinions and teachers appeared more willing to listen. While, previously teachers may have been able to establish caring and positive relationships with ‘well-behaved’ students, the explicit teaching of values meant that teachers now regarded instances of ‘misbehaviour’ as teaching opportunities whereby students could be assisted to identify their mistakes and practice the value that they hadn’t yet ‘learned’.

d) Student and Teacher Wellbeing

In the current study, while there was no single instrument employed to measure ‘well-being’, the pre-post comparisons of the student and teacher scales and the analysis of the open-ended questions on the student, teacher and parent surveys provided
converging evidence to imply that both student and teacher wellbeing were impacted in a number of ways.

**Student wellbeing**

The analysis of the quantitative data showed that there were measurable and significant improvements on the three scales measuring teacher perceptions of student behaviour (Student engagement, Inclusive behaviour and Responsible behaviour) after 12 months of the VEGPSP-2 program. The comments of parents, teachers and the students themselves corroborated this finding and further suggested that the school ambience had improved in a number of ways, thus promoting student well-being through the provision of a safer and more cooperative playground where students were taking better care of each other and of the school grounds. The following examples provided by the Year 3-6 students indicate that students were experiencing many positive effects from being on both the ‘receiving’ and ‘giving’ end of values-related actions.

The examples provided for ‘respect’ ranged from respect for belongings and the environment to respect for others, “People do not steal other people’s stuff as much and we look after other people better” (S115825). The examples provided for ‘care’ typically involved the students being helped by peers, e.g. “I was finding a thing in Maths hard but then someone helped me understand it” (S600806) or the students themselves looking after peers or younger students, often in a situation where someone was hurt or injured “When someone has got hurt I got the teacher and said someone fell over. When I have fallen over, they have helped me and told the teacher” (S060136). Care was also interpreted as ‘caring about’ people, not just caring for them in a protective way “When someone says, ‘you can’t play with me’ ask them to play with you” (S300427). Care also appeared to overlap with ‘responsibility’ in regard to looking after the environment “Care- by putting rubbish in the bin” (600711). Responsibility was interpreted as ‘taking charge’ and performing allocated tasks “When I feed my dog every night” (S104706) even when there are temptations to do otherwise “Jarrod, Jeremy, Callum and I open and close the library Monday to Wednesday and my friends wanted to play and not do their job. Jarrod and I said no and kept doing our job” (S02014). Being responsible was also seen as a personal virtue “I told the truth” (S200314) and as taking on a challenging role with little or no support “I am always responsible when people pick on my sister. My Mum said to deal with it, so I do.” (S111022).

The student comments also indicated evidence of self-regulation and awareness that implementing values was not always easy, “Honesty - I found a toy, I felt like keeping it but I handed it in” (S04011) ; “Respect – I was going to take someone’s pencil to use and I thought I shouldn’t, I should ask” (S600811); “Acceptance!! Acceptance is when you accept people to do what they want to do but you can’t do what you want to do” (S107908). Such comments show that the students are grappling at a deeper level with the ‘moral choices’ that confront them on a daily basis. It suggests that the students are reflecting on their first impulses, evaluating their behaviour and then attempting to act in accordance with the values they have learned. Such ‘internal struggles’ may not be visible to others, nor measurable, but represent a growing ‘wisdom’ that ultimately leads to more self-regulated behaviour. In the current study, the one significant finding from the student surveys that was consistent across all the grades was that student ratings of their own behaviour decreased. Because there was
no commensurate decrease in the students’ ratings of each others’ behaviour, the declining scores on self-assessed behaviour suggest that the students were engaging in a more critical and reflective analysis of their own actions. Instead of reporting that ‘All the time’, they listen to their teacher or treat others the way they would like to be treated, students were more likely to answer such questions in the post-implementation surveys with ‘Some’ or ‘Most of the time’. It could be the case that the declining scores in children’s previous ‘over-estimates’ of ‘good behaviour’ represent a growth in self-appraisal, self-awareness and moral development.

The ways in which values education was implemented appeared to have positive effects on students’ self-esteem. As part of the explicit teaching of values, teachers took every opportunity to reinforce instances when values were being shown. Thus, students often received acknowledgement from their teachers for ‘good deeds’.

[I am] always looking to commend the children when they are displaying a value (T1079).

Teaching values gives a constant reminder to teachers to keep reinforcing appropriate behaviour in a positive manner (T1040).

A common feature of program implementation in the Wallsend South cluster was the weekly assembly where individual students, or even whole classes, would receive ‘values awards’. Along with songs and values journals, assemblies and values awards featured prominently in students’ descriptions of how they had been learning about values and the recipients of the values awards were obviously proud of their actions and pleased to be given recognition.

Self-esteem as a result of enacting the values was also alluded to as a ‘flow-on’ effect in the students’ comments.

Responsibility – everyone takes more care with their work and they get better marks so they feel better (S115825).

The results of the pre-post analysis of the parent scale measuring their child’s Attitude to school approached significance at the .05 level (p = .055). The increase in the post-survey scores indicated that students were happier to go school and felt safer at school, suggesting a greater sense of belonging and connection.

My child’s self-esteem I believe has increased since starting at this school this year (P9039).

Thus, some of the impacts of values education on student well-being appeared to be the creation of a safer and more caring school community, a greater self-awareness, a greater capacity for self-appraisal and self-regulation and enhanced self-esteem.

Teacher Wellbeing

The only scale in the pre-post comparison of the teacher surveys that approached statistical significance was the scale measuring Relational trust (Figure 5, p.46). Teachers’ scores on this scale increased over the 12 months of the VEGPSP-2 program, suggesting that there was a trend for teachers to feel more accepted at
school, to feel more valued by colleagues and to have improved relationships with families. Teacher comments also indicated that the whole school approach to teaching values gave them a greater sense of team-work and being in a unified school community.

While most teachers reported that staff relationships had always been strong, some schools described that they were now implementing among the staff some of the values education activities they had introduced to their students. One of these was ‘Random Acts of Kindness’. This strategy involved ‘doing something nice’ for another person without disclosing the identity of the benefactor. This strategy brings joy to both the mystery benefactor and the recipient of the ‘good deed’ and appears to be resulting in more congenial and collegial relationships as well as a more supportive and nurturing work environment.

While the measures of teacher perceptions of student behaviour showed a significant improvement, teacher reaction to the change was not directly assessed. However, a number of teachers commented on the positive impact that improved student behaviour had on the general school climate, in turn impacting on student and staff wellbeing.

*Teaching of values contributes to a more inclusive and harmonious environment (T1124).*

It can also be inferred from some of the teacher comments that the increased respect given to them by students contributed to the school being a ‘happier’, ‘friendlier’ and more enjoyable place to work.

*More seniors greet, or just smile in passing (Littlies have always done this) (T1032).*

*We are hearing more positive comments to staff e.g. “How are you today Mr/Mrs…?” (T1041)*

*Quite common to be greeted with a smile and a “good morning” greeting. Students are happy to help – carry bags, books etc. They usually offer to help when help is needed. Rarely need to be asked (T1043).*

*I enjoy the morning greetings from children & the occasional offer made by students to open a door, carry my belongings etc. (T1040).*

Finally, the requirement to discuss, explain and model values often resulted in teachers examining their own behaviour and attitudes and perhaps engaging in self-evaluation and self-improvement.

*Values helps teachers to live the values more fully themselves, as they have the awareness that they are constantly modelling for the children. I think it has helped to make us better examples! (T1038).*

Thus, the teacher comments implied that, as stated in their key goals at the inception of the project, the schools were working towards building a ‘more positive school
culture’. While teacher wellbeing was not directly measured, teacher comments suggested that improvements in student behaviour and a greater sense of collegiality among staff had led to a happier and more harmonious work environment.

e) Parental and Family Participation

As discussed under implementation aspects in Ancillary Question 1, parental involvement at the Wallsend South cluster was actively encouraged by the schools in a number of different ways. These included regular communication about values via school newsletters, open invitations to attend assemblies and ‘Values Days’ and encouraging feedback about the program. While the schools made efforts to involve families in the development and ongoing implementation of the values education program, family involvement did not appear to be a prominent feature in either the teacher or parent surveys. Most of the teachers felt that parents supported the program and that the common focus and common language shared between home and school was mutually beneficial.

*Good again for the shared vocabulary. Shows parents and staff are on the same page and are communicating well (T1009).*

However, at a number of schools the teachers felt that their job was made harder and that the success of the program was compromised if the values they were teaching were not being demonstrated or taught at home.

*Difficult at times as school is for some students, the only place where values are important. So it can be conflicting at times with what they see at home and what we try to teach/model (T1008).*

*I still believe that if the values we are teaching are not reinforced at home or encouraged at home we will never see the full effects of our efforts (T1092).*

From the parents’ perspective, the majority appeared happy with what the schools were already doing and the introduction of values education did not appear to change parents’ positive perceptions of the school or the teachers. As reflected in the pre-post comparisons of the parent surveys (Figure 6, p.49), parent perceptions of school climate and beliefs about behaviour and learning did not change significantly.

Some parents, however, strongly endorsed the explicit teaching of values and appreciated the schools efforts to ensure that the children were getting a ‘consistent message’.

*Values should be constantly reinforced. If parent and teachers (school) reinforce common values it can only help reinforce in the child’s mind (P9050).*

*It is important for parents to teach values but also important to know they are also taught at school so kids don’t think it is just something that Mum & Dad teach them and they can forget about it when they go into the school gates (P9053).*
While most parents appreciated the schools efforts to improve the school climate and the behaviour of ‘other children’, there did appear to be some ‘resentment’ from a few parents about the suggestion that there may have been any changes in their own child due to values education at school. In response to the question “Since the Values Education program began, have you noticed any changes in your child?” one parent answered emphatically:

_NO!! We brought her up well with basic good manners & morals. She is basically a very well mannered child (especially when not at home). School teaching values has only reinforced what she already knows._

A number of parents also suggested that ‘not too much time’ should be spent teaching values and that any ‘religious’ instruction should be avoided. Others felt that while the program may not be introducing or teaching their child anything new, there were broader and more long-term positive repercussions from the explicit focus.

_I am not aware of any changes in my son, other children or staff but that is OK. As a family we live by reasonable rules and boundaries, and I believe that values taught at home also need to be instilled at school. These values are extremely important to learn at a young age, and focusing on these at school is bound to bring positive results whether subtle or very noticeable. Keep up the good work in this area! (P9026)._ 

_I think school is just one source of information about values for kids. Schools alone can’t change kids’ values or behaviour. But it is important for schools to teach values as it may be the only place some get positive values taught consistently (P2032)._ 

While the parent responses to the post-implementation surveys indicated a long-standing satisfaction with the schools and their respective staff and a general though not unanimous support for values education, the results obtained in the current investigation concerning parent perspectives may not be representative of the entire school communities, since only about a third of the parent population responded to the pre- and post–surveys. It is difficult to know whether the other two-thirds of the parent population were in ‘passive support’ of the program or were unaware of it. On the whole it appeared that schools endeavoured to maintain communication with parents, but active parent involvement was not as evident.

While, the role of parental and family participation in the effective implementation of values education was not as clear-cut as the other aspects under investigation, overall, the quantitative and qualitative survey data obtained from the students, teachers, and families in the Group A schools provided converging evidence about the positive impact of values education on student academic diligence, school ambience, student and teacher relationships and student and teacher wellbeing. The 12 month implementation of values education resulted in small to moderate effect sizes in teacher ratings of student engagement and behaviour and the triangulated evidence obtained from the three groups of stakeholders confirmed that students were developing skills in monitoring and regulating their own behaviour as well as understanding the impact of their actions on others. Increased levels of trust and kindness within the schools helped to create a happier and more harmonious climate.
Ancillary Research Questions: Question 3

What added impact does explicit teaching of values have on relevant student effects?

This last question seeks to explore some of the links between values education and quality teaching. The mode of teaching values explicitly appears to both require and create a supportive and positive school culture. Before examining the additional impact of explicit teaching on student outcomes it is necessary to understand how school context and teacher practice coalesce to provide the kind of learning environment which sustains values education.

The preceding discussion has highlighted a number of positive outcomes for students following a relatively short implementation of values education. The converging results from the analysis of the staff, student and parent surveys suggest that there were measurable and observable changes in student behaviour after 12 months of the VEGPSP-2 program. The pre-post comparisons of teacher perceptions of student behaviour showed statistically significant improvements across the three aspects measured, that is, Student engagement, Inclusive behaviour and Responsible behaviour (Figure 1, p. 37 and Table 10, Appendix 3D). Comments from the students and the majority of teachers and parents supported the view that students were making greater efforts to regulate their own behaviour, to be more considerate of others and to take more care of their belongings and their surrounding environment.

Given that the implementation of values education at the Wallsend South cluster was based on explicit teaching of values and promoting quality relationships, it would seem logical to conclude that the changes in student behaviour were associated with changes in teacher practice. And, the teacher and student testimony support this conjecture. However, in contrast to the converging evidence regarding the students’ new awareness and ongoing acquisition of values, the results concerning changes in teacher beliefs and practices were less conclusive. As indicated in Figure 7 (below), the pre-post comparisons of the teacher surveys revealed that there were no statistically significant differences on the two scales measuring Teacher beliefs about Values Education and Teacher practice (Table 11, Appendix 3D).

The Teacher beliefs scale was comprised primarily of items regarding the teachers’ beliefs about the importance and efficacy of teaching values. The mean score of 3.2 in both the pre- and post-surveys indicates that teachers ‘Agreed’ (as opposed to Strongly Agreed or Disagreed) with statements such as “Teaching values makes a difference to how well students achieve” and “Values Education improves the climate of the school”. This implies that teachers commenced the program with a sense of confidence and commitment about the benefits of values education and concluded with the same opinion.

The Teacher practice scale included items about general pedagogy, such as “Effective teaching means connecting with children’s experiences and background” as well as items specifically regarding the teaching of values, for example, “Values need to be modelled by teachers and school staff”. The pre and post mean score of 3.6 on this scale indicates that teachers ‘Strongly Agreed’ with such statements and thus there was little room for improvement on this scale.
Teacher: Pre-Post Mean Scores for Teacher Practice and Beliefs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2006</th>
<th>2007</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Practice</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>3.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beliefs</td>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>3.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 7. Pre-post comparison of teacher practice and beliefs about Values Education

No significant differences (p >.05)

Another possible explanation for these apparent ‘non-significant’ findings regarding teacher beliefs and practices is that, even though the VEGPSP-2 project commenced in the Wallsend South cluster in 2006, two of the schools in the cluster had already implemented values education or similar initiatives in their schools, some, up to six years previously (see Appendix 1). It is likely that the teachers at these schools had already endorsed much of the philosophy and many of the practices underlying values education including democratic classrooms, authentic learning opportunities, and an emphasis on student-teacher relationships. Alternatively, there was a perception among some of the teachers from schools who were embarking on values education for the first time that values education was not new to them, that ‘they were already doing this’ and the only difference was that now it was a “formal program” and “all staff were on board”. “I have always applied values education in my teaching career based on the values I was taught through family, school and church” (T1092).

While the pre-post analyses did not provide evidence of a measurable change in teacher practice, the teacher comments suggested their school’s involvement in the VEGPSP-2 project had instigated some changes in teacher practice, particularly in relation to embedding values education into the curriculum “I am trying to incorporate values into many areas” (T1073). The requirement to make values education an explicit part of the curriculum even appeared to have an impact on those teachers who believed they had always embraced the principles of values education.

I have always used this as a basis for my teaching, however, it is now being ‘taught’ more effectively to students in my class (T1014).

Furthermore, the teacher responses to the post- survey question asking about the effects of the values education program indicated that 80% of teachers felt that teaching values had encouraged them to reflect more on their teaching practices.
A number of teacher comments implied that the insights gained from this critical appraisal were not just confined to instructional techniques but also extended to new understandings about their interactions with students. This included a greater receptiveness to students’ point of view by being “more aware of listening to students” and “allowing time for two-way communication”. Some teachers also noted that they reflected more on their general teaching practices and were more conscious of how students might react to different strategies and of the impact that teachers actions could have on students’ feelings and self-esteem.

Whilst I have always believed that others should be treated as you would like to be, constant teaching of values has reinforced this to me and I am more mindful of leaving students with self-esteem particularly in difficult situations (T1030).

A number of teachers also indicated that values education had either confirmed long-held beliefs or helped the teachers come to new realizations about their role, especially in the capacity of ‘nurturing’ and supporting students.

Reinforced to me how much these children thrive on feeling loved and cared about - it is my responsibility to make sure this happens in my role as a teacher (T1166).

I am more aware of what some children need – as values are often absent in some households – it’s now my job (T1112).

In order to further investigate the relationship between student outcomes, teacher practice and school context, the pre- and post-intervention survey data for the teachers and the Year 3-6 students were employed to conduct two hierarchical multiple regression analyses. The first analysis examined whether teacher practice and beliefs or any school level variables had an additional impact on student perceptions of Classroom ambience after accounting for prior student behaviour and the autoregressive effects of prior Classroom ambience. The results of this analysis are presented in Table 1 (below).

Prior student perceptions of classroom ambience and four of the five pre-survey measures of student-rated behaviours were entered as a block at the first step. Peer impact on school was omitted because of multicollinearity problems owing to its higher correlation with the other measures of prior student behaviour than with post-classroom ambience. This block accounted for 27% of the total variance in post-measures of Classroom ambience, with prior perceptions of classroom ambience making a substantial and independently significant contribution. Two of the post survey measures of student behaviour, How I treat others and Peer impact on me, were entered at the second step and this block accounted for an additional 18% of the variance. This result indicates that the quality of interactions between students has a substantial impact on student perceptions of classroom ambience. Post-survey measures of teacher beliefs and practices were entered next and made a small but significant contribution of 3%, with teacher practice being the only predictor in this block to have a significant and independent influence on Classroom ambience. There was no significant contribution from the school level variables, which were entered at the last step in the regression equation.
Table 1. Results of Hierarchical Regression Analysis examining Relative Influences on Students Post-Survey Perceptions of Classroom Ambience

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Step</th>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>β</th>
<th>R² Change %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Autoregressor and prior measures of student behaviour</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Class ambience</td>
<td>.44***</td>
<td>27.4***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>How I treat others</td>
<td>-.09</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Personal Responsibility</td>
<td>-.08</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Peer impact on me</td>
<td>-.04</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Post measures of behaviour</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>How I treat others</td>
<td>.47***</td>
<td>18.2***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Peer impact on me</td>
<td>.12**</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Teacher effects</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Teacher beliefs</td>
<td>-.09</td>
<td>3.0***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Teacher practice</td>
<td>.24***</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>School level effects</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Relational trust</td>
<td>-.04</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Leadership and policy</td>
<td>.02</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Professional Learning</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. * p < .05  **p < .01  ***p < .000

These results suggest that, while students’ satisfaction with their classroom learning environment is largely dependent on their own and their peers’ behaviour, teacher practice, or the way that teachers conduct themselves and their classrooms, is also influential. The school context did not have a significant influence on Classroom ambience over and above the student and teacher effects. The individual variables which were found to have a unique and significant influence on Classroom Ambience are represented in the path diagram in Figure 8.

![Figure 8. Standardised paths from factors influencing student perceptions of classroom ambience. Only significant paths are shown p < .01](image-url)
The strength of the relationship between the predictor variables and Classroom ambience is indicated by the values of the standardized regression coefficients (beta weights) which are shown on each path. As illustrated in Figure 8, from a student’s perspective, the social dynamics of the classroom are as important, or even more important, than the way the teachers teach. Thus the dual impact that values education has on student relationships and quality teaching is likely to have important repercussions for students’ learning contexts and learning outcomes, although this was not demonstrated in the current short-term investigation.

Because teacher practice was indicated as a significant predictor of Classroom ambience, a second hierarchical multiple regression analysis was conducted in order to examine whether teacher practice was influenced by changes in student behaviour or school climate. It may be expected that effective values education will involve a reciprocal relationship between teacher practice and student behaviour, such that as positive changes occur in student behaviour, teachers may change the way they teach (e.g. Abbott et al., 1998; Watson, Battistich, & Solomon, 1998; Solomon, Battistich, Watson, Schaps, & Lewis, 2000). Indeed the anecdotal evidence from teachers often describes values education as a ‘transformative process’ whereby teachers adopt different pedagogical styles and ways of interacting with students (DEST, 2006). As well as investigating whether changes in student behaviour impacted on teacher practice, the analysis sought to examine whether any changes in the school climate over the 12 month period had an influence on teacher practice. Previous research has indicated that elements comprising school climate such as leadership (e.g. Newmann, Smith, Allensworth, & Bryk, 2001) and relational trust (Bryk & Schneider, 2002) are important components in the implementation of values education.

Pre- and post-intervention measures of teacher perceptions of class behaviour (Student engagement and Inclusive behaviour) and school climate (Leadership and policy, Relational trust and Professional learning) were included in the hierarchical multiple regression analysis in order to examine whether teacher practice was influenced by changes in student behaviour or school climate after controlling for the autoregressive effects of prior teacher practices and beliefs. The results of the analysis are reported in Table 2 and indicate that prior teacher beliefs and practices as well as aspects of school climate accounted for a large proportion (48%) of the total variance in the post-intervention measure of teacher practice. However, the largest contributor in this block was prior teacher practice which was the only variable that had a significant and independent influence on post teacher practice. This finding supports the teachers’ comments, which indicated that, on the whole, what teachers were doing in their classrooms had not changed substantially from what they were doing in the past, or at least from the previous year.

Pre- and post-measures of teacher ratings of classroom behaviour were entered in the equation at the second and third steps respectively. Despite the measurable changes in teachers’ perceptions of Student engagement and Inclusive behaviour over the 12 months of the program, these improvements did not appear to have a significant effect on teacher practice.
### Table 2. Results of Hierarchical Regression Analysis examining Relative Influences on Teacher Practice

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Step</th>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>$\beta$</th>
<th>$R^2$</th>
<th>Change %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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<td>48.2***</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Leadership and policy</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Relational trust</td>
<td>-.09</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Professional learning</td>
<td>.02</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Prior measures of class behaviour</td>
<td>Student engagement</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td>0.01</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Inclusive behaviour</td>
<td>.06</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Post measures of class behaviour</td>
<td>Student engagement</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Inclusive behaviour</td>
<td>-.09</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Post measures of teacher beliefs and school level effects</td>
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<td>.45*</td>
<td>10.8*</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Relational trust</td>
<td>.31*</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Leadership and policy</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Professional Learning</td>
<td>-.19</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note. * $p < .05$  **$p < .01$  ***$p < .000$

However, there was a significant additional contribution (11%) from the post-survey measures of the teacher and school level variables, with changes in Teacher beliefs and Relational trust each exerting a significant and independent influence on teacher practice ($\beta = .45$ and .31 respectively). The inclusion at Step 1 of prior measures of Teacher practice and Relational trust indicate that it was not the prevailing teacher beliefs and levels of relational trust that impacted on teacher practice, but rather, it was the relatively small changes in teacher beliefs about values education and in the levels of trust within the schools during the year of VEGPSP-2 implementation that influenced teacher practice. The inclusion of both the pre- and post-measures of student behaviour in the final regression analysis and the non-significant contribution of these possible predictors indicates that the small changes in Teacher beliefs and Relational trust had a greater impact on teacher practice than did the moderate improvements in student behaviour.

The individual variables which were found to have a unique and significant influence on Teacher practice are represented in the path diagram in Figure 9. The strength of the relationship between the predictor variables and Teacher practice is indicated by the values of the standardized regression coefficients (beta weights) which are shown on each path. As illustrated in Figure 9, teacher practice is highly stable, and what teachers believe also has a substantial impact on what they do. However, the level of Relational trust within the school community at the end of the VEGPSP-2 year of implementation was almost as important an influence on Teacher practice as the teachers’ beliefs about values education. These findings suggest that the school context, and particularly the relationships among staff and with families, has a significant impact on what teachers do in their classrooms and on how they interact with students.
The findings from the two longitudinal multiple regression analyses help to provide a more complete picture of the complex inter-relationships between different elements of values education. The first analysis indicated that teacher practice and student behaviour were significant predictors of Classroom ambience. The second analysis showed that while current teacher practice was mainly explained by past teaching methods, a more caring school community and small changes in teacher beliefs about the efficacy of values education were also responsible for a significant proportion of the variance in current teacher practice. These findings suggest that the impact of values education on students is mediated by their teachers’ beliefs and practices which are, in turn, affected by the level of Relational trust within the school. The non-significant influence of Leadership and Professional learning in the current investigation may have been affected by the inconsistency of leadership within the Group B schools cluster, where four schools changed principals during the 12 months of the VEGPSP-2 program. These results indicate that a cohesive and supportive school community supports teachers to do their job more effectively and this has important ramifications for student progress.

**Conclusion to Section A**

The current investigation of the implementation of the VEGPSP-2 project at the Wallsend South cluster has provided measurable and converging evidence about the impact of values education on student effects and school ambience across eight primary school sites.

The way in which values education is conducted has important implications for school functioning, teacher practice, inter-personal relationships and students’ learning and social outcomes. When values are given equal status with other areas of the curriculum and become an integral part of a school’s ‘core business’, a number of positive consequences coalesce. First, there is a clearly articulated and school-wide understanding of how people should treat each other and the school environment. An
explicit focus means it is incumbent on teachers to discuss, describe and model the values wherein, over time, students become ‘armed’ with a ‘values vocabulary’ and an understanding of the impact of their actions on others. Even if this new awareness does not always or immediately translate into the desired behaviours, students are nonetheless provided with a set of standards or principles by which they can evaluate their own behaviour and the conduct of others. Some of the student comments indicated that this new awareness had helped them to regulate impulses, such as overcoming the desire to keep a toy or money they had found rather than hand it in, and there was substantial evidence that students were demonstrating a range of ‘values inspired’ acts of kindness, including honesty and responsibility towards both peers and teachers. The constant visual and verbal reminders, as well as incidental acknowledgement of appropriate actions and ‘placing values on the stage’ by presenting Values Awards at school assemblies, meant that students were provided with positive guidelines and consistent reinforcement for appropriate behaviour and these practices ultimately created a more caring and harmonious school culture. As well as being the conduits for disseminating values, teachers also benefited from more mutually respectful relationships with students and from more collegial relationships with other staff. Though contexts and personalities varied, the best way of endorsing the importance of this new approach was for the principal to give it his/her imprimatur and to embed values education in school policies. Ongoing commitment to values education was also facilitated by staff collaboration and opportunities for professional development. While parent involvement appeared to facilitate and enhance the outcomes of values education, such support was not always obtainable.

When values education is treated as an ‘implicit’ part of a school’s role, there is not always the same unified and consistent approach to student-staff relations and student welfare issues. Explicit teaching exposes the ‘hidden curriculum’ in regard to expectations about student conduct. Teachers might assume that all children come to school knowing how to treat others and understanding how others feel. Not all children acquire this understanding through either explicit teaching within the context of their family or implicitly by interacting with others. If values education is given the same priority as any other in the school, then teachers can more easily accept that it is their role to explicitly teach values and to provide opportunities for students to practice and apply what they are learning. Rather than expecting instant acquisition and mastery by all students, teachers were more likely to acknowledge effort and scaffold student’s gradual progress. This issue may be more pertinent in the context of primary schools, where the current study was conducted. The results of the current investigation, though limited to primary school settings, provides consistent findings that values education changes teacher-student relationships so that rather than enforcing minimum standards of behaviour or school work, teachers are more likely to support and encourage students to strive for higher ideals. Instead of a focus on helping students to ‘correct what is wrong’, teachers are providing models and visions of ‘what can be’. The explicit teaching of values makes these positive aspirations tangible to students.
SECTION B: Findings from the Group B schools

This section contains the case study component of the study. In all, eleven case studies were undertaken. They included, in alphabetical order, together with a list of the researchers who conducted them:

Airds High School, NSW (Dr Leonie Arthur, University of Western Sydney);
Boddington High School, WA (Emeritus Professor Brian V. Hill Murdoch University, WA and Mr Gary Butcher BA Director, Operation Connect Network, Inc);
Lance Holt School, WA (Dr Laura Stocker, Murdoch University and Ms Kathryn Netherwood, Coordinator of the Lance Holt School);
Lanyon High School, ACT (Dr Thomas Nielsen, University of Canberra);
Preston South Primary School, Vic (Conjoint Professor Ron Toomey, The University of Newcastle);
Rasmussen Primary School, Qld (Dr Angela Hill and Dr Lai Kuan Lim, James Cook University of North Queensland);
St Charles Borromeo Primary School, Vic (Conjoint Professor Ron Toomey, The University of Newcastle with Ms Sue Cahill);
Seaford 6-12 School, SA (Emeritus Professor Robert Crotty, University of SA with Ms Marion McKenzie);
Toowoomba High School, Qld (Dr Marian Lewis, University of Southern Queensland);
Townsville Central Primary School, Qld (Dr Angela Hill and Dr Lai Kuan Lim, James Cook University of North Queensland);
Townsville High School, Qld (Dr Angela Hill and Dr Lai Kuan Lim, James Cook University of North Queensland).

Purpose

The case studies are intended to complement the quantitative component of the study reported earlier. The previous section describes, in the statistical sense, the relationships between values education and academic diligence, school coherence, school ambience, student-teacher relationships, student and teacher wellbeing, as well as parental and family participation. The case studies, however, are intended not so much to describe the relationships but more to explain them. As with all case study research, these eleven case studies cannot provide generalised findings. Each case study is a separate and localised account of school approaches to values education and teacher perceptions of its effect upon academic diligence, school ambience, student teacher relationships, student and teacher wellbeing, as well as parental and family participation. The detailed case studies are reported on the Values Education website (http://www.valueseducation.edu.au/values/)

Taken together, however, they present data from which strong inferences can be made about how values education can impact on such factors as the ambience of the school, the interpersonal relationships within it, students’ and teachers’ sense of wellbeing, and student academic diligence.
Methodology

A range of case study techniques was used by the researchers who constructed the case studies. They ranged from: highly qualitative research reliant mostly on interviews and participant observation for the data to produce the case studies; through to “mixed method” approaches that combined qualitative and quantitative methodologies for their evaluations.

These approaches were negotiated during two briefing sessions that were attended by all the researchers and conducted by the principal investigators. A single, uniform methodology was not possible because the school communities that were involved in the investigation wanted the opportunity to shape an approach to case study research with which they were comfortable.

However, several researchers used a Teacher Pre and Post Implementation Survey to ascertain both teachers’ and students’ perceptions of the changes that had occurred in their school over time with regard to the emphasis they placed on values education and changes in student academic diligence, school ambience, student-teacher relationships, student and teacher wellbeing, and parental and family participation. Others also used a student pre and post implementation survey designed to gather information about students’ perceptions of their engagement with their school. A copy of each survey is supplied in Appendix 5 and extended reports of each case study are available on the Values Education website (www.valueseducation.edu.au).

Other researchers used extensive periods in the school, working as ‘observer as participant’, whereby they immersed themselves in the school over a long period of time with a view to gaining understanding of what the school was attempting in general and in the values education area in particular. Many conducted interviews and focus groups to obtain data about the fit between what the school was undertaking by way of values education and student academic diligence, school ambience, student-teacher relationships, student and teacher wellbeing, and parental and family participation. Others supplemented such things with state-wide testing data and other routinely collected data about school climate, parental views of the school, and the like.

Inferences from the case studies

Overwhelmingly, the strongest inference one might draw from the case studies, when taken together as a collective case study, is that as schools give increasing curriculum and teaching emphasis to values education, students become more academically diligent, the school assumes a calmer, more peaceful ambience, better student-teacher relationships are forged, student and teacher wellbeing improves and parents are more engaged with the school. However, there are important differences between some of the case studies. The levels of academic diligence vary across cases. Approaches to implementation vary from implicit teaching to explicit teaching. There are substantial variations across case studies of parental involvement in the school community. Moreover, the case studies suggest that any relationship between Values Education programs and the quality of student attitude, parent involvement, interpersonal relations and the like is much more complicated than simply being the case that values education in and of itself produces such effects. The Townsville Central PS case study
draws attention to some of the complexities associated with studying the effects of values education programs:

These (values education) curricular reforms, together with the Peer Support program demonstrate that values are embedded as well as made explicit in the curriculum. The programs demonstrate a concerted and explicit effort to improve the quality of teaching and learning as much as they do to instil the relevant values to enhance student engagement. In evaluating the outcomes of the program, it is important to note that the difficulties in making causal links between values education and improved quality in schooling and student achievement. The outcomes of any reform are often the result of multiple factors, and it is difficult to establish conclusively the impact of a specific factor. However, over the past years, some trends are evident in the statistics, and many teachers attributed values education as a contributing factor to these changes. Whilst it is difficult to establish conclusively the effects of values education, staff and student perceptions of values education do provide a strong indication of the importance placed on the selected values and endorsement of the values education program in the school.

The case studies were designed to address eight of the research questions that shaped the study. These questions were about patterns of implementation of values education programs and their effects on academic diligence, school coherence, school ambience, student and teacher wellbeing, the quality of interpersonal relationships in schools and parental participation in the school community. In what follows, keeping in mind the complexities of the fit between values education and things like academic diligence, the case studies are interrogated in an attempt to explain how a school that is increasing its attention to values education might see that effort accompanied by improvements in student academic diligence or parents becoming more engaged or the school becoming more peaceful.

Patterns of implementation

There are major differences in how the case study schools implement values education. For instance, in eight of the eleven case studies, all of which generally present persuasive evidence about positive developments in the school with academic diligence, school ambience and coherence, student and teacher wellbeing, the quality of interpersonal relationships and parental participation, each approaches implementation differently. None of them adopts the nine core values outlined in the National Framework for Values Education in Australian Schools (DEST, 2005). One (Rasmussen PS) chose not to identify one or more particular school values but rather to adopt a set of values-based principles including:

- Praise People
- Give Up Put Downs
- Seek Wise People
- Notice Hurts
- Right Wrongs
- Help Others
Another (Boddington HS) makes one value, Respect, the main focus of school and community attention. Others have their own “home grown” set. Townsville Central PS, for example, shapes its program around four key values: a strong Sense of Self, Connectedness, Resilience and a Sense of possibility. The Seaford 6-12 school focuses on Respect, Responsibility, Listening, Learning, Happiness and Friendship. St Charles Borromeo PS emphasises the values of Respect, Responsibility, Honesty and Fair Go, coupled with agreed values-based principles like “this school is a no put-down zone”. Toowoomba HS emphasises Teamwork, Seeking Opportunity, Meeting Challenges and Success and Recognition. Airds HS uses a whole school approach to values education focussed on respect and inclusion. However, notwithstanding such differences, all the case schools have made explicit values education part of their core business. In none of them is it a ‘bolted-on’ addition to existing curriculum competing with traditional curriculum areas for attention.

The curriculum centrality of values education in all the case study schools is achieved by the use of across-school scaffolds which support the content and processes of Values Education that are considered to be important by the school. At Lanyon High School, for example, the ‘Learning by Design’ framework and ‘Information and Communication Technology’ are used as such scaffolds.

As the case study says:
The (Learning by Design) framework is a tool to design, document and track pedagogical choices that recognise and harness diversity. The two conditions of learning of the framework are learner Belonging and learner transformation. Hence, the values of inclusion, respect for difference, and tolerance and understanding are included in the framework. Also, as constructivism underpins the pedagogy of Learning by Design, there is a strong focus on student talk, capacity to reflect and collaboration, ensuring the transfer of agency from the teacher to the students and the development of student autonomy.

Participation in the values education project gave teachers in the cluster schools the opportunity to further develop their work in Learning by Design by designing, documenting and implementing (ICT based) units of work with a values focus but which were embedded in the curriculum. 22 teacher scholars from the five cluster schools participated in the project and collected evidence of learner transformation. By using a combination of frameworks, therefore, namely Learning by Design and The Nine Values for Australian Schooling, both content and pedagogy reflected a strong values focus.

Whilst such scaffolding techniques are used by each case study school, the scaffolds themselves differ. At St Charles and Preston South Primary Schools, Student Action Teams are used. At Rasmussen PS, the Peace Builders program is used. At Townsville Central PS, the PEER Support program is the scaffold. In other cases, traditional curriculum is refashioned so as to act as an effective scaffold for the values education program. For example, at the Lance Holt School, the program is scaffolded into the integrated language program through Colin Thompson’s picture book, Dust. It contains a heart rending, first person, confronting account of starvation in Africa which begins with the death of the young narrator. It was inspired by the famine in Niger in 2005. All royalties are going to the Save the Children Fund and it is
dedicated to “all children who do not wake up safe and comfortable”. The Lance Holt case study explains how it is used to scaffold the values program at the school:

Today, the teacher is working with the Years 4-7 children on a project based around the book ‘Dust’ written by Colin Thompson and illustrated by a range of well-known authors. The book begins with the shocking line, ‘Last night I died’ and narrates the circumstances of the life and death of a poor child in drought-stricken Africa. It is the sort of story that could overwhelm children with grief or guilt if it was approached badly. On the other hand, the school would not be offering an adequate education if it ignored global crises of justice and ecology in an effort to protect children from the knowledge of suffering and issues about sustainability. So, Christine has carefully scaffolded this project by fostering in the children an understanding that they are in a position to help other children and to make a difference in the world. In fact, this lesson of empowerment has consistently been part of the children’s education: don’t be guilty or despairing, be pro-active. Almost before Christine has finished reading the story, the students are, of their own accord, beginning to think about possible fundraisers to help. The process here is important. The older children are by now familiar with the idea of organizing to be effective, so in small groups the older children mentor the younger children on their fundraising ideas. Christine’s job now is as a facilitator and guide, helping the children see through their ideas to fruition. She tries not to take over the process but to enable the children as agents of process-building.

The case studies also indicate that many of the schools implement other Values Education programs, often of a commercial nature, in tandem with this scaffolding technique. Values for Life, Peer Mediation, Tidy Towns, Go For Gold, Circle Time, Bounce Back, You Can Do It and a host of others are used to reinforce the values program. Many of them are practical programs designed to produce deeper self knowledge (Circle Time) and greater self esteem (Go for Gold, Aussie Optimism and I’m the Boss of My Body) This concern for developing positive dispositions is common to all the case study schools as the Lance Holt case makes clear:

In one corner of the Year 2/3 classroom stands a set of Compliment Books. These consist of written compliments that children have paid to each other: each child has his or her own book. These are designed to make children aware of the positive aspects of their personalities and to help children learn how to pay a deep compliment about another person. The Compliment Books are part of the PATHS (Promoting Alternative Thinking Strategies) program that supports social and emotional learning in children by teaching them to understand and reflect on their feelings and emotions. The PATHS program runs in the early childhood classes of the school but not alone: it is integrated with all other aspects of learning in Lance Holt School.

The intention to develop a whole school approach to program design and implementation is also common to all the case studies but achieving it often presents significant challenges. Various techniques are used to establish an explicit values based ethos including having a school-wide engagement of a particular program such as PeaceBuilders at Rasmussen or sustainability at Townsville HS:
As part of their response to the VEGPSP project, the school has centred on their commitment to values for a sustainable future. With a focus on Year 7-8 transition, the VEGPSP project allowed for documentation of an integrated theme across the Year 8 cohort—“Survivor NQ”. As the Deputy Principal explains, the school has a cohort of staff highly committed to a focus on sustainability, but as with many other curriculum aims, such a goal had not been made explicit prior to the VEGPSP Stage 2.

“For many years in 1999, 2003, 2005, 2006 & 2007 we have received the Townsville City Council Environmental Excellence & Sustainability Awards. We are reaching out to parents in their homes & linking with the business community (to enhance this whole school approach)”.

As a result of the VEGPSP Stage 2 focus however, the Deputy is adamant that an explicit whole school approach is now feasible. With core staff in the humanities and sciences areas leading the curriculum development, the school now has an opportunity to focus, systemically, on values for sustainability.

Also, there is a pattern of common pedagogy across the case studies. The explicit teaching of the school’s values is one of the features of this common pedagogy. Explicit teaching takes several forms. At Lanyon High School, for example, “Laina, a Year 8 English teacher, the first step (she took) when addressing the value of respect was to expose students to a story and then have them discussing and thinking about what their own definition of respect was”. Others use Y charts to develop the meaning of the values with their students. At other schools more elaborate techniques are used to explicit teach the school’s values such as at St Charles Borromeo Primary School:

The explicit teaching of values also occurred when the whole school came together on Monday morning for assembly. Here, the students were taught to come into assembly in an orderly and composed way accompanied by quiet, reflective music. The assembly was used to highlight the current value—sometimes a story was read, a role play performed, observations shared of where, when and by whom a certain value had been seen in action. Values certificates were awarded. These certificates were given by staff, students and parents to staff, students and parents. The assembly usually concluded with a silent reflection read out by the values school co-ordinator and those who have been at assembly leave to quiet, reflective music.

Commonly, such processes are the object of continuous positive reinforcement by having values posters arranged prominently around the school that reiterate the explicit teaching. Often, the posters have been constructed by students during class time.

Another aspect of the common pedagogy is the emphasis given to real world learning. The meaning of real world learning is expressed in a wall display mounted at the Lance Holt School and described in its case study:

On the wall of the Year 2/3 classroom is a huge blue mural featuring Bathers Beach. The children have regular excursions to Bathers Beach and the school community has a very special relationship with it. Bathers Beach is a
sustainability hotspot with many cultural, social, economic and ecological values. Only a 10 minute walk away, it is the ideal outdoors classroom. Spontaneous or planned projects involve litter collection and analysis, sand sculptures, playing on the sculptural playground, school art exhibitions and viewings at Kidogo Arthouse, botanical drawings, painting, dune revegetation, mapping exercises, snorkelling, intertidal biology, coiling baskets from seaweed, interviewing local shopkeepers, exploring the local fish markets and cafes, and visiting the adjacent Port. The children have been active stewards of Bathers Beach for many years, and were first officially welcomed there by Nyungar Elder Mrs Marie Taylor in 2002. The mural on the wall of the Year 2/3 classroom features a variety of coloured animals swimming in the sea or living adjacent to it, and people on the beach. The children have cut out these figures and stuck them on, together with little thought bubbles they have created about what the animals need from the people, like unpolluted water, and what the people would like to offer the animals, like care and protection. This type of project fosters children’s empathy with the broader ecosystem and helps enable children to think about a world in which other sentient beings are at the centre of the moral sphere.

At the same school, the Year 6/7 teacher, Seth, approaches real world learning from another direction:

Displayed in Seth’s classroom are models of passive solar houses, designed and built by the children as part of Seth’s now on-going work in sustainability. Previously the children themselves ran a sustainability conference for the school community. The children themselves wanted to take sustainability further into the community. In the process they engaged with their parents about rainwater tanks, organic gardening, worm farming, solar ovens and recycling. Some children encouraged their parents to take on sustainability activities at home; others went on to write to politicians about local developments they were unhappy with; or to join voluntary bushcare groups.

Most see real world learning in emancipatory terms, as the description of the curriculum reorientation in the Rasmussen case study that accompanied the introduction of values education begins to say:

The Head of Curriculum noted that curriculum design in the school had historically been about “doing to” students- the development of technical competence. The priority for curriculum design within the school now, represents a deliberate intention to engage students in meaningful relevant issues and support reflective action around local concerns.

One of the aspects of real world learning that recommends it to many of the teachers in the case studies is its capacity for engaging students and maintaining that engagement. In the case of a group of older students at Lanyon, the real world learning took the form of having the students construct ICT-based presentations around “the question (of): Did they understand the responsibilities that came with the freedom and independence of driving? The values of responsibility, fair go and respect were included in the unit, which focused on the ethics and morals of driving by examining road rage, the trauma experienced by victims of road accidents and the
importance of having respect for road rules”. The case study makes the point that “students were engaged and enthusiastic about Driving Me Mild. They could clearly make connections to their life world and they were excited about the impending freedom of having their licence”. Such approaches, including students working with Fremantle council on a revegetation project are part of the common pedagogy. Less commonly but perhaps nonetheless importantly, this aspect of the common pedagogy is given the emotional bent of “deep personal learning”. This feature of real world learning is captured in the account of Debra’s class at the Lance Holt School.

Debra is also the art teacher. In the art area, adjacent to the Year 2/3 area, lies a very special collection of clay figures newly created by the Year 6/7 class. Debra has worked with the children since they were young students building up their motor and clay modelling skills, and this term she has asked the older children to create statues that express an emotion. The resultant figurines, about 20 cm in height, are tender and enormously expressive. There is a grandfather and boy in a fishing boat; a couple hugging; a boy meditating in the rain; a young couple sitting together; a couple hugging a tree; and siblings fighting over a toy. Here the children have integrated their carefully developed technical skills in sculpture with their sophisticated emotional understanding to create artworks of exquisite aesthetic depth.

Teachers engaged in consciously modelling the school’s values is a further aspect of the common pedagogy. The Boddington High School case study reports that “the classroom manner of teachers themselves has improved. They now feel accountable as role models and answerable to the same values as are being commended to students”. Other case studies feature modeling as an important way of projecting the school’s values to the point that one says “Samantha (the Pre-Primary? Grade 1 teacher) “aims to live the live the school’s values”.

Finally, there are two other influences described within the case studies that are important aspects of the schools’ approaches to implementing values education. First, in all schools there is a committed, influential person exercising leadership around the project. Second, in many of the case study schools these leaders have expressly raised the expectations they have for the schools outcomes in terms of children’s application and performance and more generally. As the Rasmussen SS case study makes the point:

The school leadership team, and in particular the Principal, has responded determinedly to these characteristics (of a very challenging school population). Appointed in 2005 the Principal has established an uncompromising set of benchmarks for learning and student conduct as well as the school environment. The 2008 Annual Operational Plan (AOP) reflects these benchmarks. Goals include the following:

- Increased proportion of students achieving above the national benchmarks in reading, writing and numeracy;
- Reduced Student Disciplinary Absences (SDAs);
• Staff, student and parent opinion data about school climate will be comparable with or better than state and like schools; and

• Overall parent satisfaction will be equal to or above the state mean.

In light of the discussion above and with the first research question for the study in mind (i.e. How is values education being implemented in ways that elicit positive change in teacher practice and student response?), the following description of a successful pattern of implementation is offered:

Successful programs respond well to, and are fashioned by, local circumstances and needs. Choices about which values should comprise the program and how the program becomes applied are matters for the school.

However, there is a common pedagogy or a set of effective teaching practices that has a key role in the delivery of the program. Its main features are:

• Values education must be seen as core business;
• Values must be scaffolded by supportive school-wide practices;
• Values must be taught in an explicit way in the classroom and through other media (e.g. Assemblies, etc.);
• Values education must be allied to ‘real world learning’ (involving deep personal learning);
• Values education must be reinforced through routine, visual positive media (e.g. through posters and/or other emblems); and
• Values education must be allied to expressed high standards for overall performance and achievement.

Successful implementation is accomplished under the guidance of a person with significant influence within the school.

We turn now to a discussion of the impact that such a pattern of implementation might have on school coherence, student diligence and those other matters of interest to the study in a way that seeks to explain the effects of good values education pedagogy.

**School coherence**

All the case studies seem to place great store on a “whole school” approach to values education. There seem to be many reasons for so doing. Townsville HS, for example, describes its “whole school” approach in terms of curriculum management:

> The school promotes an overarching pedagogy of ‘investigation’ with school units reviewed for their ‘investigative elements’.

At Lanyon High School, the conception of whole school approach is realised in curriculum management being extended to incorporate teacher motivation, collaboration, teacher ownership and creating positive teacher dispositions:
Whatever frameworks are chosen (for developing the units that comprise the
values education program), collaboration and a whole-school approach is key
in creating a positive school approach to values education. All teachers
interviewed expressed appreciation of the shared planning with other teachers,
reducing fears and increasing enthusiasm and inspiration in the process. As
such, collaborative planning may be seen as parallel to a constructivist
classroom, and therefore as having similar benefits as normally associated
with guided constructivism (e.g. making values education initiatives ‘one’s
own’ rather than something that ‘one has to do’ and as directed by a top-down
model of leadership)”.

Others, like St Charles Borromeo, consider a whole school approach to be an
important mechanism for enabling it to maximise efforts in trying to accomplish the
key school goals about optimizing student wellbeing and resilience.

Others link it to student learning, as with the Seaford 6-12 School:

Since that time, a whole school approach has been implemented to ensure that
school values underpin all school based activity. Values were embedded in all
aspects of school life – curriculum, school culture and environment, policy
and procedures and community partnerships. For example, capacity matrices
have been introduced for each learning area in the curriculum … Capacity
Matrices detail the skills specific to the learning area and students at regular
intervals are able to chart their progress in achieving mastery in each skill.
Students are being encouraged to take more responsibility for their learning
and (capacity matrices) are intended increase levels of intrinsic motivation to
learning.

Several assert that, since their values education program has been operating, there is a
stronger sense of coherence at the school. The Boddington case study links its whole
school approach to staff being more readily able to recognize the values behind their
actions, the way conflict is managed and having more consciously crafted policy
statements about values education.

The Townsville Central PS case study considers the values themselves to play a
significant role in establishing school coherence:

Reflecting its school motto, ‘Be thorough’, Townsville Central has undertaken
critical curricular reforms driven by a values agenda. On a symbolic level, the
school mission, vision and values all articulate the values agenda. On a
substantive level, values are embedded in the key curricular reforms. With
Peer Support and the UNESCO based curriculum framework embracing as
well as explicitly teaching values, these curricular reforms have enabled a
tighter coherence of the school program, practice, image and identity.

In general though, the case studies reveal relatively little about the impact of values
education on school coherence. Whilst the Townsville Central case study makes it
clear that accomplishing a whole school approach is no light matter, few case studies
yield insights to the ways that values education draws school communities together, if
indeed it does. This could be because the relationship between the two is a matter of great complexity that unfolds over time, as the Lance Holt Case study seems to imply:

At around 9am the school echoes with the sing song call “Meeeceting” as small children meander about announcing the first event of the day. There is no bell. Three days a week the whole school meets, sitting on the floor. Around 100 students, 30 parents and all the teaching staff attend. Some of the smaller children occupy the laps of parents, teachers or older children. Each Monday, the meeting is opened by an older child who begins the meeting by acknowledging the Indigenous country, ‘Koora. Ye yey. Boorda. Nidja Nyungar budjar noonook nyin-ning. We acknowledge that yesterday, today and tomorrow we are sitting in Nyungar Country.’ This day, the meeting is chaired by a pre-primary student who in a high squeaky voice announces, ‘I now declare this meeting open. Does anyone have anything to say?’ As usual, there is a lot to be said: baby teeth have fallen out; a birthday requires Happy Birthday to be sung; children are reminded about the school’s no-war toys policy; someone has returned from a holiday; a new toy is displayed; a teacher recounts a recent school excursion and acknowledges children’s mannerly behaviour; a maths poll is taken on how well-cooked members of the school community like their toast – results to be graphed by Year 2/3s; yet another Dockers’ loss is aired and grieved over. The student chairing the meeting nominates the speakers in turn, by name; she is helped out by others when she doesn’t know names. Meeting is a long-term process of community building. The school community gets to know each other better. News is shared; values are expressed and reflected on. Most importantly, it is an opportunity for every child to hear his/her own voice in the Meeting, and to be heard attentively and courteously by others, no matter how minor their announcement may appear to be. Listening to others respectfully is one of the key values shared at Meeting. For many, it is a formative experience. And for many families who have come from overseas or the eastern states, Lance Holt School is their extended family and main support network whose heart is in morning Meeting.

By embedding its values, especially that of respect, into its daily routine, the school gradually creates a cultural coherence that becomes central to learning in a way that hardly needs to be elaborated upon:

In every class, the teachers aim to embed values in every aspect of their work and to role model school values of respect to the children. This approach creates a cultural continuity and coherence in the school, which is the matrix for all learning.

**Student academic diligence**

There is a raft of material in the case studies about students applying themselves at school with greater effort and alacrity. The Boddington HS case study, for instance, reports that “students are trying harder” and suggests that “this relates to a sense of power by students” which they have gained by involvement in the values education program. The extent to which this is directly attributable to the program itself or the approach to teaching and learning is not clear. It also suggests that it may be a product of there being a “more harmonious environment” at the school but the direct causal relationship is as yet not established. This fits with Andy Furco’s (2008) assertion that
the direct link between values education and academic achievement remains elusive and perhaps will never be established in clear, uncontaminated fashion by empirical study. What is known, however, from multiple studies is that values education is invariably associated with establishing the environment in which academic diligence and attainment are enhanced.

However, the case study of St Charles Borromeo PS goes further than that of Boddington in this regard. The focus groups at the school were unequivocal about the children (by and large) trying harder than they did a few years ago. A student described his response to the values program as follows:

Question: Do you think your *Attitude to school* has changed since you have been involved with SATs?

Answer: I think it has because when (previously) things got a littler bit hard it was more I can’t be bothered and when I had to try and do things over and over I just gave up. And now after being in the values project if you really try and you keep trying you will eventually get it in the end.

A teacher said:

I personally believe it comes down to relationships. I think the relationships between staff and students and between students have improved enormously since we introduced the values program. The children are responding to that by trying harder.

The focus group described the children as “definitely having a go more”. “They now have the confidence to ask for help”. “Their levels of trust have improved. They are prepared to ask peers for help and know that it will be forthcoming”. Teachers also spoke about how they were now raising their expectations for the students.

Another comment was:

An increased level of intellectual depth on the part of some students is 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.

The focus group felt that, by and large, the students were more on task of late. It also proffered that the students were more engaged (in touch with self and connected with peers). The values education program was said to be one of the factors that contributed to this, specifically in the following way:

“*Maybe engagement is an accumulation of a whole lot of things running together very well. Teachers being well informed and knowing what they are teaching about, being motivating to the children, the children feeling they are*
valued and respected, having a great relationship with the teacher, a non-threatening classroom. I think there are lots of factors”.

Other case studies present data about students’ improved academic performance on standardised test measurement scores. At Lanyon HS, for instance, the performance of students on standardised State/ Territory assessment was offered as quantitative evidence of improvement in literacy. This was coupled with “qualitative evidence of, in particular, literacy improvement … in the action research of the teacher scholars. This literacy improvement was in the linguistic mode (writing), the visual mode (images), the audio mode (music and discussions) and the gestural mode (role plays and images). Making meaning of multi-modal texts is central to multi-literacies. It catered for a variety of learning styles, often incorporated technology, and supported students to discuss and demonstrate their understandings of values in varied ways”. Thus, the action researchers were assuming connections between the delivery of the values-based ICT units and such improvement. Whether this was an effect of the teaching approach of the values unit or the content of them is unclear. What is clear from a careful examination of the vignettes about the delivery of the values education program in the case study, however, is that the improvement is a result of the quality of the teaching which, in turn, the teachers attribute to the values education intervention. This is another example of the ‘indirect’ connections that Furco (2008) sees abounding between values education and improved academic performance.

In the Townsville Central case study, the “teachers reported values education to be a contributing factor in enhancing their understanding of how children learn, and shaping their teaching repertoire. All four teachers interviewed in this study were unanimous that they became more conscious of their own values, as well as their students. In the process, they recognise that values underpin how students learn, and (how they) are motivated to learn. The data show quite consistently that teachers acknowledged values education to be linked to academic achievement”. Again, in the spirit of Furco (2008), this would seem to shed light on the intersection of the explicit teaching of values and the quality of the teaching in the school. In this regard, it should be noted that “results of the state wide tests provide strong evidence of quality teaching in the school. Additionally, it is also useful to note students and parents’ opinion of the effectiveness of the school in facilitating their learning and academic goals. (The data) show a consistent level of student satisfaction with how the school and their teachers support them to succeed. The level of satisfaction indicated in the three years of survey is often higher than the state average, and for two consecutive years, student satisfaction with the quality of education provided by Townsville Central State School is higher than like schools”.

Another way of looking at this issue of the impact of the values education program on student academic diligence is to examine it comparatively. At Townsville High School, on the one hand, as the case study points out, the questions from the pre-implementation survey examine(d) the teachers’ perceived relationship between values education and student achievement. Given the current implicit (rather than explicit) values education focus, it is not surprising that the survey results … draw a limited relationship between student learning and values initiatives within the school”. On the other hand, in the Seaford 6-12 school case study, where data are presented about improvement in student engagement, application, and the like, a strong whole-school explicit values education program is in place.
**School ambience**

This is the area in which the case studies speak most clearly and unequivocally about the fit between values education and the “tone” of the school. Virtually all the case studies report that, since the schools’ involvement with values education, they have become significantly calmer and more peaceful places. Virtually all case studies report very substantial increases on the teacher perception measures of “school is more peaceful”, “Relationships are more trusting”, “Conflict is managed differently” and “Students’ improved social skills”. The Boddington case study reports that “student behaviour in classrooms has improved”. The Preston South PS case study says “undeniably the school is a noticeably more peaceful place. Staff point out that the language of values has taken hold and become a ‘common discourse’. As one teacher said “it’s easier to pull up bad behaviour with the language when it is common to staff and students alike”.

Moreover, many of the case studies offer explanations for these changes in school ambience. Both the Lanyon HS and Seaford 6-12 School case studies, as well as that of Preston South PS, attribute the changes to the existence of a new language. The Lanyon case study says that “the class dynamics have changed since the teaching of the unit began. The students are now using the language of the values as they debate important issues and often correct and remind each other to use manners, respect and be tolerant of each others’ opinions and feelings. At the end of the unit, in their personal reflections, students wrote responses such as, ‘It was fun to be able to have our own opinion,’ and ‘It was good to listen to other people’s ideas and we were allowed to agree or disagree with them.’” This seems to suggest that, in the process of unpacking the values, in the explicit teaching sense, a new language emerges. Through its use, students develop a capacity for self-regulated behaviour and, in the more settled environment that results, they enjoy class work more.

The St Charles Borromeo case study suggests there might be more to the values language issue than students simply acquiring or somehow ‘picking up’ a new language. It reports that “the focus group was unequivocal about the effects of the Values program on the school and classrooms. Classrooms are definitely more peaceful and calmer. Most put this down to the students knowing the meaning of things like respect and responsibility. There has been a good deal of work done on having students place themselves in other people’s shoes in order to help them understand the impact that being unfriendly or disrespectful to someone has on that person. This has made the children more conscious of their behaviour and, in turn, this has had a positive effect on classrooms”. Said another way, a new language and related responsible behaviour are not just acquired; they are very specifically taught (a good deal of work on putting students into other people’s shoes).

Other case studies make similar points. Both the Lance Holt School and Rasmussen PS case studies imply that systematically building relationships skills and conflict management skills is likely to be very important in establishing a settled ambience. At Rasmussen PS, relationship-building skills are formally taught through the use of the ‘PeaceBuilders’ program, using units like *What can I do when I’m having trouble with a friend?* According to the case study writer, these are positively reinforced through subsequent action:
In accompanying the Principal in her travels around the school, it is clear that these statements are not only reference points, but used to build student metacognition around the elements of peaceful relationships. The Principal consistently uses phrases such as “I like the way you said ….that shows you are using our school language.”

At the Lance Holt School, according to the case study writer, during lunch time “every few minutes a child approaches the table requesting help to solve a social problem. A teacher talks her through a process-building procedure. What happened? What was her part in the conflict? Has she used the stop message? How could she solve the problem by herself? The child and teacher work out a new strategy and the child departs to try it out”. Arguably, such teaching of conflict management skills is at work in producing the well-ordered ambience of the school.

**Student-teacher relationships**

Those case studies that present data on student – teacher relationships mostly report improved and very positive patterns. Empirical data regarding increased care and trust within schools are reported by the Seaford 6-12, Boddington, Preston South and St Charles Borromeo schools.

At Lanyon HS, the case study writer reports that “related to the issue of community building in the school as a whole, teachers have uniformly reported that values education has improved student interpersonal relationships and student–teacher relationships. Teachers found, in the implementation of their units, that the values focus produced more respectful, focused and harmonious classrooms. It developed students’ social skills by increasing cooperation, empathic character, self-management and self-knowledge, which in turn led to more supportive and safer learning environments”.

At Rasmussen PS, where relationship-building is formally taught, measures about relationships between children and staff score considerably higher than in equivalent schools. The case study writer connects this with the Values program:

> The differences between pre and post survey data clearly reflect the three year leadership journey within the school, but the high mean scores note that staff believe that the focus on values does create improved staff relationships, improved student resilience and serves as a catalyst for self-reflection. For staff- student relationships, the unwavering focus on behavioural values, positive language choices and strategies such as circle time have undoubtedly created more positive staff student interactions.

The fact that relationships are formally taught makes it unlikely that such good relationships are natural by-products of the values education program. Overall quality teaching, including the values education intervention, no doubt is the key.

Within the case studies, there are suggestions that other factors, apart from the values education program, help to produce good interpersonal relationships in the schools. The Townsville HS case study notes that “since the appointment of a new Principal at the start of 2007, and as stated in the first school newsletter of that year, there has
been a sharp focus and priority on improving relationships amongst students and between students and staff”.

Other case studies suggest that quality interpersonal relationships are part of a teachers’ repertoire as much as a product of values education programs. The Lance Holt case study, for instance, reports:

Samantha sees children as having rights and responsibilities, not as empty vessels waiting to be filled up. It is their classroom and they have something to offer. Samantha has set up the classroom from Day One to avoid an oppressive power relationship between her and the children, and to enable a dynamic where she respects the children, and they respect her and others. The children learn that they are part of a classroom community as well as a school community.

The effect of the teacher on the formation of good relationships is also referred to in the St Charles Borromeo case study:

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 coordinator 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 realized 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.

**Student wellbeing**

Again, the case studies suggest that, by and large, these schools contain students with a high sense of wellbeing. Not all students necessarily showed large increases in this regard as a direct result of the latest values education intervention, largely because their sense of wellbeing preceded the intervention. This of course raises questions about the reliability of student self-reporting about change owing to an intervention, especially when the intervention was of a relatively short duration. Nonetheless, we can take the overall reporting seriously when, for instance, the Boddington case study asserts that ‘holistic’ (student) wellbeing - physical, emotional, spiritual, mental - has improved because “staff are more aware of the out-of-school issues and concerns of students (and) teachers have more time to respond proactively because they are not having to deal with in-school incidents” which have lessened as a consequence of the positive effects of the values education program.

An improved sense of wellbeing could well be a function of the school’s approach to values education. For instance, at Lance Holt, student wellbeing is specifically integrated into the curriculum by the use of programs such as ‘Aussie Optimism’. The program is for primary school-aged children and is aimed at enhancing, amongst other
things, self-concept, assertiveness, ways of challenging negative thinking and learning optimistic thinking skills. This program is complemented with ‘I’m the Boss of My Body’. Other case studies indicate that such approaches to enhancing wellbeing are relatively common in these schools.

The Lanyon HS school case study implies that there are also other influences on student wellbeing, apart from the values education program, when it notes that Hilary (an Executive Teacher coordinating Student Wellbeing across the school) is “passionate about student wellbeing and producing well-rounded people.”

The Lanyon HS school case study reports further that student wellbeing could be in part a by-product of teacher wellbeing. It makes the point that the organisational structures and leadership approaches around the Values project improved staff morale dramatically. It goes on to describe a dynamic that results in improved student wellbeing:

Meeting the ‘chain of needs’, starting with the needs of teachers, are reported to have, in turn, improved student wellbeing and student outcomes. It was reported that now the surplus of care is ‘passed on to the kids’ who, in turn, ‘give the teachers more of what made them want to be teachers in the first place’. The result has been that positive social experiences among the teachers have aided school processes on all levels.

Finally, the Seaford 6-12 case study reports increases in self-confidence and engagement. The student comments in the case study attribute this to the teachers and their approaches.

**Teacher wellbeing**

With the exception of the Townsville Central PS case study, most other case studies imply improvements in teacher wellbeing. The Townsville Central PS circumstance is explained in terms of the intensification of the teacher workload in putting in place the very substantial values education curriculum reform.

In the case studies where improvements in teacher wellbeing are reported, they are explained in varying ways. At Lanyon HS, it is explained in terms of leadership, patterns of consultation and mentoring procedures associated with implementing the values education project:

Most importantly, perhaps, the school leadership has been successful in changing the social and professional climate among teachers. Teacher surveys conveyed general work dissatisfaction pre-implementation of the project. This spurred on several initiatives to change the status quo (e.g. consultation of teachers, PD days to foster a shared vision, and mentoring by lead teachers). The result has been a notable change in teachers’ overall satisfaction levels, which is reflected in less absenteeism and ‘more enthusiasm toward taking on new responsibilities within the school community’.

At Rasmussen PS, the explanation is that “within the school, staff wellbeing indicators highlight the impact of the Principal’s sustained effort to create a collaborative learning community. (The data) show(s) that over the three years, all
responses from staff show improvement. Ten of sixteen questions record staff satisfaction levels higher than other state schools”. Thus, the improvement in staff wellbeing is not directly attributable to values education but to the establishment by the Principal of a collaborative culture designed to enable its effective implementation. Similarly, at St Charles Borromeo PS, the vastly improved staff wellbeing measures are attributable to the collegial culture established by the student wellbeing coordinator around the project’s implementation.

**Parental and family participation**

The data about parental and family participation in school life over the period since values education has been introduced is scant and ambiguous. At Lance Holt School, there is clearly very significant parental involvement in school life. The case study does not provide any hard evidence of this being an effect of the values education program, as one would expect. It does provide testimony, however, that the values education program was seen by parents as being among the many attempts made by the school to live the school value of “community”. The high level of parent engagement is most likely explained by the overall community/school orientation of the Lance Holt School.

At Rasmussen PS, the data on the parental participation measures gathered as part of the annual state-wide opinion survey show a significant increase in parental involvement. Whether this is related to the introduction of the Values program is unclear. More likely, it is a result of the concerted effort of the new principal to reshape approaches to education generally and to the way the school operates.

At another of the Townsville schools, Townsville Central PS, there is a suggestion that parental participation might be linked to the Values program:

In the third set of relationships between the school and parents and community, the data also show a generally healthy trend. …. teachers indicated in the post-implementation survey that values education has contributed to an improved partnership with students’ families. The outcomes of this improved relationship are reflected in the School Survey data. Parents indicated an increased level of satisfaction with the way the school communicates its goals and expectations. Their satisfaction level with the school environment is generally higher than the state average”.

No explanation or elaboration is offered. At Townsville HS, the fact that the teachers surveyed had limited belief in the notion that values education promoted greater cooperation between school and home is explained in terms of the implicit rather than explicit values education focus of the school.

Finally, at St Charles Borromeo PS, the survey pre- and post-implementation data suggest that no improvement in parental involvement has occurred over the duration of the Values project. The annually-collected state-wide data, however, present the opposite picture.
Conclusion to Section B

The case study data are intended to address the matter of the impact that values education has on quality teaching. On the basis of the data in the case studies, it seems clear that the fit between values education and quality teaching is better described not as one having an impact on the other, but rather as the two of them being in harmony. This aligns with the central assertion in the National Framework (DEST, 2005) that values education and ‘best practice pedagogy’ are in a synergistic relationship, and also with the tenor of the text referred to within (cf. Lovat & Toomey, 2007) that values education and quality teaching constitute a nexus referred to as a ‘double helix’. In a word, values education, academic diligence, school ambience and coherence, student and teacher wellbeing, the quality of interpersonal relationships and, up to a point, parental participation, harmonize and mutually enhance each other in some way. The more attention a school gives to explicitly teaching a set of agreed values, the more students accept and apply themselves to their school work duties, the more coherent and conducive a place the school becomes, and, as a consequence, the better the staff and students feel. These assertions would seem to be decisively demonstrated in the data and attached testimony. The extent to which parents become more engaged is less decisively demonstrated, matching the many problematics around parental engagement noted elsewhere.

Explicit teaching of values certainly had a settling effect on the case study schools by providing a common language for talking about interpersonal behaviour. It also provided a mechanism for self-regulated behaviour. A more settled school circumstance can only enhance quality teaching and enable teachers to raise expectations for student performance. It is difficult to imagine most teachers and students not feeling good about such things.

Of course, this situation begs the question implied in the title of the study, about whether or not improvements in academic diligence, school ambience and coherence, student and teacher wellbeing, the quality of interpersonal relationships and the like, while not solely the result of the values education intervention, would have occurred without the intervention being such a prominent feature of these schools during the time under study. The testimony of the teachers involved tends to suggest that these phenomena would not have occurred, at least in such a demonstrated and holistic way, had the intervention not occurred. There is no doubt that schools can be quite settled places without emphasising values to the extent that these case study schools have. Similarly, students can try harder without being involved in values education. However, the unique contribution of values education in these schools seems to have been in its effecting a situation where such occurrences became natural and school wide phenomena.

Summary of Report

In summary, the triangulated evidence derived from both Group A and B schools coheres around the demonstration of values education impacting on student effects. The evidence emanates from a variety of research methodologies, from quantitative to qualitative, dispensed in a variety of settings and within a range of different projects. There is little deviation nonetheless in the coincidence of effects reported on. These
effects match those that were targeted in this study and they can be summarised in response to the three ancillary questions guiding the research.

**Ancillary Question 1.** The effective implementation of values education in both the Group A and Group B schools was underscored by the following crucial elements:

- Values education was regarded by the entire staff as a school’s “core business”. That is, it was given equal status with other areas and was embedded in school policies and student welfare practices;
- A ‘common language’ was developed among staff, students and families to describe values and the school’s expectations of student behaviour;
- Staff endeavoured to ‘model’ and demonstrate the values in everyday interactions with students;
- Values were scaffolded by supportive school-wide practices, including teacher facilitation of student reflection and self-regulation of behaviour;
- Values were taught in an explicit way in and out of the classroom and through other media (e.g. assemblies, sport and cooperative games, drama, songs etc.);
- Values education was allied to ‘real world learning’ involving deep personal learning and imbued both formal and informal learning opportunities;
- Values education was reinforced through routine, positive visual media (e.g. through posters and/or other emblems) as well as consistent, verbal encouragement and acknowledgement;
- Values education was allied to expressed high standards for overall participation, performance and achievement; and
- Values education was optimally introduced under the guidance of a person with significant influence within the school who was supported by a team of committed staff.

**Ancillary Question 2.** The assessment of the impacts of values education on a range of student, teacher and school outcomes in both the Group A and B schools also revealed common findings. First, the teacher survey responses as well as student and teacher comments indicated that improvements were evident in *Student academic diligence* including increased attentiveness, a greater capacity to work independently, greater care and effort being invested in schoolwork and students assuming more responsibility for their own learning. A number of Group B schools attributed their students’ improved academic achievement on standardized test scores to a more cooperative classroom environment created through the explicit teaching of values and conflict-management skills, in conjunction with improved teaching methods.

Second, the impact of values education on *School ambience* was measured by teacher survey responses in the Group A schools and was described in the qualitative data obtained from students, staff and parents in both groups of schools. The positive effects on school ambience included teacher perceptions of the school being calmer and more peaceful, of conflict being managed more constructively and of students’ demonstrating improved social skills. Improvement in students’ interpersonal relationships was noted by students, staff and parents and these observed and measurable changes in student behaviour had important repercussions for the schools’ ambience. Increased levels of empathic, honest, respectful and responsible behaviour led to more cooperative student interactions and contributed to safer and more harmonious classrooms and playgrounds. As well as demonstrating greater kindness and tolerance towards each other, students were also endeavouring to apply the values
to their ‘environment’ and were thus were more conscious of ‘being responsible’ with school and sports equipment as well as treating the school buildings, grounds and gardens ‘with respect’. Thus, there were positive changes in the social, emotional and physical aspects of school ambience.

Third, the investigation of the impact on Student-teacher relationships revealed that values education helped to develop “more trusting” relationships between staff and students. Teachers reported that they were more aware of ‘listening’ to students concerns and of ceding more ‘control’ to students in regard to classroom routines as well as offering more opportunities for choice in regard to learning activities. The establishment of more ‘democratic’ classrooms helped to create an environment in which students were more likely to ask for help because they felt they were being treated fairly and believed that their opinions were respected and acted upon. In return, the teachers perceived that students were behaving “more respectfully” towards them, with students described as being more attentive in class, demonstrating greater politeness and courtesy, expressing “open friendliness”, “better manners” and “offers of help” as well as being “more kind and considerate”. Fourth, in both groups of schools it was noted that, although no quantitative measures of wellbeing were employed, more trusting student-teacher relationships and the more peaceful and harmonious school climate emanating from the values education programs appeared to have a positive impact on both Student and teacher wellbeing. Improvements in aspects of Students’ physical and emotional well-being, such as a greater sense of connectedness and belonging, could be inferred from the substantial student comments regarding the transformation of the school environment into a safer and more caring community. In the Group A schools, the significant decrease in student ratings of their own behaviour indicated a greater capacity for self-reflection and self-appraisal suggesting, therefore, enhanced self-awareness. In both the Group A and B schools, Teacher wellbeing was positively affected by the deliberate community building efforts and the collegial support and camaraderie that strong leadership and a unified whole-school approach to values education engendered. The reciprocal nature of student and teacher wellbeing was evident in the positive impact that improved student-teacher relationships had on teachers as well as students. The two multiple regression analyses conducted on the Group A school surveys indicated that the impact of values education on students was mediated by their teachers’ beliefs and practices which were, in turn, affected by the level of relational trust within the school. Similarly, the flow-on effect of teacher wellbeing was aptly described in one of the Group B case studies as a ‘chain of needs’. When schools address the physical, social and emotional needs of teachers by providing adequate opportunities for professional development and fostering relational trust among staff and between teachers and families, then teachers feel adequately supported to pass on this ‘surplus of care’ to students. In turn, when students feel that school is a fair and benevolent place, they are more likely to exhibit friendly and reasonable behaviour and thus “give the teachers more of what made them want to be teachers in the first place”.

Fifth, in both the Group A and B schools, the role of Parental and family participation in the effective implementation of values education was not as clear-cut as the other aspects being examined. While the schools appeared to encourage participation from parents and invite input and feedback about values education, the parent response among the schools from both groups was variable. At some schools
there appeared to be almost unanimous acknowledgement from parents about the benefits of values education along with unsolicited offers of involvement, while at other schools there was very limited awareness of the program and negligible parent participation. In general, the successful implementation of values education did not appear to depend on parental support or participation nor did the introduction of values education per se, engender greater collaboration with families. However, the impact of values education appeared to be enhanced when parents understood and shared the school values and reinforced these. Conversely, teachers noted that the task of imparting values was hampered when the same values were not evident at home.

3. The added impact of the *Explicit teaching of values* was also consistent across both Group A and Group B schools. When values education was explicit, a common language was established among students, staff and families. This not only led to greater understanding of the targeted values but also provided a positive focus for redirecting children’s inappropriate behaviour. Teachers perceived that explicitly teaching values and developing empathy in students resulted in more responsible, focused and cooperative classrooms and equipped students to strive for better learning and social outcomes. When values are explicitly endorsed, acknowledged and ‘valued’ within a school culture, it is incumbent on schools to ensure that staff, as well as students are both benefactors and recipients in respectful and caring interactions. The common focus draws teachers together to create a collaborative and cohesive school community which supports teachers to do their job more effectively. This has important ramifications for students’ academic progress and wellbeing.

The current investigation has employed a range of methods in an attempt to measure the impact of values education on student effects and school ambience. While the Group A surveys yielded valid and reliable instruments by which to acquire quantitative data, the quantitative evidence, on its own, did not provide the ‘full story’ about the range of observable effects on students and teachers. The Group B case studies and the Group A student, teacher and, to a lesser extent, the parent comments provided important insights that helped to explain both the significant and non-significant quantitative findings. The current attempt to measure the impact of values education has revealed that values education appears to produce consistent effects that are often observable but difficult to isolate and quantify. The limitations and strengths of the methods employed in the current study have implications for future research in this field and indicate that quantitative analyses need to be supplemented by and interpreted in the light of qualitative data. Furthermore, when conducting research into the interactions that occur within complex organisations, such as schools, and that furthermore seek to investigate the relationships between students, teachers and families, it is important to include the ‘voices’ of all three groups of stakeholders. Finally, because ‘causes take time to exert their effects’ (Gollob & Reichardt, 1987, p. 86), longitudinal investigations should be conducted over at least two years and yield three data collections so that the origins of reciprocal causal effects can be traced.

Within the inherent limitations of a study carried out in multiple complex environments, using a variety of methods and across less than a calendar year, the quantitative and qualitative evidence from this study has demonstrated that a well-crafted and well-managed values education intervention has potential to impact positively on student academic diligence, school ambience, student-teacher relationships, student and teacher wellbeing, and, less significantly, parental and
family participation. Again, within the limits imposed by the nature and timing of the study, it is evident that the central question that drove the study, namely, *Can the impact of values education on teaching and school ethos, as well as student achievement and behaviour, be tested empirically and observed reliably?*, has been answered in the affirmative.
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Appendix 1: Contexts of the Nine NSW Primary Schools in the VEGPSP-2 Wallsend South Cluster – ‘Group A’ Schools

Booragul Public School, NSW
Booragul Public School has a student population of 248. The school draws from a low socio economic area with many students coming from single parent backgrounds. Many students have social and emotional needs which can impact on the school.

The school is currently on the Priority Schools Funding Program. The school is involved in a classroom based program called Roots of Empathy which teaches young children about infant development, emotional literacy and the development of empathy. Staff had little or no experience with values education before the commencement of this project. The purpose of involvement in the values project stems from the desire to provide for students a framework of positive social acceptance and involvement. Implementation aspects include the emphasis of values through the student representative council and the use of the *Roots of Empathy* program.

Fennell Bay Public School, NSW
The student population at Fennell Bay Public School is diverse with a small percentage of middle income families, 60% living in public housing, 40% parents unemployed and 20% Aboriginal families.

Staff continually seek to enhance the school learning environment and it is envisaged that participation in the Values Project will provide leadership and collegial support in achieving mutual goals of placing values at the centre of the school ethos. Given the disadvantaged background of the school community, the focus of the project is on increasing student engagement;

Hamilton North Public School, NSW
Hamilton North Public School has 117 students and serves a low socio economic area in Newcastle. The school is currently on the Priority Schools Funding Program. There is a high level of community support.

Staff have identified key issues for development in the areas of student behaviour, engagement in learning and on quality teaching. The school emphasises the setting of high expectations and of improving the perception of students and the community about what the school can achieve. The school became involved in the values project because this was seen as a key factor in improving student behaviour and fostering positive student/teacher relationships. Implementation aspects include the use of the *Rock and Water* program and a particular focus on social skills. While Hamilton North School completed the pre-implementation surveys and continued to implement the values education program, the school was re-located to the grounds of another school following severe flooding in Newcastle in June 2007 and owing to the disruption this caused, did not complete the post-implementation surveys.

Jesmond Public School, NSW
Jesmond Public School has a student population of 180. In 2003, the school surveyed its community and came up with a common set of values considered to be of the greatest importance. Following this survey, the school devised an assessment sheet to
report to parents on the progress of their children in these areas. The reporting sheet provided indicators to inform the parents of various aspects of the value being demonstrated by their children. The school sees values education as a means of promoting a positive school culture. A major part of the explicit teaching of values is the use of a set of “values” songs which are practised at assemblies and performed at community events.

Kahibah Public School, NSW
Kahibah Public School has a student enrolment of 254 and serves a low-middle income area in Newcastle. It provides a caring, supportive learning environment through developing strong networks between teachers, parents, children and the community. A strong values focus embedded in quality teaching practice aims at catering for the diverse needs of all students.

It is envisaged that participation in the values project will provide students and teachers with a common framework for describing expectations for student behaviour so that students begin to “walk the talk”. Implementation aspects include the use of the Raising Responsibility program and a focus on student choice.

Mayfield West Public School, NSW
Mayfield West Demonstration School (student population 350) serves a low income area in Newcastle with social factors frequently impacting on the core business of the school. The core values identified by both the school community and staff are respect, responsibility, care / compassion, fairness, acceptance and democracy. Additionally, three site values were identified; integrity / honesty, co-operation and happiness. As a result of this, the school has devised a timeline for students to learn about both the core and site values.

Mayfield West Demonstration School became involved in the values project with the aim of teaching students to value diversity and to empower them to make fair and responsible decisions. Implementation aspects include a focus on civics and citizenship, student leadership and acceptance of diversity.

Merewether Heights Public School, NSW
Merewether Heights Public School has a student population of 260. Staff discussions in recent years have been centred on the development of social skills and positive interactions between students and between students and staff. The focus for improving student behaviour has been on positivity of approach.

Participation in the values project is seen as critical to the school’s learning journey to explore the role of values in improving student behaviour and contributing to a positive school culture where students strive to be the best people they can be. Implementation aspects include a focus on the development of a values meta-language and enhancing student empathy.

Speers Point Public School, NSW
Speers Point Public School has a total student enrolment of 180. The school has a strong focus on values education, using a systematic and contextual approach to learning about and learning how to use values to enhance the daily lives of students.
The school hopes that participation in the values project will maintain the momentum already generated in this area and will assist staff to further focus on the importance of maintaining high quality interpersonal relationships. A new initiative is the introduction of a values based awards system.

Wallsend South Public School, NSW
Wallsend South Public School has a student population of 550 and serves a low-middle income area in Newcastle.

The school has worked with staff, students and parents to develop a set of core values pertinent to the school community and linked to the National Framework. In term 3, 2006 the school began a trial involving the explicit teaching of values in three week cycles. Whole school communities focus on the current topic through whole staff meetings, assemblies, school newsletters, parent meetings and displays around the school. It is envisaged that participation in the values project will provide staff with a greatly enhanced knowledge and experience base, the opportunity to work with partner schools to plan and to share and further develop understandings, and the opportunity to carry out valid research to guide them on their journey. Implementation aspects include an emphasis on values through student leadership, school rules and the existing peer support program.
Appendix 2: Group A School Surveys Additional Questions

Student Survey Years 3 - 6

How have you been learning about values at your school?

Write the name of one of the values you have learned about and give an example of when you or others have shown this value.

Teacher Survey

Has the values education program in your school resulted in any noticeable changes for students and staff, and the overall school climate? You may care to comment on the impact of the values education program or any changes that have occurred in any or all of the following aspects:

D1. In your classroom
D2. In the playground
D3. In the way that students apply themselves to their work
D4. In the work that student’s produce
D5. In the way that students relate to one another
D6. In the way that students relate to the staff
D7. In the way that staff relate to students
D8. In your teaching practice
D9. In your attitude to teaching
10. In the relationships between staff
D11. In school-parent relationships
D12. In the overall school climate
D13. Other comments:
Parent Survey

Since the values education program began, have you noticed any changes in your child, in other students, in the staff or the school? You may care to comment on the impact of the values education program or any changes that have occurred in relation to:

Your child’s attitude towards school and homework

Your child’s relationship with his/her teacher

Your child’s interactions with other children

Playground behaviour

Your child’s behaviour at home

Your own relationship with staff at the school

The overall school climate

Any other comments.
Appendix 3: Pre-post Test Results

Factor Items and Loadings and Results of Pre-post t-tests on Survey Data – Group A

Appendix 3 contains the item loadings and scale reliability coefficients for the survey factors as well as the pre-post comparisons for each factor. Significance levels < .05 indicate the difference in pre- and post-scores was statistically significant. Eta squared was used to measure the magnitude of the difference in scores and was calculated by the formula \( \frac{t^2}{t^2 + (N1+N2-2)} \) (Pallant, 2001, p. 180). According to Cohen (1988) the value of the eta squared statistic can be interpreted as .01 = small effect, .06 = moderate effect and .14 = large effect.

Appendix 3A - Kindergarten

Table 1. Kindergarten Factors

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Pre</th>
<th>Post</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Classroom Ambience</td>
<td>( \alpha = .60 )</td>
<td>( \alpha = .60 )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Do you like school?</td>
<td>.62</td>
<td>.47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Do you like to learn new things at school?</td>
<td>.70</td>
<td>.71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Do you like to work hard at school?</td>
<td>.66</td>
<td>.48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Do you have friends at school?</td>
<td>.54</td>
<td>.65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My Behaviour</td>
<td>( \alpha = .55 )</td>
<td>( \alpha = .55 )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Do you try to be nice to others?</td>
<td>.42</td>
<td>.46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Do you leave rubbish in the playground [R]</td>
<td>.66</td>
<td>.67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. Do you listen to your teacher?</td>
<td>.74</td>
<td>.63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. Do you wait for a turn?</td>
<td>.60</td>
<td>.73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Belonging</td>
<td>( \alpha = .52 )</td>
<td>( \alpha = .43 )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Do you like yourself?</td>
<td>.55</td>
<td>.45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Do you like other kids at school?</td>
<td>.58</td>
<td>.44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Does your teacher like you?</td>
<td>.77</td>
<td>.74</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note [R] – denotes that scoring is reversed for this item
\( \alpha \) = Cronbach’s alpha coefficient (values greater than .7 indicate scale is reliable)
For scales with small numbers of items, values above .5 considered acceptable.

Table 2. 2006 Kindergarten survey responses compared with 2007 Kindergarten responses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scale</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>t-value</th>
<th>Sig. (^a)</th>
<th>\eta^2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Classroom Ambience</td>
<td>313</td>
<td>pre</td>
<td>2.65</td>
<td>0.424</td>
<td>-6.090</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>312</td>
<td>post</td>
<td>2.83</td>
<td>0.276</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My Behaviour</td>
<td>313</td>
<td>pre</td>
<td>2.78</td>
<td>0.316</td>
<td>2.128</td>
<td>0.03</td>
<td>.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>318</td>
<td>post</td>
<td>2.72</td>
<td>0.355</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Belonging</td>
<td>313</td>
<td>pre</td>
<td>2.75</td>
<td>0.349</td>
<td>-0.670</td>
<td>0.50</td>
<td>NS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>337</td>
<td>post</td>
<td>2.77</td>
<td>0.320</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note
Significance levels < .05 indicate the difference in scores is statistically significant
\(^2\) - Independent samples t-test
\( \eta^2 \) - Effect size: .01 = small; .06 = moderate; .14 = large
NS – Not Significant
Table 3. Years 1-2 Factors

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1. Classroom Ambience</th>
<th>α = 0.71</th>
<th>α = 0.74</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Item</td>
<td>Loading</td>
<td>Loading</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>51. Teacher gives you interesting work</td>
<td>0.67</td>
<td>0.71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>49. Teacher makes you laugh or feel happy</td>
<td>0.65</td>
<td>0.69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>09. Look forward to coming to school</td>
<td>0.62</td>
<td>0.52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35. Have fun learning</td>
<td>0.61</td>
<td>0.57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>05. Feel good about being at school</td>
<td>0.52</td>
<td>0.57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50. Teachers praise you for trying hard</td>
<td>0.52</td>
<td>0.64</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. My Behaviour α = 0.71 α = 0.76

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>16. Follow school rules</td>
<td>0.71</td>
<td>0.66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21. Listen to your teacher</td>
<td>0.64</td>
<td>0.66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22. Help others even if they are not your friend</td>
<td>0.57</td>
<td>0.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17. Help others when they need it</td>
<td>0.56</td>
<td>0.48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27. Treat others the way you would like to be treated</td>
<td>0.55</td>
<td>0.65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>04. Blame others for your mistakes [R]</td>
<td>0.53</td>
<td>0.42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24. Think about how others feel</td>
<td>0.51</td>
<td>0.54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>08. Work hard at school</td>
<td>0.48</td>
<td>0.62</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3. Peer Behaviour α = 0.75 α = 0.77

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>46. Bully others [R]</td>
<td>0.76</td>
<td>0.72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45. Pick on you [R]</td>
<td>0.75</td>
<td>0.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>38. Tease you or call you names [R]</td>
<td>0.70</td>
<td>0.73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41. Fight in the classroom or playground [R]</td>
<td>0.67</td>
<td>0.63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>44. Take your things without asking [R]</td>
<td>0.61</td>
<td>0.66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>39. Break school rules [R]</td>
<td>0.52</td>
<td>0.53</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: α = Cronbach’s alpha coefficient (values greater than .7 indicate scale is reliable)
[R] – denotes that scoring is reversed for this item

Table 4. Year 1-2 Paired-samples t-test results

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scale</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>t-value</th>
<th>Sig. *</th>
<th>eta²</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Classroom Ambience</td>
<td>140</td>
<td>pre</td>
<td>3.08</td>
<td>0.638</td>
<td>1.648</td>
<td>.10</td>
<td>NS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>post</td>
<td>2.98</td>
<td>0.675</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My Behaviour</td>
<td>144</td>
<td>pre</td>
<td>3.45</td>
<td>0.462</td>
<td>8.978</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>.22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>post</td>
<td>2.91</td>
<td>0.570</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peer Behaviour</td>
<td>145</td>
<td>pre</td>
<td>3.03</td>
<td>0.632</td>
<td>-5.489</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>post</td>
<td>3.39</td>
<td>0.524</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: * Paired samples t-test
NS – Not Significant
# Appendix 3C - Years 3-6 Surveys

## Table 5. Years 3-6 Factors

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1. Classroom Ambience</th>
<th>Pre</th>
<th>Post</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Item</strong></td>
<td><strong>α</strong> = .85</td>
<td><strong>α</strong> = .82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>51. Teacher gives you interesting work</td>
<td>.70</td>
<td>.70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35. Have fun learning</td>
<td>.68</td>
<td>.56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>49. Teacher makes you laugh or feel happy</td>
<td>.68</td>
<td>.71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30. Like to be with your teacher</td>
<td>.63</td>
<td>.53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50. Teachers praise you for trying hard</td>
<td>.63</td>
<td>.68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>09. Look forward to coming to school</td>
<td>.61</td>
<td>.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>05. Feel good about being at school</td>
<td>.61</td>
<td>.35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31. Learn new things at school</td>
<td>.55</td>
<td>.52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>48. Teachers talk to you when things go wrong</td>
<td>.52</td>
<td>.53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>52. Teachers let you choose what work you do</td>
<td>.51</td>
<td>.46</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2. My Behaviour</th>
<th>Pre</th>
<th>Post</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>2a. How I treat others</strong></td>
<td><strong>α</strong> = .84</td>
<td><strong>α</strong> = .85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20. Say things to make others feel good</td>
<td>.72</td>
<td>.73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22. Help others even if they are not your friend</td>
<td>.69</td>
<td>.76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24. Think about how others feel</td>
<td>.65</td>
<td>.65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>03. Do kind things for others</td>
<td>.65</td>
<td>.73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17. Help others when they need it</td>
<td>.64</td>
<td>.71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27. Treat others the way you would like to be treated</td>
<td>.63</td>
<td>.58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>34. Make friends with children who are different</td>
<td>.59</td>
<td>.64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. Help the teacher</td>
<td>.47</td>
<td>.59</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>2b. Personal Responsibility</strong></th>
<th>Pre</th>
<th>Post</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>α</strong> = .79</td>
<td><strong>α</strong> = .80</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>04. Blame others for your mistakes [R]</td>
<td>.60</td>
<td>.63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18. Break promises [R]</td>
<td>.57</td>
<td>.54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>07. Leave your table untidy [R]</td>
<td>.56</td>
<td>.49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32. Tell lies [R]</td>
<td>.55</td>
<td>.66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>01. Lose your belongings [R]</td>
<td>.51</td>
<td>.53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23. Leave rubbish on the ground [R]</td>
<td>.49</td>
<td>.53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. Follow school rules</td>
<td>.48</td>
<td>.52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21. Listen to your teacher</td>
<td>.47</td>
<td>.53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>08. Work hard at school</td>
<td>.46</td>
<td>.42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26. Try to do the best you can</td>
<td>.44</td>
<td>.44</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>3. Peer Behaviour</th>
<th>Pre</th>
<th>Post</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>3a. Peer impact on me (How others treat me)</strong></td>
<td><strong>α</strong> = .73</td>
<td><strong>α</strong> = .75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45. Pick on you [R]</td>
<td>.82</td>
<td>.74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>38. Tease you or call you names [R]</td>
<td>.81</td>
<td>.74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>44. Take your things without asking [R]</td>
<td>.61</td>
<td>.55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33. Feel unhappy at school [R]</td>
<td>.58</td>
<td>.64</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>3b. Peer impact on school</strong></th>
<th>Pre</th>
<th>Post</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>α</strong> = .72</td>
<td><strong>α</strong> = .72</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>42. Look after school property</td>
<td>.68</td>
<td>.63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>43. Put rubbish in the bin</td>
<td>.67</td>
<td>.61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40. Do what the teachers ask</td>
<td>.62</td>
<td>.58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>46. Bully others [R]</td>
<td>.52</td>
<td>.52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>39. Break school rules [R]</td>
<td>.50</td>
<td>.62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41. Fight in the classroom or playground [R]</td>
<td>.43</td>
<td>.58</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Note**: α = Cronbach’s alpha coefficient (values greater than .7 indicate scale is reliable)

[R] – denotes that scoring is reversed for this item
Years 3-6 Surveys (cont.)

Table 6. Students in Yrs 3,4,5 in 2006 compared with their own responses in 2007

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scale</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>t-value</th>
<th>Sig.(^a)</th>
<th>eta(^2)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Classroom Ambience</td>
<td>446</td>
<td>pre</td>
<td>2.78</td>
<td>0.551</td>
<td>5.354</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>post</td>
<td>2.66</td>
<td>0.488</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My Behaviour- How I Treat Others</td>
<td>453</td>
<td>pre</td>
<td>2.97</td>
<td>0.564</td>
<td>6.061</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>post</td>
<td>2.83</td>
<td>0.535</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My Behaviour- Personal Responsibility</td>
<td>447</td>
<td>pre</td>
<td>3.34</td>
<td>0.366</td>
<td>3.130</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>post</td>
<td>3.30</td>
<td>0.351</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peer Behaviour- Peer Impact On Me</td>
<td>453</td>
<td>pre</td>
<td>3.06</td>
<td>0.573</td>
<td>-0.493</td>
<td>0.62</td>
<td>NS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>post</td>
<td>3.07</td>
<td>0.522</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peer Behaviour- Peer Impact on School</td>
<td>446</td>
<td>pre</td>
<td>2.80</td>
<td>0.461</td>
<td>-0.937</td>
<td>0.35</td>
<td>NS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>post</td>
<td>2.82</td>
<td>0.422</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. \(^a\) Paired samples t-test
NS – Not Significant

Table 7. All students in Yrs 3-6 in 2006 compared with all students in Yrs3-6 in 2007

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scale</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>t-value</th>
<th>Sig.(^a)</th>
<th>eta(^2)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Classroom Ambience</td>
<td>945</td>
<td>pre</td>
<td>2.70</td>
<td>0.547</td>
<td>-0.131</td>
<td>.90</td>
<td>NS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>post</td>
<td>2.70</td>
<td>0.509</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My Behaviour- How I Treat Others</td>
<td>945</td>
<td>pre</td>
<td>2.92</td>
<td>0.554</td>
<td>2.578</td>
<td>0.01</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>post</td>
<td>2.86</td>
<td>0.560</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My Behaviour- Personal Responsibility</td>
<td>945</td>
<td>pre</td>
<td>3.29</td>
<td>0.381</td>
<td>-1.212</td>
<td>0.23</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>post</td>
<td>3.31</td>
<td>0.381</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peer Behaviour- Peer Impact On Me</td>
<td>945</td>
<td>pre</td>
<td>3.01</td>
<td>0.603</td>
<td>-1.060</td>
<td>0.29</td>
<td>NS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>post</td>
<td>3.04</td>
<td>0.595</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peer Behaviour- Peer Impact on School</td>
<td>945</td>
<td>pre</td>
<td>2.76</td>
<td>0.474</td>
<td>-1.444</td>
<td>0.15</td>
<td>NS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>post</td>
<td>2.79</td>
<td>0.461</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. \(^a\) Independent samples t-test
NS – Not Significant
Appendix 3D - Teacher Surveys

Table 8. Teacher perceptions of student behaviour

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item: “Students in my class……”</th>
<th>Pre</th>
<th>Post</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>1. Student engagement</strong></td>
<td>α = .86</td>
<td>α = .79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B44. are attentive in class</td>
<td>.76</td>
<td>.49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B31. can be trusted to carry out instructions</td>
<td>.73</td>
<td>.55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B33. are considerate of others</td>
<td>.70</td>
<td>.65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B03. cooperate with each other</td>
<td>.69</td>
<td>.53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B04. listen to each other</td>
<td>.68</td>
<td>.61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B10. care for each other</td>
<td>.66</td>
<td>.56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B23. take responsibility for their own learning</td>
<td>.60</td>
<td>.51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B07. keep the class rules</td>
<td>.60</td>
<td>.55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B05. encourage each other</td>
<td>.55</td>
<td>.69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B30. help someone who is finding the work hard</td>
<td>.51</td>
<td>.44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>2. Inclusive Behaviour</strong></td>
<td>α = .73</td>
<td>α = .74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B17. include other children of all cultural groups</td>
<td>.70</td>
<td>.79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B18. make friends with children who are different</td>
<td>.69</td>
<td>.85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B24. make friends with new children</td>
<td>.69</td>
<td>.63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B45. help others even if they are not their friends</td>
<td>.62</td>
<td>.61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B26. make fun of others who are different [R]</td>
<td>.57</td>
<td>.56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B25. are uncomfortable with children of different cultures [R]</td>
<td>.56</td>
<td>.43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>3. Responsible behaviour</strong></td>
<td>α = .73</td>
<td>α = .72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B35. put their rubbish in the bin</td>
<td>.75</td>
<td>.72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B36. keep the classroom tidy</td>
<td>.74</td>
<td>.76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B39. look after school property</td>
<td>.67</td>
<td>.66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B48. take care of their belongings</td>
<td>.64</td>
<td>.62</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: α = Cronbach’s alpha coefficient (values greater than .7 indicate scale is reliable)
[R] – denotes that scoring is reversed for this item

Table 9. 2006 Teacher survey responses compared with 2007 Teacher responses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Score</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>t-value</th>
<th>Sig.*</th>
<th>eta²</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Student Engagement</strong></td>
<td>105</td>
<td>pre</td>
<td>2.806</td>
<td>0.299</td>
<td>-3.893</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>109</td>
<td>post</td>
<td>2.949</td>
<td>0.235</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Inclusive Behaviour</strong></td>
<td>105</td>
<td>pre</td>
<td>3.129</td>
<td>0.382</td>
<td>-2.313</td>
<td>0.02</td>
<td>0.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>109</td>
<td>post</td>
<td>3.248</td>
<td>0.371</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Responsible Behaviour</strong></td>
<td>105</td>
<td>pre</td>
<td>2.819</td>
<td>0.353</td>
<td>-2.148</td>
<td>0.03</td>
<td>0.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>111</td>
<td>post</td>
<td>2.917</td>
<td>0.315</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Independent samples t-test
### Table 10. Teacher’s beliefs, practices and perceptions of school climate

#### 1. Teacher Practice

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Pre Loading</th>
<th>Post Loading</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>C47. Values need to be modelled by teachers and school staff</td>
<td>.73</td>
<td>.77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C48. Behaviour expected of students should be modelled by staff, e.g. being quiet at assemblies</td>
<td>.72</td>
<td>.79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C49. Students should be encouraged to think about the way they feel and why they feel that way</td>
<td>.66</td>
<td>.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C22. Using incidents from the playground or classroom help children to reflect on values</td>
<td>.63</td>
<td>.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C50. Children’s emotional and social development is as important as their intellectual development</td>
<td>.65</td>
<td>.76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C36. It is important to encourage students to reflect on the consequences of their behaviour</td>
<td>.62</td>
<td>.63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C32. Teaching values should be avoided because it is hard to find common values in the community [R]</td>
<td>.59</td>
<td>.61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C27. Effective teaching means connecting with children’s experiences and background</td>
<td>.59</td>
<td>.61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C20. It is important to provide opportunities for students to put values into practice</td>
<td>.54</td>
<td>.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C60. Values taught at this school are similar to my own values</td>
<td>.54</td>
<td>.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C31. Using problems students face in their daily lives is important for teaching values</td>
<td>.47</td>
<td>.58</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### 2. Beliefs about values education

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Pre Loading</th>
<th>Post Loading</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>C18. Teaching values makes a difference to student behaviour in class</td>
<td>.71</td>
<td>.76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C55. Values education should be left to families [R]</td>
<td>.63</td>
<td>.40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C51. Teaching values makes a difference to how well students achieve</td>
<td>.60</td>
<td>.74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C38. School discipline is unaffected by values education [R]</td>
<td>.58</td>
<td>.72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C41. Values education improves the climate of the school</td>
<td>.60</td>
<td>.80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C40. Teaching values is less important than other subjects [R]</td>
<td>.52</td>
<td>.63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C13. Teaching values has a positive influence on children at school</td>
<td>.53</td>
<td>.76</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### 3. Leadership and policy

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Pre Loading</th>
<th>Post Loading</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>C10. The principal shows leadership in the school’s approach to values education</td>
<td>.77</td>
<td>.77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C05. In this school expectations regarding student behaviour are clearly and regularly communicated to students</td>
<td>.68</td>
<td>.40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C42. The principal supports teachers in values education</td>
<td>.66</td>
<td>.62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C56. The school goals are based on clear values</td>
<td>.54</td>
<td>.46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C11. All school curriculum is planned with values in mind</td>
<td>.48</td>
<td>.60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C24. The behaviour management policy reflects the school’s values</td>
<td>.48</td>
<td>.47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C07. The core values of the school are known by the students</td>
<td>.47</td>
<td>.67</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix 3D – Teacher Surveys (cont.)

4. Relational Trust

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Pre Loading</th>
<th>Post Loading</th>
<th>α = .77</th>
<th>α = .77</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>C30. School is a place where I feel accepted</td>
<td>.69</td>
<td>.72</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C29. This school is a good place to be</td>
<td>.60</td>
<td>.77</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C17. Other members of staff value me</td>
<td>.59</td>
<td>.49</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C21. Parents support the school’s approach to teaching values</td>
<td>.57</td>
<td>.50</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C46. There is a good working relationship between the principal and staff in this school</td>
<td>.56</td>
<td>.37</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C37. Relationships between staff and parents are positive</td>
<td>.46</td>
<td>.77</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5. Professional Learning

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Pre Loading</th>
<th>Post Loading</th>
<th>α = .75</th>
<th>α = .77</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>C25. The staff has had adequate professional development in teaching values</td>
<td>.66</td>
<td>.74</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C57. The staff collaborate on values education</td>
<td>.58</td>
<td>.52</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C34. There has been helpful staff development specifically on teaching values in school</td>
<td>.51</td>
<td>.61</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C15. I feel adequately equipped to teach values</td>
<td>.51</td>
<td>.63</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note

α = Cronbach’s alpha coefficient (values greater than .7 indicate scale is reliable)
[R] – Denotes that scoring is reversed for this item

Table 11. 2006 Teacher survey responses compared with 2007 Teacher responses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scale</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>t-value</th>
<th>Sig.*</th>
<th>eta²</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teacher Practice</td>
<td>111</td>
<td>pre</td>
<td>3.588</td>
<td>.327</td>
<td>0.018</td>
<td>0.99</td>
<td>NS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>112</td>
<td>post</td>
<td>3.588</td>
<td>.346</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beliefs about Values Education</td>
<td>110</td>
<td>pre</td>
<td>3.214</td>
<td>.357</td>
<td>0.654</td>
<td>0.51</td>
<td>NS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>108</td>
<td>post</td>
<td>3.182</td>
<td>.364</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leadership and policy</td>
<td>110</td>
<td>pre</td>
<td>3.190</td>
<td>.372</td>
<td>0.194</td>
<td>0.85</td>
<td>NS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>108</td>
<td>post</td>
<td>3.181</td>
<td>.365</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relational Trust</td>
<td>110</td>
<td>pre</td>
<td>3.175</td>
<td>.317</td>
<td>-1.601</td>
<td>0.11</td>
<td>NS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>110</td>
<td>post</td>
<td>3.243</td>
<td>.314</td>
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<tr>
<td>Professional Learning</td>
<td>108</td>
<td>pre</td>
<td>2.926</td>
<td>.359</td>
<td>-0.945</td>
<td>0.35</td>
<td>NS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>110</td>
<td>post</td>
<td>2.972</td>
<td>.362</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Independent samples t-test
NS – Not Significant
### Appendix 3E – Parent Surveys

**Table 12. Parent perceptions of child’s behaviour and attitude to school**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1. Social Behaviour</th>
<th>Pre</th>
<th>Post</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Item: My Child…</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. makes friends with children who are different</td>
<td>α = .83</td>
<td>α = .83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. shares belongings</td>
<td>Loading</td>
<td>Loading</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. thinks about how others feel</td>
<td>.55</td>
<td>.55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. does kind things for others</td>
<td>.66</td>
<td>.66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. helps others when they need it</td>
<td>.77</td>
<td>.73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17. treats others the way he/she would like to be treated</td>
<td>.79</td>
<td>.73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18. cares about the environment</td>
<td>.67</td>
<td>.69</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2. Personal Responsibility</th>
<th>Pre</th>
<th>Post</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Item: My Child…</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. looks after his/her own things</td>
<td>α = .75</td>
<td>α = .60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. tries to do his/her best</td>
<td>.56</td>
<td>.37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. does his/her homework without prompting</td>
<td>.43</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. helps with jobs</td>
<td>.52</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. tells the truth</td>
<td>.37</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. blames others for his/her mistakes [R]</td>
<td>.62</td>
<td>.60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. breaks promises [R]</td>
<td>.66</td>
<td>.73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. controls his/her anger</td>
<td>.61</td>
<td>.71</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>3. Attitude to school</th>
<th>Pre</th>
<th>Post</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Item: My Child…</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. looks forward to going to school</td>
<td>α = .72</td>
<td>α = .70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19. finds learning at school fun</td>
<td>.80</td>
<td>.79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20. feels safe at school</td>
<td>.77</td>
<td>.80</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Note**
- α = Cronbach’s alpha coefficient (values greater than .7 indicate scale is reliable)
- [R] – denotes that scoring is reversed for this item

**Table 13. 2006 Parent survey responses compared with 2007 Parent responses**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scale</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>t-value</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
<th>eta²</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Child's Social</td>
<td>503</td>
<td>pre</td>
<td>3.085</td>
<td>.486</td>
<td>-1.828</td>
<td>0.07</td>
<td>NS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Behaviour</td>
<td>635</td>
<td>post</td>
<td>3.138</td>
<td>.475</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child's Attitude to</td>
<td>505</td>
<td>pre</td>
<td>3.267</td>
<td>.556</td>
<td>-1.923</td>
<td>0.06</td>
<td>NS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>school</td>
<td>640</td>
<td>post</td>
<td>3.329</td>
<td>.530</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Note**
- * Independent samples t-test
- NS – Not Significant
Table 14. Parent beliefs about behaviour and learning and perceptions of school climate

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Pre</th>
<th>Post</th>
<th>α</th>
<th>α</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Parent Beliefs</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Helping children to grow emotionally is as important as helping their minds to grow</td>
<td>.48</td>
<td>.40</td>
<td>.87</td>
<td>.87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. The way we see ourselves affects everything we do</td>
<td>.59</td>
<td>.64</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. It is important to teach children to care about the environment</td>
<td>.66</td>
<td>.66</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17. Children feel better about themselves when they do good things</td>
<td>.77</td>
<td>.75</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18. Schools and parents should teach children how to get along with each other</td>
<td>.77</td>
<td>.75</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19. The way we see ourselves affects how well we do in life</td>
<td>.75</td>
<td>.76</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20. Children behave and learn better if they feel good about themselves</td>
<td>.81</td>
<td>.81</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21. Parents need to talk to their children about values</td>
<td>.72</td>
<td>.74</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Perceptions of school climate</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. The school’s values are clear to me</td>
<td>.59</td>
<td>.58</td>
<td>.80</td>
<td>.80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. The principal is available to discuss parents’ concerns</td>
<td>.66</td>
<td>.66</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Parents have the opportunity to talk to teachers about how values are taught</td>
<td>.70</td>
<td>.72</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. The school welcomes parents</td>
<td>.68</td>
<td>.71</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. It is good that the school teaches values</td>
<td>.47</td>
<td>.36</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. I like to help at school when I can</td>
<td>.42</td>
<td>.44</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. The school’s values are the same as we have at home</td>
<td>.62</td>
<td>.52</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. My child has many friends at school</td>
<td>.47</td>
<td>.43</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22. The teachers care about the students</td>
<td>.57</td>
<td>.62</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Note α = Cronbach’s alpha coefficient (values greater than .7 indicate scale is reliable) [R] – denotes that scoring is reversed for this item

Table 15. 2006 Parent survey responses compared with 2007 Parent responses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scale</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>t-value</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
<th>eta²</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Beliefs about behaviour and learning</td>
<td>502</td>
<td>Pre</td>
<td>3.630</td>
<td>.375</td>
<td>0.289</td>
<td>0.77</td>
<td>NS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>630</td>
<td>Post</td>
<td>3.624</td>
<td>.376</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perceptions of school climate</td>
<td>482</td>
<td>Pre</td>
<td>3.323</td>
<td>.365</td>
<td>-1.405</td>
<td>0.16</td>
<td>NS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>615</td>
<td>Post</td>
<td>3.354</td>
<td>.351</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Independent samples t-test
NS – Not Significant
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factor</th>
<th>No. of Items</th>
<th>Mean Inter-Item Correlation</th>
<th>% of Variance</th>
<th>Range of Factor Loadings (Average)</th>
<th>Reliability α</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Pre</td>
<td>Post</td>
<td>Pre</td>
<td>Post</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Kindergarten</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Classroom Ambience</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>.28</td>
<td>.28</td>
<td>16.58</td>
<td>14.87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My Behaviour</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>.23</td>
<td>.24</td>
<td>13.81</td>
<td>13.47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Belonging</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>.23</td>
<td>.20</td>
<td>11.06</td>
<td>18.07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Year 1-2</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Classroom Ambience</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>.29</td>
<td>.32</td>
<td>15.14</td>
<td>13.72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My Behaviour</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>.27</td>
<td>.28</td>
<td>14.42</td>
<td>15.42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peer behaviour</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>.37</td>
<td>.35</td>
<td>13.30</td>
<td>14.61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Year 3-6</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Classroom Ambience</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>.36</td>
<td>.31</td>
<td>12.15</td>
<td>10.71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How I treat others</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>.41</td>
<td>.42</td>
<td>11.13</td>
<td>16.95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal responsibility</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>.27</td>
<td>.29</td>
<td>9.17</td>
<td>4.34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peer impact on me</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>.42</td>
<td>.43</td>
<td>7.62</td>
<td>7.24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peer impact on school</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>.31</td>
<td>.30</td>
<td>6.00</td>
<td>6.85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Teacher</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student engagement</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>.38</td>
<td>.27</td>
<td>22.74</td>
<td>18.40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inclusive behaviour</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>.31</td>
<td>.34</td>
<td>13.16</td>
<td>14.59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Responsible behaviour</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>.40</td>
<td>.39</td>
<td>11.41</td>
<td>10.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher practice</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>.39</td>
<td>.48</td>
<td>10.33</td>
<td>13.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher beliefs</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>.39</td>
<td>.42</td>
<td>8.86</td>
<td>12.71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leadership &amp; policy</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>.38</td>
<td>.37</td>
<td>8.01</td>
<td>9.66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relational trust</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>.36</td>
<td>.36</td>
<td>7.92</td>
<td>8.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional learning</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>.43</td>
<td>.45</td>
<td>7.14</td>
<td>11.71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Parent</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child’s social behaviour</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>.41</td>
<td>.41</td>
<td>18.09</td>
<td>34.34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child’s attitude to school</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>.46</td>
<td>.43</td>
<td>12.73</td>
<td>20.21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beliefs about learning</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>.47</td>
<td>.47</td>
<td>26.15</td>
<td>25.86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perceptions of school climate</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>.32</td>
<td>.32</td>
<td>21.18</td>
<td>21.49</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix 4: Group A Correlations among Scales

Correlations among scales for pre-post surveys - Group A

The tables included in Appendix 4 present the Pearson product-moment correlation coefficients obtained from the investigation of the correlations among the scales from both the pre- and post-surveys for Year 1-2, Year 3-6 and teachers, as well as the correlations between the pre- and post-measures of the same scales. It was not possible to calculate the correlations for the Kindergarten and parent scales because the samples were not matched.

### Table 17  Correlations among scales for pre-post Year 1-2 surveys

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Pre</th>
<th>Post</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>My beh</td>
<td>Peer beh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre</td>
<td>Class climate</td>
<td>.42**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>My behaviour</td>
<td>.16**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Peer behaviour</td>
<td>.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post</td>
<td>Class climate</td>
<td>.52**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>My behaviour</td>
<td>.16**</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. ** p < .01     * p < .05

### Table 18  Correlations among scales for pre-post Year 3-6 surveys

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Pre</th>
<th>Post</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>My beh</td>
<td>Peer beh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Tr Oth Per Imp Imp Cl Cl Oth Per Imp Imp</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class climate</td>
<td>.57**</td>
<td>.44**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How I treat others</td>
<td>.63**</td>
<td>.11**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pers. responsibility</td>
<td>.23**</td>
<td>.32**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peer impact on me</td>
<td>.43**</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peer impact - schl</td>
<td>.12**</td>
<td>.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class climate</td>
<td>.12*</td>
<td>.18**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How I treat others</td>
<td>.59**</td>
<td>.47**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pers. responsibility</td>
<td>.68**</td>
<td>.11**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peer impact on me</td>
<td>.22**</td>
<td>.29**</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. ** p < .01     * p < .05

### Table 19  Correlations among scales for pre-post teacher perceptions - class behaviour

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Pre</th>
<th>Post</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Incl. beh</td>
<td>Resp beh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre</td>
<td>Stud. engagement</td>
<td>.31**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Inclusive behav.</td>
<td>.21*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Responsible behav</td>
<td>.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post</td>
<td>Stud. engagement</td>
<td>.34**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Inclusive behav.</td>
<td>.21*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. ** p < .01     * p < .05
Table 19  Correlations among scales for pre-post teacher beliefs, practice & climate

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Pre</th>
<th></th>
<th>Post</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Tch prac</td>
<td>L/P</td>
<td>Rel trust</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher beliefs</td>
<td>.55**</td>
<td>.43**</td>
<td>.38**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher practice</td>
<td>.43**</td>
<td>.50**</td>
<td>.34**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leadership/policy</td>
<td>.48**</td>
<td>.52**</td>
<td>.53**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relational trust</td>
<td>.22</td>
<td>.41**</td>
<td>.35*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional learn.</td>
<td>.25</td>
<td>.30*</td>
<td>.41**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher beliefs</td>
<td>.61**</td>
<td>.60**</td>
<td>.51**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leadership/policy</td>
<td>.60**</td>
<td>.71**</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note.  ** p < .01  * p < .05
Appendix 5: Surveys for Group B Schools

Appendix 5A: Testing and Measuring the Impact of Values Education on Quality Teaching: Pre and Post-Implementation Survey

Name of School ………………………………………………………………………
Grade ………………………………………………………………………...

Initial Questionnaire for Teachers
This questionnaire is in two parts. Part 1 asks you to describe your approach to values education. The second part, on the reverse side of the sheet, asks you respond to a series of statements by circling one of the seven boxes beside each item. The questionnaire is intended to provide insight to your approach to values education and your perceptions about its impact in terms of quality teaching.

Section 1. Approach to Values Education

Did You complete the pre-implementation version of this survey? Circle the appropriate one please. Yes No

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>In my class values education:</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Slightly Agree</th>
<th>Slightly Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Undecided</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. is taught explicitly</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. occupies a major part of the curriculum</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. is taught every day</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Please describe below the DETAILS of your approach to values education including the amount of time you spend on it, the content and the teaching approach.

111
Section 2. Teacher Perceptions of the Impact of the Values Education Program on Quality Teaching

Please circle your response to each item below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>In this school teaching values has:</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Slightly Disagree</th>
<th>Slightly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Undecided</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. encouraged a more peaceful atmosphere of the classroom</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. deepened my understanding of how children learn</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. encouraged greater cooperation between staff</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. led to deeper levels of trust and caring in the classroom</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. improved students’ resilience</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. made me reflect on my personal values</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. made me more conscious of the values behind my actions</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. resulted in greater student engagement in other curriculum areas</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. had little effect on the way I teach [R]</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. changed the way that conflict is managed</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. made little difference to the way I respond to children in the school [R]</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. contributed to a greater cooperation between school and home</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. improved student’s social skills</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. helped the school to focus on providing the best environment possible for student improvement</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. resulted in a more conscious statement of values in school policies</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. encouraged me to try different ways of teaching</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17. led to discussing values in relation to other subject areas</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18. led to greater numbers of students realising their full academic potential</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19. led to students exercising greater academic diligence</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20. improved student behaviour in the playground</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Comments:
Appendix 5B: Student Engagement Pre and Post Implementation Survey

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School Name</th>
<th>Grade/Year</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Appendix 5B: Student Engagement Pre and Post Implementation Survey</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. I feel like a real part of this school.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. At school I feel comfortable sharing my thoughts with peers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. At school I feel comfortable sharing my opinions with peers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. At school I feel comfortable sharing my feelings with peers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. I feel safe at school.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. People at this school notice when I am good at something.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. I can be myself at this school.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. The Principal treats students fairly at this school.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. I trust that the Principal would listen openly to me.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. I can succeed in this school.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. My school is preparing me well for the future.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. At this school we do things in class that interest me.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. What I learn at this school is relevant to my future.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. I feel confident that teachers will support me with my learning.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. My teachers listen to me when I have a problem.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17. My teachers give me the help I need with my schoolwork.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18. I complete my homework.</td>
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<tr>
<td>19. I apply myself to learning in the classroom.</td>
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<tr>
<td>20. I do my best to contribute to group projects</td>
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<tr>
<td>21. I help other students with their learning.</td>
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Comments:

Addendum to Final Report
for

AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT
Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations

Project to Test and Measure the Impact of Values Education on Student Effects and School Ambience

ASSOCIATED CASE STUDY REPORTS

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Case Study reports: Group B schools

This addendum contains the full case study reports for the groups of schools referred to as ‘Group B Schools’ in the DEEWR Report, Project to Test and Measure the Impact of Values Education on Student Effects and School Ambience. In all, eleven case studies were undertaken. They include, in alphabetical order, together with a list of the researchers who conducted them:

- Airds High School, NSW (Dr Leonie Arthur, University of Western Sydney);
- Boddington High School, WA (Emeritus Professor Brian V. Hill Murdoch University, WA and Mr Gary Butcher BA Director, Operation Connect Network, Inc);
- Lance Holt School, WA (Dr Laura Stocker, Murdoch University and Ms Kathryn Netherwood, Coordinator of the Lance Holt School);
- Lanyon High School, ACT (Dr Thomas Nielsen, University of Canberra);
- Preston South Primary School, Vic (Conjoint Professor Ron Toomey, The University of Newcastle);
- Rasmussen Primary School, Qld (Dr Angela Hill and Dr Lai Kuan Lim, James Cook University of North Queensland);
- St Charles Borromeo Primary School, Vic (Conjoint Professor Ron Toomey, The University of Newcastle with Ms Sue Cahill);
- Seaford 6 -12 School, SA (Emeritus Professor Robert Crotty, University of SA with Ms Marion McKenzie);
- Toowoomba High School, Qld (Dr Marian Lewis, University of Southern Queensland);
- Townsville Central Primary School, Qld (Dr Angela Hill and Dr Lai Kuan Lim, James Cook University of North Queensland);
- Townsville High School, Qld (Dr Angela Hill and Dr Lai Kuan Lim, James Cook University of North Queensland).

As reported in the DEEWR Report above, the case studies complemented the quantitative component of the full study. They were designed to provide data that were more subjective and grounded in the perceptions of those functioning in sites committed to explicit values education. As with all case study research, these eleven case studies cannot provide generalised findings. Each case study is a separate and localised account of school approaches to values education and its effect upon academic diligence, school ambience, student teacher relationships, student and teacher wellbeing, as well as parental and family participation. They should be read in conjunction with the full DEEWR Report, Project to Test and Measure the Impact of Values Education on Student Effects and School Ambience (DEEWR, 2009).

Case Study 1: Airds High School, New South Wales

Introduction

Airds High School is situated in the south-west of Sydney in the Campbelltown Local Government Area (LGA). The Campbelltown LGA is a growth area of Sydney with many young families. According to 2006 census data 21.7% of the Campbelltown...
population is aged 5-17 compared to 17.5% in NSW. While the numbers of children attending secondary schooling are above state average the numbers attending tertiary education are below average, indicating that there is work to be done in school retention and career pathways (Local Government Snapshot, Campbelltown, 2006).

Campbelltown has mixed demographics with a range of incomes and employment profiles. The Airds region has a high percentage of low-income households as well as a high proportion of public housing renters (Campbelltown City Council: Community Atlas). There are also a large number of single parent families in the area (22.6%). Airds is a particularly disadvantaged area with high unemployment rates (33% in 2006), and 40% of families earning less that $200 a week (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2006). There is often high mobility within the area combined with high levels of violence, drug and alcohol problems.

There is a higher than average percentage of Indigenous and Islander families in the area. 2006 Census data indicates that 2.7% of the population of Campbelltown is Indigenous compared to 2.1% of the population in NSW (Local Government Snapshot, Campbelltown, 2006). In the Airds area a significant number of families are Indigenous (12%) and Islander (17%). At Briar Rd Primary School, a major feeder school for Airds High School, 25% of students are Indigenous and 33% from diverse cultures.

Many of the families speak languages other than English, with 18.3% of the Campbelltown population speaking a language other than English compared to the NSW average of 16.8%. Across the Airds region there are issues with literacy and numeracy proficiency. Results for Airds High School students from ELLA and SNAP over a number of years indicate large numbers of students with high levels of need in the areas of literacy and numeracy.

Airds High School has been involved in numerous projects since the early 2000s aimed at addressing both social and academic aspects of learning. It has participated in a number of projects aimed at ‘at-risk’ boys where the focus was on quality teaching, enhanced relationships and improved learning (Munns et al, 2006).

The Airds Cluster, including Airds High School, has been involved in both Stage 1 and Stage 2 of the Values Project. Stage 2: My Happiness… My Voice, focused on acknowledging the diversity of the Airds region and including the many voices of the local community in the schools. The project thus emphasised the values of respect and inclusion. The aim was to strengthen respect between teachers and families, teachers and students and amongst students and for all students and families to feel a sense of belonging in the cluster schools.

The impetus for Stage 2 of the values project was that staff believed that many students, families and community members did not feel a sense of engagement with the school environment. They felt that many students did not feel that ‘school is a place for me’ – a key aspect of engagement according to Munns et al (2006). The intention of Stage 2 was to build student engagement in learning and to build relationships with families. In particular it aimed to improve the attendance, engagement and achievement of marginalised students. While the project focused on all students and their families there was a particular emphasis on Indigenous and
Islander students and families as these are highly represented in the cluster and are the most marginalised groups.

The focus on the values of inclusion and respect in Stage 2 came from the voices of families. When families were surveyed about the values they thought were important they overwhelmingly identified respect and inclusion at the top of their list.

The project for Stage 2 was very broad and multifaceted, addressing the following areas:

1. School policy development
2. Teaching and learning
3. Values modelling
4. Community partnerships
5. Student empowerment/resilience

The project had many successes at a cluster and school level. The successes at Airds High School included a stronger focus on values education across the school, a clearer articulation of each school’s ethos, the incorporation of values into school policies and key learning areas, stronger relationships between the school and families and communities and stronger student responsibility and resilience.

**Approach to Values Education**

*Whole school approach*

Schools are multi-layered and complex. There are no ‘quick fixes’ or easy answers to making improvements. Change takes time and a whole school commitment to a shared vision. Teachers at Airds High School believed that it is difficult to change the culture of a school. They were clear that “you can’t do it overnight”. As one teacher put it, “you can’t expect significant outcomes for 3-5 years”.

For values education to be effective there needs to be a whole school approach where values are integrated across all aspects of the school culture. Research suggests that whole-school staff professional development, along with supportive leadership, mentoring and opportunities for reflective learning, combine to provide the supportive scaffold that extends and deepens teachers’ professional knowledge and leads to effective educational change (Munns et al, 2006).

At Airds, values education started with the junior school and has now been extended to all students. The school as a whole has selected to focus on the values of respect and inclusion. This commitment is supported by a Values Education Strategic Planning Committee within the school, which has taken responsibility for the development of an action plan. Professional development on values education was conducted with the all of the school staff and also at a cluster level. Workshops on values education have also been provided for students. The integration of values at a whole school level supports staff to make the links to respect and inclusion across the curriculum.

Values education is strengthened by also being integrated with other programs in the school such as PBIS and Circle of Friends. Staff felt that values education was “more successful when it was running parallel to programs such as PBIS”. Events such as the Flag Ceremony and Harmony Day reinforce the values of respect and inclusion.
Classroom rules are also aligned to values. In this way many programs are working together towards the same end.

The school is also focusing on respect and inclusion through their work with local Indigenous and Islander communities. Forums have been held with Indigenous and Pacific Islander families and with students from these communities to discuss strategies to enhance student engagement. The school also aims to demonstrate respect and inclusion through greater visibility of diverse cultures within the school. This is evident in aspects such as the newly developed bush tucker garden, displays of Aboriginal art work, the Flag Ceremony, and Aboriginal and Islander dance performances.

Explicit teaching of values
At Airds High School values are implemented throughout the day and are taught explicitly. When they were surveyed, most teachers said that they saw values as a major part of the curriculum and something that they taught everyday. Teachers who were involved in focus groups believed, as one teacher put it, “it’s inherent that we as teachers promote values of respect etc”. In English, for example, where students are encouraged to examine and deconstruct the values in a range of texts and to debate a range of issues related to values, values were seen as an integral part of the curriculum. English teachers saw values as relating strongly to the themes, characters, and motives studied in English.

Explicit discussion of values occurs across all years in the school. Teachers do not assume that students understand what values such as respect and integrity mean or understand the impact their noise or intrusions have on other students. Since the introduction of values education, teachers continually discuss values with students and talk about what terms like responsibility mean in practice. Teachers agreed it was essential to stop students and point out when their behaviours disrupt others and to make expectations of students explicit. If there is any disruptive behaviour in the class teachers engage students in discussions about values. One teacher said whenever there is an incident in the class between the students

*I actually stop the lesson and remind them (about values)
so I say ‘Is that showing respect?’. I always use the words.*

In many cases the students decide what behaviours they want to target. One Year 8 class, for example, decided to focus on respect and responsibility. In other classes teachers introduced particular values. In Year 11, for example, one teacher raised the issue of behaving with integrity. She commented that the word integrity was not a word that was familiar to the students at first. Her strategies for supporting students’ understanding of this concept included putting the word up on the board, looking it up in the dictionary, and talking about what it meant in terms of behaviour in and out of the classroom.

Many of the teachers involved in focus group discussions highlighted the importance of open dialogue, breaking down values and discussing these with students. Teachers believed that it was essential to talk to students about values, what’s important and how to make positive choices. As one of the teachers commented:
It comes back to the explicit teaching. Sometimes we use these words (such as integrity) but it’s not part of their vocabulary. It’s not something they can internalise. They don’t know what you are talking about. When you stop and talk about it of course they want to have integrity when they know what it is.

Explicit teaching was viewed as particularly important in this school as it is situated in an area with high levels of poverty and disadvantage. Teachers felt that students did not always have the experiences at home that supported the development of values.

Some of our kids don’t have the idea about what is the right thing to do.

Some of them have nothing to hook this (values) on to – not at home or at church or the community.

The Principal believed that explicit teaching of social skills, within the context of values education, was essential for this school. She made comments such as

We need to explicitly teach our kids what respect looks like, what it is.

We need to explicitly show them how we can be a good ambassador (for the school and local community).

One of the criteria for effective teaching used by the principal was that teachers engage in open dialogue with students about values. Less effective teachers were identified as ones who just see values education as students doing workshops focused on values and who “don’t take it on board in their own classes” (Principal). Teachers also emphasised the role of dialogue in supporting students to understand and internalise values, so that they were able to make wise choices without relying on teachers to constantly remind them.

They can talk the talk but to get them to walk the walk consistently involves some internalisation of these notions that we are talking about and it is not easy to get them there because they are so used to going yeah yeah. (Teacher)

Slowly overtime, just by keeping the dialogue going, being explicit, and having these expectations, keying them into that on a personal level... (changes occur). (Teacher)

High expectations
Many teachers at Airds have challenged the idea that “this is only Airds” and that “you can’t expect much” from students in low socio-economic areas. Instead, these teachers have high but realistic expectations of students. The Principal’s view was that the effective teachers say
These are my expectations in class. I respect you. You respect me. So there is that dialogue going on.

Good teachers have conversations with kids – for example about graffiti.

These views are consistent with quality teaching and productive pedagogies. Quality learning environments include high expectations that students will achieve along with clear explanations for students about what is required in terms of the quality of work. Quality teaching environments also encourage students’ self-regulation of their own behaviours and student directed learning (NSW DET, 2003). Teachers at Airds have high expectations and give clear explanations as to what is required. They are equally explicit about the behaviour that is expected in class and encourage students to take responsibility for their own learning and their behaviour.

In focus group discussions teachers talked about the importance of respect for ourselves and each other. They believed that teachers need to respect students and students need to respect teachers and each other. One teacher commented

*It starts with self-respect. If you respect yourself you respect others. I say to the students ‘I always respect myself and I respect you.’*

But self-respect doesn’t come easily to some of the students. They are often not respected, and their families are not respected, in their communities. Students believed that both the suburb and the school have a bad name and that the media only reports negative stories. As one teacher noted

*We can’t undo what happens outside school but we can change what happens at school.*

**Changes in Teachers**

The principal and teachers involved in focus groups believed that the good teachers taught values all the time. One teacher, who was highly engaged in the values project, commented

*I am so seeped in values I think my classes are about values more than anything else.*

Other teachers believed that, since they had been involved in the values project, values education was a key component of their teaching, stating

*It is part of your consciousness but it has become more integrated.*

*I have values in my head.*

*I think it (values) is locked in (now).*
Many teachers were integrating values education into their classes and were now much more explicit in their teaching of values. One teacher, for example, stated:

Before you would just say “You’re being rude”, and move on. Now I would explain why it is rude.

Another teacher said:

A lot of times we used words that were not part of their (students’) vocabulary. Now there is explicit dialoguing and breaking it down in the classroom.

Teachers had different levels of awareness as to what was happening in the values project. Teachers who were committed to values education did not believe that it was implemented consciously at a whole school level but did believe that there had been changes in the respect for diverse cultures and the inclusion of diversity. Teachers commented:

I think the inclusion of Aboriginal and Islanders yes – people are doing that but they don’t think of it as values.

We are more aware of our marginalised students and how to make more integrated classrooms.

The values project resulted in greater staff awareness of the issues faced by many Indigenous and Islander students and their families. Teachers are more knowledgeable now about the students, families and communities they are working with and are more respectful of differences. The Principal commented that staff are “seeing students differently, and are developing different relationships with students and families”. She believed that the project brought to the fore the social disadvantages faced by many Aboriginal and Islander students and highlighted the importance of focusing on positive behaviours, inclusion and respect. Many staff are moving away from a deficit view of Indigenous and Islander families, where they are seen as a problem, to more of a strength-based view focused on ‘funds of knowledge’ (Moll et al, 1992) and potentials. Teachers are now generally more understanding of Indigenous and Islander students’ perspectives and issues and are working on ways to effectively assist these students. This includes student support groups, inclusion of Pacific Island and Indigenous culture across the curriculum, group rather than individual assignments, and the development of the Bush Tucker garden.

One of the challenges was engaging all the staff in the values education project so that there was a whole school approach. As one staff member stated, it is essential to have “a critical mass of people who understand school culture and adhere to it”. The reality was that while many teachers were integrating values education into their classes, not all of the teachers embraced values education. Some felt that values was another thing that they had to do in an already over-crowded curriculum, rather than seeing it as something that could be easily integrated into daily practice. A few teachers were resistant to the introduction of a more explicit focus on values education. These teachers did not believe that values education resulted in greater student engagement and did not believe that the project encouraged them to reflect on their own values.
Many teachers worked collaboratively to build on what was happening in each others’ classes. One teacher, for example, participated in the student values education workshops implemented by another teacher, and then used the list of values that the students came up with in her own classes. Another teacher was not able to participate in the workshops for students, but requested an outline of the workshops so that she was able to incorporate the ideas into her classes.

While many teachers were implementing explicit teaching of values they found it difficult to find time to reflect on and evaluate how effectively it was working. There needs to be time allocated within curriculum planning meetings and staff meetings for evaluation and future planning of values education initiatives. As one teacher explained

\[
\text{We need to have time as a staff to cement values. We are all committed to values ed and the results that we can get out of values ed but maybe we need more time and more structure.}
\]

The values project highlighted the importance of team building and strong leadership from executive to build a school culture that is inclusive of values education. The values project helped to build stronger collegiality and greater cooperation amongst staff.

**Positive changes in students**

Both teachers and the principal saw many positive changes in students’ behaviour since the implementation of the values project. Students are now seen to be taking more responsibility for their own learning and recognising the importance of respecting others’ right to learn. These changes suggest that staff and students are working collaboratively to provide a quality learning environment.

One teacher commented that now that values are talked about in a more practical way students “really get to own behaviours”. In class discussions now “students are encouraging each other to be focused” (teacher). Students are taking turns now in class and are listening to each other.

\[
\text{I tell students ‘Don’t start until you feel everyone is quiet and listening to you’. And they do – they just sit and wait and then start. (Teacher)}
\]

\[
\text{I think we are doing a very good job of capturing them (the kids on the periphery) in terms of their engagement in the PBIS, what their views of good behaviour are, so we’ll have those conversations and when they have stepped over the line they will be able to recognise it. (Principal)}
\]

Explicit teaching of values has resulted in students being better able to articulate how they would like to see their classes functioning. Teachers commented
When they communicate with each other they’ve got the dialogue, they’ve got the language that they need to use.

Before – they knew what was the right thing to do, but they really didn’t talk about it with each other. They didn’t take responsibility for each other’s actions.

Now students are able to engage in dialogue about values. In focus group discussions students were able to clearly articulate the values that were important to them. These included respect, particularly respect for cultural difference, the right to learn, the right to be safe, and the right to speak your mind. Students emphasised the importance of caring about others and showing compassion. They talked about “looking after” younger students and “the weak kids – the ones who don’t have big groups of friends, the ones who are different”. The stressed the need to help other students feel that they belong and that they are safe at school and to speak up whenever they witnessed bullying.

In Year 11 film, for example, students are “getting the hang of identity and discussing values”. According to a Year 11 teacher, students are able to “apply what they are learning to different contexts”. The students are realising that all of their behaviours have an impact in the broader community as well as at school. The school now is receiving positive feedback from the community about students’ behaviour, for example when they are out of the school on an excursion.

One of the big achievements of the values education project at Airds has been in the greater sense of responsibility taken by the students. Some senior students, for example, have volunteered to act as role models and mentors for junior students, reminding them about values. In focus group discussions some of the students talked about taking on leadership roles in the school and community, for example mentoring other students, taking on roles on school committees, being positive role models for other students, speaking up when students are being bullied, showing empathy for students with no confidence and students who are scared, and looking at ways to try to include marginalised students.

While there were many positive changes teachers believed that students at this school were dealing with so many issues at home that it was difficult for them to behave positively at school all of the time. One teacher commented that

*The level of tolerance the kids have to have for the level of baggage that everyone in the classroom brings is so high.*

While it was believed that students knew the right thing to do often students “just need to offload”. It was challenging to get students to always “walk the walk, to internalise” (values). Teachers believed it was important to start with the younger students and to have a whole school approach. They also believed that for some students, the ones they called the hard core students, “it needs something powerful for our kids to get the message….for them to cue into this stuff”.

Another positive outcome has been students’ strengthened sense of cultural identity. The students who participated in focus groups came from a range of cultural backgrounds. Some were born overseas and some in Australia. Nevertheless, they all saw themselves as Australian. Students talked about their culture and their multiple
identities across school, home, church and community. Students stated that it was important to get to know people rather than making judgements based on the way they looked or dressed. An Islamic student who participated in focus groups stated that she did not feel that everyone in the school respected her right to wear the hijab and shared examples of when she had experienced racism both at school and in the community. She was confident in her identity and able to stand up to racist comments. Students voiced the opinion that it was essential that everyone is aware of diverse cultures and beliefs, that acceptance and inclusion are part of a democratic society.

Changes in relationships with families and community
The principal and staff identified relationships with families and the local community as “one of the greatest challenges” for them. The focus on values education, in particular the emphasis on respect and inclusion, has resulted in a stronger sense of community and shared understandings between the school and families.

It is worth noting that the focus on inclusion and respect came from the families. When families were surveyed about the values that they thought were most important they “overwhelmingly put respect and inclusion at the top” (teacher). These were the most important things that they wanted for their child.

The staff agree that there have been many positive improvements in school-family-community relationships, but that there is still a long way to go. One of the key contributing factors to raising the academic achievements of students, particularly Indigenous and minority students, is family participation (Lingard et al, 2002). A report on a Federally funded intervention program for schools serving Indigenous communities (DETYA, 2000) also identified parent and community involvement and respect and awareness for individual learners and Indigenous culture as key components of effective teaching. Quality Teaching (NSW DET, 2003) also highlights the significance of a culturally responsive, inclusive curriculum that connects to students’ out of school experiences.

At Airds, some parents are “really communicating with the school and are really engaged in their children’s learning” (Principal). With other families, while there have been many attempts to build partnerships, engagement is still not happening. Many of the families face countless challenges in their daily lives, including unemployment and racism. Often they have had “negative experiences with schools themselves and …negative experiences with government bureaucracies and departments” (teacher). However, they all want the best for their children.

Family and community involvement in the school is viewed by the teachers as very important in building positive relationships and positive dispositions towards learning. The school encourages families to participate by providing a range of opportunities and by individually targeting different families for different events. Phone calls to families, to personally invite them to events or to provide positive feedback about their child, were seen as successful strategies in building relationships.

While many teachers believe that there is still a long way to go, there is greater cooperation between families and the school now and more families are participating in school events. These include cultural events such as Harmony Day, as well as informal social occasions and sporting and academic events. Opportunities for
families to see their children perform were viewed by staff as important, along with informal events such as morning teas where there are opportunities for unstructured interactions. Cultural events such as Harmony Day and food festivals were viewed as key ways of building a strong cultural identity for Indigenous and Pacific Islander students. The families are proud of their children and their culture and love to see their children perform at these types of events. Staff felt that many parents found formal academic events intimidating and that there was a need for more informal events such as barbeques and morning teas and a space at the school for families to meet where they felt comfortable.

The principal has noticed that there is now a stronger sense of coherence in the school community compared to before the Values Education project. She commented that now the school community is working together towards shared values, understandings and expectations. The school values are clear and explicit and this has supported greater consistency between home and school and a greater sense of trust. There is also a greater sense of pride in the school now, both amongst students and amongst community members.

**Changes in classroom ambience**

Students and teachers have developed stronger collegial relationships. Small things like greeting each other at the door of the classroom have helped to create a positive atmosphere. Students are also encouraged to use peer pressure to create a positive learning environment. Teachers encourage students to take responsibility for the learning environment—“you choose as a class how each period is going to be”.

Teachers commented that there had been noticeable changes in classroom ambience. Values education has encouraged a more peaceful atmosphere in classrooms. However, as one teacher noted, “this is the case as long as the dialogue is maintained”. This comment highlights the significance of talking with students “about the values that allow them to feel comfortable in the classroom”.

Students were generally observed by teachers to be more engaged in learning and working more effectively since the implementation of the values project. Teachers of Year 8, for example, commented that they were working more effectively now in small groups. It was noted that they had a better understanding of the concept of group work, respectful interactions and working together towards a shared goal.

Many teachers highlighted the importance of having a respectful and inclusive classroom that supported all students learning within and beyond the classroom. They commented that the values focused on in the classroom “are values for being a member of the community” and “make you a productive member of society”.

Values education supports the development of citizenship and democratic participation in communities. Democracy, as defined by Giroux, is grounded in the notion of the citizen as an active and critical agent upholding principles of “sociality and community” (1989, 34). The inclusion of students’ voice and open dialogue about issues supports students’ understanding of their role as citizens both within and beyond the school.

**Differences in academic achievement**
There have been significant improvements in academic achievement at Airds High School over the period of the values project. It is not clear to what extent the focus on values has contributed to these changes. Values education is one of many programs working together at the school to improve social, literacy and numeracy outcomes. Across the school there is a heavy focus on social aspects of learning and reinforcement of positive behaviours. The school has a strong commitment to quality teaching and believes that “the academic and social welfare go together”.

There has been significant growth in literacy and numeracy at Airds High School over the last two years and students have substantially increased their communicative competence. There have been high levels of improvements across all levels of literacy in the school in 2006 and 2007. These improvements were well above state averages. All students, boys as well as girls, and students from Indigenous and LBOTE backgrounds all showed marked improvements. The ELLA results indicate that there are greater numbers of students proficient now – with 52% of Year 7 in 2007 proficient compared to 45% in 2006. There has been a more substantial improvement for Year 8, with 19% more students in the proficient band in 2007 compared to same cohort the previous year. In addition, 11% more students are now in the highest band. Only 1 student in Year 7 mainstream was in the low band for literacy. This compares favourably to other schools, where there are 13 students in the low band in like schools, 4 in the State and 5 in the region. Year 8 mainstream students had an average growth of 3.9 in literacy in 2006 and 3.6 in 2007. This is trending up from 1.7 in 2004 and 2.3 in 2005 compared to a state average of 2.2. Girls had a growth of 4.6, boys 2.9, and ATSI students 3.

**Engagement**

Quality teaching and productive pedagogical relationships play a crucial role in bringing about positive cognitive, affective and behavioural outcomes for students. Research indicates that effective classrooms are ones where students have some influence over knowledge acquisition and production and where their opinions are valued (Lingard et al, 2002). Students are more likely to be engaged learners when they are encouraged to regulate their own learning, they have a sense of ownership and control and take responsibility for making decisions about their learning (Munns et al, 2006). Effective teachers entrust and enable students to progress in their learning with a sense of autonomy and control which in turn builds increasing competence. Respectful relationships are a key element of quality teaching. When students and teachers treat each other with respect learning is likely to be enhanced (NSW DET, 2003). Engagement is also more likely to occur when teachers are knowledgeable about the students, families and communities they are working with, are respectful of differences and include diverse perspectives and students' family and community experiences in the curriculum (NSW DET, 2003).

Student-teacher relationships at Airds predominantly demonstrate respect and understanding. Teachers respect students and expect respect from students. Along with this respect goes negotiation and cooperation in classrooms and as a result there are more opportunities for teachers and students to share power and control and for students to have a voice. In focus group discussions students emphasised that their learning was dependent on respectful teacher-student relationships. Staff at Airds also emphasised the key role of student-teacher relationships in engaged learning. Many students at Airds are actively engaged in learning as the result of positive, respectful
relationships between staff and students and amongst students, where there are opportunities for the exchange of ideas.

While it would not be accurate to state that all students at Airds are engaged all of the time, the school is moving towards greater levels of student engagement. Students are beginning to internalise their own values rather than just following the rules, and are more likely to actively participate in decision-making. Students are beginning to see themselves as valued members of the school community and are beginning to see that school is relevant to their lives. They are beginning to have a voice. At the same time, the social and economic issues facing many of the students, families and the local community remain, making it difficult for students to maintain their focus in the classroom all of the time.

One of the key aspects of Stage 2 of the Values Project was empowering students to determine for themselves what is right or wrong and to act responsibly. The students now generally have a greater sense of responsibility and ownership within their classrooms and within the school. The emphasis on values has encouraged students to talk about themselves and their feelings, issues and challenges in meaningful ways. One teacher commented that now “kids are talking in a deep way about what is important to them”. Values education has given students a voice. As the Principal noted:

*Traditionally – kids in this area are powerless, with no control over their destinies. This (values education) gives them a voice now.*

**Case Study 2: Boddington High School, Western Australia**

**Context**
The School is situated in a rural town currently subject to population inflow because of the re-opening of a gold mine in the vicinity. It has over 300 students from years 1-12. Some concern was developing two years ago that more needed to be done to improve general behaviour and civic responsibility in the light of the population inflow. The School worked closely with community agencies, including the shire council and the police force, to research possible programs which might help the School to contribute to this objective.

In the event, the school obtained part-funding from the National Values Education Project for a school/community forum to discuss the matter. As a result, a values program called *Choose Respect*, formulated by a chaplain in a Perth city high school, was adopted – not only by the school but by the general community.

*Choose Respect* is an anti-bullying program designed to change the culture of schools and their communities in favour of actively practising the value of respect. It is introduced to schools on invitation by a workshop that explains its intentions. Subsequently, conducted workshops train school personnel in the *Choose Respect* strategies. A *Choose Respect* coordinator is then appointed to oversee the management of the program.

The present evaluation study came at a time when this program had been in operation for just under two years.
Evaluation Methodology
A “mixed method” approach to the evaluation was used. In this case, the mixed method involved a number of site visits by the investigators. It also involved collecting pre and post implementation data between early 2007 and late 2008 using questionnaires from staff about their perceptions of the impact of the values education program on patterns of student academic diligence, school coherence, classroom ambience, student teacher relationships, student wellbeing, teacher wellbeing and parental participation. (See Appendix 1). Once the data from the surveys had been collated, they then became the subject of a focus group with staff to further probe the responses. Finally, there was an interview with the principal.

Teacher Survey
In early 2007, 15 staff completed the pre-implementation survey. In late 2008, the post-implementation version was administered. The data from the survey about the emphasis given to values education are reported below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Emphasis on Values Education Pre-implementation data</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>In my class values education:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Disagree Disagree Slightly Disagree Slightly Agree Agree Strongly Agree Undecided</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. is taught explicitly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 3 2 4 3 0 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. occupies a major part of the curriculum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 4 2 3 3 0 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. is taught every day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 5 2 2 2 1 0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Emphasis on Values Education Post-implementation data</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>In my class values education:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Disagree Disagree Slightly Disagree Slightly Agree Agree Strongly Agree Undecided</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. is taught explicitly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 1 0 1 7 4 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. occupies a major part of the curriculum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 1 1 3 6 2 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. is taught every day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 1 2 1 3 6 0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Emphasis on Values Education Pre-test Post Test Comparison</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>In my class values education:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Disagree Disagree Slightly Disagree Slightly Agree Agree Strongly Agree Undecided</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre Post Diff Pre Post Diff Pre Post Diff Pre Post Diff Pre Post Diff Pre Post Diff Pre Post Diff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. is taught explicitly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 2 -1 3 1 -2 2 0 -2 4 1 -3 3 7 +4 0 4 +4 0 0 0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
An Overview of the Data on the emphasis given to values education

A depictograph is a way of providing a synoptic overview of the data gathered from the surveys. The data related to the emphasis given to values education are set out on the following depictograph.

Exhibit 1: Boddington Summary Depictograph re emphasis on values education

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Emphasis on Values Education</th>
<th>2007</th>
<th>2008</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Explicit teaching</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>AAA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Major part of curriculum</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>AAA</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Key:** 0% - 50% say agree or strongly agree = A 51% - 70% = AA 71% 90% AAA - 91%- 100% = AAAA

**Comments by Teachers**

The surveys also made provision for teachers to make comments about their responses. These are reported below.

**Teacher C:**

Pre: *In my High School classes I do not teach values explicitly. There is no specified content. On occasions when the need arises ie. situation of conflict, values are explicitly discussed. Eg. Care of equipment in the Science Lab - not taking other students equipment without permission - only one person speaking at a time*

Post: *My approach to teaching values has not really changed. I have the Choose Respect Posters on the wall and sometimes remind students of one or two points (mainly just after the initial briefings). I still do not teach it explicitly - it doesn't occupy a major part of the curriculum in my class. However some values are dealt with as the need arises eg. conflict, disagreements, using equipment safely and treating it with care. It has had a greater focus in other school areas eg school assemblies.*

**Teacher D:**

Pre: *Tended to be more implicit, in more everyday teaching and as situations arose.*

Post: *More explicit (crossed out) implicit, especially as situations arise or relevant to the theme we are working on or things happening in the community.*

**Teacher H:**
Pre: I feel although values are important, values are something gained through life experience. Children have attitudes but their values are still forming.

Post: Values are only mentioned in my teaching. However children's attitudes are changing.

Teacher I:
Pre: In sport lessons you teach, teamwork, sportsmanship which forms a part of values education - in between exercises, games you highlight what was good / bad in the activity regarding values education.
Post: Use specific examples relating to choosing respect when talking to students. "Yes, you chose respect in that situation, well done" or "what did you do wrong there? How is that not choosing respect? What could you have done differently?"

Teacher J:
Pre: I spend very little time teaching values education. I promote it and ensure children are treating each other with respect but do not teach it specifically.
Post: I spend very little time teaching values education. I ensure children are treating each other with respect but do not teach it specifically.

Teacher K:
Pre: Formally taught through Health Education (1 hr / week) but informally taught every day through rules, manners, respect, sharing, cooperating, environmental.
Post: Formal health lesson 1 hr / week
Virtues Program 1/2 hr - 1 hr / week
Choose Respect focus 1/2 / week plus in assemblies every week
Everyday through rules, environmental / visual, manners, social etiquette.

Teacher L:
Pre: Taught incidentally - ad hoc
Post: I had two days as relief Deputy Principal (last term). In dealing with a dispute between two students - not knowing the background of the incident (or what the DP had set in place) I used the Choose Respect policy to get the students to apologise to each other (didn't think initially this was a possibility) When we got to the "Apologise when you do not ...." both students expelled the air, and smiled !!! They later apologised sincerely. This is a terrific "Umbrella" for ALL of us the work with.

Teacher M:
Post: Weekly focus at school assembly
- Links to school priorities such as drug ed etc
- Choose Respect Idol with students organising actions to Choose Respect song.
- Sing Choose Respect song at assembly
- Use language in parent and student counselling
- Discussions at fortnightly Primary Meetings re: strategies implemented.

Teacher N:
Post: *Use the "Choose Respect" programme in my classroom. Poster displayed and referred to. Each poster has been covered in targeted lessons. Also used "Friends" program (developed for developing resiliency in 8-10 yr olds and preventing anxiety) and "Anger Management" program (responding to student needs).*

**Teacher Survey Data Regarding the Impact of Values Education.**

Pre-implementation Survey data

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>In this school teaching values has</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Slightly Disagree</th>
<th>Slightly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Undecided</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. encouraged a more peaceful atmosphere of the classroom</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. deepened my understanding of how children learn</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. encouraged greater cooperation between staff</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. led to deeper levels of trust and caring in the classroom</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. improved student's resilience</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
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<td>6. made me reflect on my personal values</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. made me more conscious of the values behind my actions</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. resulted in greater student engagement in other curriculum areas</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
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<td>0</td>
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<tr>
<td>9. had little effect on the way I teach (R)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. changed the way conflict is managed</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
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<tr>
<td>11. made little difference to the way I respond to children in the school (R)</td>
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<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. contributed to a greater cooperation between school and home</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. improved students social skills</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In this school teaching values has | Strongly Disagree | Disagree | Slightly Disagree | Slightly Agree | Agree | Strongly Agree | Undecided |
--- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
14. helped the school focus on providing the best environment possible for student improvement | 1 | 1 | 3 | 5 | 3 | 1 | 1 |
15. resulted in a more conscious statement of values in school policies | 1 | 3 | 2 | 7 | 0 | 1 | 1 |
16. encouraged me to try different ways of teaching | 3 | 0 | 5 | 5 | 2 | 0 | 0 |
17. led to discussing values in relation to other subject areas | 2 | 1 | 4 | 5 | 2 | 0 | 1 |
18. led to greater numbers of students realising their full academic potential | 2 | 3 | 7 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 1 |
19. led to students exercising greater academic diligence | 3 | 3 | 2 | 5 | 0 | 0 | 2 |
20. improved student behaviour in the playground | 1 | 0 | 3 | 9 | 1 | 0 | 1 |

**Post Implementation Survey Data**

In this school teaching values has | Strongly Disagree | Disagree | Slightly Disagree | Slightly Agree | Agree | Strongly Agree | Undecided |
--- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
1. encouraged a more peaceful atmosphere of the classroom | 0 | 1 | 1 | 4 | 6 | 3 | 0 |
2. deepened my understanding of how children learn | 1 | 1 | 4 | 5 | 3 | 1 | 0 |
3. encouraged greater cooperation between staff | 0 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 6 | 5 | 0 |
4. led to deeper levels of trust and caring in the classroom | 0 | 0 | 2 | 4 | 7 | 2 | 0 |
5. improved student's resilience | 0 | 0 | 3 | 3 | 7 | 2 | 0 |
6. made me reflect on my personal values | 0 | 1 | 3 | 3 | 5 | 3 | 0 |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>In this school teaching values has</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Slightly Disagree</th>
<th>Slightly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Undecided</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7. made me more conscious of the values behind my actions</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. resulted in in greater student engagement in other curriculum areas</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. had little effect on the way I teach (R)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. changed the way conflict is managed</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>0</td>
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<tr>
<td>11. made little difference to the way I respond to children in the school (R)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. contributed to a greater cooperation between school and home</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. improved students social skills</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. helped the school focus on providing the best environment possible for student improvement</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
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<tr>
<td>15. resulted in a more conscious statement of values in school policies</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
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<td>7</td>
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<td>16. encouraged me to try different ways of teaching</td>
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<td>17. led to discussing values in relation to other subject areas</td>
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<td>18. led to greater numbers of students realising their full academic potential</td>
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<td>20. improved student behaviour in the playground</td>
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**Pre-test Post-test Comparison**
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>In this school teaching values has</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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<td>Pos Pre</td>
<td>Dif Pre</td>
<td>Pos Pre</td>
<td>Dif Pre</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. deepened my understanding of how children learn</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. encouraged greater cooperation between staff</td>
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<td>0</td>
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<td>3</td>
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<td>5. improved student's resilience</td>
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<td>12. contributed to a greater cooperation between school and home</td>
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<td>14. helped the school focus on providing the best environment possible for student improvement</td>
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<td>Slightly Agree</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Post</td>
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<td>Post</td>
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<td>values in school policies</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>16. encouraged me to try different ways of</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>teaching</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>17. led to discussing values in relation to other</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>-2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>-1</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>subject areas</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18. led to greater numbers of students realising</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>-3</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>their full academic potential</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>19. led to students exercising greater academic</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>-3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>diligence</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>20. improved student behaviour in the playground</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>-1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-1</td>
<td>3</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
### An Overview of the Survey Data

#### Exhibit 2: Boddington Summary Depictograph

**Emphasis on Values Education**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2007</th>
<th>2008</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Explicit teaching</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>AAA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Major part of curriculum</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>AAA</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Teachers’ Perceptions of Changes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Perception</th>
<th>2007</th>
<th>2008</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Students are more engaged</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>AAA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students are realising their full potential</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>AA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students are more academically diligent</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>AA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School is more connected to home</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>AAA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School is more peaceful</td>
<td>AA</td>
<td>AAA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relationships are more trusting</td>
<td>AA</td>
<td>AAA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conflict is managed differently</td>
<td>AA</td>
<td>AAAAA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students’ improved social skills</td>
<td>AA</td>
<td>AAA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Classrooms constitute the best possible learning environment</td>
<td>AA</td>
<td>AAA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Playground behaviour is improved</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>AAA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers have a deeper understanding of student learning</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>AA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers teach differently</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>AAA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students are more resilient</td>
<td>AAA</td>
<td>AAA</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Key:**
- 0% - 50% say agree or strongly agree = A
- 51% - 70% = AA
- 71% - 90% = AAA
- 91% - 100% = AAAAA

Taken together Exhibits 1 and 2 indicate that staff feel that there has been a very significant increase in emphasis on values education at the school which has been accompanied by equally significant increases in student engagement, academic diligence, more settled classrooms and playground and the like.

In the teacher comments section of the survey the teachers wrote as follows:

**Teacher A:**
- **Post:** *The Choose Respect Program is having a greater impact on the high school as the culture grows.*

**Teacher H:**
- **Post:** *Choose Respect is a framework.*

**Teacher K:**
- **Post:** *It's a journey / a process - that is - to teach kids to change the culture of thinking through the CR Program. It's great!!*
Teacher L:
Post: *Hard to monitor with new children entering the school who have major behaviour problems and disrupt the whole class.*

Teacher N:
Post: *Provided a very useful framework for discussions with parents and students.*

**Data from the Teachers’ Focus Group**
After a preliminary analysis of the surveys, a focus group of teachers was convened to probe further issues emerging from the data. The following is a summary of the focus group.

**Setting**
- Teachers were invited to stay back after a full day of Professional Development to participate.
- They met in the library, sitting around large tables (6 per table).
- Teachers were very enthusiastic to participate.
- Handouts were distributed summarising the Pre/Post Implementation Surveys.
- No audio-recording was taken as the group was quite large and difficult to record effectively.
- The meeting started at 3.30 pm and lasted one hour.

**Content**
1. The Principal thanked teachers for staying behind to participate in the focus group.
2. Co-Researcher Gary Butcher distributed the handouts and asked teachers to read through them and discuss them amongst themselves. He explained that the purpose of the Teacher’s Focus Group was to gain insight and clarification about the data derived from the surveys.
3. Open discussion followed. The general consensus was that the results were very heartening. The values education program has been warmly endorsed by teachers, providing guidelines and positive directions for behaviour management.
4. Discussion moved to focusing on three of the survey items:
   - # 7… made me more conscious of the values behind my actions  
     (Strongly Agree = Difference +4)
   - # 10… changed the way conflict is managed  
     (Strongly Agree = Difference +7)
   - # 15… resulted in a more conscious statement of values in school policies  
     (Strongly Agree = Difference +6)

   In response to the question: “Why do you think there has been a very noticeable difference in these results?” it was specially noted that students are not becoming involved in as many conflicts as before.
   Reasons given included:
   - A great help has been the use of *Choose Respect* language among young children.
   - Teachers value the program and express commitment to it.
- There has been a Whole School Approach.
- Teachers commented: “We have community support – It’s not just us.“
- The program provides a conceptual framework, and a new focus each week.
- In MSE (Monitoring Standards in Education) testing for lower primary children, the Bell Curve has skewed in a positive direction over the period under review.
- Student behaviour in class has improved. (Classroom referrals are down.)
- The classroom manner of teachers themselves has improved. They now feel accountable as role models and answerable to the same values as are being commended to students.
- Referrals from playground incidents are down.

The possibility was raised of students using the Choose Respect approach to intimidate teachers (especially those teachers who in their teaching style may not be treating students with respect). The general view was that this was fairly unlikely.

Extended comments were made about the dramatically improved student behaviour outcomes of “Choose Respect at the Rodeo”, a project aimed at improving behaviour at the annual rodeo.

It was generally agreed that the success of the “Choose Respect” strategy owed much to the enthusiasm and commitment of the Principal’s leadership, which had also filtered through to staff in their classrooms. Choose Respect has given teeth to values. Local police officers have reported to the Principal that during the Christmas Holiday period no teenage crime was reported to them. They are putting that down to the positive impact that Choose Respect is having on young people in the town. Staff agreed that the next challenge is to build on the foundation that has been established.

**Data from the Interview with the Principal**

This is a summary of the interview derived from the audio-tape.

**What is your understanding of the term “Values Education”?**

I believe that in our job we want children to achieve to their maximum capacity, whether on the sporting field, artistic, academic or whatever. We want them to get along together, be respectful and resilient. Values Education is education that develops and hopefully sometimes changes the children’s understanding of values such as respect, honesty, and giving others a fair go. I try to talk about these things at every assembly.

**Describe how values education is being implemented in your school.**

I don’t believe you can have a Values Education Program without involving the community. We have developed links with the CWA, the Shire Council, local Mines, and Sporting Clubs. This requires that we provide time to meet with the community to decide, in consultation also with students at the school, what values the whole community wants us to promote over a period of time. We must be realistic. Enormous gains cannot be made overnight.
We attempt to do this in a variety of ways, utilising a framework based on the *Choose Respect* approach developed by Gary Butcher. Within this framework, we also draw on ideas in other programs such as the Virtues Project, Tidy Towns, Peer Mediation. Activities have included:

- All staff have been trained. They understand and use the *Choose Respect* language.

- The *Choose Respect* facilitator helped us to connect with the community. They too now understand and use the language. The Shire Council has decided to adopt *Choose Respect* as have Lions Club, Mines, etc.

- We do *Choose Respect Idol* Posters around school — Children do *Choose Respect* Skits at assemblies — A *Choose Respect* Value is chosen every week — Lions Club awards two trips on the Training Sailing Ship Leeuwin (Value $1600 each) — *Choose Respect* Area (A Thinking/Time Out Zone) — *Choose Respect* Presentations at Presentation Night.

In general, I think the approach has been very successful. The hardest task is maintaining the momentum.

*Can you point to any positive changes in teacher practice that you would attribute to your school?*

Implementing the values education program has put values issues on the agenda for teachers all the time. Teachers themselves realise they have to practise *Choose Respect* as part of their modelling role. Fewer children are sent to Principal. Interestingly, in one case a student became justifiably upset because a teacher had shown disrespect towards that student.

I believe there have been positive changes in the classroom and positive support of changes in general school life. We also use a “Warm Fuzzy Board” to record good stories and, in several instances, parents have used the language of *Choose Respect* in thank you cards sent to staff.

*Can you point to any positive changes in the students in your school that you would attribute to your school implementing its values education program?*

In addition to what I’ve already said, the same has been happening with students. When children get ratty, teachers find they can quickly bring them back into line using the discourse. It is also helpful, for example, in discussing student behaviour in school assemblies.

[At this point the Primary Principal joined the interview as well]

*Do you feel that the way your school is implementing its values education program has produced a stronger sense of coherence within the school community?*

Both Principals confirmed that the program had done so. Interestingly, when the *Choose Respect* song is sung at the end of school assembly, teachers join in, as do parents who happen to be present. There is also a feeling that we have something in common with the objectives of the Shire, CWA, Lions Group, and other community agencies. Indeed, the *Choose Respect* program has turned around the perceptions the community has of the school.
For example, Service Clubs now sponsor awards for the school. Parent interviews are more positive because the discourse encouraged by Choose Respect is known to all. Similarly, staff have experienced improved relations, both with each other and the community.

Perceptions of the community have been turned around by the Choose Respect program. In general, they feel more accountable, and take more responsibility for, the values climate of the school.

**Do you feel that the way your school is implementing its values education program has had an effect on the classroom ambience?**

Most definitely. Take the annual camp for years 6 and 7, where the Choose Respect program is strongly featured. Students come back cheerful. When people are shown around the school, they comment “This feels great.” There has been some debate in the Parents and Citizens’ meeting on whether making children sit in the Choose Respect Zone is respectful.

In the primary classrooms, teachers have a focus for the week. They pull down the program poster and use it. The benchmark is quite high now for students. Students know the expectations having been explicitly taught the Choose Respect vocabulary. We have seen behaviour change in a number of ways, notably in Year 7’s using the library.

At one point some Year 3’s became feral in the playground. We’re finding we have to teach children how to play with each other. We talked to them about Choose Respect, relating it to issues of Care and Consideration. Using a Y chart, we asked: “What is it like to be in a Choose Respect playground?”

We really need to start with the children in the voluntary group which we run for children too young to start school, and to encourage parents to bring their younger ones to it in order to promote the values agenda.

**Do you feel that the way your school is implementing its values education program has had an effect on student's academic performance?**

It is probably too early to tell. We have no concrete data, but expect to obtain feedback next year. Anecdotally, a significant number of teacher comments on reports of 8-12 students say that the student is “trying harder.”

**Do you feel that the way your school is implementing its values education program has had an effect on student's academic diligence?**

Yes - We have already talked about this.

**Do you feel that the way your school is implementing its values education program has had an effect on student-teacher relationships?**

Definitely, quite profound. Staff and students empowered. When you introduce something like this, EVERYONE has to behave themselves. Instead of getting cross, students have a common language and framework with which to negotiate. Admittedly, because Choose Respect empowers students, there is the possibility of more referrals if teachers themselves do not choose respect.
The balancing possibilities, as it has happened, are that Admin has been able to talk with teachers in an unemotional way and to have conversations with students about the teacher’s point of view. Before the program was instituted, judgments about students tended to be black and white, whereas now the tendency is to be more conscious of their motivations.

Do you feel that the way your school is implementing its values education program has had an effect on student wellbeing?

Yes, we are talking more about ‘wholistic’ wellbeing - physical, emotional, spiritual, mental. Staff are more aware of the out-of-school issues and concerns of students. Teachers have more time to respond proactively because they are not having to deal with in-school incidents.

Also, students have power now. They know it. It is not all one-sided.

They do not arrive at school with a formal language and it is our job to teach them, give them practice. Our Behaviour Management Plan uses Choose Respect language. Because it is not emotionally laden or judgmental, it also works with parents. After all, 9/10ths of student behaviour is a reflection of parent behaviour. With parents, we are able to talk about the Big Picture.

Do you feel that the way your school is implementing its values education program has had an effect on teacher wellbeing?

Yes, we are able to be more proactive, getting around the school morning and afternoon. Teachers will come and tell us if they are worried about another staff member. Everyone is looking out for everyone else. Staff discourage each other from forming staff cliques. We are also able to give staff time out, and to help them with “pointy end kids.”

Do you feel that the way your school is implementing its values education program has had an effect on parental and family participation?

We do occasionally get complaints. One parent said ruefully: “You and your Bloody Choose Respect. Here are me and my husband having a row and our son butts in: ‘Excuse me, Mum and Dad. Choose Respect’; and we had to stop. Truly!” So the message is spreading through the kids.

Conclusion

The vehicles for values education are numerous at Boddington HS. The Choose Respect program is the lynchpin but other more pragmatic things add to the mix. They include an anger management program, “Friends”, the Virtues program, formal teaching of values in the WA Health program, Tidy Towns and Peer Mediation. Coupled with a “Warm Fuzzy Board” technique to give positive behaviour a high profile, the positive impact on the tone of the school has been substantial.

The school’s emphasis on values education is being driven by the principal who has the conviction that it is crucial to students achieving their maximum capacity. Her concern is to establish, over time, a whole-school, community-engaged approach to values education. Community engagement has so far been accomplished through
associations with the local Lions group, involvement in the Tidy Towns initiative and a relationship with the local Shire council.

As Exhibit 2 indicates, the teachers are gradually beginning to explicitly teach the values associated with the Choose Respect program. Several of them devote a specific half-hour to the program on a weekly basis. Those values are focussed on at the school assembly, the posters associated with them are prominently displayed throughout the school and, in some classrooms, they are made the object of continuous positive reinforcement for the students.

As staff have come to see the positive effects of the project and experienced how it leaves them with more time to focus on teaching and not be distracted by misbehaviour, the culture of the school has slowly changed. The language of values is nurtured both at assembly and in interpersonal relations.

All of this has been accompanied by significant increases in student engagement, stronger connections between school, home and community, improved measures for managing conflict and more harmonious playground behaviour.

Case Study 3: Lance Holt School, Western Australia

Relational Values Education: A Day in the Life of Lance Holt School

It is several hours since the fishing fleet throbbed away from the port town of Fremantle for the day. The aroma of coffee and croissants begins to mingle with the smells of the Port on the Cappuccino Strip and High Street. Tables and chairs being dragged out to the front of cafes, and eight languages at full volume, add to the daily clamour. The local Aboriginal owners of this land are the Whadjuk Nyungars, whose cultural memories reach back to the last ice age when there was a land-bridge between Fremantle and Rottnest Island, and their stories account for the end of the ice age when Cockburn Sound flooded with sea water. Under the concrete, shops and sea, the spirits of the land are always present.

We are committed to developing a wonder of the natural world and encouraging care of the environment which reflects a global stewardship. (The Core Values of Lance Holt School, Appendix 3)

In the West End of Fremantle, High Street is crossed by Henry Street which runs one-way from the Port to the Esplanade Park; its occupants include the Workers Club, a tattoo parlour, an art gallery and café, a university, customs buildings, and one pub. Number 10 Henry Street houses Lance Holt School, the first and only place in Fremantle classified as Living Heritage by the State Government. It is a Federation era building which functioned as a café, clothing factory and lolly shop, among other things, before the school occupied it in 1974.

Before moving to 10 Henry St, Lance Holt School operated at the old convent in North Fremantle. It was here that Lance Holt, an educational innovator, founded the
original school in 1970 with a view to providing alternative education in Perth\textsuperscript{1}. In the beginning, Lance Holt School was an all-boys’ school but one insistent mother pressured Lance into admitting girls. In the 1970s, the politics of equality, freedom from oppressive authority, women’s liberation, environmentalism, and Aboriginal rights informed the inchoate alternative school. Over the years, it has consciously developed itself as a small, caring, independent and community-oriented school without religious, philosophical or political affiliation: collective memory and culture guide its ongoing innovation, professionalisation and evolution. The ideal that children and their families have rights, responsibilities and respect in relation to the educational and developmental process is core.

\textit{We affirm the equal worth and basic right of all persons. In doing so we recognise individual differences and the uniqueness of the individual. (The Core Values of Lance Holt School, Appendix 3)}

Number 10 Henry Street is a two-storey cream and blue federation era building that looks diminutive and unassuming on the outside. But like the Tardis, its interior is much bigger than its exterior; and like the Tardis, it transports its occupants to varied points in time and space. The feeling on entering the school, even early in the morning when it is empty, is one of joy: the walls are adorned with a wide and colourful range of children works, both old and new (Figure 1).

\begin{figure}[h]
\centering
\includegraphics[width=0.4\textwidth]{welcome}
\caption{Welcome to Lance Holt School!}
\end{figure}

The school is open-plan. Near the entrance to the right is the Parent Area with the KidsMatter Banner and a display by the Year 6/7 class. They have been working with the program Aussie Optimism which provides teachers and parents with practical strategies and resources for developing children's social competence, self-management, and positive thinking in every day life, during times of stress, and across transitions, like the move to high school. Through work on Optimistic Thinking Skills children learn optimistic ways of coping so that they can thrive and develop. It has helped students to become aware of their thoughts and the connection between how they think, feel and behave. Children are shown how to look for evidence and to challenge negative thoughts about themselves so that they feel happy, confident and optimistic about the future.

\textsuperscript{1}At one point there were three campuses of the school, but only the Fremantle school retained the original name.
We recognise the special vulnerability of children and their need for a safe and healthy environment. (The Core Values of Lance Holt School, Appendix 3)

Just past the Parent Area on the right side of the school, a large patchwork blanket hangs high on the wall, recording pre-primary children’s view of history. Onto each patch a child has sewn memorabilia representing his or her life: a scrap of fabric, a knitted Bananas in Pyjamas bootie, a button, a photo. It took a whole term to produce, and drew strongly on the experience of Jane Whiteley (textile artist, teaching assistant and parent) who worked with the then Preprimary/Year 1 teacher, Wendy Gorman. The quilt highlights the value of taking time to produce a work of art rather than expecting to get an instant effect. By enabling children to identify and work with what they find to be significant in the past, the work also shows how history can be a meaningful practice, rather than an abstract timeline (Figure 2).

Below that patchwork blanket is a giant mind-map entitled ‘What I Can Do When I Am Having Trouble With A Friend” depicting Preprimary/Year 1 children’s ideas and illustrations on this subject. Samantha Wynne, the Preprimary/Year 1 teacher has worked with the children to develop peaceful and empowering ways of negotiating their early years at primary school (Figure 3).
Beyond the Preprimary/Year 1 area, lies the kitchen/staff-room and, beyond that, the kindy area at the rear. The Year 2-3s are downstairs, as is the art area, and the Year 4-7s are upstairs. There is a mezzanine office inside where the admin and coordination takes place. Here Sam Jones, the admin officer works in the office. Her longstanding knowledge of the school culture is paramount as she is the first point of contact for prospective families, government agencies, businesses, and visitors. Jennie Buchanan also works here part-time in multiple roles: policy development, project management and supporting Kathryn. This mezzanine is also the only area where teachers can be separate from the children. Elsewhere, teachers are always accessible to the children. There is a small playground outside with extra mezzanine playgrounds above it. The whole school is a large flourishing house with every nook and cranny burgeoning with art and displays of children’s work.

We see the education of children encompassing their social, emotional, academic, aesthetic and physical development. (The Core Values of Lance Holt School, Appendix 3)

The Coordinator, five teachers, two specialist teachers and four teaching assistants begin to filter into the school to prepare for the day’s lessons. Several bring their own children with them. By 8.30am the next wave of children arrives and soon the street is alive with streams of children and parents dashing towards the school.

At around 9am the school echoes with the sing song call “Meeeeeting” as small children meander about announcing the first event of the day. There is no bell. Three days a week the whole school meets, sitting on the floor. Around 100 students, 30 parents and all the teaching staff attend. Some of the smaller children occupy the laps of parents, teachers or older children. Each Monday, the meeting is opened by an older child who begins the meeting with the acknowledgement of Indigenous country, ‘Koora. Ye yey. Boorda. Nidja Nyungar budjarnoonook nyin-ning. We acknowledge that yesterday, today and tomorrow we are sitting in Nyungar Country.’ This day, the
meeting is chaired by a pre-primary student who in a high squeaky voice announces, ‘I now declare this meeting open. Does anyone have anything to say?’ As usual, there is a lot to be said: baby teeth have fallen out; a birthday requires Happy Birthday to be sung; children are reminded about the school’s no-war toys policy; someone has returned from a holiday; a hand-made ‘thunder-maker’ is displayed; a teacher recounts a recent school excursion and acknowledges children’s mannerly behaviour; a maths poll is taken on how well-cooked members of the school community like their toast – results to be graphed by Year 2/3s; yet another Dockers’ loss is aired and grieved over. The student chairing the meeting nominates the speakers in turn, by name; she is helped out by others when she doesn’t know names. Meeting is a long-term process of community building. The school community gets to know each other better. News is shared; values are expressed and reflected on. Most importantly, it is an opportunity for every child to hear his/her own voice in the Meeting, and to be heard attentively and courteously by others, no matter how minor their announcement may appear to be. Listening to others respectfully is one of the key values shared at Meeting. For many, it is a formative experience. And for many families who have come from overseas or the eastern states, Lance Holt School is their extended family and main support network whose heart is in morning Meeting. It is an affirmation of what is important in the world.

After meeting, parents drift away: some to work; some to socialise with each other or plan fundraising events in the kitchen, in the parents’ area, on the footpath or in a café; some stay to watch the beginning of their child’s class where they are always welcome. The students themselves break off into their class groups, or combinations of classes. Today, Christine Kennedy is working with the Year 4-7 children on a project based around the book ‘Dust’, written by Colin Thompson and illustrated by a range of well-known authors. The book begins with the shocking line, ‘Last night I died’ and narrates the circumstances of the life and death of a poor child in drought-stricken Africa. It is the sort of story that could overwhelm children with grief or guilt if it was approached badly. On the other hand, the school would not be offering an adequate education if it ignored global crises of justice and ecology in an effort to protect children from the knowledge of suffering and unsustainability. So, Christine has carefully scaffolded this project by fostering in the children an understanding that they are in a position to help other children and to make a difference in the world. In fact, this lesson of empowerment has consistently been part of the children’s education: don’t be guilty or despairing, be pro-active. Almost before Christine has finished reading the story, the students are, of their own accord, beginning to think about possible fundraisers to help. The process here is important. The older children are by now familiar with the idea of organising to be effective, so in small groups the older children mentor the younger children on their fundraising ideas. Christine’s job now is as a facilitator and guide, helping the children see through their ideas to fruition. She tries not to take over the process but to enable the children as agents of process-building.

We recognise the importance of learning as a life long process. (The Core Values of Lance Holt School, Appendix 3)
On a computer in Christine’s teaching area a series of animations are playing in a long loop. They are Kahootz presentations developed by the children with Deb Sear, a teaching assistant with expertise in multimedia. Now there is a container ship sailing through brilliant blue water into the port; that scene fades and there is a boy going into the local musical instrument shop to buy a guitar; now a family is picnicking by the river and a kangaroo bounces by; they fade away and are replaced by boys skateboarding. With Deb’s help, each child has prepared an animation featuring an aspect of Fremantle that they value and that relates to the cultural, social, ecological or economic sustainability of the town in some way. It was a fun project and the kids got to represent a Fremantle activity they value using a tool that they thought was completely cool.

Downstairs, the Year 2/3 class is working with their teacher Debra Salahuddeen on a Time, Continuity and Change project. It is an exploration of the past that emphasises a respect for the people and things of the past. The children reflect on what it is they value in their own personal memories. They have created a museum using objects they have chosen, including: a clicker-clacker toy from the 1970s, old children’s books, a typewriter and vinyl records. They have interviewed their parents, and written illustrated accounts of their parents’ memories, which are posted on the walls. The project also incorporates work on how the children’s bodies grow and change, and Debra works on protective behaviour for the children in relation to their own bodies, using the phrase ‘I’m the boss of my body’. Today, however, the children are preparing a morning tea for a group of elderly people, presenting cakes and biscuits they have made specially. Debra has briefed them on the etiquette and manners suitable for elderly people, in particular on the importance of not eating too much too quickly. The children are a bit surprised then to see the elderly people eating large quantities of food so enthusiastically. One of the elderly visitors is a blind lady with a guide dog. She discusses with the children the idea of a working dog who is not allowed to play with the children while he had his harness on. As soon as she takes his harness off, he knows he is free to play with the children and enjoys the attention and cakes.

_We promote shared responsibility between self and community. (The Core Values of Lance Holt School, Appendix 3)_

In one corner of the Year 2/3 classroom stand a set of Compliment Books. These consist of written compliments that children have paid to each other: each child has his or her own book. These are designed to make children aware of the positive aspects of their personalities and to help children learn how to pay a deep compliment about another person. The Compliments Books are part of the PATHS (Promoting Alternative THinking Strategies) program that supports social and emotional learning in children by teaching them to understand and reflect on their feelings and emotions. The PATHS program runs in the early childhood classes of the school but not alone: it is integrated with all other aspects of learning in Lance Holt School.
On the wall of the Year 2/3 classroom is a huge blue mural featuring Bathers Beach. The children have regular excursions to Bathers Beach and the school community has a very special relationship with it. Bathers Beach is a sustainability hotspot with many cultural, social, economic and ecological values. Only a 10 minute walk away, it is the ideal outdoors classroom. Spontaneous or planned projects involve litter collection and analysis, sand sculptures, playing on the sculptural playground, school art exhibitions and viewings at Kidogo Arthouse, botanical drawings, painting, dune revegetation, mapping exercises, snorkeling, intertidal biology, coiling baskets from seaweed, interviewing local shopkeepers, exploring the local fishmarkets and cafes, and visiting the adjacent Port. The children have been active stewards of Bathers Beach for many years, and were first officially welcomed there by Nyungar Elder Mrs Marie Taylor in 2002. The mural on the wall of the Year 2/3 classroom features a variety of coloured animals swimming in the sea or living adjacent to it, and people on the beach. The children have cut out these figures and stuck them on, together with little thought bubbles they have created about what the animals need from the people, like unpolluted water, and what the people would like to offer the animals, like care and protection. This type of project fosters children’s empathy with the broader ecosystem and helps enable children to think about a world in which other sentient beings are at the centre of the moral sphere (Figure 4). Other artworks on display include maps of the Port area featuring a child’s-eye view of all the activities that occur (Figure 5).

We understand the diversity and uniqueness of the Fremantle community and respect the special relationship between ourselves and that community. (The Core Values of Lance Holt School, Appendix 3)
A recent whole school project coordinated by a parent Simon, a professional sculptor, was an installment about the past, present and future of Bathers Beach. Some children made cardboard buildings and boats and others made clay model people and animals; they were placed on a base that represented the sandy beach and blue water. The research for the project included detailed biological, historical and cultural studies, and required a range of social and technical skills. The installment was four meters in diameter. It was exhibited in the art studio ‘Earlyworks’ of another parent Kate. Her studio specialises in children’s art so it was a perfect setting. Through this installation, the whole school was able to communicate a sense of belonging, community and place in Fremantle in a very powerful way. Every child in the school contributed to the installation in a way that enabled them to share collectively their reflections with the broader Fremantle community (Figure 6).
Debra is also the art teacher. In the art area, adjacent to the Year 2/3 area, lies a very special collection of clay figures newly created by the Year 6/7 class. Debra has worked with the children since they were young students building up their motor and clay modeling skills, and this term she has asked the older children to create statues that express an emotion. The resultant figurines, about 20 cm in height, are tender and enormously expressive. There is a grandfather and boy in a fishing boat; a couple hugging; a boy meditating in the rain; a young couple sitting together; a couple hugging a tree; and siblings fighting over a toy. Here the children have integrated their carefully developed technical skills in sculpture with their sophisticated emotional understanding to create artworks of exquisite aesthetic depth (Figure 7).

On the ground floor, working with the Kindy and Preprimary/Year 1 classes, Juliet Lewer and Samantha Wynne and their assistants Emma Cooke and Paul Johnson are building the relational foundations that help the upper school teachers to operate so successfully. The upper-school teachers know what to expect in terms of cultural norms when the next cohort of students arrives in their classes so they don’t have to begin completely from scratch. In every class, the teachers aim to embed values in every aspect of their work and to role model school values of respect to the children. This approach creates a cultural continuity and coherence in the school, which is the matrix for all learning. Cultural continuity has also been enhanced as the second generation of Lance Holt children are attending the school; and Lance Holt School
graduates, including the children of teachers, are coming back to assist or do teaching practica at the school. In Samantha’s first year as a teacher at Lance Holt School, back in 1992, she taught Christine Kennedy’s daughter Melissa Kennedy in her Year 1 class. This year Melissa is back doing her 4th year practicum as a student teacher with Samantha, and she will graduate this year.

In Juliet’s kindy class the children are sitting in groups around various activities. They can choose their activity. Several parents are sitting helping with the activities. Parents can come as often and stay as long as they like at the kindy, which runs Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday morning. Juliet works in a team with Emma to provide a nurturing environment. She feels that the children relax more, and are less traumatised, if they are not wrenched away from their parents; it is good for the children to see Juliet interacting comfortably with their parents. At the first parent night, the parents were asked what they wanted for their children from kindy. The answers were all about their children’s happiness as whole people, rather than about technical skills in reading or writing (Figure 8). Later in the morning, Juliet’s class will walk to Cicerellos at Fishing Boat Harbour to buy fish and chips. It will be their second excursion this year, and each child will have an adult’s hand to hold. As well as the excitement of buying fish and chips, the class will be looking at environmental signs and exploring the school’s neighbourhood; they are finding their place in the world.

Samantha aims to live the school’s values as a teacher. At the heart of her practice is her view that children are central to their own learning, and that learning should integrate social, emotional and academic skills. She recognises that as a community school, education is a partnership between families and the school. For these reasons, her relationship to the children and their families is the basis for all her teaching.
So Samantha’s job begins from the first moment of contact with the children: she starts the task of building relationships of trust and respect with the children and with their parents, on the premise that these values have to be earned and lived not just asserted. Welcoming parents into the school is important: Samantha sees that her job is to be there for parents and listen to their fears and concerns. Her experience is that parents care most about their child as a person not just as an academic learner. Parents like to have information and feel supported; and to know they can go to Samantha or to other staff members with concerns.

Samantha sees children as having rights and responsibilities, not as empty vessels waiting to be filled up. It is their classroom and they have something to offer. Samantha has set up the classroom from Day One to avoid an oppressive power relationship between herself and the children, and to enable a dynamic where she respects the children, and they respect her and others. The children learn that they are part of a classroom community as well as a school community. There are few physical barriers: she can see the children and they can see her. The central part of the classroom is the mat space not the desks; here the children spend most of their time on the floor with Samantha.
Samantha does a lot of work in small groups and with the whole group, and these processes support values of cooperation, sharing knowledge and creating social knowledge. Samantha recognises that she is not the single authoritative source of learning or the children but that they can learn from each other, from older children at the school, and other school community members.

Right now, Samantha and the children are having Circle Time (2008) on the mat. Since Day One, Samantha and the children have used this time to negotiate formal rules about being part of a group and make it work. The rules they have collectively established are that only one person speaks at a time and when that person speaks everyone listens respectfully. Here they also establish ground rules about personal space, the right to learn and the need to respect property in the classroom. When the Circle gets out of hand, they conduct a Circle Self-Check to get back on-task. This process, repeated often, enables the children to become self-regulating and to take responsibility for their behaviour within an accepted framework. If a problem emerges in the classroom it is addressed as a problem for the class not just for her and they seek a solution together. The children are often stricter than she is with each other. Fortunately, values at home and school are generally compatible: children have a voice in their homes and the parenting style is not overly authoritarian. Nevertheless Samantha still needs conversations with children around the acceptability of certain behaviours. She also has Molly Derriman, a Lance Holt School graduate, working part time with a special needs child.

Now, bursting with energy after sitting still in Circle Time for a few minutes, the children go outside to the playground with Paul Johnson, Samantha’s teaching assistant, who has an arts and drama background. He works with them to create a sculpture from materials the children have brought from home. In the project, which combines Science and Art, the students have been investigating different materials and their properties. Excitement is high as the students use an array of ‘junk’ materials to create a sculpture. Their ideas are shared with each other and incorporated into the design.

Shortly, a river of older children comes flooding down the stairs to spend time with their young buddies in Preprimary/Year 1. The older children read a story to the younger children and discuss the upcoming trip to the adventure playground they are planning together. The younger children will grow up and become buddies to another cohort of students. A culture of respect across the age groups is the result of these relationships: it helps build community and mitigate bullying.

It is now lunchtime. One teacher is on duty wandering through the school chatting with children and supervising play. During playtimes children can be in classrooms or outside using different spaces or visiting other classes and students. A contingent of children and teachers has gone to the Esplanade Park at the southwest end of Henry Street for a game of soccer. Some teachers are seated around a small table in the kitchen discussing a range of educational issues, domestic laughs and dramas, and current events. The kitchen is open to the remaining children who flow past in an ebullient torrent. Every few minutes a child approaches the table requesting help to solve a social problem. A teacher talks her through a process-building procedure. What happened? What was her part in the conflict? Has she used the stop message?
How could she solve the problem by herself? The child and teacher work out a new strategy and the child departs to try it out.

_We actively pursue cooperation and the peaceful resolution of conflict. (The Core Values of Lance Holt School, Appendix 3)_

Parents come and go from the kitchen, having a cup of tea with the teachers and catching up on news. Occasionally a teacher disappears to mediate an intractable conflict. Older children foray out to designated local shops where they are allowed to buy lunch. Shop visits are a privilege that comes with an expectation of self-responsibility for behaviour. Once a week at lunchtime the kitchen is transformed into ‘tuckshop’. On a roster basis, parents prepare a meal to be enjoyed by students, teachers and visitors. A few good stand-bys often reappear like nachos, pasta and garlic bread, or pumpkin soup and rolls, and since some of the parents are professional chefs occasionally the unexpected turns up in the form of dishes like honey soy chicken or spicy fried rice. After the main course comes ‘surprise’, a concession to frivolity and the sweet tooth.

At the end of lunch hour the children who went to the park flood back into the school. Teachers stand up and walk back to their classes calling ‘Classtime!’ and their call is picked up and carried around the school.

After lunch, another group of children departs to the park for sports with the sports teacher Jo Hammond and her assistant Tom Derriman, a graduate of Lance Holt School. They often go by bus to one of the various netball, volleyball or basketball courts located within 10 minutes drive of the school. Today, however, they are walking to the Esplanade Park where they are playing T-Ball. The school has a non-competitive policy, which is also reflected in sports practice. In sports the emphasis is on participating and doing your best, developing interpersonal skills, building physical skills and working strategically as a team. The children, however, like to keep score during their games and do so keenly. Surprisingly, the game often ends in a draw!

Upstairs the Year 6-7s are studying democracy and politics and government with the class teacher Seth Yeoman. Motivated by memories of what was positive and negative about his own schooling experience Seth has tried, during his 12 years of teaching, to put himself in a child’s position and plan classes that are participatory and fun. For some children whose fathers are absent for one reason or another, Seth is the main male role model in their lives and in this respect his role as a teacher is doubly important.

Seth tries to bring learning to the children’s level by making it relevant to them. With democracy and politics he wanted to make this important subject as interesting and useful as possible to the children in their present and future lives. Seth has discussed with the children examples from Australian politics and elections, and given them an understanding of the various roles that different people play in an election. With an election upcoming in Western Australia, there is a lot of news that is relevant to the topic and the children can see why it is important for them to be responsible voters and to take politics seriously. They have been on a trip to State Parliament, while
another trip to Federal Parliament in Canberra is planned with the substantial help of Jennie, a parent in the class, and Kathryn, the school coordinator. It will be the first time a Lance Holt School class has left WA and it is a big undertaking for Seth. The whole class of seventeen children will go. Fourteen parents will also go, including Kathryn who has a child in the class. These parents have known each other and participated in the life of the school community for seven or eight years, and firm friendships have formed. Their role will be to support Seth and help make the trip safe and relaxed - without cramping their own children’s style! It will be an expensive exercise, though, as the government subsidy, while significant, is not adequate for Western Australians. In addition to the politics excursions, Seth’s class has had some interesting incursions recently. Patrick Gorman (Lance Holt School graduate and the oldest son of Wendy and Ron Gorman, previous teachers at Lance Holt School) currently works for the Federal member for Fremantle Hon Melissa Parke and brought her to visit the Year 6/7 class to discuss her role in politics. He has also organised for the class to meet with Foreign Minister Stephen Smith when they go to Canberra.

Today, the 6-7 children are in the process of organising a class election. There is a lot of hands-on learning; every child has a job to do that will require them to utilise the skills and knowledge they have learned in class and on their excursions into the community with Seth. They are making posters, writing policies, running campaigns. Every child is made to feel important and part of a team; it is not about polishing the gems or just having certain children shine. Seth focuses on speaking and visual literacy, not just reading and writing skills, and constantly reinforces the idea that everyone is good at something. For Seth, that is what the school is all about: equality and respect. His interactive approach means that the children learn voraciously and build sophisticated social and teamwork skills in the process: values education and academic learning work hand in hand.

Displayed in Seth’s classroom are models of passive solar houses, designed and built by the children as part of Seth’s now on-going work in sustainability. Previously the children themselves ran a sustainability conference for the school community. The children themselves wanted to take sustainability further into the community. In the process they engaged with their parents about rainwater tanks, organic gardening, worm farming, solar ovens and recycling. Some children encouraged their parents to take on sustainability activities at home; others went on to write to politicians about local developments they were unhappy with; or to join voluntary bushcare groups.

In the computer area of the Year 6/7 classroom, Google Earth displays a set of vegetation transects the class has just completed in their study of the Swan Coastal Plain: one through coastal dunes, one through a wetland, and one through the jarrah forest. The children have uploaded to Google Earth photos of themselves, the landforms and the plant types, that were taken while completing the transects. This work ties together multimedia skills, sustainability and the mapping work they did last term, and shows the children a birds-eye view of themselves in their place in space.

Seth gives and gets strong feedback. When Seth sees the children apply their learning to their real life situation and to their families, he feels happy with his teaching. This is the best feedback, and tells him much more than formal testing. It shows him that the children have taken on-board ideas for their own value, not just to get a grade. Spot quizzes show him how much the class is gaining from a program. He does not
compare children with each other – this tends to reward only the top children and discourage the rest. He tries to praise the children as a class generously and often and tells them how well they are doing as a team and a community. Self esteem and feeling valued makes the children want to do more and do it better, and Seth sees this reflected in the children’s faces and attitudes in class. He recognises that this is part of the school culture and he is building on work done in earlier classes. This is the key to children’s academic and social success. As in all classes at the school, children help negotiate class rules and guidelines at the beginning of the year and are expected to honour those. If something goes wrong, the class can refer back to their rules or guidelines and take responsibility for solving the problem. This is empowering for the children. Visitors to the school often express surprise that the students call teachers by their first names, and are concerned that this custom might lead to lack of respect for staff. The point of the custom however is precisely that egalitarianism, genuinely enacted, leads to enhanced, not diminished, mutual respect; the thoughtful relationships between teachers and students at Lance Holt School verify this claim.

Feedback from high schools show that LHS children graduate from the school with confidence, an ability to self-manage, good social skills with other children and with adults, and high levels of academic skills (see Benchmarks, Appendix 1; Graduate Destinations, Appendix 2).

Later in the afternoon, the Italian teacher Roma Caruso will walk with the Year 6/7 students up to Amano’s, on Fremantle’s Cappucino Strip, for a gelato. Their lesson will be to each say, ‘Scusi, mi dai un gelato di Bacio’ (or whatever flavour they choose)! Needless to say this is a pleasurable way of learning Italian.

The Year 2/3 class is now with Emma Cox, known as ‘Music Emma’ to the kids, who is teaching the children a song that the children will sing at Graduation. This is a tall order as Graduation is the most important event on the school calendar (alongside school camp!). At Graduation the whole school community shares a sense of spirit and pride and celebrates the flourishing of all the gorgeous, fun, smart and creative children. Each class puts on a performance of some sort, and this year the teaching staff are also planning to let their hair down as a rock’n’roll band. During Graduation, the school community formally acknowledges the hard work of the teaching staff, the Coordinator, the parents and the Council.

Christine and the Year 4/5s have left the school on the bus for the afternoon. They are working with Fremantle City Council’s bush revegetation officer on a mapping, weeding and planting project at nearby Cantonment Hill. This project flowed out of earlier work on mapping and sustainability and was developed at the suggestion of one of the children in Christine’s class. Although the work is hot, scratchy and hard physically, the children are empowered by having a positive impact on a real place and can see that they are contributing to sustainability in Fremantle. They benefit from working with real-life practitioners. Several parents are also involved in this project and they enjoy the opportunity to be stewards alongside their children, as well as helping with supervision. This project spontaneously builds on a long-term commitment of the school to this hill and their work there goes back many years. The children have created a herbarium and are able to compare this to a herbarium made in 1998 by an earlier class of Christine’s; undertaking a series of projects over time consolidates values education at the school.
Downstairs in the Year 2/3 class, Kathryn, whose role includes both School Coordinator and part-time Year 2/3 teacher, has been working with the children documenting their effusive memories of a recent whole school camp to Rottnest Island with poems, drawings and recounts. Every year the whole school goes on a camp together – teachers, children and parents: it is a highly significant community building process. Every second year, by long standing tradition, the camp is at Rottnest Island. This event is the high point on the school calendar for the whole community and the build-up to it is enormous. It is an epic undertaking from an operational point of view: there are logistic, social, catering, safety, educational and economic factors to resolve. A teacher takes overall planning responsibility for the camp. Parents form planning teams to plan the menus and buy the food. The school rents several streets of cottages on the island and lives as a tight-knit community for the week. Teams of parents undertake the cooking and clearing up, and are coordinated by a parent. The children are involved in a range of learning activities related to sustainability such as salt-lake biology, beach combing, art and craft with an island focus, tours of the island’s recycling and renewable energy technologies, stargazing, and junior ranger training. The real lesson is about sharing the load and cooperative living: living together, eating together, bike-riding without the fear of cars, fishing for breakfast herring off the jetty, singalongs in evenings, and the traditional talent night when children put on song and dance routines, magic tricks and comedy acts. At various camps, Jane Whiteley has undertaken art projects around connecting the body to the earth: tie-dyeing silk with eucalypt leaves; and coiling seaweeds and found objects into baskets. Friendships grow among parents which translate into support and care for each other. Parents also have a chance to learn together with their children by going on excursions.

On the ground floor, Samantha is now working on a project with Nyungar Elder Marie Taylor as part of a sustainability study about place. Samantha has wrestled with how to make this project meaningful for the little children. Normally her approach is for children to identify for themselves a line of inquiry that they follow. In the case of Aboriginal studies, Samantha began with a base of what the children knew already, and she wanted to come from a position of similarity not difference. The project is grounded in the basic concept of self-in-relationship to family and place. So she is focusing not on history, skin colour or costumes but on the fact that Aboriginal people, like non-Aboriginal people, have families and homes, and a shared humanity. Samantha has asked Marie to focus on herself, her family, her place. Marie has been teaching the children Nyungar words for family, sharing her stories, and discussing families and special places. Differences emerge naturally in discussion – for example, Marie’s special place is not a house but traditional country in the wheatbelt east of Perth for which she is responsible.

The class also looks at their own homes and other special places where children have significant relationships. Sometimes the classes do not go as Samantha has planned: she recognises something more important is going on here in terms of values and she seizes the teaching moment and abandons her lesson plan to run with the opportunity the class has created. They take their time with the overall project and the children make remarkable leaps in understanding and abstract thinking. They visit each other’s homes and see where they live in relation to the school, share what their families looked like (Figure 9). The families at home are involved and feedback goes back and
forth. The class discusses what other places apart from home are special to them – the beach, the park. For every child in the class Lance Holt is a place that children feel safe, valued and wanted, and they belong here.

Samantha uses the languages that children have such as drama, maps, sculpture and drawing as well as the written word to express themselves. Today the children are drawing and painting the various family members and labeling them with Nyungar words.

Children often surprise Samantha and she is constantly learning and challenging herself. She recognises that she fails sometimes and has to try different strategies. Samantha assesses herself by critical reflection on her own teaching and discussions with Paul her assistant. She observes, takes notes and is able to see when things work well or not. A lesson is successful if the children have learnt in a constructive and positive, not a stressful, manner. She produces individual portfolios for her students. They are not just about academic learning but how the class operates as a group and is challenged in their thinking.

At around 3pm the Preprimary/Year 1 parents start to arrive. They drift in and sit at the back of the mat so their child can climb on and have a cuddle, listening while Samantha reads the last story of the day to them. Younger siblings are welcomed into Samantha’s class, and often end up sitting on her lap while she reads a story. Although toddlers can be disruptive at times, Samantha welcomes their presence in the class as members of the school community and an investment in the future of that toddler in the school.
At 3.15pm the school resonates with gleeful shouts and children flow in a torrent down the stairs from above, and up the stairs from below. Parents are standing at various strategic points inside and outside the school to intercept their children in this flow, and to negotiate the inevitable spontaneous social arrangements so central to the children’s lives.

After the last child has left the school, some teachers still have several hours ahead of them, including participation in staff and School Council meetings.

The weekly staff meeting occurs at 3.30pm in the mezzanine office. The school has a Coordinator, currently Kathryn Netherwood, who works with the staff as a team in a collaborative approach to decision-making and planning. The school works best when the staff and coordinator operate as a team. The Coordinator’s role is challenging because she has to be very consultative yet still bears final management responsibility. Kathryn comes to the staff meeting with a set of ideas that she puts on the table for discussion. Some of the other teachers also have agenda items for discussion. Nothing is a given at the start of a meeting. Some of the issues the teachers discuss are logistic; some are educational; most are both. Today the staff are organising the Learning Journey. As in previous years, children will be invited to bring a parent, relative or friend along to the school so the two share a set of learning activities together. The Learning Journey will be followed by a morning tea for the school community. Today the teachers are planning the sets of activities the visitors will participate in with the children. The teachers also have conversations around their work programs and problems they face with children or conflicts with parents. Some comments are inspirational, others are challenging for the staff as group or for individuals. While the staff don’t always agree on everything, they do agree on the core ideal: each person is equally important, and if the staff are to work and learn together as a team they need to be flexible in the roles and responsibilities they take on. A collegiate approach is valued highly at the school. They know each other very well and there is a very high retention rate among staff - most have been together for 12 years. The kindy teacher Juliet is new and delighted with the school, still finding her feet in this her first job. It was lucky for the school that Juliet did a practicum here last year and she was able to come straight back to work here. The staff model best practice for her, supporting a view of children as powerful, intellectual and compassionate higher-order thinkers, not empty vessels. There are no barriers, bureaucratic or otherwise, to teachers doing what they want in their classes – they are guided by values and experience. The school works with the WA Curriculum Framework which aligns with the school’s approach to education very well. Maintaining best practice means continued professional learning as individuals and as a staff: everyone has to invest their best and challenge themselves continually. While the teachers discuss their issues, Grant Taylor, parent of one-time Lance Holt School students, is moving about the school diligently cleaning and straightening everything for tomorrow.

The monthly School Council meeting begins at 6.30pm over a few snacks and a cuppa. Council consists of parents, a teachers’ representative and the School Coordinator. Council is a community within the school community and its members share the view that children are at the centre of the school’s concern. Many parents come to the council with a specific agenda but soon realise that their agenda sits alongside the many other things that need to be done and it is a learning experience for parents. Council is responsible for the governance and direction of the school,
making decisions on a whole range of policy issues. It also promotes the school in the community, supports of the Coordinator and, of course, fundraises. The school is respected by the local government as an important ‘stakeholder’ in Fremantle’s West End, and hardly a week goes by without the School Council discussing a local issue and making a recommendation. Much of the Council’s work is ‘invisible’ behind the daily running of the school, but important nevertheless. Council has respect, faith and trust in the Coordinator and teachers as professionals and seek to transmit this all the time: there is no sense of ‘them and us’, just ‘all of us together’. Many of the staff have, or have had, children at the school. This experience enables the teachers to see things from a parents’ viewpoint as well as a teacher’s viewpoint. The Chair of the Council is currently Bob White, who has been Chair for three years, and a Councillor for seven. Today’s agenda includes:

- Teaching peace and war – discussion of how to approach the news of another invasion.
- Busy bee – a day of maintenance around the school is planned by the Council with coordinating jobs allocated to certain Councillors.
- Festival parade – the annual Fremantle Festival Parade is rapidly approaching and much work needs to be done planning the School’s float and theme.
- Appeal – work needs to be done commenting on an inappropriate development proposed for the building next door.
- Skills auction – an auction of the skills, services and goods within the school community is being organised as a fundraiser.

Issues are debated long and fruitfully and are resolved by consensus. From time to time, the meeting drifts amiably off-task, and often dissolves into laughter. A new sub-committee is formed to plan the float for the Fremantle Festival; and Council resolves to co-opt another parent with specialist skills to work on the building appeal. At the end of the meeting, around 8.30pm, the Council departs and the front door of the little school closes for the last time today. A few local residents are wandering home from cafes in the dark. The port is quiet and a light sea breeze wafts up Henry Street - the spirits are always alert even as the town sleeps.
Acknowledgements

We thank Seth Yeoman, Christine Kennedy, Debra Salahudeen, Samantha Wynne, Juliet Lewer, Genevieve Hawks, Steve Levine and family, Anna Stuart, Gary Burke, Jane Whiteley, Tricia Woods and Rhys Ainsworth, Hannah Wilkins, Cooper/Cox family, Jacob and family for providing the ideas that form the basis of this chapter. We also thank Declan Burke and Bob White for critical readings. We also acknowledge the unpublished report by Marzel Eigures (2002) entitled: “Lance Holt School Fremantle: Influential Factors and Main Shifts from 1970 to 2002”. The ‘Day in the Life of Lance Holt School’ documented above does not portray a single historical day but rather is a mosaic of real life events and programs happening now or recently.
### Appendix 1: NAPLAN Results for Year 7, 2008

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<tr>
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<th>NAPLAN 2008</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>Writing</td>
<td>532</td>
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<tr>
<td>Spelling</td>
<td>537</td>
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<tr>
<td>Grammar &amp; Punctuation</td>
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<tr>
<td>Numeracy</td>
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### Lance Holt School - Year 7 NAPLAN 2008

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Australian Students</th>
<th>Top 20% of Students</th>
<th>Middle 60% of Students</th>
<th>Lower 20% of Students</th>
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<tr>
<td>Numeracy</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
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<td>Spelling</td>
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**Appendix 2: Graduate Destinations for Year 7s**

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</thead>
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<td>Academic Scholarship</td>
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<tr>
<td>Student 2</td>
<td>John Curtin College of the Arts</td>
<td>Gifted &amp; Talented Music &amp; Academic Excellence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student 3</td>
<td>Melville High School</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student 4</td>
<td>John Curtin College of the Arts</td>
<td>Gifted &amp; Talented Drama</td>
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<td>Gifted &amp; Talented Music &amp; Academic Excellence</td>
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<td>Student 16</td>
<td>Willetton High School</td>
<td>Basket Ball Scholarship</td>
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</table>
Appendix 3: Lance Holt School Values Statement

- We are committed to developing a wonder of the natural world and encouraging a care of the environment which reflects a global stewardship.
- We recognise the importance of learning as a life long process.
- We actively pursue cooperation and the peaceful resolution of conflict.
- We encourage creativity, curiosity and the questioning mind.
- We recognise the special vulnerability of children and their need for a safe and healthy environment.
- We see the education of children encompassing their social, emotional, academic and physical development.
- We encourage self responsibility, self knowledge and self reflection.
- We promote shared responsibility with regard to the relationship between self and community.
- We understand the diversity and uniqueness of the Fremantle community and respect the special relationship between ourselves and that community.
- We affirm the equal worth and basic right of all persons. In doing to we recognise individual differences and the uniqueness of the individual.

Case Study 4: Lanyon High School, Australian Capital Territory

The Overall Project
In 2007, the University of Newcastle was approached by DEST (now DEEWR) with a request to conduct a study that adopted a quantitative as well as a qualitative approach, and which was designed to produce evidence-based findings about relationships between values education, student academic diligence, school coherence, classroom ambience, student teacher relationships, student well being, teacher well being and parental participation. A component of the larger project, this case study was conducted to provide, in particular, qualitative research data on values education in an Australian high school.

The Research Questions
The research questions of the overall project were:
1. Can the impact of values education on teaching and school ethos, as well as student diligence and behaviour, be tested empirically and observed reliably?
2. How is values education being implemented in ways that elicit positive change in teacher practice and student response?
3. How do we find evidence for the many claims based on teacher testimony that values education has a positive effect on: student academic diligence; school ambience; student-teacher relationship; student and teacher wellbeing; and parental and family participation?
4. What added impact does explicit teaching of values have on relevant student effects?

The Case Study Research Focus
To answer the above research questions, this case study addressed three main areas of research:
1. How values education is being implemented in the school (what its approach and intentions are).

2. The perceptions of teachers, principals and parents about any positive changes in teacher practice that can be associated with the approach to values education.

3. The perceptions of teachers, principals and parents about any effects that values education has on student academic diligence, school coherence, classroom ambience, student teacher relationships, student well being, teacher well being and parental participation.

Research Methodology
The research methodology used in this case study was both qualitative and quantitative, but having an emphasis on qualitative measures, letting quantitative data corroborate and provide a fuller picture where possible. Thus the research involved:

1. Multiple site visit/s (2007-2008) to enable the researcher to determine how values education is being implemented in the school.

2. Gathering of action research data, generated by selected teachers (‘teacher scholars’) to monitor and record learner transformation and belonging.

3. A pre and post questionnaire completed by all teachers directly involved in the values education program designed to provide further insights into the approach to values education and teachers’ perceptions about its impact (see Appendices A and B).

4. Follow up focus groups with teachers designed to “flesh out” issues that emerge from the responses to the questionnaire.

5. An interview with the Principal.

6. An analysis of Standardised State/Territory Assessment to examine possible improvements in academic outcomes.

7. An analysis of behavioural records of the school to examine possible improvements in student wellbeing, self-management and the school culture as a whole.

8. Participants in the research checking the data.

Setting - The School Introduced
The research was carried out in a high school in the southern outskirts of the Australian Capital Territory. The school was established in 1996 and its population includes 62 members of staff (52 teachers) and 623 students from years 7-10, ages 12-16 years. The school is strongly connected to a cluster of schools, which includes three primary schools and an outdoor and environmental education school. The three cluster primary schools have also been built in the past seventeen years, reflecting significant suburban development in the area. Thirty-five percent of the students are identified as being socio-economically disadvantaged, according to the Australian Bureau of Statistics Index of Socio-Economic Disadvantage. Furthermore, the area is a high mortgage belt where low disposable incomes create conditions that mirror poverty.

Approach to Values Education

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Footnote 2: In this case study, where data is hard to separate but nevertheless tell something about the site under study, reference will be made to the cluster of schools rather than the high school alone.
The five cluster schools have worked collaboratively since 1996 to develop a shared philosophy and shared understandings about teaching and learning. The cluster vision is about providing learning that engages, motivates and values students as individuals. The cluster’s goal is to develop learners who are active members of society, able to collaborate, solve problems, embrace diversity, and be flexible and creative.

In 2003, with a major emphasis on professional learning, teachers began working with the Productive Pedagogies framework (Education Queensland, 2003), focusing on intellectual quality. During this year teachers developed a common language for discussing pedagogy, leading to the introduction of the Learning by Design framework in 2004 (Kalantzis & Cope, 2004). This framework is a tool to design, document and track pedagogical choices that recognise and harness diversity. The two conditions of learning of the framework are learner belonging and learner transformation. Hence the values of inclusion, respect for difference, and tolerance and understanding are included in the framework. Also, as constructivism underpins the pedagogy of Learning by Design, there is a strong focus on student talk, capacity to reflect and collaboration, ensuring the transfer of agency from the teacher to the students and the development of student autonomy.

Participation in the values education project gave teachers in the cluster schools the opportunity to further develop their work in Learning by Design by designing, documenting and implementing units of work with a values focus but which were embedded in the curriculum. 22 teacher scholars from the five cluster schools participated in the project and collected evidence of learner transformation. By using a combination of frameworks, therefore, namely Learning by Design and The Nine Values for Australian Schooling, both content and pedagogy reflected a strong values focus.

Participants
This case study focused, in particular, on three teacher scholars and nine students from the high school under study. Pseudonyms are used to protect the identity of participants.

Laina teaches year 8 English and Studies of Society and the Environment. She is also in the role of Year 8 Coordinator, which has a strong pastoral care focus. Laina has been teaching for five and half years and 2008 is her third year at the high school. Her first two years of teaching was in a primary school and she is at trained primary school teacher. However, she is ‘loving the challenges of teaching adolescents’. She is very committed to inclusive practice, providing a supportive classroom environment and building positive relationships with students. Her unit of work, entitled, Ask Australia, examined the values of respect, tolerance and inclusiveness through an investigation of Australian history before and after European settlement. Throughout this unit, Laina collected qualitative evidence on three students, Ben, Barbara, and Rhys, through role-plays, creative responses and debates.

Laina describes Ben as a great thinker who loves to explore ideas in depth and look at all sides to a story or argument. He is an above average performer academically. He is a quiet person but he still interacts positively with others and is generally accepted by his peers. Barbara is a high performer in the class – both academically and socially. She enjoys debating and expresses her ideas confidently in writing and discussions.
She is very mature and interacts well with all students in the class. Laina describes Rhys is a very ‘cheeky boy who likes to have fun in class, which can at times be disruptive’. Academically he is in the bottom 20% of students across the State/Territory. While he is confident in discussion, he avoids writing. He attends school regularly but says he doesn’t like school. Socially he tries to make friends by showing off, trying to impress and he likes attention whether it be positive or negative.

Sophie teaches years 9 and 10 Photo media and is also the year 9 Coordinator. She has been teaching at the high school for five and a half years but overall has ten years of teaching experience. She has worked as an art teacher in primary schools and alternative education settings, and has also taught drama and Japanese. She is committed to the teaching of visual arts and connecting students to the curriculum. She also believes it is very important to foster positive relationships with students, helping them to understand boundaries as they grow into adults. Her unit of work entitled, I Feel so Manipulated, looked at integrity in the media. Throughout this unit, Sophie collected qualitative evidence of the learning of four students, Gabe, Raina, Mack and Kathrine.

Sophie describes Gabe has having many friends among his peers and as quite loyal to them. He has learning difficulties and he refuses any assistance with his work that might make him seem special to other students. He does not often engage in a whole lesson and if he doesn’t understand he will try to disrupt the whole class to deflect from his difficulties. Raina is a mature student who has a strong sense of self worth. She has a small but strong friendship group. Mack is a mature student who has good relationships with friends. Students tend to show him respect. He speaks confidently and respectfully. Kathrine has her own sense of style and belongs to a close and protective friendship group, though she is friendly towards most students. She is very capable and creative. Sophie stated that all four students were curious and motivated to find out when they were being lied to or manipulated.

Hilary teaches in the Arts and Technology area and is also an Executive Teacher, coordinating student welfare across the school. Like Laina, she also trained as a primary school teacher and has been teaching for five and a half years, with five years spent at the high school. She is passionate about student wellbeing and developing well rounded young people. Her role in the school is as an executive teacher in student welfare. Her unit of work, entitled Driving Me Mild, was designed to complement the Road Ready program which all year 10 students complete in order to gain a learner drivers’ licence. The values of responsibility, fair go and respect were incorporated in this unit, which is part of the Learning for Life course. Throughout this unit, Hilary collected qualitative evidence on two students, Cailin and Tom.

Hilary describes Cailin as highly motivated and a high achiever academically. She is a mature student and could be described as an ‘all rounder’, someone ‘who excels in all areas of the curriculum’. She interacts confidently with others and has great leadership skills. Tom achieves at an average level academically. He seems to be socially accepted by his peers but is sometimes a little awkward in how he interacts with others. He could be described as well adjusted. Both students were positive about the unit, as they were excited about the impending freedom of having a licence and taking another step towards freedom and adulthood.
What follows are some more detailed narratives of the above participants’ interaction with values education.

**STORIES FROM THE CLASSROOM**

**Laina and ‘Ask Australia’**

For Laina, the first step when addressing the value of respect was to expose students to a story and then have them discussing and thinking about what their own definition of respect was. There were some interesting responses from the three focus students, ranging from ‘Respect is when you treat people with higher authority, e.g., teachers, with kindness and do what they ask’ (Barbara), and ‘Respect is like when you respect the privacy, you let them have their own time and let them do their own stuff to an extent’ (Ben), to ‘Respect is gay!’ (Rhys).

Given that Rhys was the one initially showing negativity towards the learning in this unit, the transformation of students’ understandings of the value of respect was particularly observable in this student. During the unit, he moved from his one phrase response to a few more sentences, such as, ‘I write here out of respect so that those who read it have something to do’. While his cheeky attitude is still retained in this longer sentence, at least it was a sentence! Moreover, toward the end of the unit, the cheekiness had vanished altogether:

> Respect is tolerance and kindness and being polite treating some(one) how you would like to be treated. For example if some one was getting bashed I would help him and break it up and tell a teacher. When some one was telling a speech I would listen to the person that was telling the speech. I think that respect is when you give a helping hand.

Rhys developed his understanding of respect and showed more confidence in his literacy skills. Instead of a single phrase response, he was able to write much more, showing correct sentencing, punctuation and even some editing of his writing. This was a significant improvement in this student’s academic diligence, as he was considered ‘difficult’ and ‘challenging’ by a number of teachers before the unit started. Upon the completion of the unit, the same teachers now reported ‘a radical change in behaviour and attitude’.

Similarly, the following letter was written by Barbara to demonstrate her understanding of tolerance and showing that she is doing much more than just paying ‘lip service’ to the value. There is evidence of well-developed literacy skills with her using the correct language and structural conventions of a letter, complex sentences, paragraphing, punctuating, editing and proofreading:

> To whom it may concern

> I am writing to tell you of my concern about the Cronulla riots and racism. I don’t understand why everyone with a Middle Eastern background got punished for something two reckless boys did. Innocent people got hurt even now (sic) they didn’t even do anything.
I don’t know why people think it is so funny to hurt people and destroy people’s property. It is just wasting the police’s much needed time.

I wonder if this gives everyone in Australia a much bigger message. That we are turning into a much more racist country. I think we have a serious problem and it needs to be fixed.

We all don’t have to like each other or even get along with each other. But I think that we all need to respect each other and acknowledge that they are Australian from whatever background they come from. If they live in Australia they are Australian.

I also think that people should be able to be proud to be Australian. It shouldn’t be wrecked by a few people that think it is “cool” to destroy the reputation of Australia as a non-racist country.

I think we should try and properly educate the Australian people especially young Australians. To help prevent Australia from being known as a racist country.

Ben also showed intellectual depth of the values of inclusion, tolerance and understanding, as well as the conventions of poetic writing. Like Barbara, he is not just paying ‘lip service’ to the value or to the task:

Lend a Hand to help Me Understand.
Without Understanding Life Can Be Hard.
Inclusion these days can sometimes be a delusion.
Sometimes People Include You Sometimes you are left out.
Tolerance can be shown yet sometimes it goes as little as a glance.
You Can’t Make A dance To Show Tolerance.
It is Shown By not Making a Moan OR Groan.
And Accepting People and Life For What It Is.
You Can Show Respect In majority of Aspects.
It helps if you don’t Reject.
Do you really want to be left with regret.
These four Words.
Understanding.
Inclusion.
Tolerance.
Respect.

The students had many interesting discussions about respect in their lives and in Australian history. They challenged each other, gave examples from their own experience and formed their own opinions about respect and how it played a role in their own lives. Rhys mostly sat and listened during class discussions. Barbara, one of his good friends, challenged Rhys at one point by saying, ‘Rhys … would you expect
someone you don’t know to respect you?’ He replied, ‘Yes,’ and Barbara retorted, ‘Well why wouldn’t you do the same for someone you don’t know?’ Rhys responded with a shrug of the shoulders. Although he did not respond, Rhys seemed to be thinking about Barbara’s challenge.

Students also explored racism through a short film, entitled *Between the Flags*, which dealt with the Cronulla riots. Initially, while Barbara and Ben were able to discuss the meaning of the text, Rhys and one of his other friends responded with, ‘Yeah… a riot. Awesome. I saw it on T.V.’ When they saw footage of the riots they said, ‘That would be so cool. I would be on the Aussie’s side to get the Lebs.’ They laughed at the violence. Indeed, Rhys and his friends were often in small but violent altercations in the playground. In general, violence and gang-like mentality were perceived as a joke. After extensive discussions on racial violence in the students’ life worlds and in the wider world, Rhys showed a minor shift in his opinions of violence and racism. When asked a few lessons later what the title of the short film meant, Rhys wrote, ‘It’s called *Between the Flags* because there are like two different countries [race backgrounds] and they are like coming together to work together.’

To demonstrate the learning that took place over the term, students formed groups to write and perform role-plays on respect, tolerance, understanding or inclusion. Ben and his group chose respect. Their role-play was about a new boy to the school, who looked slightly different. At first, they teased the boy and spoke over him. By the end of the play, they had decided, as a class, to respect his differences, and to make him feel included by asking him to play with them at recess.

Rhys and Barbara were in the same group doing role-plays. In one role-play, they had one person with a disability in a wheelchair that was being pushed by Barbara as they went shopping. Rhys and another student approached Barbara and her sister and made fun of her disability, pointing and laughing. Barbara spoke firmly and assertively to the boys and explained her sister had a disability and that everyone deserves to be treated with respect, regardless of what they look like or sound like. The boys were quite taken aback by what she said and apologised, shook her hand and helped her across the street.

The class dynamics have changed since the teaching of the unit began. The students are now using the language of the values as they debate important issues and often correct and remind each other to use manners, respect and be tolerant of each other’s opinions and feelings. At the end of the unit, in their personal reflections, students wrote responses such as, ‘It was fun to be able to have our own opinion,’ and ‘It was good to listen to other people’s ideas and we were allowed to agree or disagree with them.’

**Sophie and ‘I Feel So Manipulated’**

In the years 9 and 10 Photo media class the students’ initial understanding of integrity showed that no one could define the concept satisfactorily. Responses to the question, ‘What does integrity mean?’ included:
- Respect and pride
- Appearance and how you act
- Not sure, pride?
- Don’t know
- Determination
- Impact

Because of this unit, there was significant and observable learner transformation from the initial understandings of integrity. The students developed a metalanguage and deepened their understandings of integrity. They discussed the value by posing dilemmas in everyday situations, identifying persons who demonstrated the value in their expanding circles of experience, and exploring the causes and effects of demonstrating the value and how these might be counter-linked. The links to their life worlds were reinforced when students devised a code of ethics relating to YouTube. The students identified situations that might be of concern to exposing minors and the, at times, unwitting internet-using community to a range of undesirable, anti-social and even illegal images and/or behaviours. They were further exposed to the concept ‘self-regulation of integrity’ and how it relied on personal integrity being consistent between words and deeds.

The culminating activity of the students’ learning was creating a visual representation of integrity. In small groups students created a role-play exploring and demonstrating integrity in a situation that might relate to the students’ own experiences. Eight or more tableaux, or ‘frozen moments’, were selected to best illustrate the students’ understanding of integrity. The task required more than just an understanding of the concept of integrity; it engaged the student in creating visual clues and demonstrating how the images might also maintain visual integrity (including objective use of camera angles and lighting). In the tableaux, the year 10 students (Mack and Kathrine) demonstrated a very high level of visual literacy during the final task. Their images were clear and made use of symbolic gestures to express their deeper understanding of integrity. Gabe, however, did not relate the concept of integrity to linking one’s words with one’s actions. He understood integrity as being good, e.g., not breaking school rules. Raina, on the other hand, was able to demonstrate intellectual depth of the concept through writing, discussing and role-playing, even though her ability to represent integrity through visual language was not strong.
Hilary and ‘Driving Me Mild’
Students were engaged and enthusiastic about *Driving Me Mild*. They could clearly make connections to their life world and they were excited about the impending freedom of having their licence. Students perceived that getting their drivers licence is an important step toward adulthood. The question was: Did they understand the responsibilities that came with the freedom and independence of driving? The values of responsibility, fair go and respect were included in the unit, which focused on the ethics and morals of driving by examining road rage, the trauma experienced by victims of road accidents and the importance of having respect for road rules.

The evidence of learner transformation included drawings of students’ ‘ideal’ cars before and after the teaching and surveys to investigate whether students have taken on the values and attitudes of being a safe driver. Changes in student understanding of social issues were also evident in their PowerPoint presentations on road rage. Overall, there was learner transformation in relation to environmental issues, road rage and safety. The focus on values also developed students’ metalanguage of values, which in turn enhanced their communicative capacity.
In these images by Cailin, her original drawing was quite imaginative with an umbrella. It also ran on bubbles and floated. Her final drawing had four strap seat belts, thicker windscreen, animal detection sensors, outside airbags and big non-failure all stick wheels. So, clearly she had developed intellectual depth about the importance of safety for those inside and outside the car, including animals.

Tom’s original illustration included things like big wheels, ‘fire stuff’, ‘engine thing’, spoiler etc. His focus was on power and speed. His final drawing included inflatable pillows, reverse sensors, solar power, smash proof glass and a top speed of 120km per hour, showing his new concerns for safety and the environment.

The road rage presentations focused on respect and personal reflection, as the transition from being an observer of road rage as a passenger to being the driver who is dealing with road rage was difficult for many students. Nevertheless, while the students’ main motivation was still to do the ‘core’ Road Ready modules so that they were eligible to gain a learner’s licence, it was evident that students were able to make the connection between obtaining their drivers licence and the implications of that on their social, emotional and environmental responsibilities.

THEMES AND ANALYSES

Values Education and Teachers
The values education project has led to positive and transformative changes in teacher practices and teacher wellbeing. Across the cluster of schools, twenty-one teachers volunteered for the project to become experts who could lead others in the values education work. The teacher scholars, as they are called, have worked in collaborative teams to plan and teach values via the Learning Elements. As a consequence, the project has grown from twenty-one teachers to thirty-five teachers involved in designing and documenting the Learning Elements and over seventy teachers involved in implementing them.

Sixteen Learning Elements have been produced to date (July 2008), documenting the values work and making it accessible to others. This will be beneficial for future values education initiatives given the high turnover of staff and the high proportion of early career teachers. The documentation also provides a model of how to use recently introduced State/Territory frameworks in planning and assessing student learning.
Most importantly, perhaps, the school leadership has been successful in changing the social and professional climate among teachers. Teacher surveys conveyed general work dissatisfaction pre-implementation of the project. This spurred on several initiatives to change the status quo (e.g., consultation of teachers, PD days to foster a shared vision, and monitoring by lead-teachers). The result has been a notable change in teachers’ over-all satisfaction levels, which is reflected in less absenteeism and ‘more enthusiasm toward taking on new responsibilities within the school community’.

### School Satisfaction Surveys

<table>
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<th>Overall I am satisfied with this school</th>
<th>Agree and strongly agree % 2005</th>
<th>Agree and strongly agree % 2008</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Staff</td>
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<td>80</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
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</table>

*High school sector data is not available for 2005

Meeting the ‘chain of needs’, starting with the needs of teachers, are reported to have in turn improved student wellbeing and student outcomes. It was reported that now the surplus of care is ‘passed on to the kids’, who in turn ‘give the teachers more of what made them want to be teachers in the first place’. The result has been that positive social experiences among the teachers have aided school processes on all levels.

One major reason for the success has been that there have been resources to employ specific people to work with teachers collaboratively. Often the principal in a school will manage this role more or less effectively, often depending on how much time is taken by administration. But by having separate appointments of staff whose job it is to work intensely with teachers has proven essential. Young teachers, in particular, need mentoring, and by having supporting infrastructures that can accommodate this process (e.g., experienced staff as well as a framework in which collaboration is integral), has meant that a number of young teachers have, as one senior staff expressed it, ‘excelled where they could easily have become part of the high attrition rates for new teachers’.

Sustained, quality mentoring of collaborative planning and implementation may be essential in education in general, but certainly this aspect becomes even more important in trying to implement something relatively new, such as values education. Perhaps the abrupt transition between new teachers’ university training and their ‘school-baptism-by-fire’ is something that also need considering in this connection. Whatever the partnerships possible, values education, being a fairly new initiative in most schools, seems highly depended on experienced (net)workers, or change agents, to scaffold good values education conceptions, collaboration and practices.

This values education project has also exemplified the benefit for teachers of having thorough planning frameworks that interrogate the pedagogy and learning outcomes of values education, in turn becoming a source of documentation of learning outcomes as well as a resource for future planning. The use of *Productive Pedagogies* (Education Queensland 2003) as an overarching framework to describe what is quality teaching and learning, as well as the use of the *Learning by Design* (www.newlearningonline.com) framework as a collaborative planning tool to achieve
quality teaching and learning in the classroom, have proven a potent combination. By having a combination of frameworks that were values rich, theoretically as well as practically, both content and pedagogy have been embedded with a values focus.

The school has further exemplified a need for understanding the reciprocal relationship between having useful frameworks and keeping educational planning and implementation an organic process that energises the school community. For example, the comprehensive Learning Elements produced from each learning unit appeal to most teachers, in that they ‘don’t have to reinvent the wheel’, as one teacher put it. Some teachers, however, commented that it might be less motivating to teach ready-made lessons. The two ways of looking at the benefits and challenges of having fully developed units as shared resources are not mutually exclusive, of course, pointing to the need for understanding how a combination of both approaches can be superior to either on its own. If teachers are encouraged to modify their own versions of already-made learning units, incorporating their own inspirations, it is not only a way of keeping the process of planning alive and interesting for teachers, but also a way of expanding the quantity and variations of shared planning resources.

To assist this understanding, the school’s leadership has been crucial. As long as documentation/ lesson plans are perceived by teaching staff as ‘open’ to constant renewal and interpretation so that documents are kept ‘alive’ (e.g., a new teacher picks up a previous learning module but makes it his own by adapting it to his particular class and learning objectives), the rigorous documentation deriving from using Learning by Design also serves toward sustainability – something desirable for the school, having had a high staff turnover and a need to assist new teachers take on a values focus in their teaching.

Whatever frameworks are chosen, collaboration and a whole-school approach is key in creating a positive school approach to values education. All teachers interviewed expressed appreciation of the shared planning with other teachers, reducing fears and increasing enthusiasm and inspiration in the process. As such, collaborative planning may be seen as parallel to a constructivist classroom, and therefore as having similar benefits as normally associated with guided constructivism (e.g., making values education initiatives ‘one’s own’ rather than something that ‘one has to do’ and as directed by a top-down model of leadership).

Related to this observation is the fact that frameworks seem secondary to the principles with which they are implemented. Having tested and tried planning frameworks certainly make a difference because it supports teachers to think about and document learning outcomes as well as accumulate resources; however, without a leadership modelling a whole-school coherence to planning and collaboration that is in alignment with the chosen frameworks’ philosophy and pedagogy, schools seem doomed to work with great ‘tools’ but little ‘craftsmanship’.

Finally, but certainly not least, the aspect of ‘craftsmanship’ also relates to the transformational nature of dealing with values in themselves. Teachers were reported to have discovered ‘that values are everywhere’, and that ‘being conscious of this now makes them able to be explicit about values in different learning contexts and across KLAs’. It was also reported how explicit values teaching ‘makes the teacher very conscious about their own modelling of values’ (e.g., respectful language), and that
‘when teachers can apply it beyond a theoretical context it has a much more transformative power’. In other words, engaging with values seems to have transformational power in itself, as the adoption of values education by teachers has proven more likely to make them ‘at one’ with the values implicit or explicit in their teaching, in turn making the teachers into potent ‘curricula’ because the students are experiencing good models of practice.

**Values as Embedded in the Curriculum**

In the school under study, values have been integrated into learning areas, such as English, History, Studies of Society and the Environment, Life Skills and the Arts. In the process, students have increased their curriculum content knowledge. For example, year 8 students gained historical knowledge while year 9 and 10 students gained technical skills in using Photoshop. Students also developed intellectual depth and understanding about social issues, such as road rage (see *Driving Me Mild*), truth in the media (see *I Feel so Manipulated*) and racism (see *Ask Australia*). Intellectual quality was demonstrated through rich discussion, as students were able to debate important issues.

Because of these positive outcomes for student learning, the school has seen a positive change in teacher attitudes about the significance of explicitly teaching values in Key Learning Areas (KLAs), such as Science, Technology, SOSE, Maths, English, Life Skills, History and the Arts. This change has come about mainly because the teacher scholars have been presenting their work and case writings at whole Cluster workshops, thus sharing their expertise and inspiring others to be part of the project. Indeed, even though the project has been completed, teachers continue to include values in their planning. In effect, the leadership shown by these teacher scholars has meant that the values focus has extended to most areas of the curriculum.

The accomplishment of embedding values education across KLAs may also be credited to the school’s clear aim from the start to integrate values into the curriculum, instead of seeing it as a mere add on to an already crowded learning agenda. This is of particular importance in today’s education climate, where there is concern by some that we provide ‘cafeteria offerings’ rather than a ‘patterned meal’. In addition, the Cluster’s focus on multi-literacies certainly ensured an emphasis on literacy and communicative capacity, which is bound to have positive, exponential effects across the students’ learning. In more general terms, teachers have expressed satisfaction with the fact that values education has provided an opportunity to embed values beyond personal development programs, as they see this to be enhancing the social relationships that underpin teaching and learning.

Related to the matter of integrating values across the curriculum is also the issue of how the contextual embedding of values in the curriculum seems key to student acceptance and yet also seems somewhat age specific. Teaching values in context is no doubt needed with all age groups, but it has been interesting to observe in the cluster as a whole that the values teaching of younger students often has contained a stronger focus on the values *themselves*, something that seems less acceptable by the older students in the high school context. For example, embedding values in the meaningful and purpose driven context of getting road ready makes the secondary student happy to examine values, whereas the construction of a lesson plan around a particular value in itself was observed to be attractive to the primary student (as long
as ‘play’ and ‘games’ are the driving forces of pedagogy). The relationship between explicit values education across the curriculum and children’s developmental stages in general seems worthy of further research, in order to forge stronger links between what we know about quality teaching and learning and the intent to teach the curriculum via a values perspective.

**Impact on Students**

A conclusion shared by all the teacher scholars seems worthy to highlight: that is, developing a common language for students to discuss, reflect and act on their learning in relation to values has had positive, exponential effects that go beyond communicative capacity. Having a shared language seems to be at the centre of developing deeper understandings of values, as it allows students to engage in discussions, clarify their thinking and develop socially constructed connections to values. Because language is so central to social interaction and communication – and perhaps even to the very capacity to reflect (Vygotsky 1985) – having a metalanguage provides a pivotal reference point from which students can explore, consolidate and build values-related knowledge, whether that be in formal learning situations or in contexts beyond the classroom.

As such, reinforcing a metalanguage that is connected to values can be seen as closely related to fostering emotional literacy, and in turn, empathetic character and pro-social behaviour. By having a metalanguage with which to discuss values, students were able to openly talk about their feelings, resolve quarrels and incidents of bullying, and to explore issues of feeling isolated and how to make friends. It empowered them to participate in discussions that effectively became vehicles for examining their own and others’ values. All of this in turn intensified the students’ understanding and sense of responsibility so that they could take actions to care for the environment, be fair to others, empathise with people in need, critically reflect on societal influences (media, television, etc), and so on.

Thus, by weaving into the language development the realm of values and human relationships, the school empowered students by making them ‘values literate’ – a special kind of student-autonomy that seems to make anything else related to values education that much more potent. For example, as seen in *Driving Me Mild* and *I Feel So Manipulated*, the values focus deepened the students’ understanding of their social and environmental responsibilities as road users and of integrity so they could critically reflect on the role of the media and technology in their lives.

Just as technology engages and motivates students in learning through the links to their life worlds, the *Nine Values for Australian Schooling* framework provided another effective way of linking content, such as Australian history, science and the environment, media and English, to students’ life worlds. Using the *Learning by Design* framework, teachers were prompted to connect, respond to, and build on the interests, experiences and values of their students. In *Ask Australia* students made links to their life worlds by reflecting on their own values and giving examples from their own lives. In *I’m Feeling Manipulated* students created a tableaux of how the value of integrity might be demonstrated in an everyday situation and created tableaux on finding money and deciding whether to return it as well as a tableaux on bullying and how to deal with it. These promoted more engagement and reflection by students so that there was intellectual depth and application of values in school and outside
school contexts. In *Driving Me Mild*, we also saw how students moved from an understanding that only concerned the exterior world of driving to and understanding that included the interior world of driving, such as feelings, beliefs, social dynamics, etc.

Qualitative evidence of, in particular, literacy improvement was provided in the action research of the teacher scholars. This literacy improvement was in the linguistic mode (writing), the visual mode (images), the audio mode (music and discussions) and the gestural mode (role plays and images). Making meaning of multi-modal texts is central to multi-literacies. It catered for a variety of learning styles, often incorporated technology, and supported students to discuss and demonstrate their understandings of values in varied ways.

The performance of students on standardised State/ Territory assessment also provided quantitative evidence of improvement in literacy. One of the most difficult areas to improve student performance is from year 7 to year 9. However, the following graphs entitled, *The Percentage Drift Year 7—9* in reading and writing, are evidence of the change that has occurred for students as they moved from year 7 to year 9 compared to the system data. The cluster began work with the *Learning by Design* framework in 2004. Since 2005 its effects are evident in the consistent trend in the decreasing number of students in the bottom 20% and the increasing number of students in the middle 60% and upper 20%. The trend has been maintained in 2006 and 2007, as more teachers have implemented *Learning by Design* and also included other values education foci.
The following value-added/comparative performance graphs show that the average rate of progress of students in reading and writing in 2007 is close to that of students across the system. There are only a small number of students who are below the lower marker of confidence, which is an indicator of the focus on values education. In 2007 there are only two students below the lower marker of confidence in reading and only one in writing.
Over the period 2004-2007 there has been a significant trend in the decreasing number of students who are below the confidence markers. For example in 2004 there were 25 students in reading and 14 students in writing who were below the confidence markers. From 2004-2007 these results have been maintained in reading, as well as improving the results in writing.

**Impact on the School**

The impact of values education on teacher practices and student outcomes have already been discussed in previous sections, and can naturally not be separated from the impact this has made on the school community as a whole. Strategically, however, the school community has been involved in the values education project in a number of specific ways. For example, a cluster charter of values was developed by the cluster board via three cluster board meetings, involving members from the school and community. At these meetings teachers presented their work to encourage discussion about values with members of the community. Since then, various community events have been conducted, in some cases with record numbers of parents participating. Also involving the larger community were various projects of caring for the community and/or the environment (e.g., ‘Making Harmony Happen’, or ‘Environmental Pledges’), some of which received media coverage and won community prizes (e.g., water tanks).

The initiative to engage the larger school community has also included invitations to parents to be included in decisions about their children’s values education, as well as specific values projects themselves (e.g., the involvement of parent representatives, regular school-parent communication about values education initiatives). Parents also have had the opportunity to see the Learning Elements (unit plans), thus being part of the actual pedagogy. Involving the larger community has furthermore included other members of the school community, such as invited speakers and excursion target groups.
All of these initiatives have improved community, school and classroom ambience in not only the high school community under study but in the whole cluster of schools.

As importantly, perhaps, this impact has filtered down to the students themselves, who have come to own values more deeply through community engagement and via various forms of community service (e.g., students focus on practical applications of values in the Road Ready program; year 3/4 students sending relief to drought stricken farmers, or high-school students being involved in tree planting). Uniformly, teachers report that doing something with and for the community increases the students’ engagement in their learning.

This resonates with an interesting but relatively novel proposition in education: when students have opportunities to give to their community, to something beyond themselves, it changes their attitude to the learning tasks. This value runs deep in any attempts of community building; and, it ties in with notions of ‘service learning’ (e.g., Furco & Billig 2002), or, as conceptualised it in earlier work, a ‘curriculum of giving’ (e.g., Nielsen 2005). Service learning, or a curriculum of giving, engages students in action-based activities where they can apply their curriculum learning in direct service to others or their community. It combines principles of constructivist learning with a very practical manifestation of empathy and social justice in the form of giving to others or contributing to worthwhile social change.

Giving is not just some idealistic notion, however. A comprehensive review of the new science of giving tells us that giving to others makes us healthier, happier and even live longer (see Post & Neimark 2007). In schools, giving is a strong predictor of increased mental and physical health into adulthood; and the interesting thing is that even when the giving is 'enforced' to some extent, as in the case of service learning, the benefits remain. In fact, giving is the next highest predictor (only surpassed by quitting smoking) for increasing one’s health. Giving has also been found to release dopamine in the brain; the same chemical released when one is given something. A curriculum of giving, therefore, can do more than provide a learning incentive for the giver; if giving increases both the giver and the receiver’s wellbeing, it is a true community builder.

The act of serving or giving, of course, is not confined to students in values education projects, but its relatively undiscovered potential in mainstream education may have found a new voice in the final analyses of VEGPSP Stage 1 & 2. Values education is a community focus in its truest sense, whereby stakeholders come together to give, ultimately, to the broader community. Involving students in giving may be another connection in the chain needed to form a synergetic whole. Certainly, the literature supports the need for congruence between the culture of the school and the culture of the community (Cotton 1995). As such, student-giving may not only be a ‘missing link’ in educational theory these days but also an ingredient with which values education may complete the circle of community building and thus increase its inherent potential to be a social transformer.

**Relationships**

Related to the issue of community building in the school as a whole, teachers have uniformly reported that values education has improved student interpersonal
relationships and student–teacher relationships. Teachers found that in the implementation of their units that the values focus produced more respectful, focused and harmonious classrooms. It developed students’ social skills by increasing cooperation, empathetic character, self-management and self knowledge, which in turn led to more supportive and safer learning environments.

For example, a year 8 class’ dynamics were reported to have changed. Students used the language of values and often corrected and reminded each other to use manners, show respect and to be tolerant of each other. Using cooperative learning strategies also enabled teachers to emphasise the importance of respect in interacting with others. Such strategies involve more student talk and moving agency in the classroom from the teacher to the students. In these contexts student are encouraged to demonstrate respect and take responsibility for their learning.

In the process of creating better relationships, students also gained understandings of issues such as peer pressure and the importance of body language and tone of voice in forming and maintaining friendships, as well as of how to de-escalate and resolve conflict. For example, one teacher reported that there was a transformation of the classroom atmosphere by breaking down social cliques into open ‘working’ groups and by students seeing each other from new perspectives. Similarly, students were reported to demonstrate a pride in class membership and to look out for their peers in the playground, and as a result, showed more respect for each other’s values and different points of view.

In terms of quantitative data supporting the largely anecdotal testimony from teachers, a 50% decrease in vandalism was reported by the school over the Christmas break, which is typically a time when schools are targeted. Also, suspensions have decreased by 11%. While this data is affected by variables such as changes in personnel and how suspensions are managed and reported, they also reflect the school adopting more relational and inclusive ways of managing students (e.g., restorative practices, and the explicit teaching of values in the curriculum). Another important statistical indicator of the project having created better relationships is the numbers relating to student and staff attendance: student attendance across the cluster is at the system average, while staff attendance is above the system average.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Staff absences</th>
<th>Student attendance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>School</td>
<td>6.1%</td>
<td>87%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High School Sector</td>
<td>8.6%</td>
<td>87%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The school satisfaction surveys from 2005 to 2008 are also positive.

**School Satisfaction Surveys**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Overall I am satisfied with this school</th>
<th>Agree and strongly agree % 2005</th>
<th>Agree and strongly agree % 2008</th>
<th>High school sector Agree and strongly agree % 2008*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Parents/carers</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*High school sector data is not available for 2005
It might also be worth noting that values education can be confronting at times because of its focus on relationships and affective domains. As one teacher reported: when one of his students said something hurtful to another student during circle time, it made it difficult for the hurt student to open up to the circle time process again. This highlights that values education is about human relationships and human emotions – something that are easily traumatised in the process of opening up to these dimensions.

Certainly, a focus on emotions and relationships is relatively new in education. The last 20 to 30 years of research have led to a consensus that the whole learner – body, emotions, thought – must be engaged for effective learning to happen. But from a historical perspective, it is important to realize that we have only just begun a return from the polar swing toward intellectual, vocational, scientific and rational schooling – a momentum of 500 years of increasing authority bestowed upon modern science that culminated in a ‘feeling-less’ education. Indeed, it is only a century ago that some schools banned the use of colour because they felt it was too ‘sensuous’ and ‘magnetic,’ promoting frivolity and revolt (Freedman 2001, pp.34-46).

Because values education is opening schools up, for the first time it could be said, to an interrogation of ‘what it means to be human’, as Terry Lovat (2007) puts it, it might be argued that values education contains the ‘problem’ as well as the solution. Dealing with emotional dimensions of schooling, current values education projects will like pioneer work in general pave a way through the wilderness, not for its own comfort, but for those who follow in its path. Working with a somewhat neglected dimension in education, and in communities where this dimension is at times traumatized, is as potentially transformational as it is bound to be challenging.

Because the school under study, on the whole, has been good at promoting a strong, humanist-constructivist pedagogy underpinning its values education, however, it has been able to create positive learning environments in which it has been possible to accommodate for vulnerability and make space for dealing with crisis. Instrumental to this has also been the use of the Learning by Design framework, as teachers have been scaffolded in employing a collaborative and inclusive pedagogy. As indicated, the framework promotes tolerance and inclusiveness and is thus aligned with the National Framework for Values Education in Australian Schools.

Conclusion
This case study of an Australian high school has exemplified many good practices of and insights into values education. The school’s particular strength has been the presence of a solid infrastructure of experienced and committed leadership, which combined with tested and tried planning frameworks that are in alignment with a values rich pedagogy and content, has meant that the overall project aims and objectives have been supported on many levels. The school has epitomised the importance of having one or several ‘change agents’ who can work with teachers in order to scaffold and model collaborative practices, and in general make sure that the ‘chain of needs’ are met, starting with the teacher’s needs. A particular powerful strategy for increasing student autonomy has been the focus on multi-literacies and developing a metalanguage around values, in turn combating the inherent challenges of dealing with affective domains and, especially, older students’ reluctance to ‘be taught values’. The only obstacle to the sustainability of values education in the
school, as we see it, would be a lack of future funding for continued mentorship and leadership.

Our analysis of best education practices has also pointed to a suggestion of seeing values education as a new and perhaps much needed educational paradigm shift with which to balance out previous polar swings of favouring one human capacity (e.g., ‘rationality’) at the expense of another (e.g., ‘bodily experience’). Values education might be the ingredient that has so far been missing alongside our now well-established foci of educating students’ ‘head’ and their ‘practices’. Values education might have the potential to be a much needed humanity and heart-based focus, or ‘social glue’, with which we may connect our ‘head’ and ‘feet’ with what increasingly must underpin our knowledge and practices in a fragile world – whether we call this values education or something else. We happen to call it values education because something has to be called something, but whatever it is called, it appears to be a good alternative with which to make the world a more human and socially engaged place for us all.

To the overall question of whether the impact of values education on teaching and school ethos, as well as student diligence and behaviour, can be tested empirically and observed reliably, the answer is not straight forward. The essential problem is that it is near impossible to fully control all the variables within a school; there is simply too much noise (e.g., staff turnover, different teaching styles being employed, etc). Nevertheless, if one is willing to consider a more holistic assessment, sacrificing none of the logic associated with controlled experiments, then the answer is that the positive impact of values education is testable and observable; one only has to employ a holistic logic, rather than reductionist logic.

For example, there is now an established body of research showing clearly that emotional wellbeing is directly linked to pro-social behaviour and academic diligence; furthermore, we also now know that emotional wellbeing is enhanced by good values education, incorporating all the tested and tried elements of good teaching (Furco 2008). Hence the ‘holistic logic argument’ is as follows: if A is connected to B and B is connected to C, then A and C cannot be said to be disconnected. In other words, if values education fosters emotional wellbeing, which in turn fosters academic diligence and learning outcomes, it seems redundant to even ask the question of whether values education has an impact on school processes and whether this can be tested ‘empirically’.

The reason why asking such questions is in fact not redundant is because there is still much work to do in order to provide enough examples and case studies that independently, and empirically, verify the so-called ‘holistic logic argument’ in a variety of ways. Only if the combined brush strokes of numerous cases point toward the same finer detail will it be possible to claim empirical evidence in the matter. And, only when values education is understood, not as a uniform entity that is applied evenly wherever it is implemented, but rather as vehicle that still relies crucially on quality teachers and quality teaching, with all the myriad of pedagogical considerations that come with that, can we move onwards and upwards in making values education something that enhances school processes on all levels. A better question, then, it seems, would be this: As we know values to be central to human living, what do best practices of values education look like in all its manifestations?
As noted, in this case study, the best practices described have pointed toward integrating values education across the curriculum to produce associations and synthesis in the students’ learning, in turn also becoming a social glue – a communal convergence point around which quality teaching and human relationships can exist more abundantly. From a larger, historical viewpoint, values education might even have the potential to become the rejuvenated ‘heart’ of mainstream education because it questions what it means to be human within our established but relatively newfound pedagogies of constructivism and inquiry.

**Case Study 5: Preston South Primary School, Victoria**

**Context**

Preston South Primary School Number 824 is a small institution in Melbourne’s inner northern suburbs. Preston is predominantly a “working class” suburb parts of which is slowly becoming gentrified as inner Melbourne house prices move beyond the reach of more and more people and they spill into the inner north. The school was established in 1866 as a one room school. Today, there are 130 children more or less evenly distributed over grades 1 to 6 and that number continues to drop year by year.

The school serves families from a mixture of public and private housing in the area. There are numerous light industries in the back streets surrounding the school. The children are from very diverse socio-economic and cultural backgrounds and the school actively celebrates diversity and cultural acceptance is emphasised.

There are eight full time teaching staff plus two .6 teachers, a .5 music teacher, a locally paid .2 English / Mathematics extension teacher and a .5 welfare officer. They comprise a highly experienced group with 80% of them having greater than 15 years teaching experience. The Principal is a local woman with thirty six years experience. It is a very stable staff group with people rarely leaving.

The school has an explicit emphasis on values. The Information Booklet for students makes the point that “we wish Preston South PS to be a happy, safe place where everyone cares about each other”. It is also explicit about the school’s expectations about student responsibility and mutual respect being features of school life.

**Approach to Values Education.**

There are several things being undertaken by staff and students at Preston South that fit with Values Education. The school is part of a consortium funded by the Contributing to Australian Scholarship and Science Foundation (CASS) to address aspects of student engagement.

The CASS Foundation Limited is a private philanthropic foundation created to support and promote the advancement of education, science and medicine, and research in those fields. The Foundation evolved from the assets created by the former T K Schools Limited, which owned and operated Taylors College until 1998. These assets are now being used for the greater benefit of Australian society through its transformation to a philanthropic organisation able to award, sponsor or support grants, undertakings, research and development.
The CASS funding is supporting a project called Student Initiatives in School Engagement. The project supports the active participation of students in researching, designing and carrying out action around issues of school engagement in two Melbourne primary schools. In each school a core team of students (including some with a history of disengagement) works with a teacher for approximately half a day each week to investigate school and community issues associated with engagement and disengagement. These students mostly from Years 4 to 6 work with other students in their classes. They meet as an action team, are involved in forums that share results between the school and develop innovative ways to present results and bring about changes in schools and community practices. Throughout the life of the three year project, there will be a growing focus on student driven investigation to improve students' attitudes to engagement with and connectedness to school.

The school is also heavily involved in You Can Do It! Education. You Can Do It! Education (YCDI) is a system for helping all children achieve to the best of their ability and to develop social-emotional-behavioural wellbeing. Through a set of unique educational programs, YCDI supports the development of every child's unique potential.

The founder of You Can Do It! Education was Dr Michael E. Bernard. Dr. Bernard's work is based on research which identifies the following four Foundations as necessary for all children to possess in order for them to achieve and experience social-emotional-behavioural wellbeing: Confidence, Persistence, Organization, and Getting Along. His own research has isolated eleven positive Habits of the Mind that support and nourish these 4 Foundations including: Self-Acceptance ("Accepting Myself"), Risk Taking ("Taking Risks"), Independence ("Being Independent"), Optimism ("I Can Do It"), Internal Locus of Control for Learning ("Giving Effort"), High Frustration Tolerance ("Working Tough"), Goal Setting ("Setting Goals"), Time Management ("Planning My Time"), Tolerance of others ("Being Tolerant of Others"), Reflective Problem Solving ("Thinking First"), and Tolerance of Limits ("Playing By the Rules"). Michael Bernard refers to the four Foundations and supporting eleven Habits of the Mind as a child's "Positive Mindset."

At the time this research was being undertaken the school was also part of the Darebin Cluster’s Values Education Good Practice Schools’ Project Stage 2. Within this project Preston South PS pursued a Student Action Team (SAT) approach to Values Education. In a SAT, a group of students identify and tackle a school or community issue: they research the issue, make plans and proposals about it, and take action on it. Such initiatives, as part of the formal or informal school curriculum, engage students in purposeful, authentic activities which are valued by the students, which have broader community value and which meet or exceed mandated curriculum goals. SAT are based on the following principles:

- 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 skills, expertise and a knowledge of the needs of their community;
- 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.
At Preston South Grades 4/5/6 used the SAT approach to address the issue of which of the values contained in the National Framework for Values Education in Australian Schools were being taken seriously by the school community and which were not. Through explicit teaching of the values and the SAT project the school sought to have all the values practised.

**Evaluation Methodology**
A “mixed method” approach to the evaluation was used. In this case the mixed method involved the author in extensive periods in the school working as “observer as participant” whereby the author immersed himself in the school over a long period of time with a view to gaining understanding of what the school was attempting in general and in the values education area in particular. It also involved collecting pre and post implementation data using questionnaires from staff and students about their perceptions of the impact of the values education program on patterns of student academic diligence, school coherence, classroom ambience, student teacher relationships, student well being, teacher well being and parental participation. Once collated the data yielded by the pre and post implementation surveys were then further interrogated in interview and focus group settings in which staff were asked to comment upon and speculate about the patterns that emerged.

**Initial Data Collection and Collation**
Between early 2007 and late 2008 all staff and all Grades 4, 5 and 6 students completed pre and post implementation surveys designed to provide data about the extent of values education being offered within the school and teacher and student perceptions of

- student academic diligence/academic performance
- school coherence
- classroom ambience
- student teacher relationships
- student well being
- teacher well being and
- parental participation.

The surveys are attached to this section of the report see Appendix 5. The data from the surveys were collated as percentage responses to each item.

Once the data from the surveys were collated a summary chart was developed that provided a synoptic overview of the data from the surveys. It is reproduced below.

**Exhibit 1: Preston South Summary Chart Depictograph**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Emphasis on Values Education</th>
<th>2007</th>
<th>2008</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Explicit teaching</td>
<td>AA</td>
<td>AAA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Major part of curriculum</td>
<td>AA</td>
<td>AAA</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Teacher Perceptions about Academic Diligence**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2007</th>
<th>2008</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Students more engaged</td>
<td>AA</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>students realising full potential</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
students more academically diligent

**Teacher perception about school coherence**

More connected to home

**Teachers perceptions about classroom ambience**

More peaceful
More trusting
Conflict managed differently
students improved social skills
best possible learning environment
improved playground behaviour

**Student Teacher relationships**

Deeper understanding of student learning
Teach differently

**Teacher perception of student well-being**

more resilient

**Students perception of their well being**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade 4-5</th>
<th>Grade 5-6</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>2008</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>more connected to school</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>more trust in leaders</td>
<td>AAA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>more confident</td>
<td>AAAA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>more interested</td>
<td>AAA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>more supported</td>
<td>AAA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>more engaged</td>
<td>AAA</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Key**

0% - 50% say agree or strongly agree = A, 51% - 70% say agree or strongly agree = AA, 71% - 90% say agree or strongly agree = AAA, 91% - 100% say agree or strongly agree = AAAA.

**Interpretation of the Summary Chart**

There has been a very substantial increase in the attention being given to values education at the school in recent times. Its participation in two values education projects and the introduction of the You Can Do It Program account in part for this. There are other factors operating as well. The Principal is a very strong advocate for values education as she considers it an essential aspect of education for the “disadvantaged” children in her care. She points out that “many of them are from dysfunctional backgrounds and do not have a concept of respect and the like”. There has been increased attention to values education a conscious policy decision designed to redress situations of bullying and other forms of antisocial behaviour.
Over the past two years progress with the two values education projects have been regularly reported to staff at Thursday’s staff meeting. The projects have also spawned an array of display material which is prominent in corridors and on walls. Due to the small and intimate nature of the school those not directly involved in the values education projects are often informally engaged in discussion about them. Gradually members staff who were not directly involved have come to experiment with ways of injecting values into their teaching.

Two years ago many of the children were clearly disengaged from school. The principal points out that many come from backgrounds were education is held in low regard and it will take time for any impact of the values education program to have effect on their patterns of engagement and academic diligence.

Undeniably, however the school is a noticeably more peaceful place. Staff point out that the language of values has taken hold and become a “common discourse”. As one teacher said “it’s easier to pull up bad behaviour with the language when it is common to staff and students alike”.

Whilst the focus group members concurred with the view that students’ levels of engagement were generally low for the reasons offered by the principal, they felt that in the upper school over the last two years things had changed in that regard. Students were trying harder. Teachers felt that there was an improved learning environment. The Principal argued this was a product of the school engaging the SATs approach to teaching and learning:

“They have been given control of some of the decision making like what excursions they can go on, what projects they can do at school and in the yard. They feel empowered. They seem to bounce back better these days. No to this section of the report wonder people are saying they are more resilient and they are saying that about themselves”.

Case Study 6: Rasmussen Primary School, Queensland

Purpose
The purpose of this case study is to present findings of a preliminary investigation on the potential impact of values education on student academic diligence, school coherence, classroom ambience, student teacher relationships, student well being, teacher well being and parental participation. It follows the first report of Values Education Good Practice Schools (VEGPS) in 2005. Using data gathered from multiple sources that include different surveys and interviews of key stakeholders, this study documents changes in the context of Rasmussen State School since the introduction of the Stage 2 project commenced in 2007.

Method
The research approach for this case study is best described as mixed method. Quantitative data were collected from two teacher surveys. The first survey, a questionnaire for all staff was completed at the commencement of the VEGPS Stage 2 project (April 2007). This survey mapped individual teacher responses to a series of questions about their approach to values education as well as the focus on values education within the school setting as a whole. The same survey was completed in
In addition to these quantitative data collection instruments, the data collection included a range of qualitative methods. The schools involved in the Townsville Cluster VEGPS Stage 2, including Rasmussen State School, attended monthly meetings as part of an action research cycle. This cycle focused the school attention on curriculum design that would incorporate ‘values for sustainability’. These monthly meetings were documented, providing a map of the journey undertaken by the school.

As well as these action research meetings, a focused review of the curriculum design adopted in each school site as part of the VEGPS was completed in November 2007. The review included interviews with key teachers in the school, a collation of key curriculum development in each school site and a review of student work samples. This data set was complemented by further interviews with key staff including the Principal and Head of Curriculum in May 2008, to review and reflect on the values education initiatives within the school. The Principal also provided examples of staff induction overviews, and a comprehensive set of school documentation for review.

Relevant data from the annual school opinion survey was also reviewed. This opinion survey is administered in every state school in Queensland across samples of students and parents “to gauge their satisfaction with important aspects of schooling” (Education Queensland, 2008) as part of the School Improvement and Accountability Framework 2006-2008. In addition to students and parents, the School Staff Survey questionnaires are disseminated to all staff to determine their satisfaction with the school as a workplace. The questions and the responses over the last three years provide a useful indicator of school climate, student outcomes, school community relations and overall staff morale. The responses to these survey questions from parents, students and staff are benchmarked against other schools across the state, as well as against ‘like’ schools- schools that have similar size and socio-economic characteristics.

The data within this case study then, represents a rich data set to inform the responses to the research questions.

**The School Introduced**

Rasmussen State School is located in an area of significant disadvantage in Townsville, a large regional centre in Queensland. According to the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) the suburb of Rasmussen is in the lowest third of the state in relation to economic resources, with higher that state average unemployment (5.9%), almost 28% of dwellings categorised as public housing and low levels of home ownership – less than 14% compared to 30% in Queensland.

The school profile reflects local demographics. Over 34% of the 491 enrolments are Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islanders, drawing from a local population that has four times the state average Indigenous population. Over 8% of students have disabilities and child safety notifications are frequent- with occasions where three
reports in one week are required. The most striking feature of the school population is its transience. Student mobility is the focus of a major research project at the school site, and mobility has been measured at levels higher than those published internationally (Hill & Lynch, 2008). These features create a school environment where transactional pressures are significant on all staff.

The school leadership team, and in particular the Principal, has responded determinedly to these characteristics. Appointed in 2005 the Principal has established an uncompromising set of benchmarks for learning and student conduct as well as the school environment. The 2008 Annual Operational Plan (AOP) reflects these benchmarks. Goals include the following:

- Increased proportion of students achieving above the national benchmarks in reading, writing and numeracy.
- Reduced Student Disciplinary Absences (SDAs).
- Staff, student and parent opinion data about school climate will be comparable with or better than state and like schools.
- Overall parent satisfaction will be equal to or above the state mean

Data to be presented later in this case study will highlight the extent to which the Principal has been successful in her short period as school leader. The school also has a high turnover of staff – more than 40% from 2007-2008. This characteristic is also a focus of attention for the school organisational culture with many staff workshops to explicitly focus new staff on the context, school ethos and expectations.

Tracing the history of values education initiatives at Rasmussen State School.

Values education, as described in a range of research literature (Brown, Woods, Hirst & Heck, 2006; Lovat, 2007) has been a central part of the school framework over the last three years. Since the appointment of a new Principal in 2005, there has been a focussed effort to build the ‘social capital’ within the school. As noted in the School Annual Report creating community, improving communication and building confidence are the key focus points for the school leadership team.

The school chose, some years ago to use the PeaceBuilders program as a core strategy to address ‘behavioural’ values within the school. The framework for the program is embedded across school documents and policies, prioritising the motto ‘Peaceful, Proud and Learning for Living’. PeaceBuilders, once funded by the Federal government, is an accredited international program emanating from California. The program’s aims are outlined on the school website in the following promotional overview:

“We are accredited as a PeaceBuilder School to nurture positive behaviours from all members of the school community to ensure a safe, tolerant and disciplined environment. The PeaceBuilder principles underpin everything we do at Rasmussen.”
Since her appointment, the Principal has determinedly focussed staff and student attention on the PeaceBuilders’ framework, including an array of relationship and interpersonal ‘slogans’ shaping interactions and language choices of staff and students. The slogans include:

- Praise People
- Give Up Put Downs
- Seek Wise People
- Notice Hurts
- Right Wrongs
- Help Others

Posters, often student produced, appear consistently around the school buildings, and are a key reference point for students and staff. The Principal’s expectations are that students and staff will model the behaviours represented in the slogans. In accompanying the Principal in her travels around the school, it is clear that these statements are not only reference points, but used to build student meta-cognition around the elements of peaceful relationships. The Principal consistently uses phrases such “I like the way you said ….that shows you are using our school language”. As Brown et al (2006) note, such an approach to values education focuses on the development of habits and language choices.

While the Principal is the clear champion of the PeaceBuilders program, and is adamant of its importance for the Rasmussen community, comments on the staff survey indicate its wide acceptance amongst staff.

As one staff member notes:

“My program combines specific lessons focussing on issues arising constantly, daily reminders (PeaceBuilders principles) and follow ups. “

PeaceBuilders therefore, sets a cultural map for embedding values education initiatives at Rasmussen State School. Other whole of school initiatives include the “Go For Gold” positive behaviour management program. With the tenor of relationships established prior to the introduction of the VEGPS Stage 2 project, over the last two years, the Principal has also promoted an array of pedagogical practices, that engage with cognitive approaches to values education. These practices, as noted in the Annual Operational Plan are to be used across ‘every classroom, every week’.

‘Circle time”, is one approach used across the school- described as “a democratic and creative approach used to consider a wide range of issues affecting the whole school community”. With a strong focus on reflection, the circle time strategy is a core ‘emotional literacy’ strategy (Roffey, 2007) but as discussed later, is used in an integrated way to support deeper self-knowledge as part of designated curriculum units (Lovat, 2007).

Given the high levels of student transience, such explicit values education initiatives are considered essential to the development of a productive and positive learning culture. In response to community needs, in 2006, the Principal also employed a ‘Peace Coach’, accessing funding from the Catholic Agency Centracare, the first state school to access such funding in Queensland. This part time, non-teaching position,
works with the families within the school to support the peaceful resolution of problems, and improve community relations.

**Current values initiatives.**
Clearly, within three years of appointment, the current Principal had developed a framework that prioritised values education, foregrounding behavioural and cognitive approaches. As part of the VEGPS Stage 2, the school joined the larger cluster of Townsville schools and focussed attention on curriculum design to support the increasingly established culture within the school. In the Principal’s view, attention to curriculum design was pivotal in ‘centring’ a focus on learning outcomes in the school.

The focus on curriculum had commenced in earnest in 2006, with school funds diverted to enable groups of staff to work collaboratively on curriculum design. Reflecting as Brown et al (2006) note, a commitment to the development of shared values across the school, the Principal has increasingly developed a distributive model of leadership, with teachers, not the Principal leading staff meetings, and an active school student council with student leaders increasingly consulted within the school community.

With school results representing those within many disadvantaged communities, and a recently appointed Head of Curriculum the school joined the VEGPS project to build on the collaborative at an opportune moment.

The VEGPS Stage 2 project engaged with the UNESCO interlocking dimensions of sustainability, and during 2007 curriculum units were developed across a range of year levels to promote environmental, political, social or economic sustainability. Sample units developed include:

- ‘Reef Rangers’ - a project-based learning unit focussed on reef ecosystems and the individual’s responsibility as part of that eco-system (Year 4/5)
- ‘Speak Out- make a difference’- an enterprise learning unit designed to engage students in constructive citizenship through developing a project to support disadvantaged young people in other countries (Year 7)
- ‘Healthy living’ – a problem based learning unit focussed on improving school students health (Year 7)

These units prioritise local relevance and active pedagogies, as the Head of Curriculum discusses, it is her goal to engage students in the school in authentic and relevant learning activities that promote changed behaviour. As noted in the Annual Operational Plan the priority for unit planning within the school focused on engagement and success and was to include “A real world focus, critical questions for higher order thinking, hands on pedagogy and differentiation for all learners within a whole school framework”.

Mirroring concerns noted in Lovat (2007), the Head of Curriculum noted that curriculum design in the school had historically been about “doing to” students- the
development of technical competence. The priority for curriculum design within the school now, represents a deliberate intention to engage students in meaningful relevant issues, and support reflective action around local concerns.

The focus on curriculum design as part of the VEGPS Stage 2 project, and in particular curriculum design to promote ‘values for sustainable futures’ aligns with renewed statewide focus on improvement in curriculum design, and in particular assessment practices through the introduction of the Queensland Curriculum Assessment and Reporting Framework. The school is actively engaged in this reform process, now using Essential Learnings, a core component of the framework to map curriculum across the year levels. In addition, the school is actively engaged and trialling another state school initiative—“What State Schools Value”. While yet to be officially launched, Education Queensland has developed a series of overarching learning organisers that support the development of particular notions of citizenship. These organisers promote teacher engagement with five types of citizens:

- Eco citizen
- Creative citizen
- Informed citizen
- Democratic citizen
- Healthy citizen

There are obvious links between the UNESCO Dimensions of Sustainability and the five citizens above. For staff at Rasmussen State School curriculum design within the VEGPS project was made more significant, as the alignment with an Education Queensland agenda prioritised questions of sustainability and the values associated with sustainability.

**Testing and measuring the effects of the project**

Since the start of the VEGPS project, a range of data has been collected to monitor changes in the school. Using data from school surveys gathered by Education Queensland and teachers and students’ survey responses to Values, the following discussion identifies changes in the data, and illuminates on the implications of these changes in relation to Values Education. It is framed around three key themes: firstly, it examines the data on the quality of relationships between key stakeholders; secondly, it looks at changes in academic achievements between Stage 1 and Stage 2 and lastly, it considers what the data suggest about how school identity and program quality are sharpened since the implementation of Values Education.

**Evidence of positive change: Relationships**

Reviewing the data collected within the study provides insight into the effect of the Principal’s sustained values focus. School opinion survey data collected over the last three years, identifies the ways in which the consistent modelling of ‘behavioural’ values create a learning environment that is acknowledged by staff as very positive. As Table 1 indicates, there has been consistent improvement in the way teachers’ rate their relationships with students, with ratings of respect between staff and students higher than other like schools.

**Table 1. Student-Teacher Relationships: Staff views**
Likewise, Table 2 indicates that students have, consistently in the last three years had a positive view of their relationships with their teachers and are confident that teachers are supporting their development as learners. Many of the responses note higher than state or like school means.

Table 2. Student-Teacher Relationships: Students’ views

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Learning Climate</th>
<th>2005</th>
<th>2006</th>
<th>2007</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>that your teacher explains clearly what to do in your school work</td>
<td>3.51*#</td>
<td>3.48**#</td>
<td>3.42#</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>that your teacher helps you to do your best</td>
<td>3.44*#</td>
<td>3.49**#</td>
<td>3.42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>with the interest the teacher takes in your learning</td>
<td>3.17</td>
<td>3.28**#</td>
<td>3.35**#</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>that what your teacher tells you helps you to improve your school work</td>
<td>3.28</td>
<td>3.45**#</td>
<td>3.36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>that you know how well you are going with your school work</td>
<td>3.03</td>
<td>3.06</td>
<td>3.18**#</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*above like schools  # above state mean

Responses from parents indicate further confidence in the communication and relationships fostered within the school by teachers. Table 3 summarises these responses.

Table 3. Student-Teacher Relationship: Parents’ views

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>How satisfied are you</th>
<th>2005</th>
<th>2006</th>
<th>2007</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>that the school keeps you well informed on how your child is progressing</td>
<td>2.96</td>
<td>2.68</td>
<td>3.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>with the interest that the teacher(s) take in your child</td>
<td>3.04</td>
<td>3.11</td>
<td>3.07</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Within the school, staff wellbeing indicators highlight the impact of the Principal’s sustained effort to create a collaborative learning community. Table 4 shows that over the three years, all responses from staff show improvement. Ten of sixteen questions record staff satisfaction levels higher than other state schools.

Table 4. Teacher Wellbeing: Staff views

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>People in the school let me know how well I am doing in my work</th>
<th>2005</th>
<th>2006</th>
<th>2007</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I receive helpful feedback on my work at this school</td>
<td>2.59</td>
<td>2.58</td>
<td>2.83*#</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>This school gives me opportunities to improve my skills</td>
<td>2.74</td>
<td>2.94</td>
<td>3.21*#</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I can manage the different things I have to do in this school</td>
<td>2.90</td>
<td>2.88</td>
<td>3.17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I can cope with what I have to do in my work</td>
<td>3.00</td>
<td>2.91</td>
<td>3.07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>There is good team spirit among the staff of this school</td>
<td>3.34**#</td>
<td>3.28**#</td>
<td>3.45**#</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The staff in this school are enthusiastic about their work
I am happy working in this school
I have good working relationships with staff
I am treated with respect in this school
My work role makes reasonable demands of me
My contribution to this school is valued
I feel that my work efforts are worthwhile
My work skills enable me to make a worthwhile contribution to this school
I am regarded as a valuable staff member
My work skills are appreciated in this school
I feel that this school is a safe place to work

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2005</th>
<th>2006</th>
<th>2007</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The staff in this school are enthusiastic about their work</td>
<td>3.03</td>
<td>3.06</td>
<td>3.33^*#</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am happy working in this school</td>
<td>3.00</td>
<td>3.06</td>
<td>3.31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have good working relationships with staff</td>
<td>3.49^*#</td>
<td>3.43</td>
<td>3.62^*#</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am treated with respect in this school</td>
<td>2.74</td>
<td>2.83</td>
<td>3.31#</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My work role makes reasonable demands of me</td>
<td>2.59</td>
<td>2.64</td>
<td>2.93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My contribution to this school is valued</td>
<td>3.00#</td>
<td>2.91</td>
<td>3.24^*#</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I feel that my work efforts are worthwhile</td>
<td>3.00</td>
<td>2.94</td>
<td>3.21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My work skills enable me to make a worthwhile contribution to this school</td>
<td>3.15</td>
<td>3.13</td>
<td>3.31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am regarded as a valuable staff member</td>
<td>3.03#</td>
<td>2.98</td>
<td>3.14#</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My work skills are appreciated in this school</td>
<td>2.85</td>
<td>2.96</td>
<td>3.19#</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I feel that this school is a safe place to work</td>
<td>2.33^</td>
<td>2.35^</td>
<td>3.17</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

^ below state mean  *above like schools  # above state mean

As Roffey (2007) notes, feeling valued as a staff member is the critical element in the creation of a caring school community. In general, the staff responses above indicate a sense that staff can cope with the demands of the school community- and can cope with their work in general. The staff responses in the above table over the last three years indicate staff have increasingly felt acknowledged and appreciated in their work. The collaborative culture so determinedly introduced by the Principal has created a strong team spirit with the highest response levels now noted in statements that reflect school relationships between staff in the school.

The significance of the school opinion survey data noted above is also significant given the staff turnover experienced within the school. Again, as Roffey (2007) notes the role of the school leader here, sets a tenor for a particular brand of relationships, and the modelling of behavioural expectations coupled with support for teachers has created a strong relationship culture.

The extent to which teacher wellbeing, and relationships between staff, students and parents can be linked to values education is unclear, but data collected in 2007 and 2008 indicates the degree to which teachers believe they are prioritising a values driven approach within the school. Table 5 presents teacher reflections on the overall impact of values education initiatives and wellbeing within the school.

Table 5. Student and Teacher Wellbeing: Impact of Values Initiatives

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>In this school teaching values has</th>
<th>Pre-implementation (Mean)</th>
<th>Post-implementation (Mean)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Encouraged greater cooperation between staff</td>
<td>4.8</td>
<td>4.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improved students’ resilience</td>
<td>4.8</td>
<td>5.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Made me reflect on my personal values</td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>5.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>made me more conscious of the values behind my actions</td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>5.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>changed the way that conflict is managed</td>
<td>4.6</td>
<td>4.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>made little difference to the way I respond to children in the school</td>
<td>3.3^</td>
<td>2.4^</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

^low mean is positive
The differences between pre and post survey data clearly reflects the three year leadership journey within the school, but the high mean scores note that staff believe that the focus on values does create improved staff relationships, improved student resilience and serves as a catalyst for self-reflection. For staff-student relationships, the unwavering focus on behavioural values, positive language choices and strategies such as circle time, have undoubtedly created more positive staff-student interactions.

Table 6. Parental and Community Participation: from school survey

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>In this school teaching values has</th>
<th>Pre-implementation (Mean)</th>
<th>Post-implementation (Mean)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Contributed to a greater cooperation</td>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>4.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>between school and home</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 7. Parental and family participation: from school survey [Parents]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>How are satisfied are you</th>
<th>2005</th>
<th>2006</th>
<th>2007</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>with opportunities to discuss what your child is being taught</td>
<td>2.83</td>
<td>2.79</td>
<td>2.93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>with opportunities to discuss how your child is being taught</td>
<td>2.75</td>
<td>2.66</td>
<td>2.93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>that school staff are approachable when you want to talk about your child</td>
<td>3.17</td>
<td>3.24</td>
<td>3.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>that you have opportunities to participate in the life of the school</td>
<td>2.83</td>
<td>2.66</td>
<td>3.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>that you have opportunities to participate in school decision making</td>
<td>2.67</td>
<td>2.39</td>
<td>2.89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>that the school makes you feel welcome</td>
<td>3.21</td>
<td>3.03</td>
<td>3.26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>that the school communicates well with you?</td>
<td>2.67</td>
<td>2.83</td>
<td>3.11</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

One final indicator of relationships within the school is the frequency of School Disciplinary Actions. Across the student population in 2006 there were 18.5% incidents, declining in 2007 marginally to 17.8%.

Evidence of positive change: Student achievement

While making links between relationships and values education, relationships and staff well-being is possible, linking student academic results and values initiatives is more challenging. In general, school achievement in the Rasmussen State School student cohort is representative of achievement in disadvantaged communities—particularly state benchmarks in the key areas of literacy and numeracy. As the Principal also notes, getting quality data on student achievement for a transient school community is also problematic, and the school is currently seeking ways to amass evidence that for the students who remain in the school site for at least one year, there is considerable “value adding” in terms of academic achievement.

The school annual operational plan sets a clear goal for academic achievement as follows:

“Increasing proportion of students will achieve above the national benchmarks in reading writing and numeracy”.

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The school’s results in these key areas, particularly numeracy, are discussed by the principal as a ‘priority’. Data provided for this study notes improvement in 2007 from the 2006 baseline data. Improvement is particularly noted in the area of numeracy and writing as is apparent in Figure 1. Further monitoring of results in 2008 will be important.

![Figure 1](image)

The data collected for this study notes teacher engagement with the importance of quality teaching and student achievement. Table 8 presents core data from the pre and post implementation survey, and demonstrates high levels of engagement Rasmussen State School teachers have with notions of quality teaching linked to values education.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 8. Student achievement: from survey</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>In this school teaching values has</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deepened my understanding about how children learn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Encouraged me to try different ways of teaching</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Led to greater numbers of students realising their full academic potential</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Led to students exercising greater academic diligence</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Even considering the 40% turnover in staffing between 2007 and 2008, there is some evidence from the teachers’ responses above that indicates insight into the impact of teachers’ values related practices. Parent responses to the school’s focus on academic matters are positive. All responses in Table 9 indicate parents are satisfied with the school’s focus, however, none of the responses are above or below like schools.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 9. Student achievement: from parents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>How satisfied are you…</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

87
Beyond parent and teacher perception, Table 10 summarises students’ perceptions about their achievement. Showing a general trend upwards, student responses indicate that they are asked to ‘do their best’ and that the school standards promote such an ethos. This data can be linked to the Principal’s determined effort to prioritise high standards of learning outcomes and communicate these expectations with students.

Table 10. Student achievement: from students

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>How satisfied are you…</th>
<th>2005</th>
<th>2006</th>
<th>2007</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>That you are doing the best you can in your school work</td>
<td>3.05</td>
<td>3.37</td>
<td>3.29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>With how well you are learning at this school</td>
<td>3.08</td>
<td>3.11</td>
<td>3.36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>That you are getting a good education at this school</td>
<td>3.34</td>
<td>3.06</td>
<td>3.37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>With the standard of school work expected</td>
<td>2.66+</td>
<td>2.95</td>
<td>3.19*#</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

+below state mean  *above like schools  # above state mean

Evidence of positive change: School identity

With a high staff turnover, the Principal has set an agenda to ensure Rasmussen State School is a “school of choice”. Enrolments numbers have increased, and transience has declined with the appointment of a Mobility Support Officer, a position negotiated with an urban renewal program and supported by researchers at James Cook University. The values education initiatives within the school are central to maintaining the school’s reputation, as is noted in table 11.

Table 11. School Coherence: values initiatives as central

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>In my class values education</th>
<th>Pre-implementation (Mean)</th>
<th>Post-implementation (Mean)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Is taught explicitly</td>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>5.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Occupies a major part of the curriculum</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>5.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is taught everyday</td>
<td>4.9</td>
<td>4.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Beyond teachers believing that they are enacting a values centred curriculum, responses in Table 12 indicate that wide-ranging actions have resulted from the current focus. Most pertinently, teachers’ responses indicate that the school has an improved environment as a result of the values education initiatives within the school.

**Table 12. School Coherence: values initiatives impacting on teacher practice**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>In this school teaching values has</th>
<th>Pre-implementation (Mean)</th>
<th>Post-implementation (Mean)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Resulted in greater student engagement in other curriculum areas</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>5.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Had little effect on the way I teach</td>
<td>3.2&lt;sup&gt;^&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>2.3&lt;sup&gt;^&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Helped the school to focus on providing the best environment possible for student improvement</td>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>5.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resulted in a more conscious statement of values in school policies</td>
<td>4.9</td>
<td>4.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Led to discussing values in relation to other subject areas</td>
<td>5.1</td>
<td>5.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<sup>^</sup>Low values positive

While values education initiatives may support a positive school reputation, the school is also perceived by staff to be a highly organised entity, where clear statements of roles and responsibilities are apparent. As evidence of teacher confidence in the school’s organisation, nine of the ten statements in Table 13 indicate above state school satisfaction levels.

**Table 13 School Coherence: teachers’ views of school organisation**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>How satisfied are you…</th>
<th>2005</th>
<th>2006</th>
<th>2007</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I know what is going on in this school</td>
<td>2.49</td>
<td>2.52</td>
<td>3.05&lt;sup&gt;#&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>This school is a well-organised place in which to work</td>
<td>2.54</td>
<td>2.56</td>
<td>3.02&lt;sup&gt;#&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I can have a say in decisions about my work in this school</td>
<td>3.08</td>
<td>2.87</td>
<td>3.12&lt;sup&gt;#&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am kept well-informed on things that are important to my work</td>
<td>2.9</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>3.1&lt;sup&gt;#&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am encouraged to take responsibility for my own work</td>
<td>3.36</td>
<td>3.28</td>
<td>3.43&lt;sup&gt;#&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>This school is a good place in which to work</td>
<td>2.95</td>
<td>2.89</td>
<td>3.36&lt;sup&gt;*#&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The staff in this school put a lot of energy into their work</td>
<td>3.31</td>
<td>3.41&lt;sup&gt;*#&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>3.48&lt;sup&gt;*#&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I get the support within the school that I need to do my job</td>
<td>2.77</td>
<td>2.78</td>
<td>3.12&lt;sup&gt;#&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In this school I am confident of being able to do what is expected of me</td>
<td>3.15</td>
<td>2.98</td>
<td>3.21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It is clear what my work responsibilities are in this school</td>
<td>2.95</td>
<td>3.00</td>
<td>3.24&lt;sup&gt;#&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<sup>#</sup>above state mean  * above like schools

Such high levels of coherence do not occur without deliberate leadership. A review of induction materials reveals powerpoint slides that focus teacher attention as follows:

What do we need to attend to now:
• Focus on learning—meet the needs of the range of learners
• Playground structure and social skilling
• PeaceBuilders
• School tone—everyone has a part, every day
• Staff roles and responsibilities—lead each other positively
• Community connections—building partnerships with parents quickly

In addition, within this staff induction, there are consistent references to a focus on the strengths of the students. This strengths based approach is consistent with the behavioural and cognitive framework established through PeaceBuilders and Circle Time.

For teachers, values education initiatives contribute to the high levels of school coherence and in turn enable them to create and maintain a supportive classroom environment. The classroom ambience as rated by teachers in both pre and post VEGPS 2 highlights further belief in the efficacy of the school’s approach. Table 14 summarises this support.

**Table 14. Classroom ambience: from survey**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>In this school teaching values has</th>
<th>Pre-implementation (Mean)</th>
<th>Post-implementation (Mean)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Encouraged a more peaceful atmosphere of the classroom</td>
<td>5.4</td>
<td>5.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Led to deeper levels of trust and caring in the classroom</td>
<td>4.8</td>
<td>4.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improved student’s social skills</td>
<td>4.7</td>
<td>5.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improved student behaviour in the playground</td>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>4.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Over the last three years, student responses to the school curriculum and pedagogy show improved levels of satisfaction. Table 15 highlights increased satisfaction with curriculum and a sense of wellbeing, the perceived behaviour of other students showing the highest degree of improvement, from below the state mean in 2005 to above state and like schools in 2007.

**Table 15. Classroom ambience: from students**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>How satisfied are you…</th>
<th>2005</th>
<th>2006</th>
<th>2007</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>With the activities you do in your classroom</td>
<td>2.77</td>
<td>2.83</td>
<td>2.88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>With the variety of school activities you do</td>
<td>2.88</td>
<td>3.08</td>
<td>3.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>With what you are learning at this school</td>
<td>3.06</td>
<td>2.98</td>
<td>3.17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>That you are happy to go to this school</td>
<td>3.25</td>
<td>3.07</td>
<td>3.30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>About the behaviour of students at this school</td>
<td>1.58+</td>
<td>1.5+</td>
<td>2.43##</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>That you are safe at this school</td>
<td>2.85+</td>
<td>2.98</td>
<td>3.07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>That you are treated fairly at this school</td>
<td>2.89</td>
<td>3.00</td>
<td>3.12##</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How satisfied are you…</td>
<td>2005</td>
<td>2006</td>
<td>2007</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------------</td>
<td>------</td>
<td>------</td>
<td>------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>That the school provides good learning opportunities for your child</td>
<td>3.17</td>
<td>2.97</td>
<td>3.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>With the encouragement that the school gives to your child</td>
<td>3.13</td>
<td>3.00</td>
<td>3.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>That your child is happy to go to this school</td>
<td>3.33</td>
<td>2.86</td>
<td>3.22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>About the behaviour of students at this school</td>
<td>2.48</td>
<td>2.04</td>
<td>2.37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>With student discipline in the school</td>
<td>2.74</td>
<td>2.32</td>
<td>2.78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>That your child is safe at this school</td>
<td>2.79</td>
<td>2.69</td>
<td>3.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>That your child is treated fairly at this school</td>
<td>3.00</td>
<td>2.72</td>
<td>3.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Conclusion**

This case study has set out to review the impact of values education initiatives on teaching, school ethos, and student behaviour, and ultimately student academic achievement.

The school has, in the last three years adopted a whole school framework where values, particularly behavioural values are centred within the school’s organisation. The introduction of whole school initiatives such as PeaceBuilders and Circle Time, as well as the introduction of the Peace Coach make clear that that the development of a particular school ethos has been prioritised within the school. The systematic process of curriculum collaboration including release time for teacher planning and distributive leadership have also created a communal staff culture, enabling dialogue and collective decision making.

Empirical data from the School Opinion Survey and the pre and post implementation survey notes consistent improvement in staff morale, to a point where 95% of staff now rate Rasmussen State School at above morale levels in other state or like schools. Such staff responses indicate high levels of motivation in their work. There is strong empirical data that staff has clarity around their role within the school. Such staff morale and well-being indicators, when working in a disadvantaged community are surely a pre-condition for student success.

In terms of teacher practice, the school’s behavioural strategies- using the explicit language of Peace Builders and the ‘Go for Gold’ behaviour management strategy could be argued to have an effect on student behaviour and staff- student relationships. The pre and post implementation survey data indicate widespread use of these strategies. As Table 1 notes, staff consider that there are high levels of respect between staff and students above state and like schools and students consider that the behaviour of other students is at levels above other state and like schools.

The evidence from parents is less convincing, but no parent responses rate student behaviour at lower levels than in state or like schools. The nature of the school community must also be considered here. With very high levels of student transience, and a high need school community; the school leadership team has clearly prioritised the creation of a safe and supportive environment for students. School opinion survey presented in this case study show that staff, students and parents now consider the school environment is a safe one, and the data show that from both staff and students, the levels of safety have improved from below state and like school means (Tables 4
As the Principal notes, there was a need to reduce the levels of violence within the school community and ‘create calm’ within the school community and the empirical data suggest that there is evidence that the school environment is increasingly more peaceful.

It is not clear what the impact of the VEGPS Stage 2 project with a focus on curriculum design and the centring of values for a sustainable world, has had on teacher practice. Certainly, the Head of Curriculum now considers that the school is ready to adopt a consistent values focussed curriculum framework, and the school’s goals prioritise curriculum design that moves away from technical competence to more communicative competence. There is a foregrounding of active learner centred pedagogies that focus student attention on action within their local community and reflection on their identity and actions. This is an obvious outcome for Year 5 students, who recently wrote in a newspaper article about his learning experiences in 2008 as follows:

“I have become a better person in looking after the environment”

“I didn’t go on the excursions to be part of the class: I went on them to learn about the wetlands and what I’m protecting and how to teach these things to many generations to come”. (Townsville Bulletin May 6, 2008)

The Head of Curriculum, who leads the collaborative planning process, anticipates that learning frameworks that promote students’ roles and responsibilities within local and global communities will likely dominant curricular changes across the school, and the templates developed as part of the VEGPS project will certainly facilitate this shift. A school audit of curriculum units notes that 80% of units in 2007 had a “real life focus” a considerable improvement from 2006 data. In addition, there was “increased evidence of hands-on-pedagogy in units”. (School AOP, 2008). The curriculum focus on active pedagogies is considered essential in the Rasmussen School Community according to the Principal, as students in the community generally “have little power over their own lives”.

In examining evidence for improved student achievement, the Principal notes that the school still has a considerable distance to travel. Again the transient community presents many challenges, for instance, students undertaking the benchmarking tests may have just arrived at the school in the preceding weeks. According to the School Annual Operational Plan, up to 80% of students who remained in the school between benchmark tests (Year 3- Year 5; Year 5-Year 7) achieved significant or satisfactory added value to their learning. The benchmark test results presented previously in Figure 1, note improvement in numeracy and writing achievement in the last three years. Further longitudinal data will highlight the school success in improving engagement in key learning areas.

The Principal uses the metaphor of an onion to describe the work that is required in her school community- the more “layers we peel back the more we do the more we need to do”. It would appear that there is convincing empirical data that the whole school framework, including mandated teaching practices, has impacted most significantly on the school ethos and staff morale, creating a staff that are highly focused and consistent in their practices. Student achievement is improving although
evidence will need to be re-examined in the next three years, and the wider school community now considers student behaviour as respectful. Teachers have now both a behavioural and cognitive values framework to move forward with, a clearly established collaborative culture within the school to shape and guide their teaching practice. In a three-year period, the Principal has demonstrated that leadership that focuses on students and staff becoming “emotionally literate” (Roffey, 2007, p 27) does make a difference.

Case Study 7: St Charles Borromeo Primary School, Victoria

Context
St Charles Borromeo Catholic Primary School is part of the Serpell Community School Campus nestled in 13 acres of land in Templestowe. It is a multicultural, multi-faith school. Many families are second or third generation Italian, others are Lebanese, Chinese and Greek. Around a fifth of the children have a language background other than English.

There are 182 students (122 families) currently attending St. Charles Borromeo. Sixteen families qualify for assistance from the Educational Maintenance Allowance. Most parents would be considered “high achievers”. In many cases, both parents are working. It would also be fair to say that many families chose the Catholic system with the expectation that religion and values would be explicitly taught.

There are 10 full time and 10 part time staff at the school mainly married women in the 30 to 50 age group.

The students at St. Charles perform above the benchmarks set in both literacy and numeracy.

The school has been attempting to make values education a very explicit part of its work for several years most recently as a very active participant in the DEEWR VEGPSP Stages 1 and 2.

As part of its involvement in the DEEWR VEGPSP Stages 1 and 2 St Charles Borromeo pursued a Student Action Team (SAT) approach to Values Education. In a SAT, a group of students identify and tackle a school or community issue: they research the issue, make plans and proposals about it, and take action on it. Such initiatives, as part of the formal or informal school curriculum, engage students in purposeful, authentic activities which are valued by the students, which have broader community value and which meet or exceed mandated curriculum goals. SAT are based on the following principles:

- 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 skills, expertise and a knowledge of the needs of their community;
• knowledge of the needs of their community;

• that important action can be undertaken as part of students’ learning in school; and

• community-focused research and action is an appropriate educational approach for schools to adopt.

The Values Student Action team at St. Charles Borromeo is comprised of ten students from grade 5 and 6. They meet with their Values School Co-ordinator fortnightly in a formal meeting format and informally between these meetings as required.

The SAT, through its research program identified where the teaching, learning and school culture in their schools could be better aligned with the values in the national framework. This approach was intended to enable the school to listen to the “Student Voice” about how teaching, learning and school culture might be improved. A subsequent part of the SAT role was to oversee the establishment of Values Action Teams (VATs) in the school. The membership of the St Charles VAT was students, staff and parents. This VAT was responsible for the implementation of the action identified from the research the SAT carried out.

The SAT process led to a number of approaches to embedding the national values into school practice. The explicit teaching of values is carried out in each classroom, every week, on a Monday between 1:30-2:30. The values were put into an order by the members of the student action team. The same value is taught in every class for three weeks. The staff uses the same teaching resources as their main support and a pack of material is made up of other supporting resources and a list of picture story books that pertain to the particular value. A key focus of the project is to enable classroom teachers and students “to establish respectful relationships between staff and students”.

The explicit teaching of values also occurred when the whole school came together on Monday morning for assembly. Here, the students were taught to come into assembly in an orderly and composed way accompanied by quiet, reflective music. The assembly was used to highlight the current value- sometimes a story was read, a role play performed, observations shared of where, when and by whom a certain value had been seen in action. Values certificates were awarded. These certificates were given by staff, students and parents to staff, students and parents. The assembly usually concluded with a silent reflection read out by the values school co-ordinator and those who have been at assembly leave to quiet, reflective music.

The explicit embedding of values is further strengthened by the visual displays in all classrooms, in the foyer and hallways of the school. The Values trees are major pieces of artwork that have been done in each classroom. All the school’s planning documents including curriculum planning and school policies and procedures documents have been revised to make them values laden. At St Charles the members of the S.A.T. have worked with staff in auditing these documents highlighting where values can be explicitly and implicitly embedded. The integrated work unit planner,
the school newsletter and reviewed policies are some of the documents that have been addressed.

The Student Action team also produced a Values newsletter to introduce a “new” value as the programme progressed. This was distributed to all members of the school community.

Professional development of staff and students was ongoing and regular. Major presentations were given by Terry Lovat and Neil Hawkes. The cluster consultant regularly engages the staff in professional learning about quality teaching. This has had a positive impact on staff who have been given the opportunity to discuss Values Education, the challenges they face in that regard and dilemmas they have in being part of a values based school. This open and transparent dialogue has allowed a respectful, understanding, positive view of all staff to values education.

The Student Action Teams process also led to the school being designated a “No Put Down Zone” in an attempt to foster respect of self and others. They also assigned themselves to a classroom and teacher to become the Values representative whose responsibility was to share information and to discuss any questions or concerns.

The student action team process also produced a whole school ‘buddy program’ where all students and staff are buddied up with another member of the school community. This program was extended by the Student Action Team to the residents of a local retirement village. The residents and students spent time together at both school and the village to share stories about the resident’s childhood, workplace and life. The students spent time talking about their lives, interests and today’s world. This ‘service learning’ allowed “head, hands and hearts” to be involved in a values based partnership.

Finally the school has also sought to develop and support student wellbeing through a social and emotional learning curriculum (SEL). SEL is the process through which one learns to recognise and manage emotions, care about others, make good decisions, behave ethically and responsibly, develop positive relationships and avoid negative behaviours. (Elias et al, 1997). As a complement to SEL the National Framework for Values Education has provided the school with a set of guiding principles to:

- improve outcomes for individuals, groups and society
- improve relationships
- know yourself and others
- enable good decision making
- behave ethically
- increase understanding and tolerance of other people

The promotion and modelling of relational values have been central to achieving these aims. A SEL curriculum which enables the acquisition of social and emotional skills and which reflects core values is intended to contribute to the connectedness and wellbeing of the whole school community. All the staff are trained to use the commercially produced values programs of Bounce Back, Values for Life and Restorative Justice. During the course of 2004 the student
wellbeing coordinator began to introduce her colleagues to the Values for Life program (www.valuesforlifeeducation.com). This program is a set of teacher booklets and black line masters primarily designed to assist teachers to construct situations in which students learn the meaning of twelve key values such as friendliness, consideration, caring, courage and others. It is designed as a whole school approach to promoting wellbeing and resilience.

In 2008, as a further attempt to make Values Education an important aspect of its program the school adopted the Bounce Back program. The focus of Bounce Back is student wellbeing defined by the authors (McGrath and Noble, 2006) as “a positive and sustainable condition that enables individuals, groups, communities and organisations to cope, thrive and succeed”.

The program consists of a set of Teacher Resource Books for Junior Primary, Middle Primary and Upper Primary to Junior Secondary. They explore the theory, rationale and research behind the Bounce Back resilience program and outline strategies for its delivery.

Each of the three teacher’s resource books contains detailed curriculum units with accompanying classroom activities and blackline masters. These resources and activities explore topics related to student resilience such as developing positive values; developing courage and strategies for bouncing back: looking on the bright side; managing emotions; relationship skills; using humour as a coping tool; dealing with bullying and being successful.

Finally, in 2008 the Restorative Justice Program was introduced at the school. It is a whole school commitment to quality relationships. It establishes a philosophy and a set of practices that reflect a commitment to inclusiveness and collaborative problem solving. It provides schools with strategies to manage students with challenging behaviours while maintaining the respect and dignity of all parties. It is designed to respond to the needs of schools to manage student behaviour and interpersonal conflict. Instead of zero tolerance and authoritarian punishment, restorative justice practices provide high levels of both control and support to encourage appropriate behaviour, and places responsibility on students themselves, using a collaborative response to wrongdoing. The philosophy underlying these practices holds that human beings are happier, more productive, and more likely to make positive changes in their behaviour when those in positions of authority do things with them, rather than to them or for them. A general intention of this approach was to encourage the practice of respect, responsibility, honesty, fair go and others.

In summary, Values Education at St. Charles Borromeo takes place using a whole school approach. It is embedded in what happens in the classrooms, it is threaded throughout the planning documents, policies and procedures that make up the school development plan and it involves all members of the school community.

**Evaluation Methodology**

A “mixed method” approach to the evaluation was used. In this case, the mixed method involved the author in extensive periods in the school working as “observer as participant” whereby the author immersed himself in the school over a long period of time with a view to gaining understanding of what the school was attempting in
general and in the values education area in particular. It also involved collecting pre and post implementation data using questionnaires from staff and students about their perceptions of the impact of the values education program on patterns of student academic diligence, school coherence, classroom ambience, student teacher relationships, student well being, teacher well being and parental participation. Once collated the data yielded by the pre and post implementation surveys were then further interrogated in interview and focus group settings in which staff were asked to comment upon and speculate about the patterns that emerged. Finally, the school’s Student Wellbeing Coordinator was interviewed to obtain her perception of the effects of values education on student academic diligence, school coherence, classroom ambience, student teacher relationships, student well being, teacher well being and parental participation.

**Initial Data Collection and Collation**

Between early 2007 and late 2008 all staff and all Grades 4, 5 and 6 students completed pre and post implementation surveys designed to provide data about the extent of values education being offered within the school and teacher and student perceptions of

- student academic diligence/academic performance
- school coherence
- classroom ambience
- student teacher relationships
- student well being
- teacher well being and
- parental participation.

The surveys are attached as Appendices A and B to this section of the report. The data from the surveys were collated as percentage responses to each item. The collated data comprises Attachment A.

Once the data from the surveys were collated a summary chart was developed that provided a synoptic overview of the data from the surveys. It is reproduced below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Emphasis on Values Education</th>
<th>2007</th>
<th>2008</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Values Education is Explicitly Taught</td>
<td>AAA</td>
<td>AAAA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Values Education is a major part of the curriculum</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>AAAA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher Perception of academic diligence</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students are more engaged</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>AA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students are realising full potential</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>AAA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students are more academically diligent</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>AAA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher Perception of school coherence</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emphasis on Values Education</td>
<td>2007</td>
<td>2008</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------------------</td>
<td>------</td>
<td>------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More connected to home</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher Perception of classroom ambience</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More peaceful</td>
<td>AA</td>
<td>AAAA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More trusting</td>
<td>AA</td>
<td>AAAA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conflict managed differently</td>
<td>AA</td>
<td>AAAA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students’ improved social skills</td>
<td>AA</td>
<td>AAAA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Best possible learning environment</td>
<td>AAA</td>
<td>AAAA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improved playground behaviour</td>
<td>AA</td>
<td>AAAA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Teacher Relationships</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deeper understanding of student learning</td>
<td>AA</td>
<td>AAA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teach differently</td>
<td>AA</td>
<td>AAAA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher Perception of Student well being</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More resilient students</td>
<td>AAA</td>
<td>AAAA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students Perception of their own well being</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade 3/4</td>
<td>2007</td>
<td>2008</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade 4/5</td>
<td>2007</td>
<td>2008</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade 5/6</td>
<td>2007</td>
<td>2008</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More connected to school</td>
<td>AAA</td>
<td>AAAA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More trust in leaders</td>
<td>AAAA</td>
<td>AAAA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More confident</td>
<td>AAAA</td>
<td>AAAA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More interested</td>
<td>AAAA</td>
<td>AAAA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More supported</td>
<td>AAAA</td>
<td>AAAA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More engaged</td>
<td>AAAA</td>
<td>AAAA</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Key:** 0% - 50% say agree or strongly agree = A  51% - 70% = AA  71% - 90% AAA  91%- 100% = AAAA

**Interpretation of the Summary Chart**

The summary chart suggests that the teachers at St Charles consider there to have been a significant increase in attention to values education between early 2007 and late 2008. The account of the school’s progress from introducing the Values for Life program in 2004 through to having by 2008 not only that program occurring but also the SATs, VATs, Restorative Justice and Bounce Back in place suggests this is a sound perception. It also indicates that the tone of the school has changed (more peaceful, better playground behaviour, conflict handled differently, improved social skills on the part of students) and that students are more engaged, trusting, trying harder and achieving to their capacity and the like. Finally, it further suggests that levels of student wellbeing are very high.
The summary chart was then used to guide a series of meetings with staff members as they collectively interrogated the details on the chart and offered explanations about patterns in the data.

**Data from the Focus Group**

*Please describe the school’s values education program.*

Since 2004 the school has been constructing a relatively pragmatic program of values education. In 2004 it commenced the Values for Life program. In 2005 it was involved in the Values Education Good Practice Schools Project as well as continuing with the Values for Life project. In 2006 it introduced Bounce Back as well as participating in the Values Education Good Practice Schools Project Stage 2. In 2007 it participated in the Values Education Good Practice Schools Project Stage 2, reintroduced Values for Life and started work with the Restorative Justice program. In short, there has been an accumulation of effort on the part of the school to identify its core values, have them reflected in the school’s policies and procedures and have them shape the school’s curriculum. All of this has been done with the intention of sustaining optimum levels of student wellbeing.

The main outcomes of the school’s values program have been:

1. A focus on the explicit teaching of values
2. The calming effect it has had on the school
3. The emergence of a common values based language that acts as a self monitoring device

*What is the role of service learning in the program?*

The Service Learning component was initiated by the SATs during VEGPSP Stage 1. It has developed into a reciprocal learning arrangement within which the students are given opportunities to put the school values into practice.

*Why do you think the staff survey shows such an increased emphasis on VE between 2007 and 2008?*

There has been an accumulation of different values based programs over the past four years. The school has proceeded from conducting the Values for Life program to adding the VEGPSP work, the Bounce Back Program and the Restorative Justice program.

*The staff surveys seem to be suggesting that recently the children seem to be trying harder at school. The student surveys seem to be saying the same thing. Do you agree? If so, does it have anything to do with the values program?*

The staff focus group was unequivocal about the children (by and large) trying harder than they did a few years ago. A student described his response to the values program as follows:
Question: Do you think your attitude to school has changed since you have been involved with SATs?

Answer: I think it has because when (previously) things got a littler bit hard it was more I can’t be bothered and when I had to try and do things over and over I just gave up. And now after being in the values project if you really try and you keep trying you will eventually get it in the end”.

A teacher said:
“Personally believe it comes down to relationships. I think the relationships between staff and students and between students have improved enormously since we introduced the values program. The children are responding to that by trying harder.

The staff surveys seem to be suggesting that the children are achieving their full academic potential. Do you agree? If so, does it have anything to do with the values program?

The focus group described the children as “definitely having a go more”. “They now have to the confidence to ask for help”. “Their levels of trust have improved. They are prepared to ask peers for help and know that it will be forthcoming”. Teachers also spoke about how they were now raising their expectations for the students.

Another comment was:
An increased level of intellectual depth on the part of some students is 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”.

The focus group felt that, by and large, the students were more on task of late. It also felt that the students were more engaged (in touch with self and connected with peers). The values education program was said to be one of the factors that contributed to this. Probably though it was more a result of:

“Maybe engagement is an accumulation of a whole lot of things running together very well. Teachers being well informed and knowing what they are teaching about, being motivating to the children, the children feeling they are valued and respected, having a great relationship with the teacher, a non threatening classroom. I think there are lots of factors”.

The staff surveys seem to be suggesting that the school is no better connected to home these days. Do you agree?

The focus group pointed out that the recently conducted annual survey of parental opinion disclosed a strong connection between home and school from the parents
perception. The teachers commented that in parent teacher nights parents often commented that it was the values program that attracted them to the school.

*The surveys seem to be saying that the classrooms are very different these days. They are:*

- “the best possible learning environment”
- More peaceful
- More trusting
- Conflict is managed differently
- students social skills have improved
- playground behaviour has improved

*Do you agree? If so, does it have anything to do with the values program?*

The focus group was unequivocal about the effects of the values program on the school and classrooms. Classrooms are definitely more peaceful and calmer. Most put this down to the students knowing the meaning of things like respect, responsibility. There has been a good deal of work on putting students into other people’s shoes to make them understand the impact being unfriendly or disrespectful to someone has on that person. This has made the children more conscious of their behaviour and in turn this has had a positive effect on classrooms.

The staff members spoke about dramatic changes to behaviour in the playground and about more responsibility being demonstrated there.

The focus group was unequivocal about the impact the values education program has had on classroom life. Classrooms are calmer since its introduction. This might be explained by the way the common values language acts as a self monitoring device. Students now know what is expected namely respectful, tolerant behaviour and they remind each other of that regularly. The group felt that there was a direct correlation between the success of the values education program and the increased calmness and respectfulness observed in classrooms.

“The children are now more settled in the classroom. When asked to pair up they are now more likely to pair with someone they might not have done so with previously. That’s because they know the meaning of kindness, respect etc. They now have had many opportunities to put the values into practice. They know what friendship feels lie, respect feels like and that makes them behave differently”.

*What comments would you make about changed student / teacher relationships over the past couple of years? Do they have anything to do with the values program?*

The focus group felt that in the majority of cases relationships had changed along the lines of the following teacher’s comment:

“What I hadn’t anticipated, was how anxious I became when I realized 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 coordinator
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 realized 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”.

What comments would you make about teacher well being over the past couple of years? Do they have anything to do with the values program?

The focus group was unanimous about staff morale presently being very high and that it had improved significantly since there had been an emphasis on values education at the school. Many things had contributed to this including a growing esprit de corps which is actively encouraged by the student wellbeing coordinator, the excitement of being involved in a highly innovative project, a realisation that the efforts of the group are producing results like a calmed school, more resilient students and the like.

Conclusion
How is values education being implemented in ways that elicit positive change in teacher practice and student response?

The values education program at St Charles Borromeo Primary School is a combination of:

- two commercial, black line masters programs (Bounce Back and Values for Life);
- a values based approach to handling student misbehaviour (Restorative Justice);
- formal and explicit teaching of values once a week;
- an approach to modelling values (Assemblies); and,
- a student centred – teacher guided teaching and learning scaffold (SATs and VATs).

In combination, these practices have:

- Produced a common values based language that establishes expectations about the conduct of interpersonal relations at the school;
- Contributed to the school becoming a calmer and more peaceful environment where mutual respect is taken seriously;
• Enabled teachers to reshape their approaches to teaching so that quality teaching outcomes are more widespread;

• Produced a perception on the part of staff and students alike about an improved sense of wellbeing.

Case Study 8: Seaford 6-12 School, South Australia

Context
Since 2004 Seaford 6-12 has been involved in the development of what broadly can be categorised as student wellbeing. In April 2005 Quality Learning Australia facilitated a two day exercise with the SRC that involved students, staff, parents and community members to formulate school values, vision and purpose. A DVD entitled “School Visioning and Values” has been produced of the two days. The DVD is recognised as best practice and has been shown nationally and internationally (www.gla.com.au). The values identified were Respect, Responsibility, Learning, Happiness, Listening, and Friendship. All students attended Day 1 of the exercise in small teams. They were posed a series of questions such as “What would your perfect school be like?” and their responses collated into affinity charts by the SRC. The qualities described were articulated as values. Day 2 saw the students return again in groups and they had to prioritise the collated findings and finally make a numeric commitment to the agreed values.

Since that time, a whole school approach has been implemented to ensure that school values underpin all school based activity. Values were embedded in all aspects of school life – curriculum, school culture and environment, policy and procedures and community partnerships. For example, capacity matrices have been introduced for each learning area in the curriculum.

Capacity Matrices detail the skills specific to the learning area and students at regular intervals are able to chart their progress in achieving mastery in each skill. Students are being encouraged to take more responsibility for their learning and are intended increase levels of intrinsic motivation to learning.

Thus, at Seaford 6-12 School values education is about the establishment of a school culture of positive relationships, based on mutual respect, trust and care which are modelled in all aspects of school life. The curriculum has been explicitly focused to answer the question: why is an environment of respect, trust and acceptance vital to the human community? Related questions have been posed in a way that increases students’ ability to self reflect and gain knowledge of themselves, ultimately transforming their beliefs and behaviours. The catalyst for much of this work has been the regular quality professional development on Values Education and Student Wellbeing that all staff have undertaken over the past three years.

The next advance with it’s values education program was its involvement in the Values Education Good Practice Schools Grant Stage 2 in 2006. This initiative intended to skill teachers through professional development in the delivery of Values Education and to provide opportunities for teachers to work in teams to develop and to begin implementing civic and environmental projects through the curriculum and
co-curricular activities such as the Lifelong Learning book, Community Connections program and environmental service learning within the Surf and Sand subject.

The broad plan involved in this was based on a selection of values for implementation. After consideration of the Values for Australian Schooling national framework six values were selected that roughly aligned with the framework:

- Respect
- Responsibility
- Listening
- Learning
- Happiness
- Friendship

These six were developed by student and teacher selection from the National Framework offerings. The specific labels were chosen because they reflected what teachers and students saw as primary needs within the school context.

The project’s intended outcomes were first and most importantly, to provide a vehicle in the school community that would enable the values to be put into practice. Second, it was intended to engage teachers in professional development designed to produce quality teaching. Third, it sought to encourage student connections with the broader community.

The project intended to build the principles of values education across the entire school. The focus has been on the student, and specifically the student as being capable of becoming a “centre” of values. It was intended that the students should forge links with the community outside the school by either becoming involved in environmental sustainability or by becoming involved in some aspect of citizenship. In this way the individual students should develop a personal moral code and achieve a standard of social conscience and responsibility thus linking the teaching staff, the student body and the local community together in the Project.

The theoretical basis for the project consists, in the main, of partnerships. For instance, when the local health service wanted to construct a community vegetable garden for sufferers of cancer, the health service co-ordinated contacted the school and the Associate Principal linked her with an Education Department Targetwork manager who had plans drawn up, employed a site manager and then the students from the school worked with the site manager to construct the vegetable garden. The project was valued by the students for the authentic learning and skills acquired as well as the asset gained by the community.

The project has been initiated by teachers who have undergone professional development that will enable them to develop and deliver a curriculum where values are the actual framework for the students’ learning experiences. This professional development has been shown to affect curriculum design and teaching practices in the schoolroom. This changed schoolroom environment has then been shown to affect student behaviour and reaction to the teaching experience. Teachers and students together look beyond the school to the wider community with an enhanced sense of social responsibility.
The intention from the beginning of the project has been to frame the curriculum around the values chosen at the onset of the project. This has meant that all classrooms prominently display the six specific values that had been chosen at the outset. From learning plans to student reports the values are a priority.

Also, teachers explicitly teach the values through strategies such as “y” charts and goal setting and in building students intellectual capacity by using higher order thinking strategies in their learning units. A professional development program has been actively pursued to assist with such things.

The Survey Data
In the cycle of school review, regular data was collected to monitor, review and set further agendas for improvement in values education at Seaford. The data was generated to enable staff to reflect on developments with the project and to assist with decision making about project management and change. Below there is data pertaining to:

- Positive changes in the way teachers teach
- Benefits accrued by teachers
- Changes noted in student wellbeing
- Roll-on advantages for the wider population

Positive changes in the way teachers teach

Teachers explicitly teach and model the school’s values. Seaford recognises that strong positive relationships based on mutual respect, trust and care is central to student wellbeing and an essential prerequisite for quality teaching and learning. All students are formally taught values education by their Care Group Teacher in weekly Pathways and Futures Program. Values language and reference to appropriate values behaviours are used proactively by teachers when dealing with behavioural issues in the classroom and the schoolyard.

Values Education has been embedded into the curriculum.
Across Learning Areas teachers have developed units of work and teaching strategies that examine their own teacher values, and values of others, within the local and other cultures and societies. Frequently, the strategies used are those of higher order thinking skills through Bloom’s taxonomy and the pedagogies of multiple
intelligences. The school argues that such experiences take students to a deeper level of reflection and understanding in relation to values.

There is also some evidence that students are more engaged since commencing the values education program.

![Graph showing student engagement in other curriculum areas](image)

**Benefits accrued by teachers**

Values Education has resulted in an increase in school cohesion. There is greater consistency across the staff in relationships with one another and with students. A clearer sense of purpose has been noted as staff work within a positive school culture any evidence.

The DECS survey results indicate that the school has a very positive view about Leadership Support, Decision Making, Staff Recognition, Employee Development and Co-workers Support. No real negative issue emerged from these findings. The Staff Psychological Health data improvements range from 1% o 17% in all aspects of the survey.

Leadership Support was 86% and is now, 88%, Decision Making was 87% and now is 93%, Staff Recognition was 77% and now is 78%, Employee Development was 77% and now is 88% and Co-workers Support 83% - 90%. The percentage is determined by how many staff ticked **strongly agree** and **agree** in response to the question.

As one teacher noted:

“I’ve noticed the school change in many ways, the most important for me is that I am now dealing with students in a proactive way. I feel that students are beginning to take responsibility for their action and behaviours. In the past there were always issues with students that were reactive; I seemed to always be putting out spot fires with behavioural issues. There’s now more time to spend with those who really need help in the class”.

**Ambience**

Since commencing the values program the school has become a more peaceful environment.
In this school teaching values has encouraged a more peaceful atmosphere

Student wellbeing
Surveys have shown that students at Seaford feel respected and listened to resulting in them feeling valued as individuals. Students experience a consistency across the school through the focus on values. Whether teachers are addressing a behavioural issue within the classroom or yard or relating to some aspect of learning in a learning activity, teachers and increasingly students are speaking the language of the school values.

Students feel that they have a voice in the classroom by negotiating their learning. They have many opportunities to clarify, analyse and evaluate their own and others values within Pathways and Futures, the whole school pastoral care program, in subjects and in their daily relationships across the school. Students at each year participate in structured programs where they can practise actioning their values. The Life Long Learning book issued to all Middle School students provides a multitude of suggested experiences that students can engage in within the school and the community. Year 7 and 8 students also engage in a Community Connections program where they do some voluntary community service. Year 10s can complete the Youth Opportunities Personal Leadership Program.

The following comments from students are indicative of the level of wellbeing:

“The school feels safe and you feel good being here and the teachers are friendly and nice and flexible” Students, Year 6

“The school has helped me improve my behaviour. They have persevered with me. Staff take the time to talk and listen to you and the communication with my home has been good. I have matured and I understand the school’s expectations” Student, Year 10

“The teachers here ask questions to find out about you, they give you a chance. The difference at Seaford is mainly the teachers. The teachers respect the kids and listen to what they have got to say”. Student, Year 11

“People also accept you more. Everyone is friendly and it has been easy to make friends. The teachers like us and respect us and the way they behave shows they like teaching us”. Migrant student, Year 10

“The school always asks the students their opinion on school improvement”. Students, Year 12
According to the social outcomes survey conducted at the school students’ wellbeing at Seaford has significantly improved over the last three years. The annual student Social Outcomes survey demonstrated the sustained improvement that has occurred since the introduction of the Values and Visioning process.

The community has benefited by students remaining at school longer, and more students completing 12 years of schooling.

**Student Retention Rates 2002 -2006**
- 2002 - 60%
- 2003 - 58%
- 2004 - 56%
- 2005 -70.5%
- 2006 - 80.7%

**Parental Involvement**
Positive relationships have been further developed between school and home. The annual parent survey demonstrates high levels of satisfaction with the school.
Community members, when visiting the school, frequently comment on the positive and warm feel of the school. The attitudes engendered in students has led to positive behaviours in the community.

In March, 2007 the Principal received an unsolicited letter from a mother with two pre school boys who were travelling on a local Seaford bus. The bus braked heavily throwing them around. The mother reported:

“After this incident most of the students showed and/or asked if we were O.K. and they offered their seats to us. I thankfully accepted and was again very impressed by their attitudes…… I would like to also thank the parents and teachers of these teenagers as they were polite and friendly and this can only be the result of hard work on both the teachers and the parents behalf”

**Data from the Focus Group Survey 2007**
Towards the end of 2007 it was decided to extend the quantitative data cited above by running a number of Focus Groups on the student population. These took place on December 4, 2007 with Professor Robert Crotty, the cluster’s UAN person, acting as facilitator. Five classes were represented by four students. Common questions were devised for the groups.
The questions were intended to gather information on the following topics:

- Understanding of values chosen by the cluster (q.1-3)
- Hierarchy of these values (q.4-5)
- Appreciation of Values Education (q. 6)
- Embedding of Values in curriculum (q.7)
- Linking of Values with community: teachers and home community (q.8).

A meeting room was chosen for the Focus Groups. It was neutral territory. Like all rooms in the school it paraded a copy of the Values, with some information on each: Respect, Responsibility, Listening, Learning, Happiness and Friendship.

The agreed upon schedule of questions was as follows:

1. Can you tell me what you understand when I talk about the value “RESPECT”?
2. How do you know when someone like you is showing “RESPECT”? What might they be doing?
3. How would I know if someone like you did not have this value?
4. Which of these values (point to the values on the wall) have you and your friends mainly learnt about?
5. Which of our school values do you think is the most important to have in our school? Why?
6. Do you think it’s important for students to learn about values?
7. Do your teachers get you to think about or learn about values when studying various topics in different subjects? Can you give an example?
8. Should teachers and parents have the same values as students?

Altogether there were ten groups of students, giving a total of forty students. Each group was attended by a familiar teacher who usually joined in the conversation. The students were evenly divided by gender and (following the advice of teachers) on the basis of academic ability. The groups covered the range from Years 8 to 10. Questions were posed to each student, although the order in which students were approached was regularly changed. Every endeavour was made to put the students at ease and questioning stopped as soon as they showed any signs of not being comfortable. The responses given by the students were transcribed in note form and also taped.

The understanding of Values was pursued by questioning the students on the Value of Respect. This covered the first three questions. Each group was able to describe, first of all by positive examples, what was meant by having a Value of Respect as a key requirement. They were also able to respond negatively by describing what they would call disrespectful behaviour. In the main the activities described were personal – allowing others to speak and express opinions even if they were not mainstream,
helping people, not invading personal property. One particular point, mentioned by three students in three different cohorts, was that respect meant maintaining eye contact even if you disagreed with someone. This must have been mentioned at some briefing attended by the students and had an impact.

Three of the cohorts extended the list of actions under the value of Respect to acceptance of ethnic difference. One student gave the specific example of a Chinese peer. This seemed to be an advanced awareness of respectfulness.

The negative behaviours associated with lack of respect were, for the most part, the other side of the coin although new language was noticeable: not listening to peers, putting people down, bullying, damaging others’ property (including graffiti). There were several mentions of not accepting others’ ‘beliefs’, which seemed to be a fairly encompassing term. On one occasion religion was mentioned under ‘beliefs’.

Questions 4-5 tried to elicit a hierarchy of those Values proposed within the school community. Some students could not see any purpose in the hierarchy. They wanted ‘all of them’ included. When choices were made, among the younger cohorts Respect and Responsibility were almost universally chosen. There were some laboured attempts to claim priority for Learning, on the basis that Learning was the purpose behind going to school. For the later Years, it was Happiness and Friendship. This would have reflected growing maturity.

There were interesting replies to Question 6 about the appreciation of Values Education. The only negative response was from one senior girl who was opposed to being part of the Focus Group and, I suspect, was voicing her protest in this way. A number of cohorts agreed that ‘the school would not work’ and ‘the school would be a mess’ without the Values Education framework. Also of interest were specific replies from more senior students that ‘you know what is expected’ and ‘it is in black and white’. With some significant maturity, one student explained that the Values provided ‘boundaries’ for the school community. In this connection, it was my impression that the Values Education framework gave the students some security. They knew what was expected of them but, importantly, they knew what they could demand from others.

The embedding of Values in the curriculum, information gained by Question 7, was found to be a difficulty to some of the cohorts. A few could be explicit about Values Education in PE and a specific lesson was recalled on a greatly admired footballer who had been charged with an offence: what were his real values? That lesson had made an impression. Others recalled teachers calling on specific Values in order to instil respect and responsibility in the use of IT equipment and sports equipment. There were also references to Listening, Friendship and Respect as side issues raised by teachers in the classroom and in assemblies.

It might be that embedding the school’s Values in the curriculum needs to be made more explicit to the students. In a final session with staff involved with the Focus Groups it was suggested that some of the more recent staff might not have had sufficient induction in this matter.
The final Question 8 sought information on the extent to which the students saw the Values framework extending into wider communities. The younger students tended to see the framework as being specific to the student population and the school environment. This perception was not clear-cut as there were also some clear references to teachers modelling Values for students. Certainly, the older students claimed that teachers and (usually) parents/guardians should maintain the same Values as themselves. These latter students had a more flexible grasp of the meaning of the Values. Their younger companions saw Values as fixed and Learning, for example, was confined to what could be learned in their classroom.

However, it should be noted that there was some interesting conversation about Values in the family environment. A few students were able to articulate that, with some changes, the same Values espoused in the school should be transferred to the family setting. In fact, there were a few claims that this had happened. One student explained that the Values in the Project were already functional in the family. That the conversation could happen was significant. This Focus Group exercise gave a snapshot of Seaford 6-12 and the Sea and Vales cluster. It provided extra information to that which has been on other occasions gleaned from quantitative surveys. In general, it shows that Values Education is firmly entrenched in the school culture. Students might have differed in their answers and attitudes but there was no gainsaying the fact that a Values framework was actively present in the school (and presumably in the cluster). Some of the differences in student responses were to be expected and they were based simply on difference of perception because of age and maturity.

The Focus Groups demonstrated that the Values Education project at Seaford has produced the following outcomes:

- The Values are firmly incorporated in the school planning procedures. The choice of specific Values and the proliferation of signage is evidence.
- There is a whole school adoption of the Project.
- There are partnerships with regard to the Project between the cluster schools and some signs that the Values culture is moving into families.
- Students feel supported by the ‘boundaries’ supplied by the Values Project. They feel safer and they feel that they can call on the Values for their personal protection from bullying, harassment.
- There was certainly some higher order thinking on the part of students reflecting on the Values in their school environment and on the Values across communities. It would be too much to conclude from the Focus Group experience by itself that the Values Project had created this intellectual depth, but it is a possibility.
- The Focus Groups showed reflective capacity and self-knowledge. Again, further evidence would be required to posit a causal link with the Project.

The two issues raised by the Focus Groups that probably require some further attention as the Project moves forward are: awareness of Values embedded in the curriculum and the possibility of extension of the Values framework beyond the immediate school community.
Principal Interview
An interview was conducted with the Principal on Friday 4 April. The interviewer was Professor Robert Crotty (UniSA) and the interview was recorded. The transcript has been edited in a minor way to read more coherently and to remove any extraneous conversation. It was subsequently checked by Mary Asikas.

How do you understand ‘Values Education’ in the Seaford setting?
At Seaford the whole educational environment is now underpinned by VE. Prior to the advent of VE, there had not been any common understanding about values in the school culture and what they actually meant. VE brought with it a common language and a common understanding of what was valued in the school and by the school. VE adds to the school’s vision. When vision and values were there together, from that point the whole school was moving in the one direction. Values Education acted as an umbrella and the values became embedded in the curriculum.

When VE was first mentioned, the clear idea at the beginning was to achieve a common language for the school - but it turned into something much more. The VE umbrella has become part of the day-to-day running of the school. It’s there all the time. Initially it was about the school’s need to establish what was important, but it eventually became part of the school culture. Today students can articulate the values; staff have embraced them. A staff of eighty can use the same language. I did not expect it to go where it has gone. It has become embedded in everything. At first, we were not clear about how VE would have a role to play in the curriculum. We called in the experts and, with Marion’s work especially, VE was articulated into the curriculum.

Values Education has been defined as: ‘a symbiotic relationship between: the explicit teaching of values, the effects of quality teaching and good service learning practice’. Would you agree with this definition?
If this means that VE is embedded into all sections of the school life, then I agree. I see these three as being related, one leading to the next one. Yes, I accept the definition. I like it.

What would you understand by each of these three items?
In the first place, there has been an effort to explicitly teach values at Seaford. On Open Nights the teaching of values is explained and it takes place in a prominent way. The 15 minute Seaford DVD sums up what is meant by our values and this is played to parents and students. The students like the DVD.

Next, you engage teachers in PD. The teachers are the essential link in the plan. At Seaford they are divided into Learning Area teams and they map out units of work and try to see where the values components actually fit. They find out where they fit in the facilitation of learning. If this is done effectively, teaching has improved in the school. Where the teachers have embraced the idea of VE, teaching has improved. The students involved with these committed teachers then think at a higher level. They have their own say and express their own views. Teachers in turn during the PD sessions have received affirmation about what they were already doing and they receive new ideas that could improve their teaching.
I understand service learning to mean putting what has been learned about values into active practice. This takes place at Seaford. The students begin within the school community but they move beyond that. Service learning goes back to the explicit teaching about the values. If the student is mucking up and is asked to talk about values, they can do so. They know exactly where they have gone wrong. There is an explicit knowledge about how they as students should behave, should learn. Kids need these boundaries. After all, the boundaries were developed by the kids themselves. On Open Night values are gone through with new students. The golden question is: why is it important to show you the DVD about the values? The answer comes back: because we kids have made them up.

**How would you gauge ‘quality learning’ at Seaford after the advent of Values Education?**

Quality learning is there at Seaford. In fact, we have 27 teachers going to a training session with David Langford on quality learning. Most teachers understand about quality learning and realise that the voice of the students is vitally important if it is to be achieved. The quality learning agenda is seen by visitors to the school; they come to see it.

Seaford has had a number of top quality teachers who have accepted the ideals of VE. They recognise the importance of the student voices and they allow the students to engage in independent learning. These students are then able to negotiate their own learning and their own assessment. Students think for themselves; they are not doing things at school because they are told. Furthermore, the students are able to recognise when they are getting a raw deal in the classroom. Then they have sufficient independence to come and complain. I love these conversations. They can articulate the raw deal. Our kids are prepared to complain if they are not receiving quality teaching. And they receive a hearing from me. I am willing to take their side. I see all of this from teachers who empower students to negotiate their own learning and know the boundaries of the educational arena. This has been enabled by VE. This learning has intellectual depth and the students are given communicative competence. They develop empathic character.

**Have you seen any change at Seaford after the advent of Values Education in staff morale?**

There is now direction in the school; previously it was lacking. The values are up on the wall. There has been a positive change in staff morale since VE became part of the school culture. In the first place, there is a common language. Staff believe in the values. We have had to do a lot of sharing since secondary staff do not usually use this sort of language. We have had conversations. The psychological findings undertaken by Seaford show that the teachers feel supported. The values are there explicitly on the wall in every room; they can tap into them. Staff know what is expected and where they are going. There is a consistency that was not there before. Staff also feel supported in what they might want to try out in the classroom.

I’ve done 10 interstate presentations and I say during these presentations that what has had the greatest impact on improvement at Seaford has been the Visions and Values exercise. It set the direction and put everyone on the same page. I was there before in July 2002 and have been there since and I have seen the impact. There were other changes in the school setting. I changed the leadership structure for example, engaged
people differently but there was still a link with values. As far as the values in the school are concerned, I do the upfront leadership, Marion has the passion and the knowledge.

Some of the teachers were at first reluctant. We conducted a survey and actually asked: What should students/teachers/others be doing if they “walked the talk”? The students knew what they expected of the teachers.

**Have you seen any change at Seaford after the advent of Values Education in the achievement of student potential?**
At first there was some resistance from the older students. When the values became explicit, they said that they did not like to be told what to do. But after all they had made the choices. The important point here is that the student voice has been recognised. Their voice has certainly increased. Students feel empowered by what is happening in the school and in the classroom.

**Have you seen any change at Seaford after the advent of Values Education in student resilience?**
Today students at Seaford have their own opinions and they feel safe in expressing them. There are pathways. No longer is there the complaint: “No one listens to us”. Within the school there are structures by which the student voice can be heard and the SRC is very active and powerful.

**Have you seen any change at Seaford after the advent of Values Education in student wellbeing?**
The important point here is that Seaford is now a safer place. Student voice has increased. Student wellbeing and resilience means students can improve the school and make it a better place. Before, the feeling was that students could not change things. No one would say that now. There are avenues by which they can have a say and express a view. Kids are running the school in many ways but of course there needs to be parameters. That’s what happens in life. What has happened in the SRC – we won money last year for our award and the kids were asked what they wanted to do with it. Students know there are boundaries, not only for themselves but for the whole community, including the teachers and other staff.

**Have you seen any change at Seaford after the advent of Values Education in teacher wellbeing?**
The same point applies to the teachers. Staff Induction is about the values, about what this stress on values and on VE means for the management of the classroom. As a result, Seaford is a safer place for teachers. New teachers find that they walk into a structure which gives them something concrete to work with. They feel less threatened. The leadership team is willing to model the values for them.

**Conclusion**
As Seaford 6-12 school has increased the emphasis it gives to values education, measures of student wellbeing and staff wellbeing indicate significant improvement. The ambience of the school has altered and it has become a more peaceful place. Students are staying at school longer, appear happier and are more engaged.
Case Study 9: Toowoomba High School, Queensland

The School Introduced
Wilsonton Campus is a relatively new, geographically separate junior campus (for Years 8 – 10) of a large, traditional urban high school in Toowoomba, Queensland. Established in 1998, the Campus struggled for identity and ‘market share’, being neither Middle School nor High School, and developed a reputation for providing excellent Special Needs programs. The students, and the suburb, seemed destined to be defined by need rather than by ability.

In 2003, Wilsonton Campus became a part of a cluster of Toowoomba schools that initiated IDEAS projects (Crowther, Andrews, Dawson, & Lewis, 2001). In the following years this IDEAS cluster of schools shared experiences in developing unifying visions for their schools, identifying the key values underpinning their vision, and deriving, from the visions and values, school-wide pedagogies - approaches to teaching and learning supported by authoritative pedagogies that work for the students of their various schools.

By 2005, Wilsonton Campus was beginning to action the school-wide pedagogy they had developed. The following year, along with two other schools from the North Toowoomba Cluster, Wilsonton Campus sought to continue their IDEAS Actioning by joining the Values Education – Good Practice Schools Project (VEGPS-2). All three schools wished to implement their various school-wide pedagogies in the area of pastoral care and each wanted to further the teaching of their school’s IDEAS values by embedding these values in their curricula.

Wilsonton Campus wanted to develop a curriculum that taught students the skills and practices of their IDEAS values: Teamwork, Seeking Opportunity, Meeting Challenges and Success and Recognition. After much stumbling, and a few false starts, it was a briefing session with Terry Lovat (whose thesis was that the explicit teaching of values has as its purpose the questioning and balancing of values so that students may choose to live a moral life) confirmed what their objectives must be:

To bring our community into our Values Education projects; and,
To develop processes for the explicit teaching of values (work programs, written curriculum, visible staff relationships, ad hoc activities, etc.) that encourage students to investigate the implications of these values.

Approach to Values Education

Early Days
In the early days of the VEGPS-2 project, the staff cross-referenced the IDEAS school values – Teamwork, Seeking Opportunity, Meeting Challenges and Success and Recognition – with the Values for Australian Schools. From this activity they became more familiar with the Nine Values and developed a more complex understanding of the implications of their own school values. Teachers were asked to suggest Action Research questions aligned to the school values and the number of sub-projects suggested were planned to be developed in the 2007 school year. To help manage the
A committee of teachers was formed, consisting of a broad cross-section of teachers, including some of those who expressed an interest in conducting specific action research projects. As well, a staff working party was established and given one year to write and implement a Pastoral Care/Values Education curriculum.

**Beginning Curriculum Writing** - At the beginning of the 2007 school year the Values Education / Pastoral Care (VE/PC) Committee immediately set to work on developing a framework for a curriculum to be taught in the ‘ACCESS’ lessons, a single, 35 minute lesson weekly. A scope and sequence was developed where the school values would be a focus for each term and each year level followed a theme to make the course developmental. The year themes were: Year 8 – Connection; Year 9 – Changes; Year 10 – Choices. The term focuses, with progressive intent were: Term 1 – Teamwork; Term 2 – Meeting Challenges; Term 3 – Seeking Opportunity; and Term 4 – Success and Recognition. The scope and sequence were filled with content from Human Relationships Education requirements and with relevant school-wide or specific year level activities.

Members of the VE/PC committee were then assigned to work in teams to write the specific lessons and prepare the resources. In each year level course, the term values were the focus of goal-setting and reflections at the start and finish of lessons. For example, in their unit on Sexuality, Year 10s were asked to identify the characteristics of ‘Meeting Challenges’ and then to evaluate their work in a lesson, using these characteristics as criteria.

The program was implemented in Term 2, 2007. On-going monitoring was undertaken by year level coordinators and the project coordinator. Evaluations by teachers and students were conducted at the end of the term. This evaluation helped inform the writing of Term 3 material. For example, a forum approach and combining classes / team teaching were suggested and some classes chose to reorganise classes in order to divide them into boys and girls groups.

Several of the teachers involved in delivering the ACCESS program were recruited to be Action Researchers and collectors of case writing examples. This group was mentored by the project coordinator to keep a reflective journal, especially concerning ACCESS, and provided with ongoing information about values-based schooling, reflective practices and case writing. The feedback from these teachers about their reflective practices was instrumental in initiating ‘Phase 3’ as they planned to look at school organisation to enhance teacher reflection, a key element of becoming a ‘values-based school’.

**Community Alignment** - Parents were informed about Values Education and the ACCESS program through articles in the school newsletter. A questionnaire was conducted about their understanding and expectations of Values Education as an activity during the Term 2 Parent–Teacher Interview evening. This confirmed that the parents supported the processes though little was offered in relation to further
direction. A focus group of parents was assembled during National Safe Schools Week to discuss events, issues and opinions around the Values Education project but attendance was poor. Parents were interviewed on an ad hoc basis about their awareness of and response to the VE/PC program. Parents were aware of the louder aspects of the program – improved sport house team spirit and the more controversial topics covered – but work still needs to be done to more deeply embed the values program in the parents’ awareness.

**Becoming a Values-based School**

As the ACCESS program was being developed, the VE/PC Committee turned their attention to the next phases in the project. They wanted to look into ways of embedding Values Education processes (the explicit teaching of values in context) across the curriculum and they needed to review the ‘School-wide Pedagogy’ (their agreed “Learning works best at Wilsonton when …” approaches) for pedagogical practices consistent with being a values-based school.

In beginning their Values Education work, they were building on their review-and-reform (IDEAS) process: their school vision, school values, statement of schoolwide pedagogy and their ‘Teaching our way for our kids’ (TOWFOK). By mid-2007, they had a written curriculum overview built around the school values to be implemented in a weekly 35 minute period. Groups of teachers were working, using the Teaching Our Way For Our Kids (TOWFOK) process, to gather resources and write units to fill out this curriculum framework. A number of interested teachers were developing reflective practices and action research questions. At this stage there was a sense that they were ‘doing values education’ rather than ‘becoming a values-based school’.

For the remainder of 2007, the writing and reviewing of the curriculum program continued, with active teacher discussion about what worked and what didn’t. The work of the group of interested teachers engaged in reflective practice (and some action research) was instrumental in shifting the focus from critiquing the curriculum, topics, strategies and student engagement towards talk about pedagogy. As part of this growing awareness, the VE/PC committee increasingly focused on how to invite more teachers to reflect on the Values Education program, how to make reflection time available, what to provide teachers with to make this reflection time valuable, and how to build time for professional conversation into existing structures.

**Sustaining a Values-based School**

At the start of 2008, teachers began the ongoing process of reviewing the ACCESS lessons trialled the previous year. Most teachers seemed a little more confident about the purposes of the program and what they were trying to achieve by exploring values through the Pastoral Care topics. But it became increasingly apparent that the biggest challenge to sustaining a values-based school was to see teachers fully embrace the significance and consequences of true values-based pedagogies across all KLas. Robust conversations at the ‘Review of ACCESS’ committee meetings have been reflecting this. On-going teacher in-service at staff meetings, that draws on research and other authoritative sources, is useful in further provoking and extending the reflection and conversations about the role between good teaching practice and positive relationships in the school. It is hoped that the measurable improvements that were noted (see Outcomes) by the end of Term 1, 2008, in both academic and
behaviour management areas, will inspire and encourage staff to recognise that the purposeful approaches to changing school culture through acting out their values is making a difference.

Student feedback has informed the development and now the review of the ACCESS program. In late 2007, the Year Level Coordinators conducted focus groups of students at Wilsonton Campus about ACCESS. The products from this were very helpful. Late in third term of 2008, ACCESS classes were invited to respond informally to some questions about their experiences in ACCESS. The feedback from this exercise will be useful to the review committee which is currently rewriting parts of the program.

The most recent attempt to ensure parents are fully informed about the Pastoral Care/Values Education is the preparation of a leaflet to inform parents of the specific content and organisation of the Access program. This brochure, being rewritten as the last meetings about the 2009 program progress, outlines the topics covered and graphically reinforces the school values to parents. This brochure will be printed and ready for distribution at the start of the 2009 school year.

Another interesting development that is emerging from the meetings of the ACCESS review committee is the discussion that we need to unpack the four school values into smaller, more generally applicable values that underpin all four of the school values. Tentatively these are being discussed as Respect, Responsibility, Resilience and Reflection. This could open up a whole new professional conversation about where these would sit – if they do.

**Outcomes**

By the time the Phase II project report was submitted in early April, 2008, Wilsonton Campus had uncovered some rather remarkable statistical information after collating 2007 data. Discussion with the Campus Principal, within the cluster and with the University Associate Network person, suggested that they should interpret this as their approach to Values Education and their commitment to embedding values across all aspects of school life starting to reap rewards.

1. There was a statistically impressive drop in the number of students being suspended – a quantitative measure of poor student behaviour – after an initial spike when the more consistent application of consequences, for not abiding by school values, took a few ‘truants’ by surprise. There is no doubt that the first term of 2008 also felt like a 'calmer' start for the school year according to staff anecdotal comments.

2. The number of students achieving grade point average improvements between Semester 1 and Semester 2 in 2007 was very heartening: 46.2% of current Year 9 and 10 students improved their GPAs. Perhaps the messages of ‘Seeking Opportunities’ and ‘Meeting Challenges’ was beginning to take root in the school’s culture. While figures were not compared to other years administration was confident that they would show a remarkable improvement. Importantly, for the first time the Campus Principal acknowledged this success with handsome certificates for all successful students. Having a GPA figure before them appears to be challenging students to
increase it this semester and students are talking about doing so and raises questions about the power of ‘Success and Recognition’.

3. Another statistical indicator, that students (and staff and administration) are ‘living’ the value of ‘Meeting Challenges,’ was the dramatic drop in the number of students not completing assignments by end of term. In 2007, administration introduced the policy that students could not commence studies in a subject in a new term until they had completed assignments outstanding in that subject from the previous term. Deputies spent nearly the first week of Terms 3 and 4 monitoring students who needed to complete assignments before re-entering classes. It is more paper work for staff and administration and a challenge for all to follow through but the results are impressive. At the commencement of Term 3 there were 120 out of 470 students who had work outstanding (usually in more than one subject) from Term 2. At the commencement of Term 4 there were just 60 students with work still outstanding representing a drop by half.

4. The growing realisation that they needed to move beyond responding to need, and be more proactive in encouraging ability and excellence (‘Seeking Opportunities’), resulted in the implementation of a new approach to teaching and in both 2007 and 2008 Wilsonton Campus promoted and established a Year 8 class based on the Knowledge Producing Schools (KPS) research. The active involvement of the 2007 class in the community attracted much media attention and positively lifted the profile of the school in the community. '8KPS' students (and others) continue to be extended in “Jetstream” classes of excellence in Year 9 English, Maths, SOSE and Science. The Jetstream concept will flow over into Year 10 in 2009. Teachers have been engaged in professional conversations about how the KPS concept can be used across all Year 8 classes with its underpinnings of Service Learning. There is also a discussion about Service Learning as a vehicle for Values Education in ACCESS.

5. The articulation of school values across all parts of school life is empowering the staff to confidently justify decisions that are made and that impact student life. The encouraging statistics that have emerged and the better school tone are the types of things that lift staff morale as they realise that they are starting to ‘make a positive difference’ in what had previously been an apathetic culture for much of the school population. As well teachers are realising that Values Education is about pedagogy – quality teaching – not curriculum and a written document alone will not improve relationships in the classroom.

The Culminating Approach to Measuring the Impact of Values Education on Quality Teaching at Wilsonton Campus

The data discussed below was gathered through in-depth structured interviews carried out by one of the teacher leaders within the school. To ensure a broad representative sample, a range of teachers actively engaged in the Access (Values Education/Pastoral Care) program along with the year coordinators were interviewed – a sample of 11, 36% of the school staff. Teachers were from different discipline areas in the school, from highly experienced to relatively new to the profession.

Values Education and the Teachers

There was broad agreement that while children initially learned values from their parents and family (and then popular culture), this process was ongoing and school
experience was important. In the middle school environment, peer pressure was significant but teachers are also influential in helping students to ‘form judgments about what is right and fair’ (Teacher). All teachers interviewed recognised the importance of teachers modelling good values and having positive relationships with students. Clear communication of values was also important.

Almost unanimously, teachers recognised the importance of explicitly teaching values in the school. This represents a shift in thinking. Modelling values is necessary but not sufficient – it is reported that explicit teaching reinforced by teachers in other lessons is having an impact on classroom ambience. Using Year 8 as an example:

> It really works because the core teachers are the ACCESS teachers and teach the explicit lessons but then have more connections with the kids through core subjects and can model/point out ‘that I am doing what we talked about the other day’...I have really noticed good things happening with Year 8 ACCESS teachers this year. (Teacher C).

> It is important that the values we talk about in ACCESS are carried over into other subjects and talked about in different contexts. (Teacher F)

This reinforcement was significant to success and needed to be ‘a combination of implicit and explicit’ (Teacher J). Teachers recognised that students are ‘watching all the time’ but if the teaching is not explicit “some kids may miss the message.” (Teacher A)

The language of values: Teachers offered a number of insights into how the explicit teaching of values had impacted on their practice. While the language of the school values and vision statement had provided some common ground for teachers and students, the explicit teaching of values took this further, “providing a language to give to behaviour like justice, fairness and courtesy.” (Teacher B) It puts a name to these concepts and allows ongoing discussion about them in a range of contexts. One teacher acknowledged being “more conscious of using the values language” and making references to the school values in her teaching (Teacher K). Another reflected on the importance of discussing the reasons for values – of letting the students “…discover the reasons why we should behave in certain ways – rather than just having the values coming from authority.” (Teacher I).

The application of ‘values’ to the broader teaching context is captured in the following reflection:

> In classes I refer back to things we have discussed in ACCESS and which are happening now in class. It is a language and a culture that we are trying to improve. It is important, for example, for students to learn that mistakes are a part of the learning process and that when we make them we need to own them and then move on – seeking opportunities; meeting challenges...I try to reiterate this all the time in the subjects I teach. (Teacher F)

The ACCESS program provides the opportunity for teachers to better understand their students and to be more responsive when the class is not going well. “I get to know them better even when the lesson doesn’t work and sometimes I change the lessons to an approach that I think will work for both them and me.” (Teacher I). It has also has...
provided opportunity for teachers to engage students in ‘different’ types of activities – including those that are deliberately affirming.

I started the kids on keeping gratitude journals. At first they thought it was painful but we persevered and after a while they seemed to come to appreciate each other. Eventually they would walk into the room and ask if we were doing gratitude journals today. Particular kids who seemed to be hurting a lot seemed to get the most out of that activity. ACCESS classes give us the time, space and permission to do these sorts of activities which would never fit into mainstream curriculum. (Teacher D)

In contrast, the teachers who only see ACCESS as roll marking and reading notices aren’t making the connection - their classes are not engaged in the same way:

There are a few teachers who just give out the handouts, have not prepared themselves and the classes are just not engaged and are having chitchat. You can have the best ACCESS program in the world but to make it work the teacher has to invest in building relationships (Teacher E)

Impact on Students
As typical adolescents, the students tend not to be articulate about the significance of ACCESS on their lives. When asked, they were willing to express appreciation for the less academic nature of the program; the smaller class arrangements; the topics (some perceived as more interesting than others); the opportunity to have fun in some of the ACCESS activities with their peers and with teachers; and the guests that have on occasion presented on topics such as disability and drug abuse. Obviously some students respond more than others – level of confidence and personality type being factors here. Some teachers observed that adolescents may be taking in more that they show and that sometimes the quiet and uninvolved are the ones who are really listening. Teachers are taking student response seriously and are using their feedback to inform the planning of the committee that is currently reviewing ACCESS. Some teachers worry, justifiably, about whether it is nearly too late to impact values that students have already taken on by the age of 12 and 13 but all agree that they need to teach values anyway – they don’t want to risk any possible outcome that may result from their not teaching them. Teachers agree that the smaller ACCESS classes benefit the students socially and emotionally.

We have a couple of less academic and more negative students but the rest of the class is encouraging them to be a part of the team. I think the students are recognising the usefulness of the program – they are supporting and encouraging each other. They are looking after each other. (Teacher F)

New kids sometimes say they like this stuff. There are kids who don’t enjoy it and many who are happy to go along with it and there are some who get a lot out of it even if they don’t actually communicate that. (Teacher E)

Some say it is better than school work but it comes down to ‘too cool for school’ attitude. I know for a fact that some kids are genuinely interested in some of the stuff we have done. (Teacher I)

Students often see a discrete difference between what is valued at school compared to other places and this can be a little bit of a puzzle for them. (Teacher H)
If you are trying to establish good relationship and connections with kids a small group such as our ACCESS classes has to be better. There are fewer Behaviour Management issues and kids are feeling less threatened and contribute more. There is room to break up bad combinations etc. So I think the way we are doing it structurally has to make it better. (Teacher E)

When asked to comment on the effects of the values education program on the student academic engagement/diligence/achievement the teachers tended to be more hesitant to make any direct and positive connections. They could see the potential alignment of better relationships and better academic outcomes but a number expressed that they didn’t think that was necessarily the prime goal of values education and that good citizens were not always the greatest scholars. As well some teachers felt that family values that do not make education a priority mean that students are not getting supported to improve (when they are not studying and doing assignments at home).

I can’t see academically much improvement yet...We just have to keep pushing in the hope that one day they will make the connections – even if it is at senior level after they have left us. I don’t think that is the main idea of Values Education anyway. (Teacher C)

If we get to know the kids better we will use better strategies for reaching them. I have had kids improve in their effort and behaviour grades on their reports but academically I am not sure. (Teacher D)

I don’t think there are enough successes yet. I can talk about successful ACCESS teachers but I don’t think there is enough of that happening out there to translate it into academic improvement. As well, a class may improve due to good teaching but it is hard to determine whether it is good subject teaching or the application of ACCESS learned values or both. We can probably see an improvement if ACCESS teachers were at least one of the core teachers. (Teacher E)

The benefits of Values Education may be more measurable in social ways (e.g. willingness to take on leadership, work in a team) than in merely academic ways. Academic success is mainly important in regard to your goals of getting into uni or the courses you want and may not be the most important thing to value for life skills. (Teacher I)

Academic improvement can happen if the values are taken up but I think we are too late on the change. I don’t think we can measure the success of our VE program with academic improvement – at least not with our client base. We can hope for more well-rounded people. (Teacher J)

It is starting to happen but it is really hard to measure. The new assignment policy and finishing work expectations are good. We can turn the responsibility back onto the kids – to act responsibly about their schoolwork. (Teacher K)

Impact on the School
There is a general perception that there is greater coherence in school operation – that the school seems calmer and more focused than it was 1-2 years ago. It is difficult to identify the particular role that Values Education has played in this change but they suggest that it is a combination of factors including a new admin team, consistent
behaviour management strategies, and the introduction of smaller house groups for ACCESS lessons.

I think a lot of the things we have done over the last year or two at our school have made a measurable difference. It is very easy to check this from data. But whether the data is improved because of more consistent and firmer consequences or whether it is because students are taking values to heart would be very hard to tease out. What we have been doing is making sure students do the right thing – it is a better place to teach, it is a better place to learn. (Teacher I)

We have to look and see what works and what doesn’t work. That makes sense in any educational process. I think to measure the progress however, we will need a micrometer – the movement forward with these kids is so small because of our lack of influence. We are value adding but we need a three year (or even better 5 year) time frame – it is a long road. But we have to do it. (Teacher J)

I feel our sense of school and who we are has improved in the last two years. (Teacher B)

I think the fact that we have taken a harder line on everything has ultimately created a culture in the school where things have calmed... Most kids are able to get on better and be happier now that kids who had too much individual freedom have been reined in – we have stronger boundaries but whether it is related to improving the values of those individuals I am not sure but at least it is improving the situation for the rest of the students. (Teacher I)

... the kids aren’t as scared to walk around the playground. There is improved respect for self and others. Students are more likely to report trouble and kids are more comfortable approaching the year coordinator for help due to growing relationships. This could have a down side if the kids are not trying to be resilient and coping for themselves and running to the teacher for every little thing. But it is better that they can come especially on the bigger issue. (Teacher K)

Regards bullying, we have got tougher and that has improved heaps. Admin are being consistent and kids are now more likely to report it where once they mightn’t have – because they can see there will be an end result. (Teacher C)

I think ACCESS is one of the strongest things we’ve got going. I’d only like to enhance it by having it vertical – 8, 9 & 10 in the one group. It would be a more socially real scenario. (Teacher J)

I think there is a nice feeling in the school – a continuing nice feeling. There’s more pride in uniform – a symbol of wanting to be recognised as part of the group. (Teacher F)

Connecting with parents
If there is a weak link in the whole Values Education program it is unanimously agreed to be the connection with parents. While there is no suggestion that the relationship between teachers and parents is adversarial, teachers generally felt that they had not succeeded in any significant way in conveying the goals of ACCESS to
parents. Most agreed that they need to communicate with parents more about the aims of ACCESS but they had very few suggestions as to how to go about this.

This is the big challenge – at primary school parents think they should be involved but when kids get to secondary parents drop us – kids don’t want them involved. Often the only time we have a conversation with parents is when there is a problem. It is a big area that needs attention but how we can tackle it I am not sure. (Teacher B)

I don’t think parents are really aware of it [ACCESS] although it is important that they should be. I think that if parents are really struggling with their kids they might benefit from having the same language that we use and maybe they wouldn’t feel so powerless. (Teacher A)

...I certainly know that if you have a good relationship with the parent, when you need to call them about issues you get very good support from them. When teachers and parents are getting along, we can make better headway with the kids. I think we probably haven’t communicated enough about our ACCESS program. Not all parents are going to read anything you send home but for those who do bother it could be helpful. (Teacher E)

We have the school here and the parents there. It is a hard bridge to cross. I don’t think the parents are connected to our Values Education program at all. I think they should be. Perhaps if we were to do community based projects we could get the parents involved. But they are not easy to involve – I know that from being involved in school musicals and trying to get parents to do stuff for them. (Teacher K)

I haven’t observed much teacher-parent relationship other than PT interviews; but communication home is very important to me. I phoned every parent of every student in my ACCESS class at the beginning of the year. I saw that as part of the ACCESS role. I continue to have interaction with parents when I am concerned about something or have something good to report. But I think keeping the parents and community involved is really important. But I think it is also about a gradual shift – as the parents of these Years 8’s grow with the program. (Teacher F)

Relationships

“Values education is about valuing kids as well as teaching them values!” (Teacher D)

There is a clear recognition of the importance of building more positive relationships with students, to try to get to know them better. “I have probably done this more consciously in the last two years than I ever have before”. (Teacher B).

Keeping the same ACCESS groups through the year levels has also been important: “It has played a major role in building relationships with kids who are going through puberty and are pretty volatile.” (Teacher B).

There was general agreement (with one exception) that explicitly teaching values education made a difference to students. It was difficult to quantitatively measure difference in teaching and learning - because “it is hard to pin down” (Teacher A)
Forming a relationship can bring results with individual students but longer term impacts are impossible to quantify.

Sometimes the ACCESS teacher can see in a particular kid that they are trying to take on the values that we have been trying to establish the whole time. There only has to be glimpses... We have to do it. Very hard to measure but we don’t need measurement to justify teaching values. If we don’t teach them and they don’t have it to start with they can’t think about it and later on it might come back to help them (Teacher C).

Teachers recognised the challenge of going beyond observations and positive anecdotal evidence to collect information on relationships.

I think that the way that the students interact with each other... fewer red cards, fewer suspensions...as I teach a range of Year 8 classes and I see far fewer read cards in the class that is my ACCESS and core class compared to other classes which suggests to me that other classes are valuing education differently. (Teacher F).

It is tremendously difficult to put quantitative or qualitative measures on something like this. There are so many variables – huge student number turn over at this school, range of teacher practices, adolescence and the natural maturing process, so much bombarding on their lives. (Teacher H)

But this same teacher was also was very upbeat about the power of the ACCESS program:

What we set out to do - to facilitate the business of building positive relationships – I really think that has been a winner. The culture of the school since we initiated it 3-4 years ago is quite close – sometimes that is negative - it can be quite upsetting at times if it is dysfunctional on the student or the teacher’s part (Teacher H)

A year level coordinator felt things were measurably better:

I’d say that the school is a safer place to be in. Pastoral Care has helped us to have a little bit more respect for each other and as well the admin have consistently backed us up. I don’t feel as though I have to break up fights as much as I used to do. (Teacher K)

Teachers believed that generally relationships both between students and between teachers and students are much improved. There was general agreement that the smaller ACCESS class sizes contributed positively to relationship building but most teachers observed that it depends a lot on the extent of the commitment of the teacher to building those relationships.

If you are trying to establish good relationship and connections with kids a small group such as our ACCESS classes has to be better. There are fewer behaviour management issues and kids are feeling less threatened and contribute more. (Teacher E)

A class I observe with shared teachers is so ratty and disconnected. Then I see another group with a strong sense of belonging with their teacher and room. When their teacher is not there they revert to disconnected behaviour. A
teacher with good rapport with the kids, who takes time to get to know them, who appreciates what Values Education can do, can really make a difference. (Teacher B)

I believe there are a lot better teacher-student relationships – a lot better. There are always going to be conflicts, but I do believe that since we have gone to the smaller groups that we are all working together to make the relationships a lot stronger. (Teacher C)

Yes, Values Education does impact on relationships. I will give you an example. KT has a couple of troubled students – they struggle with everything. I do believe that if they were not in the classroom with KT they would have up to three times the behaviour management issues than they currently have. I really do believe that her relationship with those kids, she can talk to them; advise them; her relationship with them is powerful. (Teacher E)

When everyone knows the boundaries – and that admin will support us – conflict is not so personal and we can work better with a kid when we aren’t judge, jury and executioner. It is much healthier with a clear delineation between the roles of teacher and admin assisting improved relations between teachers and students. (Teacher I)

If a teacher shows that they are interested in a student, that they think a topic is important – the kids pick up on the teacher’s attitude as soon as they walk in the door and they tend to reflect that attitude back. The ACCESS program has a lot of potential for building positive relationships if the teacher is willing to take advantage of it – there’s the risk too that the teacher doesn’t care enough to get excited about the topics and getting to know the kids. (Teacher D)

Some Further Words of Wisdom from Teachers

I feel that our school is a better place than it was before we moved to teach values more explicitly. But it is a double edged sword. We are a small community that really values its kids and staff. As a parent you hear about that and you want to put your kid, who has a few extra issues, here where they might do well. That can create challenges for us even as it compliments us. ... Values is the wrong word – the word is relationships. We need to offer better relationships to kids who are coming from pretty crappy relationships. If I was Christina [principal] and someone came and said they wanted to work at this school I would ask them, “Are you good at relationships?” The academic stuff is just in a book. The relationships stuff is the core work. (Teacher J)

One main thing is that everyone (teachers) has to put a value on ACCESS – otherwise there is no point in being a Values Education School. Even if it is not their cup of tea they should appreciate what we are trying to do and get behind it. I think that every teacher should get an in-service about the ACCESS content across all the grades whether or not they are actually an ACCESS teacher. This will give greater consistency in expectations. General teaching needs to be more consistent with our school values. For example, if we ask kids to pick up paper then we should be willing to pick up paper as teachers. Consistency, consistency. Leading by example. Teachers need to be passionate about Values Education – it will be catching for the kids. If we don’t believe in it - we can’t
really complain if they do the wrong thing. Values Education is not optional. (Teacher D)

I really agree that the measure of what we are doing may not be a measurement we can take now. It may be that in 15 years time a student may come up to us and say ‘I always loved being a part of your class because you always made me feel special.’ Years ago I taught a class where I emphasised ‘never say can’t’ and I ran into a student from that class who told me she had just finished a course of study because she kept on thinking of that ‘flaming red train’ that climbed up the hill saying “I think I can, I think I can”. It is not just the content of the lesson that is important – it is the values in which that lesson is embedded that are so important and most lasting (Teacher F)

Some Quiet Observations from Teacher Interviewer

The passion and intensity of responses from the many teachers interviewed (the main process in collecting data for this final report) was quite unexpected and quite overwhelming. In lunch hours and after school, they happily gave up their own time to share their hopes and frustrations about their Values Education program. They took no prompting and interviews went for half an hour or longer! There was clearly significant ownership of the ACCESS program.

All, but one teacher, believed that passing on values both explicitly and implicitly was a crucial part of their roles as teachers. This same teacher was still acknowledging her responsibility to reinforce positive values implicitly and through modelling. They all admitted they were on a journey and could do better yet, but they all had experienced positive outcomes as a result of the ACCESS program being implemented. They were articulate, intelligent, compassionate and insightful in their comments and it was truly a privilege to be invited to share their deepest thoughts on the topics we discussed. Even transcribing the tapes was not arduous as the process gave opportunity to again listen and begin to distil the messages they were sending about their experiences so far.

The raw transcripts have been shared with the committee currently reviewing the ACCESS program in the last half of this year (2008) and undoubtedly they will yield some rich insights that can inform positive changes to the program. If one were to distil all the messages into a couple of points, they might simply be:

− Positive teacher/student relationships are the main thing – and the teachers need to take the lead
− Teachers must lead by example and back up explicit teaching of values with consistent, implicit modelling of them
− They must keep on being a Values Education school at all costs – they have only just begun the journey of ‘questioning and balancing values so that teachers and students are choosing to live moral lives’ (to paraphrase Terry Lovat’s message to them in February, 2007).
Case Study 10: Townsville Central Primary School, Queensland

Purpose
The purpose of this case study is to present findings of a preliminary investigation on the potential impact of Values Education on student academic diligence, school coherence, classroom ambience, student teacher relationships, student well being, teacher well being and parental participation. It follows the first report of Values Education Good Practice Schools (VEGPS) (Hill, 2007). Using data gathered from multiple sources that include different surveys and interviews of key stakeholders, this study documents changes in the context of Townsville Central State School.

The research approach for this case study is best described as mixed method. Quantitative data were collected from two teacher surveys. The first survey, a questionnaire for all staff was completed at the commencement of the VEGPS Stage 2 project (April 2007) This survey mapped individual teacher responses to a series of questions about their approach to values education as well as the focus on values education within the school setting as a whole. The same survey was completed in July 2008 following the completion of the VEGPS Stage 2 initiative.

In addition to these quantitative data collection instruments, the data collection included a range of qualitative methods. The schools involved in the Townsville Cluster VEGPS Stage 2, including Townsville Central State School, attended monthly meetings as part of an action research cycle. This cycle focussed the school attention on curriculum design that would incorporate ‘values for sustainability’. These monthly meetings were documented, providing a map of the journey undertaken by the school.

As well as these action research meetings, a focussed review of the curriculum design adopted in each school site as part of the VEGPS Stage 2 was completed in November 2007. The review included interviews with key teachers in the school, a collation of key curriculum development in each school site and a review of student work samples. This data set was complemented by further interviews with key staff including the Principal and four teachers in May 2008, to review and reflect on the values education initiatives within the school. The Principal also provided a comprehensive suite of school documentation for review.

Relevant data from the annual school opinion survey were also reviewed. This opinion survey is administered in every state school in Queensland across samples of students and parents “to gauge their satisfaction with important aspects of schooling” (Education Queensland, 2008) as part of the School Improvement and Accountability Framework 2006-2008. In addition to students and parents, the School Staff Survey questionnaires are disseminated to all staff to determine their satisfaction with the school as a workplace. The questions and the responses over the last three years provide a useful indicator of school climate, student outcomes, school community relations and overall staff morale. The responses to these survey questions from parents, students and staff are benchmarked against other schools across the state, as well as against ‘like’ schools- schools that have similar size and socio-economic characteristics.
The data within this case study then, represents a rich data set to inform the responses to the research questions.

The School Introduced
Townsville Central State School is located in a gentrifying inner city within regional Queensland. Sitting on the foot of the imposing Castle Hill, the school is distinguished by two unique historical facts. It began in 1869 as the National School, and was the first recognized school in the provincial Queensland city of Townsville. Established initially as a school for boys, it expanded four years later to include a Girls School. Separate buildings were constructed for the boys and girls, and they were identified as Townsville Central Schools. In 1936, the two schools amalgamated and became formally named as Townsville Central. In 1955, the school relocated to its present site on Warburton Street occupying the premises of the first gaol constructed in Townsville in 1878. The history of its location symbolizes a site and time of hard and violent discipline for reform purpose, however, the School’s mission and approach in the twentieth-first century embodies and reflects a soft mode of discipline with the purpose to systematically and systemically instil a set of core values in pupils to enable them to be productive and active learners and citizens.

Nestled in the intersection of contrasting wealths, with the region’s most expensive residential area, Yarrawonga, on the slope of Castle Hill, and families from a cross-section of socioeconomic backgrounds on the lowland, Townsville Central attracts students from diverse socioeconomic and cultural backgrounds. In 2008, Townsville Central has a student population of 249 in 11 classes. Approximately 60% of the students live in the school catchment area, with the remainder representing children of CBD workers who utilise the school’s After School Care centre, or a more transient population who are located in emergency or other local accommodation for short periods. Eleven percent of the school’s population is from a non-English Speaking background and this group appears to be increasing in number. Three percent of the student population is of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander descent, a lower proportion than found in many other state schools in the area. Coupled with the relatively diverse student population, the school stability and enrolment continuity measures indicate higher than average school population mobility.

As the lead school driving the national VEGPS project in Townsville, it utilizes a values-based framework to foster cohesiveness and provide quality schooling for its students. The significance of this mission and the enactment of this mission are symbolic of the historical functions of schools as moral guardians. With a local and global community that comprises a complex interweaving of contrasting and competing economic, social and cultural threads, and with a varying level of understanding of, and responses to the diverse cultural milieu, the value in educating, instilling and perhaps inculcating in a systematic and systemic way of how youth see and engage the world, is not just of a political significance, but bears social, moral and economic significance too.

Refashioning the School: A Values Education Approach
Townsville Central State School faces similar challenges to many state schools in Australia. It locates itself as a school that develops both strengths in individuals and the relationships between individuals as crucial to addressing issues of student
retention, engagement and achievement. It also recognizes educational and pastoral responsibilities to develop students with the necessary understanding, knowledge, skills, attitudes, values and practices to participate in and out of schools. Values Education offers a useful framework with which to develop its human capital.

Since the appointment of a new principal in 2005, the school has undertaken key curricular reforms. The principal has been working steadfastly with staff to refashion the school curriculum with the vision “to be judged by the community as the premier school in Townsville” (Hill, 2005, 2). VEGPS Stage 1 provided the catalyst for a series of curricular changes. By locating values-education at the heart of its reform initiatives, a tighter and sharper coherence is evident in its curriculum, practices and identity. The school identified the following core values which underpin their curriculum and vision for their students: a strong sense of self, connectedness, resilience and a sense of possibility. These values are the principles of the Peer Support Program that was the key driver of the school’s values program in VEGPS Stage 1. For Stage 2 under the Principal’s leadership, the UNESCO model of sustainability was introduced to initiate additional critical curricular changes, reflecting the school’s mission to ‘educate students for a sustainable future’.

Values are firmly integrated in the curriculum with opportunities for both students and teachers to enact on the values actively, as they consider what values underpin their actions and practices, as well as, how their actions and practices have the capacity to promote specific values. In its school vision, policy and procedures, pastoral support, curriculum planning and behaviour management approaches, values were clearly incorporated. Since 2000, the school has adapted a commercially produced Peer Support Program as a whole school approach to support its values education. The key concepts of the Peer Support Program: sense of self, resilience, connectedness and a sense of possibility for the future have also been adopted as the school’s core values. The implementation of Peer Support demonstrates a coherent and explicit attempt to develop socially, emotionally and mentally strong individuals. Further, in 2008, Townsville Central has also undertaken a values-based curricular reform. The school has designed and implemented a framework with an explicit emphasis on values to guide all teachers in their unit planning.

According to the Peer Support website, the program is taken up by over 1400 primary and secondary schools in NSW, ACT, Queensland and Tasmania. It aims to develop student resilience and leadership skills. The program is led by students for students to develop leadership skills, productive relationships and mentoring across year levels. Year 7 students participate in a 2-day leadership training program organised by Peer Support before they take on the leadership position. With the support of Year 7 teachers, Peer Support leaders conceptualise and implement a range of activities for all students in the school. In the early years of the program implementation, the school relied heavily on the Peer Support material, however in recent years, students have taken a greater ownership in designing activities specific to the needs of the school. The program involves all year 7 students organising activities to engage groups of students from preparatory year to Year 6. These activities include Peer Support activities every Wednesday, a weekly Jump Heart session, leading school parades, and an annual Catch the Spirit Day. They are intended to develop students’ well being, and provide opportunities for Year 7 students to contribute to the school community, and for their younger counterparts to model leadership skills and the
values of service. In 2007, the Year 7 students were awarded the Young Achiever Award for National Safe Schools Week for their leadership and contribution to promoting a safe and supportive school community (Townsville Central Annual Report, 2007).

Hill & Vick (2007) note that Peer Support needs to be implemented with a ‘quality teaching’ framework in order to ensure that students engage with values in meaningful fashion. As part of VEGPS Stage 2, Townsville Central has made additional critical curricular reforms that promote students’ and teachers’ engagement with values. It drew on the UNESCO’s interlocking model of sustainability to reframe the Values Education framework. The model emphasizes four areas of sustainability: social, economic, ecological and political, which frame the functions and implications of values (Department of the Environment and Heritage, 2005). In 2007, two major projects were developed, based on this UNESCO model. A wetland education project which culminated in two days canoeing along Stuart Creek in Townsville was designed and implemented in collaboration with the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority for Year 7 students. ‘COME HOME: Breathing House Exhibition’ an arts-based project was also a collaborative effort with two other neighbouring schools and a team of 8 local artists. Since the beginning of 2008, the School has also developed a unit planning framework using the model. Explicitly linking content, pedagogy and assessment to Values, the framework provides a clear articulation of Values, as well as a tighter coherence in its curriculum design. The principal has recently appointed a Head of Curriculum to lead and support teachers in this curricular reform.

These curricular reforms, together with the Peer Support, demonstrate that values are embedded as well as made explicit in the curriculum. The programs demonstrate a concerted and explicit effort to improve the quality of teaching and learning as much as they do to instil the relevant values to enhance student engagement. In evaluating the outcomes of the program, it is important to note the difficulties in making causal links between values education and improved quality in schooling and student achievement. The outcomes of any reform are often the result of multiple factors, and it is difficult to establish conclusively the impact of a specific factor. However, over the past years, some trends are evident in the statistics, and many teachers attributed Values Education as a contributing factor to these changes. Whilst it is difficult to establish conclusively the effects of Values Education, staff and student perceptions of Values Education do provide a strong indication of the importance placed on the selected values and endorsement of the Values Education program in the school.

Testing and measuring the effects of the project
Since the start of the VEGPS project, a range of data has been collected to monitor changes in the school. Using data from school surveys gathered by Education Queensland and teachers’ and students’ survey responses to Values, the following discussion identifies changes in the data, and illuminates on the implications of these changes in relation to Values Education. It is framed around three key themes: firstly, it examines the data on the quality of relationships between key stakeholders; secondly, it looks at changes in academic achievements between Stage 1 and Stage 2 and lastly, it considers what the data suggest about how school identity and program quality are sharpened since the implementation of Values Education.

Evidence of positive change: Relationships
Since the start of VEGPS 1, Townsville Central has been increasingly more explicit in its focus on values in the school curriculum as indicated by Table 1. By locating values in the core of its curriculum and school discourse, all students and staff make explicit tacit expectations in how they relate to each other. Peer Support activities in the school are designed with the intention to contribute to this improvement. The reference to values in negotiating supportive relationships as well as resolving conflicts can facilitate a closer mutual understanding of social and professional expectations. In this section, data have been selected to show changes in the relationship of three key stakeholders, students, staff and parents.

Table 1  Student-Teacher Relationship: Impact of values initiatives

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Pre-implementation (Mean)</th>
<th>Post-implementation (Mean)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Is taught explicitly</td>
<td>4.4</td>
<td>4.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Occupies a major part of the curriculum</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>3.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is taught everyday</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>4.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Students’ perspectives on a school are determined in part by their relationships with teachers and their peers. As indicated in Table 2 below, students’ satisfaction with the teachers’ communication of expectation and the demonstration of support. Compared to the state average, the survey data also consistently indicate a relatively above average level of satisfaction with the discipline, safety and sense of fairness in the school which suggest the presence of supportive and positive networks of relationships with peers and staff. This improvement is reflective as well as contributive to the student achievement and in developing a more positive school environment. All the teachers interviewed observed much improved playground behaviour and noted students’ use of values language to communicate differences and resolve conflicts independently.

Table 2. Student-Teacher Relationship: Students’ views

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>How satisfied are you</th>
<th>2005</th>
<th>2006</th>
<th>2007</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>that your teacher explains clearly what to do in your school work</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3.32</td>
<td>3.54*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>that your teacher helps you to do your best</td>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>3.56</td>
<td>3.63*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>with the interest the teacher takes in your learning</td>
<td>3.06</td>
<td>3.52</td>
<td>3.62*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>that what your teacher tells you helps you to improve your school work</td>
<td>3.06</td>
<td>3.28</td>
<td>3.6*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>that you know how well you are going with your school work</td>
<td>2.91</td>
<td>3.48*</td>
<td>3.22*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>That you are happy to go to this school</td>
<td>3.46#</td>
<td>3.76**</td>
<td>3.62*#</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>About the behaviour of students at this school</td>
<td>2.63#</td>
<td>3.8*#</td>
<td>3.02*#</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>That you are safe at this school</td>
<td>3.31</td>
<td>3.64*#</td>
<td>3.51#</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>That you are treated fairly at this school</td>
<td>2.97</td>
<td>3.6*#</td>
<td>3.31*#</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*above like school
#above state average

Teachers play a critical role in developing and sustaining effective relationship with students. The data indicate that teachers in Townsville Central recognised links between values education and how they conduct themselves as teachers, and links
between values education and student behaviour. One teacher noted in the survey that “[v]alues education has been instrumental in developing a work environment where staff members see the benefits for the curriculum and their own personal development.” Although the data in Table 3 do not show significant variation in the teachers’ response, it does show quite consistently, that teachers acknowledged values to underpin their actions and the way they interact with their students. Toomey (2007) observes that it is critical that teachers positively model values to facilitate a supportive learning environment. However the figures also show that while teachers acknowledged values education to have developed a strong awareness of values behind their actions, they noted in the post implementation survey, that increasingly Values Education did not affect the way they conduct themselves towards students.

### Table 3. Student-Teacher Relationship: Impact of values initiatives

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>In this school teaching values has:</th>
<th>Pre-implementation (Mean)</th>
<th>Post-implementation (Mean)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>made me more conscious of the values behind my actions</td>
<td>4.8</td>
<td>4.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>changed the way that conflict is managed</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>4.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>made little difference to the way I respond to children in the school</td>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>3.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Teachers attributed values education as a key factor in improving student behaviour as Table 4 shows. According to data, teachers acknowledge values education to have improved student behaviour. While teachers indicated that they generally got along well with students, which reflects students’ opinions about their relationships with teachers, there appears to be slight downward trend in the teachers’ opinion of the amount of mutual respect shared with students (Table 5).

### Table 4. Classroom ambience: Impact of values initiatives

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>In this school teaching values has</th>
<th>Pre-implementation (Mean)</th>
<th>Post-implementation (Mean)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Encouraged a more peaceful atmosphere of the classroom</td>
<td>4.9</td>
<td>4.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improved student’s social skills</td>
<td>4.6</td>
<td>4.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improved student behaviour in the playground</td>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>4.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Table 5. Student-Teacher Relationship: Staff views

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Relationships</th>
<th>2005</th>
<th>2006</th>
<th>2007</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I get on well with the students in this school</td>
<td>3.25</td>
<td>3.15^</td>
<td>3.44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staff and students respect each other in this school</td>
<td>3.1#</td>
<td>3.07#</td>
<td>2.84^</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In the third set of relationship between the school and parents and community, the data also show a generally healthy trend. As Table 6 shows, teachers indicated in the post implementation survey, that values education has contributed to an improved partnership with students’ families. The outcomes of this improved relationship are reflected in the School Survey data. Parents indicated an increased level of
satisfaction with the way the school communicates their goals and expectations (Table 7). Their satisfaction level with the school environment is generally higher than the state average.

**Table 6. Parental and Community Participation: Impact of values initiatives**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>In this school teaching values has</th>
<th>Pre-implementation (Mean)</th>
<th>Post-implementation (Mean)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Contributed to a greater cooperation between school and home</td>
<td>2.9</td>
<td>3.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 7. Student-Teacher Relationship: Parents’ views**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>How satisfied are you</th>
<th>2006</th>
<th>2007</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>that the school keeps you well informed on how your child is progressing</td>
<td>2.89</td>
<td>2.97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>with the interest that the teacher(s) take in your child</td>
<td>3.32</td>
<td>3.35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>That the school provides good learning opportunities for your child</td>
<td>3.21</td>
<td>3.26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>With the encouragement that the school gives to your child</td>
<td>3.04</td>
<td>3.13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>That your child is happy to go to this school</td>
<td>3.25</td>
<td>3.47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>About the behaviour of students at this school</td>
<td>2.93#</td>
<td>2.68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>With student discipline in the school</td>
<td>2.93</td>
<td>2.97#</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>That your child is safe at this school</td>
<td>3.32#</td>
<td>3.27#</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>That your child is treated fairly at this school</td>
<td>3.18</td>
<td>3.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#above state mean

However, while the survey data indicate strengthening relationships between teachers and students, and between teachers and parents, the trend is not as evident in how teachers relate with each other. Values Education appears to be integrated in the curriculum, but it does not appear to change the way teachers conduct themselves as colleagues. The data on teacher wellbeing suggest that since the implementation of Values Education, there has been a general rise in dissatisfaction in staff relationships. Communication between staff appears to be an issue that requires examination. Table 8 shows an almost 0.5 point dip in team spirit between the 2005 and 2007 survey, a decline in satisfaction with the feedback given for their work and a consistent decline in staff perception of the demonstration of respect for each other. These figures are in contrast with those on communication between staff and students, and staff and parents. There could be a number of explanations to account for this difference, with the most obvious, that it might suggest a resistance to change and a sense of over-intensification of workload. Second, it might also suggest teachers see values initiatives as strategies in creating a safe and supportive learning environment, rather than as relevant to the way they conduct themselves. Therefore, they do not consider how values remain relevant in their actions outside of the classroom and in their interactions with colleagues.

**Table 8. Student-Teacher Wellbeing: Impact of values initiatives**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Support, resources and training</th>
<th>2005</th>
<th>2006</th>
<th>2007</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>People in the school let me know how well I am doing in my work</td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>2.62</td>
<td>2.17^</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I receive helpful feedback on my work at this school</td>
<td>2.55</td>
<td>2.41^</td>
<td>2.32^</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Support, resources and training

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Support, resources and training</th>
<th>2005</th>
<th>2006</th>
<th>2007</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>There is good team spirit among the staff of this school</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2.96</td>
<td>2.48^</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The staff in this school are enthusiastic about their work</td>
<td>3.15</td>
<td>2.92</td>
<td>2.92^</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am happy working in this school</td>
<td>3.45#</td>
<td>3.41#</td>
<td>3.32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have good working relationships with staff</td>
<td>3.25</td>
<td>3.37</td>
<td>3.16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am treated with respect in this school</td>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>3.12</td>
<td>3.08^</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My contribution to this school is valued</td>
<td>3.05</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2.76^</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I feel that my work efforts are worthwhile</td>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>3.07</td>
<td>2.96^</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My work skills enable me to make a worthwhile contribution to this school</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>3.22</td>
<td>3.12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am regarded as a valuable staff member</td>
<td>2.95</td>
<td>2.85</td>
<td>2.72^</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My work skills are appreciated in this school</td>
<td>2.85</td>
<td>2.85</td>
<td>2.71^</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

^ below like school
# above state mean

Evidence of positive change: Student achievement

Values Education and quality teaching form a symbiotic relationship, which Lovat and Toomey (2007) characterize as a “double helix”. As Rowe (2003) shows, quality teaching is central to improving academic outcomes. Since VEGPS Stage 1, values-based curricular changes were made to improve the quality of schooling in Townsville Central State School. As shown in the data above, teachers indicated that they were conscious that values underpinned their actions. This section of the report illuminates on student achievement since the implementation of values-based curricular reforms.

Teachers reported that Values Education is a contributing factor in enhancing their understanding of how children learn, and it shapes their teaching repertoire (Table 8). All four teachers interviewed in this study were unanimous that they became more conscious of their own values, as well as those of their students. In the process, they recognize that values underpin how students learn, and how they are motivated to learn. The data in Table 9 show quite consistently that teachers acknowledged Values Education to be linked to academic achievement.

Table 9. Student achievement: Impact of values initiatives

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>In this school teaching values has</th>
<th>Pre-implementation (Mean)</th>
<th>Post-implementation (Mean)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Deepened my understanding about how children learn</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>4.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Encouraged me to try different ways of teaching</td>
<td>4.4</td>
<td>4.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Led to greater numbers of students realising their full academic potential</td>
<td>2.9</td>
<td>3.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Led to students exercising greater academic diligence</td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>3.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

During the period of values-based curricular reforms, the school performed credibly in the state wide reading, writing and numeracy tests for Years 3, 5 and 7. Comparing the results of 2006 and 2007, Figure 1 shows that while the Year 3 reading results went down, there was at least a 10% improvement in the reading results for Year 5 and 7. Likewise, the school maintained a relatively stable performance in writing, with an average of 90% of students at above national benchmark in the two years.
With the exception of Year 7 results, numeracy scores went up by 25% for Year 3 and 10% for year 5.

**Figure 1**

![Student achievement: national benchmarks](image)

Results of the state wide tests provide strong evidence of quality teaching in the school. Additionally, it is also useful to note students and parents’ opinion of the effectiveness of the school in facilitating their learning and academic goals. Table 10 shows a consistent level of students’ satisfaction with how the school and their teachers support them to succeed. The level of satisfaction indicated in the three years of survey is often higher than the state average, and for two consecutive years, students’ satisfaction with the quality of education provided by Townsville Central State School is higher than like schools.

**Table 10. Student achievement: Students’ views**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>How satisfied are you…</th>
<th>2005</th>
<th>2006</th>
<th>2007</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>That you are doing the best you can in your school work</td>
<td>3.23</td>
<td>3.44</td>
<td>3.46#</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>With how well you are learning at this school</td>
<td>3.11</td>
<td>3.4#</td>
<td>3.35#</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>That you are getting a good education at this school</td>
<td>3.37</td>
<td>3.64#</td>
<td>3.6*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>With the standard of school work expected</td>
<td>3.2*#</td>
<td>3.36#</td>
<td>3.17#</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

^ below like school  
#above state mean  
*above like school

In this school, the data indicate a consistent level of parental satisfaction with the school’s program and delivery of the program over the two years (Table 11). Support from parents is necessary to facilitate student learning as well as the school’s delivery of their program.
Table 11. Student achievement: Parents’ views

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>How satisfied are you…</th>
<th>2006</th>
<th>2007</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>That your child is making sufficient progress</td>
<td>3.04</td>
<td>3.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>That your child works well at this school</td>
<td>3.22</td>
<td>3.35#</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>That the school is developing your child’s numeracy skills</td>
<td>2.82</td>
<td>3.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>That the school is developing your child’s literacy skills</td>
<td>2.93</td>
<td>3.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>That your child is getting a good education at this school</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>With what your child is learning at this school</td>
<td>3.14</td>
<td>3.13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>That the school is preparing your child for the future</td>
<td>3.07</td>
<td>3.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>About the usefulness of what your child learning at school</td>
<td>3.07</td>
<td>3.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>With the quality of teaching your child receives</td>
<td>3.25</td>
<td>3.26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>With the standard of work expected</td>
<td>3.07</td>
<td>3.03</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

# above state mean

Evidence of positive change: School identity
Reflecting its school motto, ‘Be thorough’, Townsville Central has undertaken critical curricular reforms driven by a values agenda. On a symbolic level, the school mission, vision and values all articulate the values agenda. On a substantive level, values are embedded in the key curricular reforms. With Peer Support and the UNESCO based curriculum framework embracing as well as explicitly teaching values, these curricular reforms have enabled a tighter coherence of the school program, practice, image and identity. This section of the report discusses the implications of these reforms as suggested by the various survey data.

Table 12 shows a consistent level of teacher engagement with values. Teachers noted in the post implementation survey, values education improved student engagement with other curriculum areas but at the same time, they also reported less discussion of values in other subject areas. A teacher noted in the survey that “(s)chool documentation highlights values and the hopeful vision for students…but this isn’t always ‘enacted’” Teachers’ resistance to change is not an issue unique to Townsville Central. The Principal acknowledged the resistance to curricular reforms and was as empathetic towards the resistance as he was driven to persuade a greater buy-in of the changes. The school has recently implemented a unit plan framework that embeds the school’s core values. The intention of this reform was to provide students with more substantive opportunities to discuss and reflect on the relationship between values and actions. In the teacher interview, suggestions were also made for in servicing on how to draw more in depth connections between values and the curriculum areas.

Table 12. School Coherence: Impact of values initiatives

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>In this school teaching values has</th>
<th>Pre-implementation (Mean)</th>
<th>Post-implementation (Mean)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Resulted in greater student engagement in other curriculum areas</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>4.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Had little effect on the way I teach</td>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>3.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Helped the school to focus on providing the</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
best environment possible for student improvement
Resulted in a more conscious statement of values in school policies
Led to discussing values in relation to other subject areas

5.4
5.1

5.2
4.1

Table 13 indicates the staff are generally supportive of the reforms undertaken since VEGPS Stage 1. Teachers generally reported satisfaction of the extent they are valued in the school. They recognised they have a voice in how they teach, and they are generally clear about their responsibilities. Consistently over three years, teachers report a relatively low level of satisfaction with the extent of information on changes in the school and how the school is organised. These issues, however, are not unexpected in a school that is attempting major curricular reforms to change entrenched practices. The Principal expressed similar concerns about the impact of the curricular reforms on teachers and recently appointed a Head of Curriculum to provide staff with greater level of support.

Table 13 School Coherence: Staff views

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>How satisfied are you…</th>
<th>2005</th>
<th>2006</th>
<th>2007</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I know what is going on in this school</td>
<td>2.5^</td>
<td>2.59^</td>
<td>2.6^</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>This school is a well-organised place in which to work</td>
<td>2.85</td>
<td>2.96#</td>
<td>2.68^</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I can have a say in decisions about my work in this school</td>
<td>3.05</td>
<td>3.07#</td>
<td>3.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am kept well-informed on things that are important to my work</td>
<td>3.05</td>
<td>2.85</td>
<td>2.83^</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am encouraged to take responsibility for my own work</td>
<td>3.6#</td>
<td>3.41</td>
<td>3.44#</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>This school is a good place in which to work</td>
<td>3.45#</td>
<td>3.3#</td>
<td>3.24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The staff in this school put a lot of energy into their work</td>
<td>3.15</td>
<td>3.22</td>
<td>3.04^</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I get the support within the school that I need to do my job</td>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>3.04</td>
<td>2.88^</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In this school I am confident of being able to do what is expected of me</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3.26#</td>
<td>3.13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It is clear what my work responsibilities are in this school</td>
<td>3.3#</td>
<td>3.11</td>
<td>3.08</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

^ below like school
#above state mean

While there might be a slight resistance from teachers about the changes, an examination of the data from parents and students reveal a distinct support. Students’ satisfaction with the school has consistently been above that of like schools, and in 2007, parents’ satisfaction was also above that like schools. Their satisfaction indicates at least tacit support for the direction and approach in the school’s reforms.

Table 14 School Coherence: Students’ views

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>How satisfied are you…</th>
<th>2005</th>
<th>2006</th>
<th>2007</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Are you satisfied that this is a good school</td>
<td>3.66#</td>
<td>3.96*#</td>
<td>3.62#</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#above state mean
Table 15 School Coherence: Parents’ views

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>How satisfied are you…</th>
<th>2006</th>
<th>2007</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Are you satisfied that this is a good school</td>
<td>3.39</td>
<td>3.53#</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#above state mean

Conclusion

This report has documented key curricular changes in Townsville Central State School and tracked these changes alongside a range of opinion surveys and school performance data to illuminate on the impact of values education on developing supportive relationships, enhancing student achievement and school identity. Since VEGPS Stage 1, the School has utilised a values education as a basis to design a more coherent curriculum to enhance the quality of schooling for students.

Values based reforms are evident in the school vision, guiding principles as well as curricular and extra-curricular activities. From Peer Support to the UNESCO model of sustainability, it is evident that values have become increasingly embedded in the school curriculum. They articulate the selected values implicitly as well as explicitly, and in the process contribute to a more coherent curriculum. In the teacher interview conducted, all teachers identified values education to be of merit to classroom management and to develop socially responsible citizens. However, some of the teachers expressed inadequacy in incorporating values in their unit planning and found it difficult to make explicit tacit values in the teaching of curriculum subjects. The difficulty in making such connections appears to be that the teachers saw values as moral imperatives, rather than socially constructed concepts that need to be negotiated and critiqued. As a couple of teachers noted, they understood the social and ecological dimensions of the UNESCO model, however they had difficulties identifying relevance in the economic and political dimensions for their students. Both teachers suggested in-servicing to enable them to make links between values, UNESCO mode of sustainability and curriculum areas. The Principal has appointed a Head of Curriculum to support teachers to address these issues and facilitate a more substantive engagement with values.

While it is evident that curricular changes are values driven, it is difficult to draw conclusive causal link explanations for the changes in the student achievement, school climate and identity. To illuminate on the problematic nature of making such causal explanations, we turn to Lovat’s discussion of communicative knowing in a Habermasian approach. He notes the limitation of this form of knowledge here:

…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 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. (Lovat, 2007, 7)

Likewise, while it is difficult to draw conclusive statements of the effectiveness of values based reforms, it is fair to argue that curricular changes based on a specific model or a group of models provide a greater level of coherence in the reform
initiatives, and help shape a tighter and shaper curriculum. The figures in the different survey data capture the performance and opinions of the key stakeholders during the values-based curricular reforms. Survey data indicate the three key stakeholders in the school, students, staff and parents reported consistently general satisfaction with the school. In terms of student achievement, the school data quite conclusively show that the school is performing relatively well in key writing, reading and numeracy tests. Further the survey data also show a supportive and positive climate for students to learn. Research indicates that student learning and achievement are influenced by emotional climate of a classroom (Toomey, 2007). Therefore, while any connections drawn in any case study analysis are at best generalisations, the evidence does suggest that the values framework offers a useful model to centre curricular reforms, and a coherent program with a strong emphasis on emotional and social climate can offer the “missing link in quality teaching” (Lovat & Toomey, 2007, xix) to facilitate student learning and achievement.

Case Study 11: Townsville High School, Queensland

Purpose
The purpose of this case study is to present findings of a preliminary investigation on the potential impact of values education on student academic diligence, school coherence, classroom ambience, student teacher relationships, student well being, teacher well being and parental participation. Using data gathered from multiple sources that include different surveys, a range of school documents and responses to curriculum initiatives related to values education, this study documents changes in the context of Townsville State High School, with a focus on the specific changes since the introduction of the Stage 2 project in 2007.

Method
The research approach for this case study is best described as mixed method. Quantitative data were collected from a pre-implementation teacher survey involving 15 staff involved in teaching Year 8. This staff cohort represented those engaged in the VEGPS Stage 2 project (April 2007). The survey mapped individual teacher responses to a series of questions about teachers’ approaches to values education as well as the perceived focus on values education within the school setting as a whole.

Further relevant quantitative data from the annual School Opinion Survey was also reviewed. This survey is administered in every state school in Queensland across samples of students and parents “to gauge their satisfaction with important aspects of schooling” (Education Queensland, 2008) as part of the School Improvement and Accountability Framework. In addition to students and parents, the school opinion survey questionnaires are disseminated to all staff to determine their satisfaction with the school as a workplace. The questions and the responses over the years 2003-2007 provide a useful indicator of school climate, student outcomes, school community relations and overall staff morale. The responses to these survey questions from parents, students and staff are benchmarked against other schools across the state, as well as against ‘like’ schools- schools that have similar size and socio-economic characteristics.

In addition to these quantitative data collection instruments, the data collection included a range of qualitative methods. The schools involved in the Townsville
Cluster VEGPS Stage 2, including Townsville State High School, attended monthly meetings as part of an action research cycle. This cycle focussed the school attention on curriculum design that would incorporate ‘values for sustainability’. These monthly meetings were documented, providing a map of the journey undertaken by the school and the school participated in regular case writing.

Further to these action research meetings, a focussed review of the curriculum design adopted in each school site as part of the VEGPS was completed in November 2007. The review included interviews with key teachers in the school and a collation of key school documents. This data set was complemented by further interviews with key staff involved in VEGPS, including the Deputy Principal and relevant Heads of Departments. A cohort of Year 8 students was also interviewed with particular focus questions designed to explore their understanding of curriculum intentions relating to ‘values for sustainability’- the goal of the VEGPS project. The data within this case study then, represents a reasonably rich data set to inform the responses to the research questions.

The School Community Introduced
Townsville State High School is the oldest state high school in the region. Currently enrolling 650 students from years 8-12, the school has seen fluctuating enrolment numbers of between 400 to 650 students over the last decade. This fluctuation can be attributed to two key factors. The first relates to the demography of the school’s catchment area. The area has undergone significant transformation from a largely industrial and low socio-economic zone to an increasingly gentrified urban inner city where new apartment and multi-occupancy buildings are increasingly apparent. This shift is reflected in the latest census data that notes for example, in the local suburb of Railway Estate, some 46% of dwellings contain couples without children. In the adjacent suburb of Hermit Part, 34% of dwellings are lone households, compared to an Australian average of 23% (ABS, 2008).

In addition to demographic changes, the second explanation for fluctuating enrolment numbers relates to the impact of a highly marketized schooling system. The region has two state secondary schools with considerable over-enrolment, and four state secondary schools, including Townsville State High School with effective under-enrolment. Competition between state schools and with non-state schools, ‘white flight’ and urban renewal make for a challenging schooling environment. Given the way state schools are currently funded, it is also not surprising to identify data within the school opinion survey that laments the poor state of facilities. As an example, from 2003, staff responses to the question-‘the facilities are well maintained’ are consistently below the state and ‘like school’ means.

The school’s strategic plan 2008-2010, emanating from the Triennial School Review, notes 5 key focus areas. These areas encompass school curriculum developments required as part of new department initiatives and show implicit engagement with school and community relationships and quality teaching. They are as follows:

- School curriculum, assessment and reporting practices meet the needs of students and the broader school community;
- A renewed physical school environment that is safe and sustainable;
• Improve staff well-being and effectiveness;

• Provide a safe and supportive school environment for students, parents and staff at Townsville State High;

• An effective and functioning school ICT network that is utilised by staff, students and community.

The School’s Approach to Values Education: School Structure and Curriculum Organisation

Discussions with staff from Townsville State High School reveal that paralleling other state school communities, the initial positioning by the then Prime Minister, John Howard (2004), of state schools as ‘value free’ was hotly contested. While the school focus areas in the most recent strategic plan above do not make explicit ‘values education’, discussions with school staff reflect the notion that the cultivation of particular values is indeed the school’s “end game” (Hill, 2008). It is less clear, in reviewing school documentation, what these values are, or how they are played out in the school. The VEGPS Stage 2 Project, as will be noted later, did not represent a major curriculum or organizational initiative or the engagement of community in debates around values. Unlike most other state schools in the region however, Townsville State High School has a long history of curriculum innovation that is tightly coupled with a particular school and class organization.

While the school’s values are not explicit in many policy documents, an examination of the school’s educational structure and class organization makes plain the school commitment to the values of democracy and inclusivity. For almost a decade now, the school has operated a “Democratic Vertical Inclusive curriculum’ for students in Years 8-10 which is “based on their stage of learning, rather than being in a set course and year level”. This organizational structure, unique to the region, supports individual learners and potentially nurtures individual learners’ needs. As the school website notes:

“This philosophy is founded on the belief that individuals have the right to maximise their learning potential through the provision of learning choices that are not restricted by an inflexible lockstep grading system. It is based on the notions of "access" and "success".

With the school and class organization reflecting a fundamental commitment to democracy, a closer examination of the curriculum reveals a strong commitment to graduating students who apply values in a range of community contexts. To ground the students within the school community, the school curriculum operates an ‘official care program’ that involves two scheduled periods a week for all students in addition to a daily morning encounter- (TAG- TOWN HIGH ACTIVITY GROUP). The First Year Induction Program, the Year 11 Seminar the Year 12 Student Leadership Camp and the “buddy” system between Year 12 and First year students, signal an overarching ethic of care and a belief that senior students can assist and support younger students. Year 11 students are involved in a Helping Friends program to support their peers in times of stress, with the school developing specific skills in
listening. In addition, a Personal Development and Leadership Program (PDL) involving parades, guest speakers, study options, sport, assignment work and selected activities operates for one lesson a week.

Already in operation and with a further explicit aim in the current school planning document, the *Triennial School Review* notes a commitment to “widespread and active community partnerships” prioritising an outward looking curriculum. Across the range of the school curriculum offerings, the school is clearly promoting partnerships that support community action. These are summarized in Table 1 below.

**Table 1. Overview of curriculum directions (indicative programs)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Learning partnerships</th>
<th>Community action: some examples</th>
<th>Examples of competitions promoted within the school</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Aerospace project: Partnership with Townsville Airport and regional airlines</td>
<td>Town High Renewable Energies Initiative: Xstrata</td>
<td>United Nations Youth Association Security Council Competition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tropics Basketball program: partnership with National Basketball league</td>
<td>Heart Foundation Skipping Showcase</td>
<td>Young Diplomats Program</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technology Maths and Science Centre for Excellence: funded centre of excellence</td>
<td>Pink Breast Cancer Luncheon</td>
<td>Innovative Young Australian programs /F1 Challenge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arts in the Cities: multiagency partnership to promote contemporary arts curriculum</td>
<td>World Vision Global Leadership convention</td>
<td>Japanese Speaking Competition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Australian Youth Development Program</td>
<td>ANZAC ceremony</td>
<td>Optiminds</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As part of their response to the VEGPS project, the school has centred their commitment to *values for a sustainable future*. With a focus on Year 7-8 transition, the VEGPS project allowed for documentation of an integrated theme across the Year 8 cohort- “Survivor NQ”. As the Deputy Principal explains, the school has a cohort of staff highly committed to a focus on sustainability, but as with many other curriculum aims, such a goal had not been made explicit prior to the VEGPS Stage 2.

“For many years in 1999, 2003, 2005, 2006 &2007 we have received the Townsville City Council Environmental Excellence & Sustainability Awards. We are reaching out to parents in their homes & linking with the business community (to enhance this whole school approach)”.

As a result of the VEGPS Stage 2 focus however, the Deputy is adamant that an explicit whole school approach is now feasible. With core staff in the humanities and sciences areas leading the curriculum development, the school now has an opportunity to focus, systemically, on values for sustainability.

“Where are we heading? Units of work will now be rewritten when the new syllabi are available & not this year as planned. While the specific curriculum development was not carried through to where we had planned, the key area from the configurative mapping tool about a whole school approach to
sustainability has expanded. Is it because of this VEGPSP2 project or a journey begun many years ago when “sustainability” became a key issue at Town High long before it became so fashionable with politicians, I am not sure & no amount of evaluation could clarify that. I do know that Clean Up Australia Day last Friday has never had so many volunteers in our school & that at the end of this week we are holding our first ever Sustainability Day involving many areas across the school & outside the community…….. Is there an expanding feeling throughout the school about sustainability & everyone’s responsibility as part of that – YES!”

While school planning and reporting documents have yet to reflect a broader commitment to values for sustainability, the first indications of this explicit focus are now apparent on the school website, where ‘sustainability’ now features alongside core curriculum objectives. Once such a focus is made explicit it would appear that the school is well positioned to enact such a curriculum vision as well as making explicit ‘values’ associated with sustainability. The school promotes an overarching pedagogy of ‘investigation’ with school units reviewed for their ‘investigative elements’. Such a pedagogy promotes both communicative knowledge-knowledge developed from engagement with authentic real world experiences, and potentially critical knowing, where knowledge is transformed to personal action (Lovat, 2007).

Certainly, the school’s priority on curriculum and learning partnerships would suggest that the school is able to explicitly embed a values focused curriculum design around sustainability. While this is clearly a useful next step, it should also be noted that the centrality of values education, although not necessarily documented is apparent to staff, as indicated in the pre-implementation survey results tabulated below.

Table 2. Values and School Coherence: teachers’ views

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>In my class values education</th>
<th>Pre-implementation (Mean)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Is taught explicitly</td>
<td>4.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Occupies a major part of the curriculum</td>
<td>3.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is taught everyday</td>
<td>4.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Further confirmation of the values focus, albeit implicit, is found in an interview with a small group of Year 8 students. The investigative and action components within their early experiences of the curriculum were very apparent, with many student noting school’s interest in engaging them as ‘active citizens”.

**Academic Diligence: A Focus on Diverse Students’ Needs and Outcomes**
The school has a diverse population. Fifteen percent of the students are Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders and the school has the region’s designated English as Second Language (ESL) centre for newly arrived immigrants. While issues of race, culture and language are central to the school’s organization and curriculum, the school also oversees a large special education unit and a specialist outreach centre for students with disabilities. As would be expected within such a diverse school community, issues of academic diligence must be a focus.
The school’s motto “strive for better” resonates with the current school outcomes and post-school transitions. Overall, students’ outcomes reflect sound academic achievement but demonstrate many of the challenges of teaching a diverse community
in a system of compulsory participation. With a diverse range of students, the school draws on a range of support staff. These include a guidance officer, school based youth health nurse, school-based police officer and chaplain. In addition, to support the school’s Indigenous population, a Community Education Counsellor is also a key staff member.

Year 12 outcomes reflect the challenges of working with a diverse community. Sixty three percent of students completing Year 12 in 2007 and undertaking subjects related to tertiary entrance (working towards an ‘overall position-OP’) obtained a score that allows for the pursuit of tertiary study (OP1-15). The student post school destination data however, reflects trends in the region away from tertiary education. While 53% of students completing Year 12 in 2006 went on to some form of post-secondary education, for the 2007 cohort, this has declined to 39%. Only 21% of school leavers from 2007 pursued university study, down from 31% of the 2006 cohort. While a generally strong labour market suggests that school graduates are presently more likely to be involved in the workforce rather than further study, the ‘Next Step’ survey results note that in May 2008, 17% of the 2007 leaving cohort was seeking employment. This compares with 5.8% of school leavers across Queensland.

Tables 3-5 map the various perspectives around student outcomes. Table 3 notes ongoing concerns around academic and emotional development from parents’ perspective, with issues of school standards and diligence reflected in the lower than state and like school means in a number of key areas.

Table 3. Student achievement: parents views

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>How satisfied are you…</th>
<th>2003</th>
<th>2005</th>
<th>2007</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>That your child is making sufficient progress</td>
<td>2.61</td>
<td>2.76</td>
<td>2.13*#</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>That your child works well at this school</td>
<td>2.79</td>
<td>3.00</td>
<td>2.36*#</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>That the school is developing your child’s numeracy skills</td>
<td>2.54#</td>
<td>3.00</td>
<td>2.30#</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>That the school is developing your child’s literacy skills</td>
<td>2.46#</td>
<td>2.94</td>
<td>2.30##</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>That your child is getting a good education at this school</td>
<td>2.75</td>
<td>3.06</td>
<td>2.43#</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>That the school is developing your child’s social skills</td>
<td>2.57</td>
<td>2.88</td>
<td>2.43##</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>With what your child is learning at this school</td>
<td>2.79</td>
<td>2.94</td>
<td>2.39##</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>That the school is preparing your child for the future</td>
<td>2.50</td>
<td>2.94</td>
<td>2.43#</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>About the usefulness of what your child learning at school</td>
<td>2.75</td>
<td>3.06</td>
<td>2.48#</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>With the quality of teaching your child receives</td>
<td>2.32#</td>
<td>2.76</td>
<td>2.22#</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>With the standard of work expected</td>
<td>2.36#</td>
<td>2.88</td>
<td>2.43#</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*below like schools;  # below state mean

While Table 3 reflects the parents’ concerns around questions of academic diligence, the student survey responses, noted in Table 4 reflect an improvement in perceptions around school expectations for work standards between 2005-2007.
Table 4. Student achievement: students’ views

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>How satisfied are you…</th>
<th>2003</th>
<th>2005</th>
<th>2007</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>That you are doing the best you can in your school work</td>
<td>2.23*#</td>
<td>2.35*#</td>
<td>2.30*#</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>With how well you are learning at this school</td>
<td>2.15*#</td>
<td>2.08*#</td>
<td>2.49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>That you are getting a good education at this school</td>
<td>2.23*#</td>
<td>2.15*#</td>
<td>2.70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>With the standard of school work expected</td>
<td>2.22*#</td>
<td>2.09*#</td>
<td>2.76^+</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*below like schools; # below state mean; ^ above state mean; + above like schools

Questions from the pre-implementation survey examine the teachers' perceived relationship between Values Education and student achievement. Given the current implicit rather than explicit values education focus it is not surprising that the survey results in Table 5 draw a limited relationship between student learning and values initiatives within the school.

Table 5. Values education and student achievement: teachers’ views

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>In this school teaching values has</th>
<th>Pre-implementation(Mean)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Deepened my understanding about how children learn</td>
<td>3.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Encouraged me to try different ways of teaching</td>
<td>4.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Led to greater numbers of students realising their full academic potential</td>
<td>3.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Led to students exercising greater academic diligence</td>
<td>3.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 6. School Relationships: Staff views

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Relationships</th>
<th>2003</th>
<th>2005</th>
<th>2007</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I get on well with the students in this school</td>
<td>3.17</td>
<td>3.23</td>
<td>3.13#</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I feel that this school is a safe place to work</td>
<td>2.98</td>
<td>3.06</td>
<td>2.95*#</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staff and students respect each other in this school</td>
<td>2.41#</td>
<td>2.69</td>
<td>3.44#</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

# below state mean; * below like schools;

Table 7. School Relationships: Students’ views

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Learning Climate</th>
<th>2003</th>
<th>2005</th>
<th>2007</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>that your teacher explains clearly what to do in your school work</td>
<td>1.59*#</td>
<td>1.60*#</td>
<td>2.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>that your teacher helps you to do your best</td>
<td>2.01*#</td>
<td>2.05*#</td>
<td>2.73^+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>with the interest the teacher takes in your learning</td>
<td>3.17</td>
<td>3.28**#</td>
<td>3.35*#</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>that what your teacher tells you helps you to improve</td>
<td>3.28</td>
<td>3.45*#</td>
<td>3.36</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Learning Climate

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2003</th>
<th>2005</th>
<th>2007</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>your school work</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>that you know how well you are going with your school work</td>
<td>3.03</td>
<td>3.06</td>
<td>3.18*#</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>That you are treated fairly at this school</td>
<td>1.94*#</td>
<td>1.74*#</td>
<td>2.68^+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>About the behaviour of students at this school</td>
<td>1.60*#</td>
<td>1.63*#</td>
<td>1.78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>That you are safe at this school</td>
<td>2.05*#</td>
<td>2.20*#</td>
<td>2.79</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*bellow like schools; # below state mean; ^ above state mean; + above like schools

Table 8 also notes parents’ views around the quality of relationships between students and staff providing a strong rationale for the Principal’s decision to focus on relationships as a core school priority.

Table 8. School Relationship: Parents’ views

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>How satisfied are you</th>
<th>2003</th>
<th>2005</th>
<th>2007</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>With the encouragement that the school gives to your child</td>
<td>2.64</td>
<td>2.65</td>
<td>2.30#</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>with the interest that the teacher(s) take in your child</td>
<td>3.04</td>
<td>3.11</td>
<td>3.07#*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>About the behaviour of students at this school</td>
<td>2.04#</td>
<td>2.59</td>
<td>2.13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>With student discipline in the school</td>
<td>2.25</td>
<td>2.65</td>
<td>2.39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>That your child is safe at this school</td>
<td>2.61#</td>
<td>2.69</td>
<td>3.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>That your child is treated fairly at this school</td>
<td>2.68</td>
<td>2.94</td>
<td>2.48#</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

# below state mean; *below like schools

For some students, attendance and engagement patterns have presented considerable challenges, clearly impacting on outcomes. Such varying engagement patterns would not be surprising given the student population. In 2007, the school received national press coverage of a new program developed by the Principal to support re-engagement. The ‘box the Principal’ program involved shifting the nature of the relationship between the students and the principal, by allowing students who met set targets around attendance and engagement to be involved in a boxing program. The psychologist, Chris Dickson, involved in the program notes the following in a press interview:

“"What we are doing is humanising the relationship between the principal and students," Mr Dickson said. "What we are seeing is their self-esteem, confidence, emotional control, ability to work with the principal in certain situations growing”.

"We build informal relationships. When they get in trouble at school they can use the real relationship in the training sessions to work through the issue. It's about building relationships between young people and the community" (Townsville Bulletin, 2007).

While this is a program focussed on a limited cohort of students, the data provided above suggests increased emphasis on relationships within the school should remain a priority in 2008 and beyond.

Making Connections: Coherence between Curriculum, Students, Values and Structures
While school community relationships are yet to be shaped by an explicit values education focus, some implicit connections between values, curriculum and school organisation can be drawn.

Table 9 for example, notes the positive way in which the school organisation and curriculum structure promotes teacher engagement in their professional lives. Sound levels of staff morale are clear from this data, with the school’s annual report noting high levels of staff retention-90% of appointed staff retained for the school year, and low levels of staff absenteeism.

**Table 9. Teacher Wellbeing: Staff views**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2003</th>
<th>2005</th>
<th>2007</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>People in the school let me know how well I am doing in my work</td>
<td>2.43</td>
<td>2.44</td>
<td>2.54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I receive helpful feedback on my work at this school</td>
<td>2.43</td>
<td>2.33</td>
<td>2.45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>This school gives me opportunities to improve my skills</td>
<td>2.83</td>
<td>2.67</td>
<td>2.71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I can manage the different things I have to do in this school</td>
<td>2.94</td>
<td>2.94</td>
<td>2.88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I can cope with what I have to do in my work</td>
<td>2.92</td>
<td>2.93</td>
<td>2.90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>There is good team spirit among the staff of this school</td>
<td>3.06^+</td>
<td>3.18^+</td>
<td>3.24^+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The staff in this school are enthusiastic about their work</td>
<td>2.78</td>
<td>3.04^+</td>
<td>2.95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am happy working in this school</td>
<td>3.03</td>
<td>3.21</td>
<td>3.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have good working relationships with other staff</td>
<td>3.32</td>
<td>3.43^+</td>
<td>3.28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am treated with respect in this school</td>
<td>2.79</td>
<td>2.94</td>
<td>2.80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My work role makes reasonable demands of me</td>
<td>2.66</td>
<td>2.57</td>
<td>2.61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My contribution to this school is valued</td>
<td>2.57</td>
<td>2.70</td>
<td>2.76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I feel that my work efforts are worthwhile</td>
<td>2.86</td>
<td>2.94</td>
<td>2.94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My work skills enable me to make a worthwhile contribution to this school</td>
<td>3.11</td>
<td>3.13</td>
<td>3.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am regarded as a valuable staff member</td>
<td>2.66</td>
<td>2.77</td>
<td>2.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My work skills are appreciated in this school</td>
<td>2.68</td>
<td>2.71</td>
<td>2.80</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

^ above state mean; + above like schools

**Table 10 School Coherence: teachers’ views**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>How satisfied are you…</th>
<th>2003</th>
<th>2005</th>
<th>2007</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I know what is going on in this school</td>
<td>2.48</td>
<td>2.37</td>
<td>2.68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>This school is a well-organised place in which to work</td>
<td>2.47</td>
<td>2.67</td>
<td>2.64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I can have a say in decisions about my work in this school</td>
<td>2.60</td>
<td>2.74</td>
<td>2.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am kept well-informed on things that are important to my work</td>
<td>2.65</td>
<td>2.69</td>
<td>2.77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am encouraged to take responsibility for my own work</td>
<td>3.23</td>
<td>3.19</td>
<td>3.27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>This school is a good place in which to work</td>
<td>2.97</td>
<td>3.17</td>
<td>3.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The staff in this school put a lot of energy into their work</td>
<td>3.14</td>
<td>3.27</td>
<td>3.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I get the support within the school that I need to do my job</td>
<td>2.53#</td>
<td>2.74</td>
<td>2.77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In this school I am confident of being able to do what is expected of me</td>
<td>3.05</td>
<td>3.03</td>
<td>2.95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It is clear what my work responsibilities are in this school</td>
<td>2.92</td>
<td>2.96</td>
<td>2.88</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The responses in Table 9 and 10 above can also be linked to the strong culture of ‘curriculum mentoring’ within the school. The vertically inclusive curriculum requires close monitoring of students, and five key staff share the role of curriculum coherence and student progression. Together with a senior schooling team, and the usual secondary discipline based – ‘head of department’ – this distributive leadership model presents many opportunities for staff to pursue professional development.

While the Tables 9 and 10 reflect teacher satisfaction with the coherence within the school, Table 11 summarises students’ responses to the overall curriculum experience. This table shows some improvement in students’ rating of their curriculum experiences. In 2007, students were generally more satisfied with their experiences of the curriculum with all areas demonstrating improved student responses.

### Table 11 School/curriculum experiences: students’ views

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>How satisfied are you…</th>
<th>2003</th>
<th>2005</th>
<th>2007</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>That you are able to get involved in school activities</td>
<td>2.29*#</td>
<td>2.14*#</td>
<td>2.92^+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>With the variety of school activities available to you</td>
<td>2.07*#</td>
<td>2.00*#</td>
<td>2.65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>With what you are learning at this school</td>
<td>2.27*#</td>
<td>2.17*#</td>
<td>2.70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>That you are happy to go to this school</td>
<td>2.20*#</td>
<td>2.08*#</td>
<td>2.88</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*below like schools; # below state mean; ^ above state mean; +above like schools

Data from Table 11 however, suggests that the school needs to do more work with parents to promote overall curriculum experience offered to students.

### Table 12. School/curriculum experiences: parents’ views

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>How satisfied are you…</th>
<th>2003</th>
<th>2005</th>
<th>2007</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>That the school provides good learning opportunities for your child</td>
<td>3.00</td>
<td>3.18</td>
<td>2.74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>With the encouragement that the school gives to your child</td>
<td>2.64</td>
<td>2.65</td>
<td>2.30#</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>That your child is happy to go to this school</td>
<td>2.64#</td>
<td>3.06</td>
<td>2.61#</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

# below state mean

### Parental Participation and Engagement

With an implicit rather than explicit values education focus, and limited reference in school policies to ‘values’ initiatives, it is not surprising that teachers surveyed had limited belief in the notion that values education promoted greater cooperation between school and home. Table 13 summaries the pre-implementation survey response to questions about the parent participation and values education.

### Table 13. Parental and Community Participation: teachers’ views

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>In this school teaching values has</th>
<th>Pre-implementation (Mean)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Contributed to a greater cooperation between school and home</td>
<td>3.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resulted in a more conscious statement of values in school policies</td>
<td>3.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Concomitantly, the school survey data notes in Table 14, the challenges facing the school in focusing parents on the positive potential of their contributions.

Table 14. Parental and family participation: parents’ views

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>How are satisfied are you</th>
<th>2003</th>
<th>2005</th>
<th>2007</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>with opportunities to discuss what your child is being taught</td>
<td>2.52</td>
<td>3.06</td>
<td>2.26#*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>that school staff are approachable when you want to talk about your child</td>
<td>2.75#</td>
<td>3.06</td>
<td>2.74#</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>that you have opportunities to participate in the life of the school</td>
<td>2.56</td>
<td>2.81</td>
<td>2.52#</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>that you have opportunities to participate in school decision making</td>
<td>2.44</td>
<td>2.76</td>
<td>2.48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>that the school makes you feel welcome</td>
<td>2.82</td>
<td>3.12</td>
<td>2.74#</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>that the school communicates well with you?</td>
<td>2.71</td>
<td>3.06</td>
<td>2.48</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*below like schools; # below state mean

**Conclusion**

The VEGPS Stage 2 project within Townsville State High School has provided an opportunity to document and focus a curriculum design around sustainability and improve coherence around an existing thematic approach for the transition from Year 7 to Year 8. The school’s case writing, the visibility of the ‘sustainability’ focus, and the student interviews provide evidence of positive outcomes from the project. All have the potential for impact on teacher practice.

In terms of evidence that values education has a positive effect on the school ethos or school system, the work of Le Métais (1997) is instructive. Values can be reflected systematically and implicitly throughout the life of a school and national schooling system if the aims, educational structure, school and class organization are then aligned to the curriculum. Figure 1 represents Le Métais (1997) view around this cohesion.
Without an explicit statement of the values vision for the school however, the likelihood of this coherence occurrence is lessened. As Le Métais (1997) argues “any education system, at any given point in time, is a combination of the past, the present and the future” (p 4). Townsville State High School has a newly appointed principal and has inherited school and class organization with an implicit values statement—democracy and inclusion as central. From the evidence in this study, teachers affirm these structures as supporting their work but are yet to truly capitalize on these values through explicit and named curriculum design or teaching practices. This is despite the school having many curriculum messages around the significance of active community partnerships that promote the development of active citizens.

Clearly, the school is aware of the potential of changed teacher practice to improve student outcomes. The school’s annual report notes the following:

“The school recognizes and embraces the research findings that the single most influential factor contributing to increasing students learning outcomes is the quality teaching and learning”.

With a diverse student population, student engagement and academic diligence could well be supported by a more explicit values driven curriculum. Missing data from this study includes student attendance and school disciplinary absences. Such data would be an important benchmark for school priorities around teaching practice. From the school option survey data however, it is clear, that the Principal’s decision to focus on relationships is an important one.

As a ‘point in time’ study, this research provides some insight into the challenges facing a state secondary school-particularly in terms of student outcomes, although the scope is clearly limited. A longitudinal study exploring a more explicit focus on a values driven curriculum vision could provide further insight.
References


