At the Heart of What We Do
Values Education at the Centre of Schooling

The Final Report of the
Values Education Good Practice Schools Project – Stage 2

August 2008
Acknowledgements

At the Heart of What We Do: Values Education at the Centre of Schooling – The Final Report of the Values Education Good Practice Schools Project – Stage 2 was funded and commissioned by the Australian Government Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations. The views expressed in the report do not necessarily represent the views of the Australian Government Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations.

Curriculum Corporation gratefully acknowledges the work of the project cluster schools and their communities, the professional contributions of the University Associates Network, the support of the state and territory values education project officers and the guidance and advice of the Values Education Project Advisory Committee.

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The cause of values education is essential, in my opinion, to Australian education. It is the ingredient that can make the difference to education in the Australian context. Students who attend a school where they feel secure from physical and psychological harm, who are met by teachers who model ethical behaviours and who require such behaviours from their students will achieve well in the academic sphere. Why? The answer is obvious. Because the students will be more emotionally stable; they will apply themselves to learning with greater alacrity; they will be more at ease with school personnel and will achieve greater self-discipline.

Extract from Emeritus Professor Robert Crotty’s report as the Values Education Good Practice Schools Project – Stage 2 University Associates Network member for South Australia

Background

In 2004 the Australian Government committed funding for a multifaceted values education initiative designed to support Australian schools in implementing the National Framework for Values Education in Australian Schools (the National Framework). As part of that initiative the Values Education Good Practice Schools Project (VEGPSP) was established as a two-stage undertaking to support selected schools from across Australia to design and conduct local projects that would identify and exemplify good practice in values education.

The aim was to demonstrate how the National Framework could help schools provide values education in a planned and systematic way, and as a core part of schooling. The work of the project schools involved in both stages was to be captured, reported on and disseminated to inform and guide all Australian schools in the task of improving practice in values education.

The Values Education Good Practice Schools Project – Stage 1 ran from 2005 to 2006. The Final Report described the endeavours of 26 school clusters and their 166 schools, and identified a set of key recommendations to Australian schools about the principles of good practice in values education (Curriculum Corporation 2006).

The Values Education Good Practice Schools Project – Stage 2 built on and extended the work of Stage 1 into other school contexts. Stage 2 ran from 2006 to 2008 and involved 25 school clusters, comprising 143 schools from across the nation. The clusters designed and implemented their values education projects to meet their local needs and to further inform the development and uptake of good practice in values education in all Australian schools.

This Final Report provides an account of Stage 2 of the VEGPSP in three sections. Section 1 gives an overview of Stage 2: the way it was established, organised and conducted. Section 2 offers an analysis of the Stage 2 cluster projects and a synthesis of their key messages about good practice in values education. Section 3 presents a detailed synopsis of each of the Stage 2 cluster projects: their aims, processes, activities and outcomes.

About the Values Education Good Practice Schools Project – Stage 2

The Values Education Good Practice Schools Project – Stage 2 was established and managed by Curriculum Corporation to work towards the National Framework’s vision of all Australian schools providing values education in a ‘planned and systematic way as a central aspect of their work’ (DEST 2005, p 3). Stage 2 sought to extend the work of the Stage 1 clusters by
demonstrating good practices for implementing values education. In particular, some of the Stage 2 clusters were selected to focus on the implementation on values education across all key learning areas and by addressing values in intercultural and global contexts.

In mid 2006 the then Minister for Education, Science and Training invited all Australian schools to apply for funding to undertake values education projects in Stage 2 of the VEGPSP. The projects were to use the National Framework to implement programs that met the needs of their local school communities. Schools were invited to form clusters of four to ten schools, to design projects and to apply in a competitive selection process for funding grants, which ranged from $45,000 to $100,000.

The final cluster projects were selected through a three-stage, criteria-based selection process. In the last stage, a National Selection Committee, chaired by Curriculum Corporation, recommended a final list of 25 cluster projects, which were announced in 2006 by the then Minister for Education, Science and Training.

A number of Stage 1 clusters were selected to extend their work into Stage 2 to enable observation of the impacts of longer-term values education work. All successful clusters pursued an array of approaches to implementing the National Framework, which added to the variety of projects seen in Stage 1. To name a few, one involved student action groups in leading a series of community events to highlight the values outlined in the National Framework. Another used a ‘kids teaching kids’ approach to adopt the values in the National Framework as part of a community capacity-building strategy. In a third, the values in the National Framework and pedagogy were linked to help create a shared sustainable vision of the future. A fourth integrated service learning as part of the teaching and learning experiences embedded across the key learning areas of English, studies of society and environment, and religious education. Another developed emotional literacy through restorative justice practices to help students value commitment, empathy and responsibility through the stages of development from middle childhood to late adolescence.

Section 3 of this Final Report provides outline descriptions and summary accounts of key messages from each of the 25 cluster projects.

**PROJECT METHODOLOGY: THE EVIDENCE OF GOOD PRACTICE**

The Values Education Good Practice Schools Project was designed as a school-driven, ground-up approach to exploring values education practice in local schooling contexts. The project invited school communities with diverse backgrounds to conceive of their own values education projects and apply for grants to support their implementation. The intention was to create opportunities for schools to use the National Framework in their local contexts and for them to report on what they learnt. The project established ways of supporting, monitoring and gathering accounts of these diverse school experiences. The task then was to interpret these different experiences and distil generalisations of good practice in values education for other Australian schools.

To achieve this, Stage 2 of the project adopted a meta-evaluation methodology to identify values education good practices and their outcomes for the Final Report. The project did not adopt a centrally designed and controlled quantitative research methodology, with its associated control groups, uniform fields for data gathering and statistical analysis. Instead, a number of factors – the project purpose, the eclectic nature of the school project activity, the fact that each cluster designed their own projects to meet local needs, and the limited time frame for the project work – determined that a meta-evaluation methodology was the most appropriate approach to use in assessing and reporting on the project outcomes.

Accordingly, Curriculum Corporation employed a range of tools for the cluster projects to use in gathering information about their work and for both the schools and other project collaborators to use when reporting on their work to the project managers at Curriculum Corporation. These tools were case studies, case writing, University Associates Network accounts and supplementary accounts.
Case studies prepared by clusters

Project clusters submitted four interim reports to Curriculum Corporation: in December 2006, June 2007, December 2007 and a final report in April 2008. These reports took the form of case studies of the approaches used by individual clusters to implement their projects.

The case studies were constructed through an iterative process over four drafts, which passed between the school and Curriculum Corporation staff. The University Associates Network colleagues, Curriculum Corporation personnel and, in some cases, consultants engaged by clusters assisted with this drafting process. Each draft pursued a broad pro forma pattern that addressed context, purpose, process and outcomes to achieve an evidence-based account of good practice.

Case writing prepared by individual teachers within each cluster

All schools in each project cluster submitted four pieces of case writing from individual teachers in response to particular issues of professional practice in values education. Teacher case writing is a technique designed to encourage teachers to describe their practice, reflect on it, discuss it with colleagues and collaboratively attempt to improve it. The case writing provided accounts of good practice, which could be used to inform and improve the approaches of teachers engaged in values education in schools across Australia.

The University Associates Network accounts of good practice

To support the project, the University Associates Network (UAN) was established. Participating universities assigned a colleague from their education faculties to each cluster. The UAN ‘critical friend’ advised their cluster about implementing its values education project and applying the key elements and principles of the National Framework. UAN members provided their own objective accounts of the good practices witnessed during the course of the project.

Supplementary accounts

In addition to the case studies, case writing and UAN accounts, the project reporting was supplemented with reports from two other agencies who were engaged to support the cluster work throughout the life of the project.

The first of these was the state and territory values education officers, who supported the project and participated in meetings of the Values Education Networks of Engagement (VENEs). Curriculum Corporation established these networks in each jurisdiction to bring together parents, teachers and values education officers to support and promote values education activity at the educational jurisdictional level and thereby support a more integrated approach to the values education initiative, by conducting school forums and disseminating information and resources. The VENEs also provided an avenue to input the experiences and learnings of local teachers who participated in Stage 1 of the VEGPSP. At the end of the project each VENE provided a report about its contribution to the project.

The second additional agency was the mentor group. As part of its project support structure Curriculum Corporation established a group of mentors from Stage 1 to support clusters in Stage 2. The mentors were selected from experienced school leaders who had implemented successful projects in Stage 1. The role of the mentors was to provide advice and guidance on a needs basis to Stage 2 participants about ways of effectively implementing and managing their projects. By the end of Stage 2, five mentors had worked at different levels of intensity with fifteen clusters. These mentors provided Curriculum Corporation with a brief report on the mentoring activity and its outcomes.

IDENTIFYING GOOD PRACTICE IN STAGE 2 CLUSTER PROJECTS

In keeping with the interpretative research approach established for the project, Curriculum Corporation used a form of meta-evaluation to aggregate the findings from project reports.
Curriculum Corporation initially reviewed all of the report material, paying special attention to the outcomes that clusters, teachers and the UAN members were claiming had arisen out of the projects. Clusters or schools that were pointing to substantial improvement in outcomes such as student engagement, improved teaching practice, student and teacher wellbeing, and parental satisfaction with the school were identified. A panel of readers (which included the project managers and research manager at Curriculum Corporation) examined the nature and type of evidence offered to support the claims, and noted recurring themes. The reviewers then compared the Stage 2 cluster and school approaches to implementing their projects with those used and reported on in Stage 1.

PRINCIPLES OF GOOD PRACTICE IN VALUES EDUCATION

On the basis of Curriculum Corporation’s meta-evaluation of the activity of the 25 Stage 2 cluster projects over 20 months, this Final Report identifies ten principles of good practice in values education for Australian schools. It is worth noting that many of the Stage 2 cluster projects provide evidence to support a number of the findings and recommendations to Australian schools about the principles of good practice in values education from Stage 1 of the VEGPSP.

A number of the Stage 2 findings about good practice directly reflect some of the Stage 1 recommendations to schools. Several of these have not been repeated as they are now widely understood as being self-evident principles for the implementation of quality values education approaches in schools.

Specifically, Stage 2 cluster experiences reaffirm:

- Recommendation 2 from the Stage 1 Final Report which asserts: ‘Values education is sustained over time only through a whole school approach that engages all sectors of the school community.’
- Recommendation 3 from the Stage 1 Final Report which asserts: ‘School leadership is critical in developing values education as a core part of schooling.’ (Curriculum Corporation 2006, p 2)

Other Stage 1 recommendations also reverberate in the Stage 2 experiences, but they have been reasserted in the following principles of good practice in recognition of the fact that the Stage 2 cluster experiences have added new insights and understandings about these good practices.

Other principles of good practice are new understandings about values education practice that were not obvious or evident in Stage 1 of the VEGPSP.

In summary, the following ten good practices in values education have been distilled from Stage 2 of the VEGPSP.

1. **Establish and consistently use a common and shared values language across the school.**

   Establishing, articulating and disseminating a common and shared values language is essential to good practice in values education. In keeping with the Stage 1 findings (Recommendation 1), reaching agreement within the whole school community about the values that will guide the school’s work is the first critical step a school must take if it seeks to become values-centred. In a values-based school the shared values language comes to inform everything that school does and says. It underpins pedagogy, leadership, planning, policy positions, curriculum practices and behavioural expectations. If there is no common values language, if the values within the school are neither owned nor shared by the school community, there can be no basis for implementing effective, planned and systematic values education.

2. **Use pedagogies that are values-focused and student-centred within all curriculum.**

   Effective values education uses pedagogies that mirror the values being taught. A number of the cluster projects in Stage 2 clearly suggest that the most effective learning experiences in values education are generally values-explicit, student-centred and open-ended rather than values-implicit, teacher-centred and closed. The pedagogies engage students in real-life learning, offer opportunity for real practice, provide safe structures for taking risks, and encourage personal reflection and action.
Many of the cluster projects demonstrate that when values and students are at the centre of learning design, there are observable changes for the student, the teacher and the learning environment. These include calmer classrooms and happier students, students who are empowered, engaged, more responsible, confident and positive about their place in the school and wider community. This is values education at its best and contrasts with traditional didactic, teacher- and content-centred pedagogies, which are largely inappropriate for effective values education. A number of cluster projects would also suggest that values-focused pedagogies are required to support students to live as enabled and resilient individuals in the real world of the twenty-first century: a world beset with climate change, personal and societal insecurities, shifting certainties, rapidly changing forms of social interaction and intensifying intercultural and interglobal realignments.

3 **Develop values education as an integrated curriculum concept, rather than as a program, an event or an addition to curriculum.**

Good practice in values education requires schools to see values education as a whole of curriculum concept that informs all teaching and learning across the school. Values education is not a discrete program or part of an implicit hidden curriculum; it is a central principle underpinning the school curriculum offerings, the curriculum design, pedagogy, content and assessment. In this view (alluded to in Recommendations 2 and 4 in the Stage 1 Final Report) values education is neither an addition to be ‘bolted on’ to a curriculum nor a curriculum topic that resides in a humanities or religious education learning area. Values education is instead an approach to existing curriculum, a way of seeing curriculum that requires an integration rather than an addition. Many Stage 2 cluster projects demonstrate this principle of curriculum integration and system integration with existing jurisdictional curriculum frameworks, policies, priorities and other education initiatives.

4 **Explicitly teach values so students know what the values mean and how the values are lived.**

The Stage 2 cluster projects reassert the Stage 1 finding (Recommendation 4) that values must be explicitly articulated and taught. The Stage 2 experiences deepen our understanding of how critical this principle is in successful values education practice. The principle of explicitness applies more broadly and pervasively than has been previously recognised. It means that values-based schools live and breathe a values consciousness. They become schools where values are thought about, talked about, taught about, reflected upon and enacted across the whole school in all school activities. Values are explicitly taught across all key learning areas and articulated in all co-curricular activities. They are also explicitly present in the physical school environment, its signage, ceremonies and rituals as well as policies, administration and key documents. The explicit values become ubiquitous, and values ‘teaching’ and values ‘learning’ become part of the embedded consciousness within every school activity.

5 **Implicitly model values and explicitly foster the modelling of values.**

Stage 2 projects reassert the Stage 1 finding (Recommendation 5) that modelling is an integral component of successful values approaches. Stage 2 experiences add to our understanding of the operation and effects of this good practice. Once values are explicitly established within the school, the modelling implicitly reinforces the values learning. This principle applies equally to all relationships in the school, not just teachers modelling to students: teachers model to teachers and students model to students. Such pervasive modelling of values helps to create more positive classrooms and school cultures. Without this implicit values modelling, the task of implementing values education is doomed. If the seen-behaviours of teachers and felt-experiences of students do not correspond to the explicit values fostered in the school community, the explicit values education becomes compromised, incongruent and less effective.
6 Develop relevant and engaging values approaches connected to local and global contexts and which offer real opportunity for student agency.

The Stage 2 cluster experiences speak convincingly of the critical importance of enabling and providing opportunities for student agency. Although present in many of the Stage 1 projects, the role of student empowerment and agency in values education practice has been significantly highlighted in Stage 2. Starting from the premise that schooling educates for the whole child and must necessarily engage a student’s heart, mind and actions, effective values education empowers student decision making, fosters student action and assigns real student responsibility. Effective values education is not an academic exercise; it needs to be deeply personal, deeply real and deeply engaging.

In many of the Stage 2 projects students can be seen to move in stages from growing in knowledge and understanding of the values, to an increasing clarity and commitment to certain values, and then concerted action in living those values in their personal and community lives. The teaching and learning is three-dimensional and could not be more profoundly meaningful.

7 Use values education to consciously foster intercultural understanding, social cohesion and social inclusion.

Stage 2 speaks more specifically and extensively than Stage 1 on the use of values education to foster social inclusion within school communities. A number of cluster projects demonstrate how some of their values education practices can provide both the tools and the common ground for positively engaging with the diversity and difference that arises from a multitude of cultures, faiths, ethnicities, abilities, and geographic and socioeconomic circumstances, and which can marginalise groups from mainstream learning. These Stage 2 cluster projects show that values education is uniquely placed as a vehicle to work across these different forms of ‘divide’, and to provide opportunities for social inclusion, fostering social cohesion, developing intercultural and interfaith understanding, and engaging the disengaged.

8 Provide teachers with informed, sustained and targeted professional learning and foster their professional collaborations.

Stage 2 projects have further developed the notion expressed in Recommendation 6 of the Stage 1 Final Report that professional learning is crucial to successful values education. Stage 2 has clearly demonstrated how explicit values education professional learning – at a local, state and national level – can lead to transformed teacher practice. Professional learning can be the critical factor between success and failure in developing sustainable values-based schooling. The Stage 2 experience also firmly asserts the type of professional learning required: ongoing models such as the use of learning communities, objective critical friends, mentors, and collaborative peer exchange, as well as time for reflective practice.

In a message that is evident in Stage 1 (Recommendation 10) but even more pronounced in Stage 2, the ‘teacher as researcher’ model, with its collaborations between education faculty university educators, can be a ‘good practice’ in values education. These collaborations often involved a mutually beneficial partnership between clusters and universities to explore different approaches and knowledge pathways in implementing values education. The positive impacts of this collaboration on people and projects are evident in many of the Stage 2 cluster reports. School practitioners received the benefit of mentors and critical friends as well as one-on-one professional learning; the university teacher educators were formally connected to a substantial school-based teaching and learning project which could inform the training of new teachers and foster new academic research. The collaboration has also resulted in at least three major academic international publications and a major university-based research project on values education in Australian schools. These publications and the research activity have used a number of the cluster projects as case studies to explore new theoretical and conceptual thinking about the nature and effects of values education in schooling for the twenty-first century.
9 Encourage teachers to take risks in their approaches to values education.

The Stage 2 cluster experiences assert and often demonstrate that successful values education initiatives are positively disturbing and disruptive in nature. They can challenge familiar and traditional notions of the curriculum, the teacher role, the ways school operate, teacher–student relationships and the very nature of schooling. Good practice in values education, and the crucial professional development that it requires, encourages teachers to review their teaching practices at a fundamental and personal level. It can also disrupt established patterns of school operations as the school community becomes more values-centred. Curriculum offerings, resource allocations, parent relations and even timetabling may all be reassessed. All this can be confronting, and requires a variety of supports, the most powerful of which is a collegial community of practice.

10 Gather and monitor data for continuous improvement in values education.

In a move forward from Stage 1, and in concert with the guiding principles of the National Framework, the Stage 2 clusters were encouraged to attend more consciously to monitoring and evaluating the values education work. As the cluster case studies show, a number made significant efforts to develop empirical data based on a variety of measures and tools (climate surveys, test score comparisons, incident reports, staff surveys and the like) that would provide evidence of outcomes for students and for other sectors of the school community. Cluster experiences also suggest that positive outcomes in values education can be achieved through a continuous and supported action research cycle that monitors and evaluates the intended values education approaches among the teaching staff. The ‘plan, do, study, act’ cycle guides and fosters professional change, encourages reflection and supports the process of monitoring values education outcomes.

Conclusion

The ten good practices in values education identified here are not the total story of what the 25 Stage 2 project clusters have achieved. There have been many other good practices that different school communities have found useful and productive for their own contexts. This Final Report cannot possibly capture all the triumphs and magic moments that the 143 schools have encountered in their 20 months of intense project activity. Nor can it recount all the uncertainties, fluctuations, failings and frustrations that were also part of the baggage in many of these values education ‘journeys’. But despite the limitations, this Final Report gratefully acknowledges all the efforts of the thousands of teachers, principals, students and parents as well as the numerous academics and education system officers who have contributed to this work and the findings of the Stage 2 project.

On behalf of the wider Australian education community we thank them for their rich contributions to our growing understanding of what values education is and how we can best undertake values education in Australian schools for the benefit of our students and our communities. The Stage 2 Final Report voices the clusters’ testimony to the potential and actual transformative capacity of values education, its capacity to transform students, teachers and whole schools. It provides all Australian school communities with more evidence of the sorts of good practice that can bring values education to the centre of the whole purpose of schooling, to the heart of what we do in education.
Section 1: About the Values Education Good Practice Schools Project – Stage 2

The origins of the project

The Values Education Good Practice Schools Project – Stage 2 forms part of a major national education initiative funded by the Australian Government. The foundations of the project are located in the *Adelaide Declaration on National Goals for Schooling in the Twenty-First Century*, agreed to by all Australian education ministers in 1999 (MCEETYA).

The *National Goals* refers directly to the role of schooling in contributing to students’ moral and ethical development (MCEETYA 1999). The Preamble argues that:

- Australia’s future depends upon each citizen having the necessary knowledge, understanding, skills and values for a productive and rewarding life in an educated, just and open society. High quality schooling is central to achieving this vision.

- Schooling provides a foundation for young Australians’ intellectual, physical, social, moral, spiritual and aesthetic development. By providing a supportive and nurturing environment, schooling contributes to the development of students’ sense of self-worth, enthusiasm for learning and optimism for the future.

More specifically, Goals 1.2 and 1.3 emphasise the role of values learning in students’ holistic development, so that by the time they leave school they should:

- have qualities of self-confidence, optimism, high self-esteem, and a commitment to personal excellence as a basis for their potential life roles as family, community and workforce members.

- have the capacity to exercise judgement and responsibility in matters of morality, ethics and social justice, and the capacity to make sense of their world, to think about how things got to be the way they are, to make rational and informed decisions about their own lives, and to accept responsibility for their own actions.

The nation’s schools and educational jurisdictions set out to develop their own ways of meeting these goals. Values education became a particular focus in some state and territory jurisdictions. Western Australia, for example, embarked on a major initiative to foster values teaching and learning at all levels of schooling and mandated the teaching of a set of core values. Some other states, such as New South Wales, moved in a similar direction. On the other hand, for many faith-based and independent schools values education was seen as central to their school purpose and cultures. While the *National Goals* might have voiced an agreed aim for schooling to foster students’ moral and ethical development, in practice both government and non-government Australian schooling displayed a marked variety of approaches. Some were clear, planned and explicit; others were more passive, implicit and muted.

In 2002 the former Australian Government began to address the question of how values education could better contribute to the achievement of the goals. In July, with unanimous support from the state and territory ministers at the Ministerial Council on Education, Employment, Training and Youth Affairs (MCEETYA), the then federal Minister for Education, Science and Training commissioned a values education study to examine how Australian schools were going about values education.

The decision to commission a values education study acknowledged several core principles about the nature of schooling and its role in values education.
education. It emphasised firstly that schooling was about the whole child and that ‘education was as much about building character as it was about equipping students with specific academic skills and knowledge’. Secondly it noted the connection of values education and student wellbeing by pointing out ‘that a values-based education could strengthen students’ self-esteem’. And finally, it acknowledged the partnership between schools and parents in values education and ‘recognised that parents expected schools to help students understand and develop personal and social responsibilities’ (Curriculum Corporation 2003, p 10).

THE VALUES EDUCATION STUDY (2002–03)

Curriculum Corporation was commissioned to conduct the Values Education Study. The task was to work with a selected group of schools, which were funded to develop and demonstrate current practice projects in values education. These projects were to provide an informed basis for promoting improved values education to other schools. The Values Education Study aimed to recommend a set of principles and a framework for strengthening values education in all Australian schools.

The Values Education Study took the form of a qualitative investigation comprising three interrelated components:
• a literature review of current national and international values education research
• action research with a selected group of 69 schools from across Australia, funded with grants to develop, implement and document locally relevant values education practices
• research to determine parent, student and teacher views on the values the community expected Australian schools to foster.

The Values Education Study was completed in August 2003. Its report and recommendations led to the development of a Draft Framework for Values Education in Australian Schools. After extensive consultation within the Australian education community, the draft was further refined and the final document taken to MCEETYA in 2005.

The National Framework for Values Education in Australian Schools (the National Framework) was endorsed by MCEETYA, and published and distributed to all Australian schools in June 2005. The document was designed to promote improved values education in Australian schools by:
• articulating a vision
• providing an agreed set of Values for Australian Schooling to foster
• describing some guiding principles and key elements to inform school practice.

In essence the central purpose of the National Framework was to help schools provide values education in a planned and systematic way, and as a core part of schooling. The National Framework laid the foundation and defined the direction for the subsequent Australian Government values education initiative of 2004–08. The National Framework is available at the values education website, www.valueseducation.edu.au.

THE VALUES EDUCATION INITIATIVE (2004–08)

In the May 2004 budget, the Australian Government committed $29.7 million to a range of values education initiatives. These included the opportunity for all Australian schools to conduct values and drug education forums; projects for selected clusters of schools to implement good practice approaches; an ongoing values education website; an annual National Values Education Forum; national activities with parents, principals, teachers and teacher educators; and the development and distribution of new values education curriculum and professional learning resources for every school in Australia.

Overview of the Values Education Good Practice Schools Project

The Values Education Good Practice Schools Project (VEG PSP) was designed to operate in two stages. In each stage, selected clusters of school communities were to design and implement their own local projects and explore ways of improving approaches to values education using the National Framework as a guide. Experience from the clusters' activities was then to be used to identify and demonstrate, from the ground up,
evidence of good practice in values education which could be disseminated to all Australian schools. In this way both stages of the Values Education Good Practice Schools Project would support the broader implementation of the National Framework.

THE VALUES EDUCATION GOOD PRACTICE SCHOOLS PROJECT – STAGE 1

In 2005 Curriculum Corporation was engaged to manage Stage 1 of the project. All Australian schools were invited to establish clusters and apply for grants to design and implement values education projects that would meet their local needs and apply the National Framework. Stage 1 commenced in May 2005: 26 selected clusters, involving 166 schools from across the breadth of Australian school contexts, were funded to pursue projects that employed many different approaches to values education.

The Stage 1 clusters concluded their projects in April 2006 after approximately ten months of activity. They submitted project reports and other documentation to Curriculum Corporation, which then proceeded to analyse the data to formulate a set of findings about good practice in values education.

The Final Report for Stage 1, Implementing the National Framework for Values Education in Australian Schools: Report of the Values Education Good Practice Schools Project – Stage 1, argued that the Stage 1 cluster projects ‘presented evidence of the impacts on many aspects of the school life, including student learning, student behaviours, teacher professional practice, relationships in school and school culture change’ (Curriculum Corporation 2006, p 1).

After examining the projects and exploring them through four thematic organisers that broadly reflected different categories of cluster approaches to values education, the Final Report identified a set of inferences about good practice (Curriculum Corporation 2006, pp 12–19); it then recommended ten principles of good practice to inform implementation of values education in all schools (Curriculum Corporation 2006, pp 215–16).

One of the good practice principles identified from the Stage 1 cluster experiences reaffirmed the notion that values need to be explicitly articulated and explicitly taught in schools. This was seen to mean that values occupy an integrated territory within all mainstream curriculum, that values are modelled in the school and that students are given authentic opportunities to practise the values.

The Stage 1 clusters also strongly voiced the view that, as a first step for developing values-centred schools, school communities needed to reach agreement on the values the school would foster and to develop a common language in which to articulate, promote and reflect on those values.

As a precondition to the previous two principles, the Stage 1 clusters demonstrated that the whole school approach, as advanced in the National Framework, was necessary to ensure consistency in values education, a deeper commitment across the school community and the sustainability of values-centred schooling. This was echoed in another principle which stressed that there is greater success in values education when it is seen as integral to all aspects of school life and not just as an ‘additional’ demand amid other priorities and work. In this context, school leadership was seen as critical to the whole school integrated approach and to the success of any significant school change informed by values education. These conclusions formed another three of the ten principles of good practice.

A further principle focused on the understanding that values education is as much about how students are taught as it is about what they are taught: values espoused need to be reflected in the values modelled to promote congruence and consistency for student learning. This principle highlights the importance of pedagogy and quality teaching in values-based schools. It also alludes to another important finding, that the development of positive relationships in classrooms and schools is a central feature of effective values-based schools.
Stage 2 of the Values Education Good Practice Schools Project was conceived of largely as an extension of Stage 1 to fund more Australian schools to give them the opportunity to explore ways of improving their approaches to values education and identifying effective ways of putting the *National Framework* into practice.

The Stage 2 work again underlines the essential ‘ground-up’ nature of the Values Education Good Practice Schools Project. The project aimed to develop good practice values education by providing schools from different educational, geographic, demographic and socioeconomic settings the opportunity to implement focused values education projects; then to describe the practice, learn from it, recommend it and disseminate it to other schools. There was no intent to research any particular ‘top-down’ approach or theory of values education. There was no centrally designed and controlled research model applied to the schools. The only central unifying framework for the schools’ work was the non-prescriptive guideline provided by the *National Framework*. Stage 2 was to provide more schools, more school contexts and more school experiences from which good practice could be identified and recommended to the Australian schooling community.

The criteria for selecting school clusters were modified to include three areas of specific interest. Firstly, Stage 2 was to include projects that had a particular focus on exploring values education in intercultural and global contexts. Secondly, some Stage 2 projects would focus on integrating values education in teaching programs in and across key learning areas. And finally, Stage 2 was to include cluster projects that aimed to use explicit values education classroom practices that developed student social skills and fostered student resilience.

Stage 1 clusters and schools were again eligible for Stage 2 funding. They were encouraged to apply so that the project might develop insights into how values education could be sustained, developed and evaluated over longer time frames.

There were several other notable new elements to the Stage 2 project. Unlike Stage 1, Stage 2 clusters would have the opportunity to work across two school years, with a total activity time of 20 months, approximately double the project time available to Stage 1. Stage 2 clusters also were to have the benefit of Stage 1 learning available to them through the Stage 1 Final Report and through the assignment of mentors from Stage 1 clusters. Stage 2 clusters would also be building on a growing awareness and an extensive national conversation about values education that had been gaining momentum since 2002.

### The Stage 2 project setup

Curriculum Corporation was commissioned to manage Stage 2 of the Values Education Good Practice Schools Project. As with Stage 1, the Australian Government requested that Curriculum Corporation establish a national project advisory committee to support and guide the project. The resultant Values Education Project Advisory Committee (VEPAC) consisted of representatives from key stakeholder groups in the education community. The VEPAC assisted in the selection of the cluster projects, met three times throughout the project, and provided advice in response to project progress reports and on the Final Report structure and draft.

Stage 2 commenced when all Australian schools were invited by the Australian Government to apply for funding to design and undertake values education projects that would use the *National Framework* to meet the needs of local school communities. Schools were invited to form clusters of four to ten schools, and to use the funding criteria to design projects and apply in a competitive selection process for funding grants, which ranged from $45,000 to $100,000.

Applications and proposals for Stage 2 funding were received from 181 clusters made up of 342 schools from across Australia. The final cluster projects were selected through a three-stage, criteria-based selection process. In the last stage, a National Selection Committee, chaired by Curriculum Corporation, selected and
recommended to the Australian Government a list of projects to be approved by the minister. In August 2006 the Australian Government announced the 25 successful clusters of Stage 2. These clusters involved 143 schools, reflecting a broad cross-section of Australian school contexts. After finalising their project plans and project contracts, the Stage 2 clusters commenced their work in October 2006.

Stage 2 operated between October 2006 and April 2008. As the project manager, Curriculum Corporation provided a range of services to facilitate and support the work.

The Stage 2 project methodology
Curriculum Corporation’s objective was to develop evidence-based accounts of good practice experienced by the Stage 2 clusters. Although the 25 cluster projects were locally determined and idiosyncratic to local needs, the clusters were provided with a project process framework and a range of research tools to use in developing their work and reporting on it. Figure 1 captures the interplay of stakeholders, activities and elements that have been involved in the multifaceted collaboration of Stage 2 of the VEGPSP. These various roles are discussed in more detail in the narrative that follows.
As the first step, the clusters were assisted to refine and define their project plans, including objectives, processes and intended outcomes. All clusters were requested to report on the project progress in terms of purposes, processes and products (outcomes) in four phases. These reports would incrementally build the cluster story and, as a whole, come to constitute each cluster’s case study. The case studies have provided the major source of data for this Final Report and for the synthesis of good practice, found in Section 2 of this report.

All clusters were also required to produce four pieces of case writing from each cluster school over the duration of the project. Case writing is a technique pioneered by the Carnegie Corporation by which teachers describe their practice. Case-writing reports present examples of individual teachers’ values education experiences and professional learning as they meet and respond to challenges along the way. They are not simply stories. Nor are they purely subjective. They are accounts of practices addressing compelling classroom and school issues, such as student bullying in the schoolyard or achieving improved attentiveness in the classroom. The cases were to be shared, analysed and developed over time with colleagues and critical friends, thus making them more objective accounts of good practice. This case writing has informed this Final Report with in-depth personal accounts of professional practice relating to values education. Importantly, teachers were able to reflect over time on the progress made in their values education work and then share those reflections with others.

Finally, the clusters were also encouraged and required to provide any quantitative evidence to support claims or assertions they wished to make about the efficacy of their values education work. While the overall purpose of the project, and its short duration, did not allow for gathering quantitative data to track long-term project impacts, some clusters believed that their values education approaches did create quantifiable changes. Some claimed, for example, improved student engagement; and they used school attendance rates to support the claim. Such assertions were to be accompanied by relevant attendance data.

These and other elements of the project methodology were worked through with the cluster leaders and other project personnel at a series of three in-residence national briefing sessions (see below) during the project.

Collaborations: Stage 2 as a learning exchange

From the outset Stage 2 was conceived of as a learning exchange between the cluster projects and a number of stakeholder partners. As the overall project manager, Curriculum Corporation provided a range of day-to-day support services to the cluster projects and facilitated key collaborations.

Throughout the project Curriculum Corporation provided clusters with a telephone help desk, regular email communication, a number of onsite cluster visits, a series of round table intercluster teleconferences, and access to reading materials, project news and updates at the values education website, www.valueseducation.edu.au. The Stage 2 project manager also reviewed the four instalments of the clusters’ case studies and provided feedback and advice to clusters as required.

Other key collaborations and learning exchanges that supported the Stage 2 project involved universities, state and territory education systems officers, mentors from the Stage 1 project and influences from specialist educators. These are briefly described below.

THE UNIVERSITY ASSOCIATES NETWORK

As with Stage 1 of the project, an innovative network of university-based education advisers, designated as Curriculum Corporation’s University Associates Network (UAN), supported Stage 2. Led and coordinated by the University of Newcastle and the Australian Catholic University, the UAN came to include selected staff from the faculties of education in 14 universities. Each of the Stage 2 clusters was offered the assistance of a UAN ‘critical friend’ drawn from the network.

The role of these critical friends varied according to the needs and circumstances of the particular
clusters. The role often included assistance with the research aspects of the project, professional learning support, general advice about values education and quality teaching, support for project implementation and reviewing drafts of the cluster case study. Many of the UAN critical friends became very deeply and personally involved with the projects and played significant roles in making projects successful. Some UAN personnel were engaged by the cluster project to provide additional services. Each of the UAN teacher educators also produced for Curriculum Corporation independent accounts of good values education practice that they witnessed during their association with clusters. These reports have informed the development of this Final Report.

The full list of UAN contributors is included as Appendix 2.

**BRIEFING SESSIONS**

Three one-and-a-half day residential project briefing sessions were conducted during Stage 2. These sessions brought together cluster coordinators, Curriculum Corporation project staff, UAN advisers, state and territory values education officers and representatives from the federal education department to discuss aspects of project delivery, share accounts of progress and explore values education issues arising from the work.

The briefings sessions – held in October 2006 (Melbourne, Vic), June 2007 (Kingscliff, NSW) and February 2008 (Melbourne, Vic) – featured keynote addresses, cluster reports and accounts, UAN and cluster workshops, sessions on project operations, and open exchanges on the nature of values education. On a practical level, briefing sessions served to inform clusters of project methods and requirements; on a deeper conceptual level they provided an essential professional learning experience for all the stakeholders.

At the initial briefing session, cluster coordinators were provided with a support document, *Tool Kit for Values Education Good Practice Schools Project – Stage 2*. The kit was designed to support schools to:

- plan their project and make sure that it focused on implementing some aspect of the *National Framework*
- undertake the action research component of their project.

The kit drew on insights gained from Stage 1 of the VEGPSP.

**THE VALUES EDUCATION NETWORKS OF ENGAGEMENT**

Stage 2 of the VEGPSP introduced the Values Education Networks of Engagement (VENEs) to support and promote the work of the local cluster projects and facilitate an exchange of information between key stakeholders at the educational jurisdictional level. The networks were established in partnership with state and territory values education officers.

The VENEs initiative was an attempt to address a number of matters arising out of lessons learnt from Stage 1. In particular, the VENEs sought to:

- develop a more integrated approach to the values education initiative at the jurisdictional level
- provide advice to local Stage 2 clusters on relevant state and territory policies and statements in relation to values education
- create a local learning environment that supported sustainability of the Stage 2 project clusters and schools
- support the dissemination of improved values education practice at a jurisdictional level.

The local VENEs meetings brought together a diverse range of stakeholders. These included representatives of the local Stage 2 cluster projects, relevant state and territory values education officers, local Catholic and independent school representatives, experienced mentors from Stage 1 cluster projects, local representatives from the peak parent bodies, relevant UAN personnel, and a Curriculum Corporation project manager.

Reports of the activities and deliberations of the VENEs have supported the development of this Final Report.
MENTORS FOR STAGE 2 CLUSTER PROJECTS

In a bid to use the learning and expertise developed in Stage 1, a formal mentoring program was developed and offered to all Stage 2 cluster projects. This was another new element of strategic support for the Stage 2 clusters. Under this arrangement, people with significant successful experience from Stage 1 were identified and commissioned to work as mentors with one or more of the Stage 2 clusters to assist with their project implementation.

Fifteen of the twenty-five Stage 2 clusters took up the offer of mentor support. Five mentors, all experienced project leaders from Stage 1, provided the services of adviser, critical friend and professional learning facilitator.

Mentors were required to contact clusters on a regular basis to develop supportive working relationships. In the course of their work, mentors met regularly in teleconference with Curriculum Corporation to monitor progress and share understandings about how the program could advance the work of the Stage 2 clusters.

At the conclusion of the project, mentors provided Curriculum Corporation with brief reports; these have contributed to this Final Report.

OTHER INFLUENCES INFORMING STAGE 2

As might be expected and hoped for, a major source of informal support for Stage 2 came from the dissemination of learning from Stage 1 of the project. Unlike Stage 1 participants, Stage 2 projects had available to them a bank of learning experiences on which to build their work. This resource included not only the lessons from Stage 1 but also a wealth of contributions from the expanding conversations and professional learning activities that had been taking place since 2004.

During Stage 1 considerable teacher development had taken place. The VENEs and the mentor program helped to tap into some of this learning. The values education website was another valuable resource. The website, www.valueseducation.edu.au, published increasingly rich and detailed accounts of values education events, new resources and publications about the meaning and practice of values education. In particular, web publication of the Final Report from Stage 1 of the Values Education Good Practice Schools Project in 2006 and papers from the three annual National Values Education Forums (2005–07) provided insights for use by the Stage 2 cluster projects.

The two-day National Values Education Forums – held in Canberra, May 2005 and again in May 2006, and in Melbourne in May 2007 – provided more professional learning impetus. Major keynote addresses from a range of national and international educators, as well as reports and workshops on the experiences of good practice schools, began to reshape thinking and attitudes to the way values education might work in schools and to what effect.

One of the significant mind shifts to influence the work of Stage 2 projects is the connection between values education and quality teaching. Quality teaching is nominated in the National Framework as one of the key elements in effective values education, but the nature of how and why it was of influence had never been clearly articulated. In his keynote address to the 2005 National Values Education Forum, Professor Terence Lovat argued a compelling case about the powerful synergy operating between quality teaching and values education. At the next National Forum in May 2006, just as the Stage 1 clusters had completed their work, he further elaborated on what had become for him a much stronger connection between values education and the characterising features of quality teaching.

Lovat’s close analysis of the Final Report of Stage 1 of the project further confirmed his proposition that there was a demonstrable role being played by values education in transforming the role of teaching and the impact of the school. He realised there was an opportunity here for further examination what ‘some of [the good practice] schools were doing to see if we could make sense of the notion of “quality teaching” from it’ (Lovat & Toomey 2007, p xvii).
To more rigorously test this idea, Lovat approached the Australian Government to undertake this research under the Values Education Partnership Project, conducted by the Australian Council of Deans of Education. Together with Adjunct Professor Ron Toomey, Professor Lovat worked with cluster leaders from four of the Stage 1 clusters, several international values education leaders and a research reviewer to develop and publish *Values Education and Quality Teaching: The Double Helix Effect* in April 2007.

By the time Terry Lovat addressed the Stage 2 cluster coordinators at their first briefing session in October 2007, the national discussion about values education had come to include this powerful and pervasive talk about the interplay of values education and quality teaching.

The influence of the interpretative framework offered by Lovat and Toomey is discernable in many of the Stage 2 cluster accounts. The quality teaching markers of learning such as intellectual depth, communicative competence, capacity for reflection, self-management and self-knowledge are echoed and reflected in a number of cluster case studies and in the UAN reports. These often emphasise elements such as: changes in teacher professional practice in classrooms and, in particular, in the way teachers relate to and communicate with their students; observations of students as better self-managers; students with greater capacities for reflection; and more positive relationships between students and between students and teachers.

The Stage 2 clusters were also able to draw on the other contributions of a growing number of values education researchers, academics and practitioners. These voices became available through the National Values Education Forums as well as through professional development workshops and publications. The national forums in 2006 and 2007, for example, spotlighted the thinking and experiences of speakers such as Dr Andy Furco, University of Minnesota, USA, (Furco 2007) and Dr Neil Hawkes, Director of the Association of Living Values Education International, UK, (Hawkes 2006 & 2007). Dr Hawkes is the former principal of West Kidlington Primary School, UK, and his inspirational account of values-based schooling has been particularly influential through numerous presentations to hundreds of teachers in forums and workshops across Australia in the last three years. Locally, Professor Judith Chapman and Emeritus Professor David Aspin drew on the Stage 1 project in their international publication *Values Education and Lifelong Learning* (2007).

While it is difficult to measure the precise impact of such influences and the degree to which they informed Stage 2 cluster projects, the echoes of the voices and the reflections of the thinking evidenced in the Stage 2 documentation suggest that these contributions have played a formative role in the learning exchange about values education that has taken place in a number of clusters in the Stage 2 project.

The Stage 2 cluster projects

Stage 2 of the VEGPSP funded selected clusters of school communities across all Australian states and territories to explore ways of improving their approaches to values education and identify effective ways of implementing the National Framework in their schools. The clusters intended to pursue an array of different approaches to implementing the National Framework. Some of these were similar to some Stage 1 approaches, some were variations and a number had entirely new focuses. All reflected the particular local needs of their school communities. As with Stage 1 clusters, the Stage 2 projects showed some clusters were operating at an initiating stage of values education implementation, some at a developing stage and others at a consolidation stage.

All states and territories were represented within the Stage 2 project cohort. The cohort included a good cross-section of government, independent and faith-based schools of different beliefs. Metropolitan, regional and remote schools were represented. As alluded to earlier, a number of the clusters from Stage 1 were funded in Stage 2 to undertake different forms of values education work with new school partners.
In terms of the project focus and objectives, as the descriptions of cluster projects (see Section 3) will illustrate, the Stage 2 projects set out with ambitious and innovative approaches. One operated across three different jurisdictions with the participating schools separated by thousands of kilometres and by the diversity of the student populations. This project made innovative use of information and communication technologies to connect the separate school mini-projects as they explored the meaning of explicit values education in their local environmental education context. Another cluster of four primary schools and one 6–12 secondary school aimed first to develop teachers’ skills through professional development in values education and then to have each school undertake localised interpretations of values education implementation. Yet another cluster sought to develop a ‘kids teaching kids’ approach to adopting the values in the National Framework as part of a community capacity-building strategy. In another, service learning was strengthened through collaboratively developed integrated teaching and learning experiences embedded across the key learning areas of English, studies of society and environment, and religious education. Another proposed to develop emotional literacy through restorative justice practices to help students to value commitment, empathy and responsibility through the stages of development starting with middle childhood to late adolescence.

They demonstrate that there are many different of ways of applying the National Framework’s guiding principles and key elements in order to implement values education in a planned and systematic way.

This Final Report does not constitute a culminating report on the efficacy of the entire Values Education Good Practice Schools Project. Rather, in keeping with the project brief, it is a report on the activities and the outcomes of the Stage 2 cluster projects. Although more contained than a whole of project report, it will, together with the Stage 1 Final Report, provide some rich and compelling insights into what schools can and ought to do to implement good practice education.

Conclusion

As with the 26 cluster projects of Stage 1 of the Values Education Good Practice Project, the 25 cluster projects of Stage 2 are unique. The variety of their approaches reflects the advice in the National Framework that ‘Individual schools will develop their own approaches to values education in partnership with their local school communities, including students, parents, caregivers, families and teachers’ (DEST 2005, p 4). The Stage 2 projects are testimony to the ways schools can take advantage of the National Framework’s open configuration and robust structure to build a custom-made values-centred school environment that meets local needs.
Section 2: Good practice values education – what the Stage 2 cluster projects are telling us

Introduction
At the 2006 National Values Education Forum in Melbourne, Professor Terry Lovat (Pro Vice Chancellor University of Newcastle) observed that very useful advances had been made to bring values education in from the cold periphery of Australian schooling to be:

grasped by teachers, schools and systems as being central and pivotal to their endeavours, rather than being on their margins ... values education has the potential to go to the very heart of what it is that teachers, schools and educational systems are about. (Lovat 2006)

A large part of the change had flowed, he claimed, from the Values Education Good Practice Schools Project. Professor Lovat then listed some indicators of the change, in particular the shift in language around quality teaching, pedagogy, modelling, whole school approaches, student engagement, improved relationships and the practice or living out of the values.

Two years later, at the 2008 National Values Education Forum, an audience of over 300 educators heard how current research and international experience was confirming that the values education initiative for Australian schooling had ‘got it very right’. The forum highlighted the importance of quality practice, support for teacher professional development, the focus on student benefit, ‘the hooks’ for values education, connection to global agendas and the need to ‘give it time’. The Values Education Good Practice Schools Project – Stage 2 clusters have done much to take the advance still further. They have provided Australian schools with a greater knowledge and understanding of the key quality practices that bring values education to the centre of what schooling and teaching is all about.

This section of the report analyses the work of the 25 clusters in Stage 2 and distils the key indicators of ‘good practice’ from 20 months of intense values education activity in 143 project schools from across Australia. Section 3 of the report provides more detailed accounts of the activities of individual clusters. Readers are encouraged to refer to those accounts for specific instances to illuminate the generalisations presented in the analysis.

A key feature of the Stage 2 cluster projects is that they were locally initiated, grounded in school experiences and based on action research cycles. In the Sustainable Values Townsville Cluster, for example, teachers asked: how do we educate the whole child with the values dispositions and skills to allow them to participate as effective local, national and global citizens? Some activities and approaches formulated to address this question included teacher professional learning activities, engaging with new international curriculum materials and revisiting the school’s vision and mission statement. Many of the clusters built on education programs already in place in their schools to address perceived school issues. A number of clusters focused directly on ‘global connections’, such as exploring environmental sustainability or developing students’ commitment to intercultural and interfaith understanding.

This action research methodology – based on a ‘plan, do, study, act’ cycle – enabled schools and clusters to develop their projects flexibly and respond to needs as they arose. Teachers acted as researchers as they planned and applied values education strategies in their classrooms and across their schools. The project synopses presented in Section 3 of this report demonstrate the range and variety of values education approaches undertaken by the schools in this project.
Good practice in values education

The following description of good practice in values education is distilled from the comprehensive reports presented by teachers, cluster coordinators, UAN members, mentors and critical friends. It is informed by the teleconferences, briefing sessions and Curriculum Corporation staff site visits that took place as part of Stage 2. A number of recurring themes emerge from this analysis of the project materials. These themes are neither exhaustive nor uniformly present across the 25 cluster experiences. Nonetheless, they represent discernable patterns derived from the empirical data – quantitative, qualitative and narrative – presented by the cluster schools. Using what the schools report about ‘what works’ and the criteria established by the National Framework, ten good practices in values education can be generated from these themes. These good practices can be commended to other Australian schools.

It is worth noting that whereas the Stage 1 report drew ‘inferences’ about evidence of what constitutes good practice in values education, the findings from the Stage 2 clusters corroborate and validate many of the initial findings from Stage 1. In some instances the Stage 2 work extends and deepens the findings of Stage 1. Rather than implying what constitutes good practice in values education, the Stage 2 work confirms that there are clearly identifiable good practices that have positive outcomes for a range of school contexts.

In summary, the ten good practices in values education distilled from Stage 2 of the Values Education Good Practice Schools Project are:

1. Establish and consistently use a common and shared values language across the school.
2. Use pedagogies that are values-focused and student-centred within all curriculum.
3. Develop values education as an integrated curriculum concept rather than as a program, an event or an addition to curriculum.
4. Explicitly teach values so students know what the values mean and how the values are lived.
5. Implicitly model values and explicitly foster the modelling of the values.
6. Develop relevant and engaging values approaches connected to local and global contexts and which offer real opportunity for student agency.
7. Use values education to consciously foster intercultural understanding, social cohesion and social inclusion.
8. Provide teachers with informed, sustained and targeted professional learning and foster their professional collaborations.
9. Encourage teachers to take risks in their approaches to values education.
10. Gather and monitor data for continuous improvement in values education.

The evidence for each of these good practices in values education emerges in the discussion that follows the themes. While we assign no particular priority to these practices, we have attempted to sequence them in a way that might be helpful for practitioners in schools.

**LANGUAGE IN VALUES EDUCATION**

1. Establish and consistently use a common and shared values language across the school.

Establishing, articulating and disseminating a common and shared values language is essential to good practice in values education. In keeping with the Stage 1 findings (Recommendation 1), reaching agreement within the whole school community about the values that will guide the school’s work is the first critical step a school must take if it seeks to become values-centred. In a values-based school the shared values language comes to inform everything that school does and says. It underpins pedagogy, leadership, planning, policy positions, curriculum practices and behavioural expectations. If there is no common values language, if the values within the school are neither owned nor shared by the school community, there can be no basis for implementing effective, planned and systematic values education.

Many clusters reported the importance of establishing a common and shared values education language as a foundation for successfully implementing values education. Just as explicitly teaching and modelling values builds congruence and encourages teacher development, so the language of values needs to be agreed on and enacted across the whole
school. While not all clusters nor schools within clusters achieved this objective, those that did gave compelling accounts of the impacts of a common values language.

In the Lanyon Cluster of Schools (ACT) project, collaborative teaching teams planned, developed and implemented units of learning based on shared values. Lanyon also worked to engage whole school communities through student-designed forums. Having a common language to discuss the values was critical. Dr Thomas Nielsen, the UAN adviser for the cluster, expressed the phenomenon in these terms:

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 competence. 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 process of thinking itself (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 out of their own accord ... Also, students were in general reported to have begun reminding each other about doing things with ‘care’, ‘respect’, ‘tolerance’ – such words becoming part of the daily vocabulary.

As such, reinforcing a metalanguage that is connected to values can be seen as closely related to fostering emotional literacy and, in turn, empathy and prosocial 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 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, we empower students by making them ‘values literate’ – a special kind of student autonomy, I would argue, which makes anything else related to values education that much more potent.

Lanyon and other clusters, such as Merrylands–Guildford (NSW) and Griffith Primary and Secondary Schools (NSW), achieved a common values language through a range of school community activities. These included school and community forums, curriculum audits, baseline data gathering, school policy revisions and teacher professional learning sessions. The open and repeated expression of the language in promotion materials, school signage and school activities reinforced the currency of the values language in the school culture.

In the Merrylands–Guildford and Griffith clusters, student teams were an integral part of this process of developing a common values language. The case studies report on forums, workshops, DVD productions and the like that were all designed and implemented by students, and all of which explicate the values being fostered in the clusters. Parents also shared in this building of a common values language within the cluster schools.

One teacher in the Griffith cluster observed:

Each school within the cluster is at very different stages in their values work, and people in all groups are ‘talking’ values. As a person with 20 years of experience within the cluster, this has never before happened to this extent. What’s more is that these discussions are taking place between schools and with groups outside of the schools. In this way we are starting to see an impact of the shared values language at the broader level.

As Dr Nielsen observed, language and communication is central to who we are as human beings. When school communities can articulate behaviours and relationships in a shared values-based language, more harmonious school communities result. The process of establishing a common and shared language – through which students, teachers and parents mediate the common set of values across cultures and experiences – is just as important as the outcome of this process. This principle was exemplified by the experiences at Griffith and Merrylands–Guildford, and at other clusters with school communities of differing ethnic and cultural backgrounds.
PEDAGOGIES

Use pedagogies that are values-focused and student-centred within all curriculum.

Effective values education uses pedagogies that mirror the values being taught. A number of the cluster projects in Stage 2 clearly suggest that the most effective learning experiences in values education are generally values-explicit, student-centred and open-ended rather than values-implicit, teacher-centred and closed. The pedagogies engage students in real-life learning, offer opportunity for real practice, provide safe structures for taking risks, and encourage personal reflection and action.

Many of the cluster projects demonstrate that when values and students are at the centre of learning design, there are observable changes for the student, the teacher and the learning environment. These include calmer classrooms and happier students, students who are empowered, engaged, more responsible, confident and positive about their place in the school and wider community. This is values education at its best and contrasts with traditional didactic, teacher- and content-centred pedagogies, which are largely inappropriate for effective values education. A number of cluster projects would also suggest that values-focused pedagogies are required to support students to live as enabled and resilient individuals in the real world of the twenty-first century: a world beset with climate change, personal and societal insecurities, shifting certainties, rapidly changing forms of social interaction and intensifying intercultural and interglobal realignments.

This theme accounts for how the Stage 2 schools and teachers went about the core business of teaching values. What the cluster case studies show is that most of the schools involved in the Stage 2 project hooked their values education approaches onto an existing educational priority or teaching approach that was either common practice in the school or within the existing expertise of the teachers. For teachers making changes to the way they taught values, familiar strategies were starting points for deeper engagement with values education. Once started, however, the pedagogies used for effective values teaching and learning in many of the clusters evolved into particular pedagogies that shared some strong common characteristics. For want of a better term, we have called these ‘values-focused pedagogies’ of values education.

So what are the ‘hooks’ for values education and what are these ‘values-focused pedagogies’? What are their common characteristics?

For many, if not most, of the 25 cluster projects their values education ‘program’ was invariably attached to a pre-existing curriculum or policy priority. For some, such as the Students for the Biosphere Cluster (Vic), it was their environment education program, or, as in the case of the Edmund Rice Ministries Cluster (SA), their service-learning activities. For clusters where the driver behind the project was a need to resolve a common challenge in the cluster schools (such as improving student engagement, developing more responsible student behaviour or promoting stronger school harmony) the project needed to find the appropriate content hook on which to hang the values teaching and learning. For a number of primary school clusters, explicit teaching and learning about the values themselves was the sufficient hook. For some cluster schools the hooks were a series of public display events.

But the hook in itself was not sufficient. The cluster experiences show that sustained and deep values learning requires particular types of teaching and learning strategies, where the values taught are the values practised in the pedagogies themselves. These pedagogies, which are described in the cluster case studies, the UAN reports and the case writing, invariably share the following characteristics. They:

- are student-centred rather than teacher- or content-centred
- explicitly teach knowledge and understanding of the values
- are inclusive, respectful and reflective
- provide open-ended rather than closed learning experiences
- engage students in real-life worlds and lived experiences
- require student action, empowerment and responsibility
- provide avenues for moving beyond understanding to taking action
- involve students in making meaning.
Educators have characterised ‘taking action’ as moving from cognitive understandings of values towards manifesting values in personal and prosocial behaviours. Students live and practise the values rather than simply knowing about them.

In this context, student empowerment was at the core of these pedagogies. Teachers reported that students connected more successfully with their learning when it was authentic and when they felt that it was relevant to their lives. Teachers further reported that a values-focused pedagogy produced other benefits. These included focused classroom activity, calmer classrooms with students going about their work purposefully, and more respectful behaviour between students. Teachers and students also reported improved relationships between the two groups. Other reports included improved student attendance, fewer reportable behaviour incidents and the observation that students appeared happier. These outcomes all testify to good practice at work.

The Darebin Schools Network (Vic) provided an example of how a values-focused pedagogy delivers effective values learning. The Darebin cluster used student action teams as a pedagogy with the requisite principles and inherent values-focus for teaching values. Student action teams were also effectively used by the Manningham Cluster (Vic) in Stage 1 and Stage 2 and were evident in the work at a number of the Stage 2 clusters, including Merrylands–Guildford and the Airds–Bradbury Cluster (NSW). One teacher at Darebin described the decision to use the action teams process as:

the best approach to encourage student-centred learning and generate scaffolded knowledge around values.

The final case study report from the Darebin cluster is very clear about how the cluster saw the scaffolding working for values education. It is not just that the student action teams were researching and taking action about values-laden issues in the school. As well, as the case study pointed out:

Values are inherent in the SAT approach – values such as trusting students, doing respectful things, being socially useful, making an important difference to one’s community, being a responsible leader, engendering inclusion and teamwork. Moreover, enabling students to question and envision the sort of community in which they want to live is not only in itself a values journey, but the deeper, implicit intention to empower students to undertake such a task, in the first place, is pre-eminently a value statement – a commitment to valuing students as important members of our community.

Learning is a mediated process. It may be mediated by classroom teaching strategies, such as collaborative group work, enhanced learning materials, carefully crafted experiences outside the classroom or by combinations of these and more. For students to gain fresh understandings, develop insights and acquire values dispositions, teachers need to approach their subject matter with an explicit values focus in a planned and deliberate way; these deliberations can then lead to pedagogies that are particularly suited to focusing on values.

For example, Seaford 6–12 School in the Sea and Vales Cluster (SA) provided a useful model for how teachers can strengthen their pedagogy by adding a values lens to existing curriculum. Seaford 6–12 used ‘capacity matrices’, a tool developed by staff and used by students. The tool allowed students to self-direct their learning in terms of values, knowledge and skills. The matrices were added to units of work and used as a checklist or journal to be completed and reflected upon during the unit. Students were encouraged to look beyond the content to make meaning in their lives. The approach demonstrated that teachers were thinking about how they were teaching their subject area. The technique is student-centred, fosters reflective student behaviour and provides for student ownership of their learning.

The Stage 2 clusters employed an array of hooks or scaffolds on which to build values education and used a number of values-focused pedagogies for the teaching of values. A discussion of some of these approaches follows.
Philosophy in the classroom

Philosophy in the classroom is a methodology for exploring ideas that involves questioning, investigating concepts and values, and posing ethical dilemmas. Philosophical inquiry requires students to speak their thoughts, articulate opinions, listen effectively to their peers and teachers and respond to stimulus material as a way of viewing issues or ideas from different perspectives. The pedagogy is suitable even for very young children to explore difficult issues in any area of learning but is particularly useful for values education. The approach was used extensively as the key teaching pedagogy for embedding values into an integrated primary school curriculum in the Ferny Grove and the Oxenford clusters in Queensland.

The methodology uses stimulus visual or text-based material to generate open discussion. The stimulus material raises questions about the 'big ideas' in students' lives, in the local community or in global contexts. Philosophy in the classroom requires students to scrutinise questions that are difficult to resolve or answer, and focus on listening, thinking, challenging and changing viewpoints within a guided and safe environment.

The pedagogy of philosophy in the classroom is built around a 'community of inquiry'. Groups of students use dialogue to search out the problematic borders of a puzzling concept. The community of inquiry enables critical thinking that is caring and respectful of individual student opinions. Each member of the group is supported and allowed to be an integral part of the inquiry. Creativity and critical thinking is encouraged through the process of reasoned argument. Philosophical inquiry presumes differences in opinion, different values that may be incompatible and in conflict. The structured discussion and agreed values that govern the engagement provide safety and support for students as well as an expectation that correction and revision are part of the debating process. It promotes critical thinking and encourages an obligation to respect one's fellow inquirers. It attempts to produce better thinkers and more caring members of society, who accept differences and, at the same time, submit conflicts to reasonable scrutiny. All participants are expected to respect one another as thoughtful members of the group who communally seek to better understand the issue at hand.

Values dilemmas are intrinsic to philosophy in the classroom pedagogy. By examining scenarios within a philosophy in the classroom inquiry pedagogy, students can analyse values conflicts and disagreements and go beyond their known values sets to explore other values systems, beliefs and understandings.

Some Oxenford schools used philosophy in the classroom pedagogy to explore the Values for Australian Schooling before students embarked on school-based, hands-on action projects to move from 'values understanding' to 'values lived in action'. The UAN adviser reported that the pedagogy was also used to develop peer support and more positive interactions between students and the wider community. At Ferny Grove where, as at Oxenford, there was also extensive professional development in the pedagogy, the cluster reported how it ‘inherently’ developed stronger relationships between the teachers and students.

Both clusters reported positive impacts with students. They saw this in student engagement with learning, active listening, and evidence of more care and respect in student-to-student interactions. Students themselves enjoyed the respectful attention they received working with philosophy in the classroom. In practice they experienced the mutual benefits of a values-centred classroom environment.

Socratic circles

Socratic circles, as the name suggests, is a teaching methodology with ancient origins in the western education tradition. It shares many features with a philosophy in a classroom approach but is also very different in some aspects. The pedagogy was used intensively in the Melbourne Interfaith Intercultural Cluster (Vic) where a group of faith-based and secular secondary schools developed a project to explore values in the context of different faiths and cultures.
Socratic circles is a systematic process for examining ideas, questions and answers that are highly values-laden. The Socratic circles are made up of two concentric circles, with usually six to eight students grouped in each circle. Members of the inner circle use Socratic dialogue to ask planned questions that relate to a portfolio of stimulus material. An overarching question for a Socratic circle discussion might touch on an open-ended and contentious issue such as ‘What does it mean to be an Australian today?’ Before entering the circle, students review the portfolio of material and critically assess its content, ideas and implicit assumptions. In this instance, the portfolio might be a memoir from a first generation immigrant, an extract from a Tim Winton novel, an image of the crowd at an Australian Cricket Test or an Emily Kngwarreye painting of Central Australia.

The second, outer circle observes the dynamics of the first group’s discussion by using an observational rubric on which they note the behaviours of contributors to the discussion. They take careful note of individual students’ capacity to elaborate, respect other viewpoints and explicate a values position; they also note the depth of the discussion. They then provide the inner circle with a commentary on observed features of the group’s interaction and discussion. One of the primary intentions of the process is to challenge stereotypes and examine potential values conflicts by building skills and dispositions from a values perspective.

The role of the teacher in this type of pedagogy is first to explicitly establish the structured learning environment and the operational values of the process. The teacher thereafter facilitates the interactions to ensure that the process unfolds in a way that encourages the growth of increasingly confident, respectful, well-reasoned and articulate inputs from students. The emphasis of the pedagogy is on building students’ self-confidence, respect for others, and on an understanding of argument, different perspectives and values.

The Melbourne Interfaith cluster used the methodology in humanities key learning areas and the visual arts. One school principal noted that one of the powerful aspects of Socratic circle pedagogy was that it could be used across all key learning areas and could form the basis of a whole school approach to values-centred schooling. The pedagogy was seen as especially suitable as a method for secondary adolescents to clarify and discern their values and the values of others in a respectful and rational way. It is an effective pedagogy for use with students in the middle years who are exploring interfaith and intercultural issues through a values lens. The UAN adviser for the Melbourne Interfaith cluster noted:

One advantage of Socratic circles as a learning strategy is that it provides for systematic dialogue and the objectification of possible conflict... it gives students support and direction when discussing potentially difficult and contentious issues. There is safety in the structure of the Socratic circle.

Surveys of the students in the cluster indicated that they preferred the open, seminar style of the Socratic circle to that of the regular classroom. They also felt that the opportunities they were given to directly experience ‘the cultures of others’ outside the classroom reinforced and deepened their learning and has affected the way they interact and live. Students commented, for example, about a difference in their behaviour with fellow students. Some have initiated social activities outside of the formal school program. Because the dialogue centred on intercultural matters and involved students from different cultures, there has been a meeting of ‘head and heart’ that has led to greater cultural awareness. The Melbourne Interfaith cluster has demonstrated that Socratic circles pedagogy, coupled with experiential engagement through the arts and through opportunities for students to experience different cultures in meaningful ways, can effectively challenge stereotypes, provide rational ways for negotiating values differences and encourage prosocial behaviours.

Student action teams and values action teams
Student action teams (SATs) and values action teams (VATs) form a student-focused pedagogy where groups of students identify and tackle a school or community issue. Typically, students research an issue, make plans and proposals about it, and take action on it. As mentioned
previously, SATs were used in Stage 2 by clusters such as the Darebin Schools Network and in various forms at Merrylands–Guildford, Griffith and Airds–Bradbury clusters.

Such initiatives, as part of the formal or informal school curriculum, are used to 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.

SATs and VATs are based on the following principles:
• Students make serious decisions about issues that are important to them.
• Students have skills, expertise and a knowledge of the needs of their community to take important and valuable action.
• Important action can be undertaken as part of students’ learning in school.
• Community-focused research and action is an appropriate educational approach for schools to adopt.

The clusters that employed this student-centred pedagogy as part of their project had students research the dissonances between the espoused school values (which were usually aligned with those in the National Framework) and the realities of classroom and playground life. Students were also charged with the responsibility of getting the school community to reduce the dissonances.

A tenet of the SAT pedagogy is that the activities to be pursued by each action team are selected by the student team itself, and depend on the issues identified in the school. SAT activities proceed through the following stages:
• Selection and formation of the SAT
• Engagement with the issue
• Deciding on a focus
• Posing research questions
• Planning research
• Conducting research
• Analysing research
• Presenting research results
• Articulating desired change
• Deciding on the main action response
• Planning action

• Involving the community
• Implementing action plans
• Final reporting
• Reflection
• Celebration
• Planning for sustainability.

Although the process closely mirrors well-established inquiry-based learning pedagogy, a particular feature of the SAT method is that it supports and enables students to take action on their values learning. Not only does the method require knowing about the values, but also requires commitment to the values and then enactment of the values. As the coordinator for the Darebin cluster said:

The SAT approach was successful in engaging students in values education, offering authentic, relevant learning experiences and producing significant rather than superficial learning outcomes ... We can see students becoming highly literate, competent values users, capable of reflecting on, analysing, modifying and enacting values in real-life situations ... The SAT approach has, on the one hand, enriched the values education project and produced outcomes not possible using more traditional, teacher-centred approaches, and, on the other hand, has itself been enriched by the explicit focus on values education, values language and concepts.

Stage 1 clusters also reported positively on the capacity of student action teams to engage students in meaningful learning leading to taking action. However, in Stage 2, Manningham took the pedagogy a step further by forming values action teams. Rather than addressing a school or community issue, these teams were formed around ensuring that values were at the core of all the group’s activities.

The power of story and art practice
Story spans culture, place and age. Storytelling is a well-established traditional medium for the teaching and learning of community values and norms. A number of Stage 2 clusters such as Pullenvale Environmental Education Centre (Qld), WestPEERS (NSW) and the Broader Horizons (Tas) focused in various ways on using story to examine and explore values in a safe and supportive environment.
Story connects individuals and groups to particular places within systems of ethical responsibility. For example, a children’s story such as Cinderella contains messages about family relationships, cruelty, jealousy and hope. Within the narrative, readers learn about values through the behaviour and motives of the characters. A number of Stage 2 clusters used story in innovative ways in subject areas other than English and humanities to explore deeply personal values, and local community and global values.

One of these was Storythread, used by the Pullenvale cluster. In this project, the environment was the focus of the teaching and learning activity and narrative was used to engage students personally, emotionally and directly with the ethics of environmental sustainability.

Storythreads are stories about people and landscapes and how each has shaped the other. They are about individual and joint responsibility to the land, and the ethic of care that underpins and shapes our moral obligations to the world and to each other. Storythreads are ‘environmental narratives’ that engage individuals in deep learning that connects them emotionally and intellectually with people and place. They offer students adventure and challenge. They also offer a range of arts-based opportunities that allow students to think about, reflect on and practise applying core values within lifelike contexts. In this way, students are able to simulate values in action as part of a story and at the same time apply them in real situations in their own lives.

As the Pullenvale cluster coordinator explained in the case study report:

Storythread is premised on the idea that story provides opportunities for deep learning ... and deep attentive listening and reflection ... Education in this sense is about individuals participating in ‘story journeys’ that allow them to experience, gather and analyse knowledge in new ways that inform and invigorate their lives.

Storyfest was another narrative-based pedagogy used by WestPEERS. Unlike Storythread, Storyfest does not necessarily have an environmental orientation. It is a gathering of children and teachers for storytelling purposes. In preparation for the Storyfest, children learn some of the effective ways of telling story. This includes use of parables, fables, folktales and modern picture books. Students are encouraged to read a selection of stories before choosing the one they want to deliver to a public audience; they make a story map, then complete a short sequence of writing to help them learn the story. In this way, the children can make the story ‘their own’ and take on its key messages and values. In the Storyfest process the students engage the other students not only in the story but also in values education by telling them the values-laden messages of the story. The approach also fosters the development in students of empathetic understanding of others. In the words of the UAN adviser:

The power of story in values education was used effectively through Storyfest and the potential for narratives to provide an opportunity for empathy and wearing someone else’s shoes ... Students were not only required to tell the story but were also asked to critically analyse the narrative. This required higher order thinking and an understanding of the feelings of others. Children were hence better able to explain things in terms that both they and their teachers understood.

One of the students in reflecting on their storytelling commented:

The moral in my story was justice and fairness and that one good turn deserves another. If we didn’t have justice and fairness in the world people would be sad and angry.

The power of story was also used effectively in the Broader Horizons cluster. Teachers worked with the Milly, Molly series of books by Gill Pittar. The series is written for children between the ages of four and eight and is based on the adventures of two little girls from different ethnic backgrounds. The stories promote the acceptance of diversity and the learning of life skills; they deal with day-to-day issues that students face, and develop understanding about honesty, respect for others, difference, tenacity, exercise, cooperation, respect for nature, bullying, stranger danger, forgiveness, trustworthiness, responsibility, loyalty, loss and grief.
The use of the *Milly, Molly* series infuses issues about cultural harmony into the language lessons of the primary school. Teachers reported that rather than focusing in the main on the language and literacy aspects of the reading exercise, they instead drew out the values underpinning the story and made them a key focus for class discussion.

A number of clusters in the project took this notion of story as a vehicle for values education into other artistic and performance domains. Some used drama, others sculpture, montages, painting, drawing, role-play and music. It is apparent from the cluster reports that art practice is a powerful means of developing confident self-expression in students in values explorations.

Art practice was used in intercultural and interfaith contexts to explore issues of commonality in a safe and collaborative place. An example of this was Unity in Diversity in South Western Sydney (NSW). This cluster brought groups of students together from diverse secondary schools to showcase various dance styles, artworks and music. The creative process became the vehicle by which students explored relationships with one another and began to learn more about one another’s values, cultures and worlds.

In another art practice approach, the Melbourne Interfaith cluster wrote music and a script, then produced and directed a dramatic presentation at a statewide event called A Day of Understanding. Here we see that art practice forms the ‘hook’ for values education, and the values-focused pedagogy encourages student reflection, self-knowing and values enactment through personal expression. Rather than reproducing the work of others in dramatic or visual forms, students took creative ownership and developed their own messages relevant to their own lives, traditions and histories.

**Students mentoring students**

Many clusters conducted values projects that involved students mentoring students in multi-aged groups. These included the Eastern Goldfields Cluster (WA) and WestPEERS. Peer support programs also featured in several Stage 1 clusters.

Similar to student action teams, in that students take responsibility for identifying an issue and then move towards solutions and taking action, students working with or mentoring other students is also built around developing responsibility and taking care of others.

One of the key elements of peer support programs is the reciprocal nature of the relationships. Typically an older student will be paired with a younger student, either from the same school or from another school. Teachers involved in constructing these programs commented on the need for the program to be highly planned and structured with evaluation cycles built into the process to ensure that needs can be responded to quickly. The pedagogy gives students responsibility but recognises the inherent risks of this and accordingly provides for student safety and support.

Older students can help prepare younger students for what lies ahead, build future student leadership and empower students to create a supportive school environment in which everyone has a role and is accepted and valued. Students mentoring students provides both the older and younger students with strategies to deal with challenges in positive and effective ways. The values dispositions developed as a result of these programs include a stronger sense of self, connectedness, resilience and a heightened sense of possibility or hope for the future.

Eastern Goldfields used the basic organisational structures of a peer support program but modified the content and approaches to meet the values education focus of the project. Students revealed some interesting insights. One Year 11 student leader reported:

A boy in my group and his friends used to fight a lot at the start. One session they were fighting when another boy said, ‘Stop it! Haven’t you been listening to any of this.’ They stopped.
One of the other aspects of students mentoring students is the development of relationships outside the school. When students relate to one another socially and with a specific purpose, respect for one another grows and the potential for students to grow and feel supported is apparent.

There are a number of well-known and documented students-mentoring-students approaches developed over the past 25 years. The sessions are usually run by students who are carefully prepared for the task of leading and teaching. The good practice schools that used these strategies with values as the focus of the mentoring reported the growing maturity of both older and younger students through the process. The schools also commented on the ability of students to self-reflect on their experiences and communicate the benefits of the program on their relationships with others and the sense of empowerment they felt though helping others. As one Year 11 student in Eastern Goldfields reflected:

> It has helped me look at younger age groups in a different way. Spending time with them really opened my eyes. They are full of excitement and energy and are really fun to be around. I respect them a lot more than I used to.

**Service learning**

Service learning is a pedagogy where students learn and develop values dispositions by actively participating in a service experience designed to meet a community need. As a form of education the goal of service learning is to benefit the student as well as the recipient. It has been characterised as reciprocal learning. As such, service learning might take place as an extracurricular activity but have a curriculum focus where the learning supports the service.

Values are at the core of service learning and, similarly, service learning can increase awareness of the core values to which we adhere. Service learning starts with discussion in the classroom and activities students can undertake.

Generally service learning can take two different approaches: a charity approach or a social change approach (Furco 2008). Charity service learning is where individuals provide a direct service to needy others in a short-term capacity. In social change service learning the focus is longer term and looks to producing lasting societal changes that will alleviate the causes of social disadvantage.

Both forms found expression in the Stage 2 cluster projects where the service-learning programs all related to key learning areas or cross-curricular programs and were explicit in their development of values. In the Edmund Rice Ministries project, a global education focus took students on a journey of understanding social justice issues. Students developed empathetic understanding by investigating a range of issues relating to children’s working conditions in third world countries. Following their investigation the students took part in a simulation activity in an attempt to deepen their empathy with child labourers. A student commitment to take action to address the long-term root causes of child labour exploitation then followed. Students mounted publicity campaigns to alert consumers to manufactured goods that were the identified products of child labour.

A principal focus for Edmund Rice Ministries was to take service learning into the broader curriculum and decouple it from presumptions that it ‘belonged’ only in religious education. Values education was seen as a general curriculum concept not a simply as a peripheral extra-curricular activity or only an element of religious education. The intent was to use an established education priority (service learning) but to broaden it to take values to the core of curriculum.

The WestPEERS cluster of remote Catholic schools took another approach. Using Storyfest as a starting point they engaged parents and the wider community in storytelling as part of an objective to build community. As an extension of this the students planned visits to elderly citizens at a local nursing home in a storytelling exchange. In this case ‘the service’ provided an action-centred vehicle for students to live the values learnt and explored in storytelling.
A similar service-learning approach was used in Manningham. This cluster of Catholic schools used student action teams, which implemented a ‘buddy system’ with the residents of a local retirement village. The residents and students spent time together at school and the village to share stories about the residents’ childhoods, workplaces and lives. The students spent time talking about their lives, interests and today’s world. This service learning built around intergenerational communication is a good example of a ‘head, hands and hearts’ approach to values education born of a school and community partnership.

Service learning is a pedagogy that aids the development of young people as they learn to engage in the worlds of others and then participate in civic service. It is a form of experiential learning which is integrally related to values education, and helps young people to empathise, engage and take their place as civic-minded, responsible, caring and empowered citizens in our community.

**Information and communication technologies in values education**

The use of information and communication technologies (ICT), although more often regarded as an education tool rather than an approach or pedagogy, deserves special mention as an element of some Stage 2 cluster project work. Several clusters used ICT in innovative ways, not only as a hook or scaffold on which to build student knowledge about values, but also to demonstrate the ways social networking through ICT can be an engaging forum for students to explore and enact positive values.

Students from the Unity in Diversity cluster, for instance, developed an intranet site on which students from different cultures interacted around cultural issues as a way of questioning stereotypes presented in the popular media. Students used the intranet to chat, question, blog and find out about each other’s cultures in a non-threatening environment which supported intercultural understanding.

The Cross Borders Cluster (NT, SA and WA) used ICT to hold online, real-time video discussions among students from across Australia for whom geographic isolation limits cultural experiences. Mataranka Primary School in the Northern Territory participated in environmental education values dilemmas with Spearwood Primary School and Chrysalis Montessori School in Western Australia and Victor Harbour Primary School and Birdwood High School in South Australia.

The WA Distance Education Cluster in Western Australia faced significant challenges in implementing values education as it involved eight remote and isolated small communities with very diverse student cohorts. The project effectively used ICT as one component of a mixed strategy approach, which produced quality support materials to ‘provide engaging and interactive learning experiences in values education’. All schools in the cluster agreed to use the online Monitoring Standards in Education Social Outcomes of Schooling Survey to evaluate student thinking about values education. The trial of the materials in semester two provided many opportunities for the students to participate in real-time sessions on Centra, an online real-time communications technology, which allowed teachers to speak to students on the internet and via the telephone. Teachers reported that the students engaged in the sessions positively and, in some instances, attended school more frequently in order to participate.

In another example, many of the 17 learning elements developed by the Lanyon cluster made use of digital technologies and multimodal forms of communication, including the linguistic, visual, audio and spatial, to create learning environments in harmony with the changing world of the twenty-first century and the everyday technologies students engage with. The pedagogical approach in the learning elements was values-based and reflected students’ lives and experiences.
Values education in curriculum for the twenty-first century

A notable aspect of the Stage 2 cluster projects was their concern with and central focus on many of the big questions of contemporary life of the twenty-first century as the context for the values education work. It appears that values education is seen and used by many of the clusters as a means of working with students to develop their knowledge and active engagement on the urgent issues of our age. In particular, a significant number of clusters focused their project on:

- environmental and social sustainability (Cross Borders, E-Schools, Pullenvale, Students for the Biosphere, Townsville)
- developing greater social harmony (Airds–Bradbury, Eastern Goldfields, Griffith, Broader Horizons, Merrylands–Guildford)
- fostering intercultural and interfaith understandings (Melbourne Interfaith, Shire 4 Values, Unity in Diversity)
- using ICT for building better communities (Cross Borders, Unity in Diversity, Lanyon).

**CURRICULUM**

3 Develop values education as an integrated curriculum concept, rather than as a program, an event or an addition to curriculum.

Good practice in values education requires schools to see values education as a whole of curriculum concept that informs all teaching and learning across the school. Values education is not a discrete program or part of an implicit hidden curriculum; it is a central principle underpinning the school curriculum offerings, the curriculum design, pedagogy, content and assessment. In this view (alluded to in Recommendations 2 and 4 in the Stage 1 Final Report) values education is neither an addition to be ‘bolted on’ to a curriculum nor a curriculum topic that resides in a humanities or religious education learning area. Values education is instead an approach to existing curriculum, a way of seeing curriculum that requires an integration rather than an addition. Many Stage 2 cluster projects demonstrate this principle of curriculum integration and system integration with existing jurisdictional curriculum frameworks, policies, priorities and other education initiatives.

The cluster case studies from Stage 2 reinforced the inference from Stage 1 that values education is a curriculum concept that is best applied or infused across the curriculum. The Stage 2 projects reaffirmed that good practice in values education is to conceive of and develop approaches in values education that treat it as the core bond or heart for the whole schooling community life. It is more effective practice to embed values education as an integral component of all curriculum activity rather than see it as a separate curriculum or as a part of a particular curriculum domain, such as pastoral care, religious education or the humanities. If embedded in the whole curriculum it ceases to be regarded as an ‘add-on’ extracurricular program. In the same vein, an embedded values education approach requires more than a one-off ‘program’ or a series of public events or school show days. The Stage 2 projects show that while some of these approaches — such as special events or particular curriculum ‘homes’ for values education — might have a part to play, it is dubious that they yield the positive longer-term effects required for the whole school development. The most effective clusters suggest that values education is a central curriculum concept rather than a peripheral curriculum concern. It is the ‘glue’ for the whole of schooling.

Two of the most comprehensive attempts at this infusing and integrating of values education across the curriculum were evident at the Sea and Vales (in particular the Seafood 6–12 School) and Griffith clusters. Others were evident at the Toowoomba North Cluster (Qld) and Merrylands–Guildford.

After the Seafood 6–12 School identified and articulated its set of core values it then used a ‘community of practice’ technique to have staff identify ways of embedding the values in the school’s practices. The value of responsibility, for instance, was embedded into (among other things) the curriculum and assessment practices of the school in capacity matrices. Capacity matrices are effectively mechanisms for mapping the curriculum outcomes sought for in a unit of work in ways that make them clear and practical
for students. The matrices also enable students to track their progress in accomplishing the outcomes on their own terms and in their own time frame.

Several clusters reported rewriting units within key learning areas to model values education approaches to teachers across the cluster. For example, WA Distance Education completely rewrote their mathematics, English and learning support materials. Lanyon wrote 21 learning elements with a values focus. Similarly, Merrylands–Guildford rewrote a range of units of work across key learning areas. In each case, a feature of the writing process was a trialling and evaluation phase, with both students and teachers using the materials then feeding back to writers, who rewrote the materials to incorporate suggestions for improvement. Again, the action research methodology, with teachers acting as researchers, pervades the project activity.

Values are an established aspect of all state and territory curriculum frameworks. In their quest to provide a comprehensive and coherent approach to values education across the curriculum, a number of Stage 2 clusters undertook mapping exercises to ascertain a fit between state and territory curriculum priorities and the National Framework. This process always produced alignment with the values vision statements in jurisdictional curriculum documents and the National Framework. A number of the clusters reported that because of the process they have a much stronger understanding of the values and the possible implementation pathways for values education from both the jurisdictional and national perspectives.

Several clusters also wedded their values projects to international education frameworks. Values were used as an entry point for engaging with the UNESCO Educating for a Sustainable Future framework (UNESCO 1997) at both the Townsville cluster and the E-Schools: Yorke Peninsula Cluster (SA). The UNESCO concept of sustainable development is a lifelong learning concept that defines sustainability in terms of social, economic and environmental issues. The Townsville cluster mapped connections between the UNESCO sustainability framework and the Queensland Curriculum and Assessment and Reporting Framework and concluded that each supported the other.

Another cluster used the UNESCO sustainability framework to inform its values program by having the students redesign part of the school grounds in terms of social, economic and environmental sustainability following research they undertook in the community. Other clusters took a more narrow environmental education perspective of sustainability to shape their values program. All were concerned to have the school community address values such as responsibility, respect and care in such an approach.

Again demonstrating the strong alignment with local curriculum priorities, the coordinator of the Dunmunkle Cluster (Vic) said that ‘the Victorian Essential Learnings is the perfect vehicle for values education’. Two NSW clusters, Airds–Bradbury and Merrylands–Guilford, were able to connect the National Framework with state policies. While applying the National Framework, Airds–Bradbury succeeded in addressing a range of NSW government policies, such as policies on Aboriginal education, disability policy and positive behaviour intervention.

State curriculum frameworks were tested and supported within a number of collegial environments as clusters sought to make connections between the National Framework and local policies. The E-Schools cluster linked the National Framework with the South Australia Curriculum Standards and Accountability Framework, especially essential learnings, key competencies, society and environment, health and physical education strands.

There was a clear message from faith-based schools about the applicability of values education approaches in religious contexts. Edmund Rice Ministries made the following point:

Faith-based schools can be challenged to examine the relationship between their own ‘unique’ set of values statements with the ... Values for Australian Schooling. This project provided the means for a
A diverse group of staff from three schools to align our Common Heart Values (as set out in the Edmund Rice charter) with the values of the National Framework in the context of service learning. Staff involved in this process readily aligned the two sets of values and as a result validated the importance and relevance of the project in terms of its applicability with our foundational Charter or Heart Values. The National Framework is written in such a way that it is not difficult to marry the stated ... values with other values criteria of schools, including those of faith traditions.

**EXPLICITNESS**

4. Explicitly teach values so students know what the values mean and how the values are lived.

The Stage 2 cluster projects reassert the Stage 1 finding (Recommendation 4) that values must be explicitly articulated and taught. The Stage 2 experiences deepen our understanding of how critical this principle is in successful values education practice. The principle of explicitness applies more broadly and pervasively than has been previously recognised. It means that values-based schools live and breathe a values consciousness. They become schools where values are thought about, talked about, taught about, reflected upon and enacted across the whole school in all school activities. Values are explicitly taught across all key learning areas and articulated in all co-curricular activities. They are also explicitly present in the physical school environment, its signage, ceremonies and rituals as well as policies, administration and key documents. The explicit values become ubiquitous, and values ‘teaching’ and values ‘learning’ become part of the embedded consciousness within every school activity.

While teachers reported on the various ways they went about explicitly teaching the values nominated in the National Framework, many in the Stage 2 clusters also emphasised that the process of values clarification was important. This relates to the fact that values are interpreted through culture, experiences and a variety of other filters. When teachers provide a space and activities where students can explore what the values mean, the group can reach consensus and real understandings rather than accepting a strict definition imposed as a starting point. Students need to make meaning of their values world.

This process may highlight values differences and incompatible values positions that are a part of cultural debate and dissonance. Some teachers have characterised this dissonance as ‘positive disruption’. The more disruptive and extensive the values education disruption is, the more strongly owned the resulting values understandings become, across and beyond the school community. Many clusters reported that the debate around values was a vital starting point in achieving congruence and consistency, both within the classroom and across the whole school. As the Dunmunkle cluster coordinator warned:

> Don’t make assumptions. There was an expectation/ assumption, especially in the secondary school, that students would know what each of the values actually meant. We soon discovered that this wasn’t always the case. In all situations it is important to ensure that students know the meaning of words such as responsibility and respect, and what they mean for themselves, their school, their town and their world.

This observation suggests the need for planned and explicit values teaching and values clarification strategies to be integral with all values education approaches. It should be noted that the use of ‘values clarification’ here refers to a process where values understandings are explored from the school community and students, or ‘bottom-up’ rather than the commonly understood ‘top-down’ model, where definitions are fixed and imposed. The cluster reports are clear about the importance of this community-based consultation as a road map towards identifying, defining and owning the values of the school community.
Teachers in the Stage 2 projects wrote about using a variety of tools and techniques to explicitly teach values education. Some of these included Y charts, fish bone diagrams, mind maps, affinity diagrams, values trees and a host of other graphic organisers. What all these tools have in common is that they are ways of managing and patterning class discussion. They are techniques of representing the views of individual students in a way that brings order and understanding and, most importantly, respects and acknowledges the contribution of all students. They build student interest in and ownership of the learning.

A variety of strategies assisted teachers to reinforce the values they articulated after values were explored in the classroom. They included a ‘value of the month’, weekly values assemblies, community forums, newsletters, dramatic presentations and lunchtime clubs.

One of the teachers from the Darebin cluster described one approach they used to make the values explicit as follows:

To help students in their understanding of values I explicitly taught the definitions of values in a ‘chalk and talk’ fashion. After completing two such lessons and receiving very little student participation I asked the students to define values for me in their own words. One student out of 24 bravely spoke. Her definition was not correct but on the right track. When I asked others for their contributions I received blank looks, shrugs of the shoulders and a mumbled ‘I don’t know’. Clearly an explicit teacher-directed approach did not work.

After perceiving this lack of student understanding of values, and acknowledging that the didactic teacher-talk methodology was not optimal when teaching values, this teacher employed a different pedagogy. As she explained:

I used a variety of thinking tools which provided tremendous benefit to the scaffolding of knowledge; however, the Y chart was the most beneficial. Completing a Y chart for each value enabled students to really unpack the essence of the particular value. Students looked at what the value looked like, sounded like and felt like in the classroom, outside in the yard and in the wider community. This way of unpacking each value meant students were able to develop a deep understanding of each value and how it relates to them as citizens within a community.

This teacher observation raises another key learning from the Stage 2 project. This is around the action research methodology. Not satisfied with the outcomes of the first approach at teaching values, this teacher evaluated the outcomes from the first attempt, planned for a new approach and used different pedagogies, tools and strategies to engage students. In schools where a critical mass of teachers were undertaking monitoring and evaluation as part of the action research cycle, debriefing with one another gave the opportunity for teachers to trial approaches and strategies and take remedial action when required. This encouraged teachers to take risks, an important element of teacher professional learning in values education.

**MODELLING**

5 Implicitly model values and explicitly foster the modelling of values.

Stage 2 projects reassert the Stage 1 finding (Recommendation 5) that modelling is an integral component of successful values approaches. Stage 2 experiences add to our understanding of the operation and effects of this good practice. Once values are explicitly established within the school, the modelling implicitly reinforces the values learning. This principle applies equally to all relationships in the school, not just teachers modelling to students: teachers model to teachers and students model to students. Such pervasive modelling of values helps to create more positive classrooms and school cultures. Without the implicit values modelling the task of implementing values education is doomed. If the seen-behaviours of teachers and felt-experiences of students do not correspond to the explicit values fostered in the school community, the explicit values education becomes compromised, incongruent and less effective.

Modelling, or the implicit demonstration and living out of particular values positions, is a critical part of values learning, as it reinforces the explicit teaching. Explicit teaching of values without congruent implicit modelling of the values is counterproductive.
The Stage 2 clusters starkly remind school communities that implicit values education through modelling is an integral part of the total approach. Although the explicit teaching of values through direct teaching and the display of values words and concepts in posters, slogans, values trees, visual representations in classrooms and school environments is critical, it is the modelling or living out of the values that creates the real meaning. The modelling is in everything that teachers do and say and it resides in all other elements of school life, reinforcing and embedding the values culture the school community seeks to foster.

The Stage 2 clusters consistently report on this importance of modelling as part of the values education process. One cluster coordinator eloquently expressed this when she said:

“Students learn more from the person we are ‘being’ and the behaviours we demonstrate than the content we are teaching.”

This raises another of the strongly voiced messages from the Stage 2 school experiences: namely, when the positive values of teachers are transferred into teacher classroom practices and embedded into pedagogy, they play a more vital role in terms of student engagement than the subject-specific curriculum content being imparted. As the Ferny Grove cluster coordinator put it:

“We observed that those teachers whose classrooms were characterised by an inclusive culture of caring and respect and where character development played an important and quite often explicit role in the daily learning of students were those same teachers who also demonstrated a high level of personal development, self-awareness of, and commitment to their own values and beliefs.”

In the Cross Borders cluster, teachers looked closely at the way they modelled values with both students and the wider school community. They asked questions about their own professional conduct, and were willing to reassess their behaviours on the basis of a values audit of their ‘ethical, professional and interpersonal behaviours’. In this context, the process of implementing and modelling values in values education can involve teachers in very personal professional learning.

The case writing in Stage 2 often demonstrates how transformational this learning can be for teachers. In the following example, a teacher at one cluster school in Queensland reflects on her long struggle working with ‘Jane’, an at-risk student in her pastoral care class. The result was positive for the student and the teacher. In her reflections the teacher noted:

“Teachers need to be brutally honest about how mature they are in their dealings with students – they are the adult, the students are children, but sometimes it is hard to tell which is which when a teacher ‘loses it’. Values education must be embraced by the teachers and acted out by them.

and again,

‘Jane’s story clearly shows that what happens at school does have implications for other arenas of a child’s life. There is no room for complacency on the part of teachers to think otherwise. We are quick to blame bad or good behaviour on home influences but consequences flow in both directions (good and bad) and making a positive difference for a child at school can be helpful in how they manage at home – this obviously has huge implications for values education at school.”

Finally, in assessing what worked in this instance the teacher reflected:

“As values education teachers, commencing in 2007, we did not have much of an idea of what the journey would be like although some teachers were resistant to the idea that we could make a difference through teaching values – ‘that should all have been done before they started school’... For me it has been a heart-warming journey. I have enjoyed getting to know my class and feel we have progressed together... I believe that ‘Jane’s' improved outlook on life is attributable to many factors but includes:
- settling in and getting to know students and teachers better
- consistent responses from teachers and administration in not accepting her poor behaviour
- parents who backed us up
- maturing
- consistent values education, formally and informally across the whole school program, including classroom, playground, school assemblies, behaviour management and curriculum delivery and assessment procedures
- discussion in formal values education classes making an impact
- all of the above empowering her to feel better about herself so that she does not need to put others down to put herself up.

Most importantly, I was reminded that, as a teacher, I can make a difference and that is rather affirming."
This case writing reflects impacts of explicit teaching and modelling of values over time that are commented on in several cluster case study reports. Teachers reported calmer school environments, where a clear and shared set of school values, collectively developed, helped to focus teachers and students on behaviours that upheld those values. They reported that a whole school focus on values, when consistently applied by all staff, led to improved relationships between all members of the school, and over time created a positive school ‘ambience’. Interestingly, many parents commented on aspects such as ‘ambience’ or ‘feeling’ or ‘care’.

There is evidence in schools’ experiences that mutual respect is at the core of explicitly teaching and modelling values across the school, and that many positive outcomes flow from it. As the Townsville cluster coordinator observed:

Parents and teachers have ... expressed that students now possess more of an ability to discuss values and are empowered to behave in socially acceptable ways. For students who are not seeing values modelled at home this observable change in attitude and behaviour can be attributed to the values agenda occurring in schools. These values are taught through words, actions, attitudes and the curriculum. Some teachers have outlined that a positive atmosphere has filtered through the school and students who previously did not believe they could achieve have now changed their attitudes with success building success.

Teacher modelling is a powerful contributor to student knowledge about values and, more importantly, a key element in developing values attitudes, values dispositions and social skills as Deakin Crick (2005) has shown.

**STUDENT AGENCY**

**6 Develop relevant and engaging values approaches connected to local and global contexts and which offer real opportunity for student agency.**

The Stage 2 cluster experiences speak convincingly of the critical importance of enabling and providing opportunities for student agency. Although present in many of the Stage 1 projects, the role of student empowerment and agency in values education practice has been significantly highlighted in Stage 2. Starting from the premise that schooling educates for the whole child and must necessarily engage a student’s heart, mind and actions, effective values education empowers student decision making, fosters student action and assigns real student responsibility. Effective values education is not an academic exercise; it needs to be deeply personal, deeply real and deeply engaging. In many of the Stage 2 projects students can be seen to move in stages from growing in knowledge and understanding of the values, to an increasing clarity and commitment to certain values and then concerted action in living those values in their personal and community lives. The teaching and learning is three-dimensional and could not be more profoundly meaningful.

In an important development from the Stage 1 Final Report inferences, which talked about having something worthwhile to teach in the values domain, the Stage 2 cluster experiences drill deeper and report on the effects on students of what was taught, and link it to increased student agency. Teachers assert that increased student agency makes schooling more meaningful, enjoyable and relevant to students’ lives.

Student agency refers to empowering students through curriculum approaches that:
- engage them
- are respectful of and seek their opinions
- give them opportunities to feel connected to school life
- promote positive and caring relationships between all members of the school community
- promote wellbeing and focus on the whole student
• relate to real-life experiences
• are safe and supportive.

Many clusters described practices that were designed to encourage students to speak freely and confidently, to explore their own and others’ thinking, to take risks and to be resilient in the face of challenges. The student action teams implemented in the Darebin cluster, the values action teams from Manningham and the ‘kids teaching kids’ approach in the E-Schools cluster are three examples of the many approaches that were used by clusters in creating student agency.

Real-life learning creates agency in students by tapping into what is relevant in a student’s day-to-day life as a starting point for further learning. The UAN adviser working with the Cross Borders cluster noted:

Before engaging in a real-life environmental project, it is important to brainstorm with the students the values that may be relevant in that particular context. Then it is useful to explicitly teach/discuss those values in terms of what they mean and what they look like. Including this cognitive processing component into the values education program allows all stakeholders to learn a discourse, a vocabulary, to review values education understandings. This preparation appears to facilitate values education development when the students are subsequently working in the real-life, hands-on environmental context.

Some made connections between real-life learning and agency, as shown in the Townsville cluster:

Those involved within the project have outlined that student learning is extending beyond the boundaries of the classroom and becoming generalised, which again links back to the notion of teaching values within context and has links to Guiding Principles 7 and 8. Students are discussing their learning months later and becoming agents for change within the school and home. Parents have outlined what they have learnt from their children and that practices are now being enacted at home as a result of units of work completed within Stage 2 of the VEGPSP.

Many of the values-based pedagogies referred to earlier, such as student action teams, philosophy in the classroom, Socratic circles and the power of story or narrative have wider applications in enabling student agency. All of them have an applied dimension that encourages students to put values into practice. The importance of student agency is picked up many times in the case studies, the accounts of good practice and teacher case writing.

The UAN adviser working with the Lanyon cluster, which had a focus on community building, reported in his account of good practice that exercising agency also led to greater student engagement:

Most importantly, perhaps, students themselves have come to own values more deeply through community engagement and via various forms of community service (eg students focusing on practical applications of values in the Road Ready program, Years 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 new 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’ (Furco and Billig 2002).

The values-focused pedagogies discussed support and produce student agency by offering real-life learning from which students find meaning.

The Stage 2 cluster experiences accord with research findings in the field of social-emotional learning and its relation to building academic success. Zins et al (2004) conclude that safe, caring and orderly environments are conducive to learning; that caring relations between teachers and students foster a desire to learn and a connection to school; and that socially engaging teaching strategies focus students on their learning tasks.

Similarly, the teachers in Deakin Crick’s (2002) study found that by introducing shared values into teaching and learning across the curriculum they related to the whole person as learner, incorporating the student’s personal and emotional experience and their ‘personal story’ into the process of learning, rather than
just focusing on the student's acquisition of knowledge, skills and understanding.

The UAN adviser working with WestPEERS would concur, as her final report testifies:

It was clear throughout the project and is evident in the reports from the individual schools that the overwhelming theme of good practice in values education in the Grenfell (St Joseph's) cluster occurred through the affective domain. Children were consistently brought back to how they would feel, to putting themselves in the shoes of others and to experiencing empathy. These are all aspects of emotional cognition that were fostered and developed in the lived experience of both teachers and students.

Effective pedagogies in values education built around a values-rich content, develop students’ higher order thinking skills, and provide opportunities for real-world learning and for students to exercise their agency. Often, they engage students’ emotions in way that makes learning more meaningful and relevant. These pedagogies establish the circumstances in which students develop improved self-confidence and positive dispositions about social and cultural diversity.

Social Cohesion

7 Use values education to consciously foster intercultural understanding, social cohesion and social inclusion.

Stage 2 speaks more specifically and extensively than Stage 1 on the use of values education to foster social inclusion within school communities. A number of cluster projects demonstrate how some of their values education practices can provide both the tools and the common ground for positively engaging with the diversity and difference that arises from a multitude of cultures, faiths, ethnicities, abilities, and geographic and socioeconomic circumstances, and which can marginalise groups from mainstream learning. These Stage 2 cluster projects show that values education is uniquely placed as a vehicle to work across these different forms of ‘divide’ and to provide opportunities for social inclusion, fostering social cohesion, developing intercultural and interfaith understanding, and engaging the disengaged.

One of the special focus areas of the Stage 2 project was the role values education could play in developing better intercultural understanding and social harmony in schooling. A number of the Stage 2 clusters designed their projects to explore these connections and to implement strategies to address particular local needs.

In New South Wales, the Airds–Bradbury, Merrylands–Guildford, Griffith, Unity in Diversity and Shire 4 Values clusters all implemented values education approaches to develop stronger communities; facilitate better interaction among diverse ethnic, cultural and social groups; promote common shared values; and explicitly work to develop tolerance, understanding, inclusion and effective communication. The strategies were many and eclectic. They reflected in sharp focus the particular and complex contexts of each cluster. Broadly the approaches included explicit values teaching in formal and informal settings; extensive teacher professional development; engagement with local community leaders; small, practical and targeted projects with marginalised student cohorts; energetic parent engagement; cultural events; and monitoring of activity impacts.

In Victoria, the Melbourne Interfaith cluster, with its group of secular, Islamic and Jewish secondary schools, and the Darebin cluster, with its ten schools with diverse cultural groups, undertook similar work. They used extensive teacher professional development as well as pedagogies such as Socratic circles, intercultural visits, festival exchanges, art programs and student action teams as part of their values education approach to building more inclusive and harmonious school communities.

Although it is difficult to evaluate the longer-term impacts of all these clusters’ efforts to foster the explicit values necessary for building intercultural and interfaith understanding and greater social cohesion, there are many positive indicators of good practice at work.

At Airds–Bradbury, with its diverse student population of some 56 different cultural groups and its other marginalised, disabled and
socioeconomically disadvantaged groups, the schools focused on turning around poor levels of student engagement as well as improving social inclusion and cohesion. The UAN adviser noted that one of the results from the professional learning approaches was increased staff knowledge and awareness of the difficult aspects of the lives of their students and the consequent need to change curriculum design and pedagogies:

The values project resulted in greater staff awareness of the issues faced by many Indigenous and Islander students and their families. The principal of one school commented that staff are ‘seeing students differently, and are developing different relationships with students and families’. This principal 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 knowledge and potentials. Teachers across the cluster schools are now generally more supportive of Indigenous and Islander students and are working on ways to effectively support these students. This includes student support groups, inclusion of Pacific Island and Indigenous culture across the curriculum, group rather than individual assignments, Bush Tucker gardens and so on.

In contrast the Shire 4 Values Cluster is located in the largely monocultural Sutherland Shire, which became the focus of national attention after the 2005 Cronulla riots. The cluster focused its project on the aim of fostering community harmony. The explicit goal was for students to explore and come to understand and live within a world of multicultural values. Approaches used included explicit values teaching, interschool cultural exchange programs, student leadership programs, peer support and experiential multicultural learning. The culminating event to the school-based work was a major interschool community forum. The cluster UAN adviser commented on the event and on the student involvement:

The forum itself was chaired and presented by a number of students from each of the cluster schools. The main focus of the night was the National Framework values of respect and tolerance, inclusion and understanding. Students defined what these values mean to them and their school. The school leaders displayed impressive qualities of confidence, assurance and deep reflection in their speeches.

Also in response to the events of Cronulla, the Unity in Diversity cluster saw government secondary schools and Islamic schools work together to build relationships, respect, intercultural understanding and inclusion. The cluster used the central notion of space-and-place to create learning experiences on beaches, at community forums and on a collaborative website. As the UAN adviser explained:

One of the key aims became geographic; to have students work together on each other’s turf on projects of mutual benefit, that in and of themselves provided the scaffolding for clarification of values.

The cluster case study reported that as a result of the values education work teachers are using a common and explicit values language; that relationships have improved between students – with them generally exercising better self-discipline and apparently having a more genuine regard for each other. Also, students are better able to articulate the effect their behaviour has on others. One student commented on what they had learnt at the Bankstown forum in these terms:

I got to know new people at the forum. While some had a different religion to me and went to different schools we were alike in other ways. We had similar ideas, we said the same things, enjoyed the same food and drink. I also got to know their friends and they met mine.

This is connection. This is the discovery of the common ground on which the community is based. This is good practice values education in action.
Provide teachers with informed, sustained and targeted professional learning and foster their professional collaborations.

Stage 2 projects have further developed the notion expressed in Recommendation 6 of the Stage 1 Final Report that professional learning is crucial to successful values education. Stage 2 has clearly demonstrated how explicit values education professional learning – at a local, state and national level – can lead to transformed teacher practice. Professional learning can be the critical factor between success and failure in developing sustainable values-based schooling. The Stage 2 experience also firmly asserts the type of professional learning required: ongoing models such as the use of learning communities, objective critical friends, mentors, collaborative peer exchange as well as time for reflective practice.

In a message that is evident in Stage 1 (Recommendation 10) but even more pronounced in Stage 2, the ‘teacher as researcher’ model with its collaborations between education faculty university educators can be a ‘good practice’ in values education. These collaborations often involved a mutually beneficial partnership between clusters and universities to explore different approaches and knowledge pathways in implementing values education. The positive impacts of this collaboration on people and projects are evident in many of the Stage 2 cluster reports. School practitioners received the benefit of mentors and critical friends as well as one-on-one professional learning; the university teacher educators were formally connected to a substantial school-based teaching and learning project which could inform the training of new teachers and foster new academic research. The collaboration has also resulted in at least three major academic international publications and a major university-based research project on values education in Australian schools. These publications and the research activity have used a number of the cluster projects as case studies to explore new theoretical and conceptual thinking about the nature and effects of values education in schooling for the twenty-first century.

In a further development from Stage 1 of the VEGPSP, teacher development through professional learning emerged as a key finding from the Stage 2 cluster experiences. Teachers repeatedly reported that professional learning, located in school settings and supported by reflective practice, was instrumental in changing their teaching practice in a positive and dynamic way.

Section 1 of this report outlines the key elements of the Stage 2 project. When viewed holistically, the elements outlined provided teachers with a range of professional learning opportunities and supports. They included:
• National Values Education Forums
• national briefing sessions comprising three two-day residential programs
• state and territory Values Education Networks of Engagement
• University Associate Network critical friend
• mentors
• consultants
• school- and cluster-based professional learning sessions
• values education website offering values education units of work and other professional resource supports.

The sum of these professional learning activities involved individual teachers in cluster projects in up to 70 professional learning sessions over the 20 months of intense project activity. The model afforded inputs from international, national, state and local educators and created a powerful community of practice among participating schools.

Schools approached school-based professional learning in a variety of ways. Some took a whole school approach, factoring in regular school-based and cluster-based meetings. Some included students front and centre in the planning process. The Pullenvale cluster, on the other hand, implemented a unique and highly personalised approach with the cluster coordinator initiating a series of intensive dialogues with teachers where values education and professional practice was the core of the discussion. This type of personalised
professional learning is a model that offers powerful transformational opportunities.

An essential message from this cluster experience is the power of ‘attentiveness’ or close, engaged observation. Attentive listening allows teachers and students to make deep connections to place, to each other and to themselves. More than this, deep attentive listening, implemented in planned values education activities, builds positive relationships and communities.

A number of clusters focused their dialogue around ‘propositions’ or ‘statements of intent’ to help focus their work, and to ensure that professional development remained consistent with the values education spotlight. The E-Schools, Townsville, Sea and Vales, and Darebin clusters are clear examples of building professional learning around central propositions.

Merrylands–Guildford undertook a range of professional learning activities that were whole-cluster and whole-school based. There was a cross-school leadership team and, in a ground-breaking approach, the cluster included students and parents in key professional learning activities, thus building a stronger whole school approach. The importance of all stakeholders sharing common ground was championed in this initiative. With 56 different ethnicities represented in the school population, common ground was the basis for consensus.

In another approach to professional learning, the Griffith cluster visited nearby schools to witness how a youth parliament project was conducted by teacher researchers. Interestingly, these visits involved secondary teachers venturing into primary classrooms and vice versa. Others scheduled the student-free professional days of all cluster schools onto a common day to enable collective action around the cluster project. Some used project funds to invite specialists to conduct school-based professional learning. One of the lessons to be learnt from this thirst for information on the part of teachers, especially information about effective classroom practices for values education, is that effective values education is a complex teaching and learning matter.

For well over a decade, evidence has been accumulating to suggest that traditional models such as a student-free day set aside for staff development are failing to help educators to integrate ideas into practice, and that when staff development is ‘... done to teachers rather than with them’ (Fullan & Hargreaves 1991, p 17) it is less effective. Several Stage 2 clusters provide examples of creating meaningful and effective professional learning communities. Particular examples of this can be found in the Darebin, Manningham, Merrylands–Guildford and Pullenvale cluster project descriptions in Section 3 of this report.

The benefits claimed by education researchers for the professional learning community approach include reduced isolation of teachers, better informed and committed teachers, and academic gains for students (see, for example, Hord 1997; Cochran-Smith & Lytle 1993; Darling-Hammond & McLaughlin 1995; Lieberman & Grolnick 1996). Hord (1997) also found that professional learning communities can be influential in bringing about school reform, a finding echoed in Aspin and Chapman’s (2007) account of professional learning undertaken as part of Values Education Good Practice Schools Project – Stage 1.

The benefits claimed for the professional learning community approach used by some of the Stage 2 clusters were similar to those above. The role of professional learning in successfully implementing cluster projects was to enable staff to become familiar with the theory and practice of values education and to provide support structures to help them implement it. The Darebin cluster was articulate about the role of professional learning in its project:

Our approach to all cluster projects, including Stage 2 of the VEGPSP, is predicated on the belief that teacher quality is at the very centre of student learning. In line with research, we assert that in order to be effective, teachers need: firstly, a deep understanding of their subject area (discipline knowledge), secondly, skills and knowledge in
the principles of effective teaching and learning (pedagogical knowledge); and thirdly, a knowledge of how students learn a specific subject area together with effective strategies and practices that support such learning (pedagogical content knowledge). We further affirm that engaging teachers in high quality professional learning is the most successful way to improve teacher effectiveness. Therefore, professional development is a core focus and priority for our Stage 2 project. The following principles have guided our planning and delivery of high quality professional development:

- Professional development should be focused on student learning as well as teacher needs.
- Professional development should be embedded in teacher practice and built into day-to-day work of teaching.
- Professional development should be informed by the best available research and good practice models.
- Professional development should be collaborative and involve reflection and inquiry.
- Professional development should be evidence-based to guide improvement.
- Professional development should be an extended process (not a one-off event) involving a broad range of interlinked strategies and resources.

**POSITIVE DISRUPTION**

**Encourage teachers to take risks in their approaches to values education.**

The Stage 2 cluster experiences assert and often demonstrate that successful values education initiatives are positively disturbing and disruptive in nature. They can challenge familiar and traditional notions of the curriculum, the teacher role, the ways school operate, teacher–student relationships and the very nature of schooling. Good practice in values education, and the crucial professional development that it requires, encourages teachers to review their teaching practices at a fundamental and personal level. It can also disrupt established patterns of school operations as the school community becomes more values-centred. Curriculum offerings, resource allocations, parent relations and even timetabling may all be reassessed. All this can be confronting, and requires a variety of supports, the most powerful of which is a collegial community of practice.

Values education has encouraged me to risk-take and look outside the box that I may have been locked in for too long. (Teacher in the Manningham Cluster)

Values education approaches generated out of identified school needs and issues and guided by university associates and other critical friends and mentors encouraged teachers to take risks and to reassess their professional practice using values as a scaffold.

The very personal and reflective nature of this task was a feature of teacher case writing in the cluster reporting process. Many teachers wrote about confronting the way they approached their classroom practice and wrote in a deeply reflective manner about how they were growing as educators. It is noteworthy that reflection included this writing component, as there is an honesty associated with writing experiences down and sharing them with professional colleagues. As teachers learnt from one another and through the process of enacting values education approaches, so their willingness to apply new pedagogies increased. This aspect of teacher change is worth exploring further, as there were many examples of it in cluster case writing and case studies.

A teacher in the Toowoomba North Cluster wrote about this professional change process in the following way:

The whole process has been great for reflection about who I am as a teacher. I have learnt that I am really important. I don’t mean that in an arrogant way – I have learnt that we underestimate our role as teachers of values. I think it has resurrected my belief in why I am a teacher, the importance of being a teacher, the importance of being a good teacher. It has been hard for me to acknowledge just how important relationships are to learning. I have become a more positive teacher and I am more self-aware – more conscious of myself – it is almost as if I am looking down on myself a lot of the time.

The effects of teacher development through professional learning can be distributed throughout the school, as a teacher in the Oxenford Cluster described:

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.

The Lanyon cluster has been involved in values education initiatives for over five years, and argued so persuasively in its final report that the project had affected literacy so significantly that a substantial section of its report is reiterated below:

Through the project we collected quantitative and qualitative evidence of improvement in literacy skills. Performance of students on the ACT Assessment Program (ACTAP) provided quantitative evidence of improvement in literacy. One of the most difficult areas to improve student performance is from Year 7 to Year 9 yet our data for students in reading and writing shows definite improvement and is evidence of the value added that has occurred for students as they moved from Year 7 to Year 9 compared to the system data.

We began work with the Learning by Design framework in 2004. Since 2005 the effects of our interventions are evident in the consistent trend in the decreasing number of students in the bottom 20 per cent and the increasing number of students in the middle 60 per cent and upper 20 per cent in ACTAP. The trend has been maintained in 2006 and 2007 as more teachers in the cluster have implemented Learning by Design and also included the values education focus.

Our data for reading exemplifies this. In 2002 there were 28 per cent of Year 7 students identified in the lowest 20 per cent of students for reading. By the time they were in Year 9, there were 51 per cent in the bottom 20 per cent. This was very disheartening. This changed from 2003 to 2005. In 2003, 42 per cent of students were identified in the bottom 20 per cent in Year 7. By the time they were in Year 9, only 23 per cent were in the bottom 20 per cent – an improvement for 19 per cent of students. This trend has continued in 2006 (32 per cent of Year 7 students → 25 per cent of Year 9 students in the bottom 20 per cent) and in 2007 (23 per cent of Year 7 students → 16 per cent of Year 9 students in the bottom 20 per cent).

Qualitative evidence of literacy improvement was provided in the impact stories 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 multimodal texts is central to multiliteracies. It catered for a variety of learning styles, often incorporated technology, and supported students to discuss and demonstrate their understandings of the values in varied ways.

Gathering data to inform values education approaches was encouraged as part of the initial briefing of Stage 2 clusters. Within the action research methodology, data gathering is a vital component of the monitoring and evaluation cycle.

Cluster experiences also suggest that positive outcomes in values education can be achieved through a continuous and supported action research cycle that monitors and evaluates the intended values education approaches among the teaching staff. The ‘plan, do, study, act’ cycle guides and fosters professional change, encourages reflection and supports the process of monitoring values education outcomes.

Clusters recorded patterns of improvement since initiating their projects by using data gathered at the school level. This data included parent, student and teacher satisfaction surveys, student engagement data, school climate, attendance, reportable behaviour incidents and, in some cases, academic progress data related to key learning areas.
Clusters, especially at the initiating stage, were tentative about claiming causal links between values education and patterns of improvement. There are many initiatives occurring in the schools that might contribute to improvements in performance other than values education. However, many argued that when values education is in the mix, it makes significant contributions towards calming the school, focusing the students, improving the quality of interpersonal relationships and influencing teacher professional practice.

Many schools produced empirical evidence about increased levels of calmness in their school since being involved in values education. It is conventional wisdom that such things have important effects on students. Unsurprisingly then, many schools provided empirical data about improvements in student engagement since being involved in values education. One school measured the students’ ‘sense of belonging’ and other perceptions over the course of the project and found considerable improvement in academic engagement.

The Toowoomba North cluster reported that ‘there has been a statistically impressive drop in the number of marginalised students being suspended’.

Patterns such as these have recently gained the attention of researchers working in the values education area. Benninga et al (2006), for instance, have speculated that ‘high quality character education can promote academic achievement’. They base this on a comparison of ‘quality’ character education schools with a control group not exposed to such programs where they used the California Academic Index as the comparative measure.

Deakin Crick et al (2005) also suggest that values education ‘can impact on affective outcomes, as well as cognitive growth, in areas such as the development of self-concept, increased self-confidence, and more positive behaviour and can improve students’ communication skills’. According to their review of research it can also enhance student learning and academic achievement.

In her final report on the effects of the values program on the Values Newcastle Cluster (NSW) measured in a pre- and post-implementation study, the UAN adviser reported:

Finally, in regard to the impact of the program on student engagement and academic output [at] most schools, the teachers indicated that learning about ‘responsibility’ had resulted in students being more independent in their approach to tasks and that students appeared to be working more cooperatively and taking greater pride in their work – taking more responsibility to do quality work, cooperating and helping each other complete tasks; taking pride in a job well done. Some teachers also perceived that students were trying harder and the teachers appeared to realise their own influence in recognising and encouraging children’s efforts. ‘Students try to achieve to the best of their ability’; ‘Students understand that all efforts are valued’.

Conclusion

The ways and means by which the different clusters utilised some or a range of these good practices varied from cluster to cluster and from school to school, depending on local needs and priorities. Consistent with the original advice of the National Framework for Values Education in Australian Schools, the Stage 2 cluster project experiences reaffirm the importance of the first principle that individual schools will develop their own approaches to values education. While all schools need to find their own way to develop planned and systematic values education, it is clear from each of the Stage 2 cluster project stories that there are demonstrable good practices that can be used to make this work more effective and efficient. Each cluster story might have a different tale to tell and some different messages to offer but as a collective they have made a significant contribution to charting the course for all Australian schools to bring values-based education into the heart of schooling practice.
Section 3: The Values Education Good Practice Schools Project – Stage 2 cluster project synopses

Introduction

The purpose of Section 3 is to provide an account of the stories from the 25 clusters involved in the Values Education Good Practice Schools Project – Stage 2. Each account is unique, as each cluster’s approach was designed at the school and cluster level. Many also changed over time as school communities learnt more about values education and made adjustments to their projects in response to their action research methodology.

The sheer volume of writing and materials produced by each cluster attests to the intensity of values education work across the nation. A key feature of the work was the diversity of voice in the reporting as cluster coordinators, teachers, students and university colleagues and mentors described their experiences during the 20 months of the Stage 2 project activity. Each cluster produced an iterative case study over four drafts, teacher case writing, action research writing and planning, cluster coordinator reports and a University Associates Network account of good practice in values education.

The task of distilling this reporting into concise synopses that capture the important purposes, processes and outcomes of projects means that not all of the particular activities of individual schools have been included. However, the following section of the final report captures the key activities, approaches, evaluative reflections and voices of key participants in the projects.

It is noteworthy that even though each cluster’s experience, as documented in their case studies, samples of case writing and UAN reports, is unique, there are observations, insights and key messages that are echoed across many of the projects. Patterns become discernable.
THE LANYON CLUSTER OF SCHOOLS
Australian Capital Territory

A Multiliteracies Approach to Values Education

Cluster coordinator: Rita Van Haren, Lanyon High School

Participating schools:
• Lanyon High School
• Birrigai Outdoor Education Centre
• Bonnython Primary School
• Charles Condor Primary School
• Gordon Primary School
• Tharwa Primary School

UAN critical friend: Dr Thomas Nielsen, University of Canberra, Australian Capital Territory

KEY MESSAGES
1 When schools focus consistently on values in the school, and particularly through curriculum, parents and the broader community can work in partnership to create congruence between the values espoused at home and those espoused at school.

2 Values education is not merely a program that can be implemented in classrooms; it is a process that involves teachers in ongoing professional learning and action research in a ‘plan, do, study, act’ model that actively nurtures ‘the teacher as researcher’ and ultimately transforms practice.

3 With sustained implementation over time, values education approaches lead to improved student social skills and to safe and harmonious classrooms and playgrounds.

4 With a metalanguage to discuss values, and more importantly to understand and include them in their daily lives, students develop their communicative competence and improve their literacy performance.

5 Students participating in values approaches are more engaged in learning and show improved education outcomes when learning is linked to their lived experiences.
Lanyon’s project, *A Multiliteracies Approach to Values Education*, sought to improve student learning outcomes related to the *Values for Australian Schooling* by ensuring learner belonging and learner transformation through the teaching and learning process. The cluster wanted teachers to collect evidence of learner transformation in relation to the *Values for Australian Schooling*. It also wanted to make use of digital technologies, using multimodal forms of communication including linguistic, visual, audio and spatial, to create learning environments relevant to the changing world of the twenty-first century.

The project also acknowledged the need for whole school communities to be engaged with the work. Each cluster school held community forums. Designed by the students, these forums built upon the values that the students focused on in their learning. They enabled students to demonstrate their learning and their understanding of values education, build community partnerships and enhance community perceptions of their local school and of public education.

The project methodology was based on an action research model in which teachers worked in small teams to plan, implement and evaluate units of work, known as learning elements, based on values education. The approach is based on the values-laden Learning by Design framework, a values-based pedagogical framework that has teachers working in collaborative teams, as teacher scholars, to make their pedagogy explicit through a planning and documentation process.

Learning by Design focuses on pedagogy as a way of improving student learning outcomes. The strategy supports teachers to develop a deeper understanding of values education. The reflection and discussion inherent in the approach ensures that the resources developed by teachers are explicit, shareable, transparent, re-usable and professionally documented.

At the outset, 22 teachers planned and documented learning elements based on the Learning by Design framework, and shared their work with other teacher scholars through the planning phase of the action research cycle. The implementation of the learning elements was done as the first action step and was followed by monitoring and evaluation phases of the action research cycle.

Teachers undertook case writing and individual case studies to establish the context and provide an account of the learning problem for their individual cases. They then gathered data and described what happened in the teaching and what appeared to be the student learning. These accounts became the substance of teacher meetings intended to gradually improve the learning elements being developed. It was hoped that by documenting their planning in this way teachers would describe the learning from the teacher’s perspective and from the learner’s perspective. In doing so, students should then be informed about their learning and have input into the process. As the cluster UAN adviser observed:

> The rigorous documentation deriving from using Learning by Design serves toward sustainability – something desirable for the Lanyon cluster, 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, eg 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.

With a metalanguage to discuss values, students developed their communicative competence. They were able to discuss their feelings openly and solve disputes and issues of bullying, feeling isolated and making friends. It enabled them to engage in discussions where they could explore and challenge their own values and the values of others. For example, it deepened their understanding of responsibility so they could take actions to care for the environment; of
fairness so they could explore and act on ways of being a fair player, a fair person and a fair member of society; of freedom so they could empathise with people who do not have freedom; of their social and environmental responsibilities as road users; and of integrity so they could critically reflect on the role of the media in their lives.

Like many other clusters, one of the important features of this cluster project was the focus on developing a common values language for students to discuss, reflect upon and enact. The UAN adviser recognised the importance and vitality of this, and said that a common language:

has had exponential effects that go beyond communicative competence. 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 process of thinking itself (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 out of their own accord.

This observation is echoed by a Year 1 student's reflections on the learning element What's Up Goldilocks:

The best part was when we were learning about what the values mean. I didn't get it, well not all of it, and then [our teacher] showed us. It was funny. She, like when some people didn't know what honesty was, she showed us. She threw a rubber across the room and people said don't 'cause it's not the right thing to do and she lied and said she didn't do it. Well that's not honest, then she did it again but this time she said she did and said sorry. That's honest. I value honesty. We did lots of those and it made it easy to get what everything means. I also like having our values photos in the classroom everyone can see them and it reminds us what to do.

The UAN adviser further builds on this common values language motif and explores the connection between values fostering emotional literacy, and in turn empathy and prosocial behaviour. Values from the National Framework are now articulated in the cluster mission statement and in the documentation of the schools' student management procedures and philosophy.

The Lanyon cluster has been working on this project for a number of years, and the cluster is well positioned to make comments based on a more substantial set of experiences over time. The cluster coordinator commented that some outcomes of the project included:

- Students developed communicative competence in values.
- Students' literacy improved.
- Students became more engaged in their learning through links to their life worlds.
- Students developed their social skills, and classrooms and playgrounds became more harmonious in safer environments.
- Values were embedded in the whole curriculum.
- Teachers led other teachers in values education and in implementing system priorities such as the ACT Curriculum Framework.
- The community responded positively to the focus on values education.

The cluster began work with the Learning by Design framework in 2004. Since 2005 the effects of their interventions can be tracked by the decreasing number of students in the bottom 20 per cent of the Australian Capital Territory Assessment Program and the increasing number of students in the middle 60 per cent and upper 20 per cent. The trend has been maintained in 2006 and 2007 as more teachers have implemented Learning by Design and focused on values education. Similar improvement data was presented across the national testing cohorts of Years 7 and 9.

One of the key learnings from this cluster is provided by the UAN report and echoed in other cluster reports:

It should be highlighted that integrating values education across the curriculum produces more than associations and synthesis in the students’ learning: it seems to have an ability to become a ‘social glue’ – a communal convergence point around which quality teaching and human relationships can exist more easily.
AIRDS–BRADBURY CLUSTER
New South Wales

My Happiness ... My Voice – Many Voices ... One Community

Cluster coordinator: Carol Jones, Airds High School

Participating schools:
- Airds High School
- Bradbury Public School
- Briar Road Public School
- John Warby Public School
- Woodland Road Public School

UAN critical friend: Dr Leonie Arthur, University of Western Sydney, New South Wales

KEY MESSAGES

1. Focusing on empowering students to determine for themselves what is right or wrong through planned values activities has had a positive impact on student engagement. In the words of one teacher in this project, ‘Kids are talking in a deep way about what is important to them.’

2. Teachers report transformed relationships with their students due to delivering values-based curriculum that engages students, links to their lived experiences and gives them more responsibility for their learning. This transformation is manifested as happier students who are cooperative and aware of themselves and others.

3. Safe and inclusive school environments can create pride in multiple cultures where parents and students feel a sense of belonging and participate more fully in the life of the school.

4. Carefully planned, targeted and sustained professional learning is vital to the success of the embedding of values education into teacher practice and curriculum content. Teachers need to be guided to understanding that values education is a whole of curriculum concept and not a one-off lesson attached to the core curriculum.
Building on their involvement in Stage 1 of the VECPSP, the Airds–Bradbury Cluster, situated in New South Wales in the Campbelltown School Education Area, included a variety of community, whole school and classroom-based activities designed to use values education to address the influence of socioeconomic disadvantage on educational attainment. *My Happiness … My Voice – Many Voices … One Community* focused on improving the engagement and commitment of marginalised student groups – specifically Aboriginal and Pacific Islander students and students with disabilities – through a values-based approach to curriculum and school ethos. The project addressed what was perceived by many to be a lack of ‘social capital’ among the students, particularly those in the targeted marginalised groups.

The student population, comprising 56 different cultural groups, is transient and there is a mobility rate consistently around 30 per cent per annum. Historically, student absenteeism and retention have been significant issues. There are high rates of single parent families in the area and high numbers of families access the social security system. While the schools have worked hard to build social cohesion through inclusive curriculum and practices, some student groups within the cluster were not engaged and were therefore not participating in key aspects of schooling.

The project aimed to use a values education approach that welded the *National Framework* with existing NSW policies on Aboriginal education, cultural diversity, community relations, multicultural education, literacy, anti-racism, student welfare, and safe and ethical practice.

One of the drivers of the project was the strong connection between quality teaching and values education approaches that had emerged from Stage 1. The cluster teachers believed that values education was able to provide strategies for eliminating the gap between the success rates of marginalised student groups and the main student body.

The project sought to encourage and acknowledge all student and family ‘voices’ to ensure an inclusive and safe learning environment, with broad engagement levels, beginning with the Indigenous community. Finally it sought to ensure an effective school reform agenda through strong community partnerships.

The project began with a range of professional learning activities. The Airds High School principal and deputy principal led a review of quality teaching documents that specifically explored pedagogy and assessment for targeted groups. The careers teacher and Aboriginal education officer conducted a professional learning workshop on Individual Education Programs – what they are and how they work. The principal at Airds convened a staff focus group to address the needs of Pacific Islander students. Approximately one-third of the staff attended. At other staff development days, Indigenous and Pacific Islander role models addressed the staff from across the cluster and spoke about key issues in the lives of different cultural groups. A sub-group of teachers undertook an analysis of how the cluster schools currently cater for these groups.

The UAN adviser noted that one of the results from the professional learning activities was increased staff knowledge and awareness of the difficult aspects of the lives of their students. This awareness fed subsequent changes in curriculum design and pedagogies:

The values project resulted in greater staff awareness of the issues faced by many Indigenous and Islander students and their families. The principal of one school commented that staff are ‘seeing students differently, and are developing different relationships with students and families’. This principal 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 [knowledge] and potentials. Teachers across the cluster schools are now generally more supportive of Indigenous and Islander students and
are working on ways to effectively support these students. This includes student support groups, inclusion of Pacific Island and Indigenous culture across the curriculum, group rather than individual assignments, bush tucker gardens and so on.

In a further values-based initiative, the cluster consulted with various communities about the strengths and weaknesses of current school policies and practices that influenced student engagement and attendance. For example, a survey was conducted at the parent–community level to ascertain the degree of respect and inclusion that different cultural groups felt from within the school. To ensure an effective school reform agenda through strong community partnerships, the Aboriginal education assistant worked with Aboriginal students on a number of projects, including decorating a free-standing wall in the school’s front garden with the Aboriginal and Australian flags. This created a key cultural marker, an explicit values statement that was visible from the front of the school. It was one of the actions recommended from the consultation process.

Another strategy used to promote student engagement was a landscaping project which used the services of a volunteer landscape gardener who worked alongside a teacher with a group of six students on a major landscaping venture. The focus was numeracy, engagement and social skills. The participants included students with emotional disturbances and intellectual disability. The numeracy component consisted of planning, measuring and design, calculating quantities and pricing, ordering and laying turf and paving materials.

There is strong evidence in this cluster that values education approaches lead to prosocial impacts for marginalised students. Data collected across the cluster schools showed an increase in Indigenous student attendance and a decrease in behaviour-related incidents since the implementation of the values project. While this improvement data is not solely attributable to the values education initiatives, which were being amalgamated with a number of jurisdictional policy thrusts being run in the school, the cluster coordinator argued that:

If Indigenous education had not become a stated priority of the school through the values education project some of these programs and changes in teacher attitude would not have occurred.

In another aspect of the cluster activity, student values teams, similar to those established in the Manningham and Darebin Schools Network clusters, were established to increase student involvement in real-life learning and to develop student responsibility and resilience. There is now an acceptance by staff of student teams as a viable working structure to achieve specific outcomes.

Previously, apart from sport and debating, the only student teams were the formal school leadership team and the Student Representative Council. The notion of student values teams articulating priorities and issues relevant to them and feeding this information to school policy makers was a project learning. As the cluster coordinator says in reference to the Indigenous garden team:

When the team was originally formulated, other Indigenous students asked to join, indicating the project was something they thought worthwhile. When team meetings had to be cancelled for two weeks due to exams and my engagement elsewhere, students sought me out to complain and ensure that it would definitely be running the following week. The students, from Years 7–9, work extremely well together and tasks seemingly distribute themselves evenly. Each student has taken pride of ownership of their ‘adopted’ plant and is researching it assiduously. One student took it upon himself to design a template for plant information so there would be consistency of layout in the final information product. Another volunteered to design a thank you card for all the people who have assisted us so far. Another asked if her father could join our excursion.

Both students and their families enthusiastically embraced the cluster values project, which demonstrated the power of actively engaging students in values-rich real-life learning.

The project’s focus on Indigenous education saw the dance group workshop with the National
Aboriginal and Islander Skills Development Association (NAISDA) – a unique world-class cultural organisation providing excellence in Indigenous dance and performing arts education and training. As a result NAISDA has offered scholarships to two dancers.

One of the student values teams proposed a multimedia competition and exhibition. This has now become a combined cluster schools event. Students in the team have a greater understanding of ‘respect’ and ‘inclusion’ through conducting workshops with younger students. They have also refined their skills relating to organisation, publication, petitioning, promotion and resilience under pressure. The Landscape Gardening Project has had the effect of increasing students’ engagement in other classes as well as reducing suspension and other disciplinary actions.

The cluster coordinator captured some of the key learnings from this work:

Student-focused cluster activities expand students’ perceptions of the world outside their homogenous, (sometimes) parochial environment, develop self-confidence, provide different avenues for self-expression, widen their life experiences, provide leadership opportunities, and provide exposure to, and opportunity to demonstrate, the full range of values in the National Framework.

However, values education is primarily about relationships. A person’s values determine how they relate to the world. Thus, each individual teacher has the capacity (and responsibility) to demonstrate and explicitly deliver values education to their students … one person can make a difference.
GRIFFITH PRIMARY AND SECONDARY SCHOOLS CLUSTER
New South Wales

Values in Action

Cluster coordinator: David Fox, Griffith High School

Participating schools:
- Griffith High School
- Griffith East Public School
- Griffith Public School
- Griffith North Public School
- Hanwood Public School
- Kalinda School
- Wade High School

UAN critical friend: Dr Peter Grootenboer (to October 2007) and Dr Tracey Smith, Charles Sturt University, New South Wales

KEY MESSAGES

1. Student leadership in the values domain is a powerful method for developing student responsibility, initiative and agency when it is student-led rather than teacher-driven.

2. Values education creates shared goals that can transform individual schools into collaborative networks where previously there has been minimal contact with geographically close schools. As the UAN advisers for the cluster commented, ‘Schools learnt from each other in ways that could not be designed before the project began.’

3. A collaborative values education approach can bring disparate communities together in community-building activities. In this context, values have been characterised as the ‘glue’ that binds communities in shared action.

4. Values clashes or conflicts provide a starting point for school community discussion about ‘whose values’ in consensus-building exercises.

5. Echoing the Unity in Diversity, Merrylands–Guildford, Airds–Bradbury and Melbourne Interfaith clusters, the Griffith cluster reports that values education can provide a common objective ground for discussions about intracultural and intercultural issues.

6. Explicit teaching and modelling of values in intercultural contexts can cut through perceptions of difference and highlight areas of common understanding.
Griffith cluster’s Values in Action project made values education more explicit by bringing the values in the National Framework into the curriculum in a planned way. Project intentions included teaching and modelling values, using a common and shared language within and between participating schools, being consistent in staff approaches to values education and involving the whole community in the values education process.

Significant changes in the ethnic composition of the Griffith community have occurred over the last decade. These changes are reflected in the demographics of the school population. The community currently comprises members of more than 40 cultural groups, making it a unique centre within rural New South Wales. Of these, the most significant in number would be the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander, Indian, Turkish, Pacific communities, Italian, Filipino and African cultures. There is also a growing number of Afghani families with a refugee background. In addition, there is a broad socioeconomic range represented within Griffith schools. While these factors enrich the schools’ cultures, they also pose a range of challenges for schools, in particular the challenge of breaking down the cultural barriers that exist in the community and the schools.

Project activity highlighted and clarified sets of values which reflected the intention and spirit of the National Framework and the Values in NSW Public Schools policy by embedding values into the systems and practices of schools. The UAN adviser working with this cluster noted:

One of the significant markers in the Griffith project was the degree of community building in terms of the way in which individual schools transformed into a collaborative network ... In addition, a shared goal of making values more explicit in schools was identified. This shared goal, once identified, seemed to provide the ‘glue’ that held the cluster together.

This notion of values education providing the ‘glue’ to bring people together around common understandings across and within school communities resonates with a number of other clusters in Stage 2 of the VEGPSP.

The Griffith project sought to establish a cluster framework for these values to be shared and practised in real terms within schools and in the wider Griffith community. Student action groups enabled the schools to lead and participate in a series of community events to highlight the schools’ values and demonstrate commitment to them. These forums were designed to make a significant contribution to effecting cultural change in the Griffith community. This implementation model allowed each school the opportunity to tailor activities to suit local community needs. Although making values more explicit was a goal for all schools, the processes for achieving this goal were experienced in multiple ways.

The project involved a range of separate school-level values projects all designed to address the cultural barriers in the Griffith schools and the broader Griffith community.

As a cluster, the schools organised themselves to meet this challenge by having Griffith High School act as a coordinator of the project that conducted a number of different school-level projects all concerned to address the cultural issues facing the community. The focal points of the school-level projects are outlined in Table 1 on page 59.

Griffith High School used planning and action teams to implement the project. A community advisory group, comprising representatives from many of the different cultural groups in the community, reviewed the school’s values platform.

The school also established three staff teams, responsible for:

• designing and delivering the specific values lessons in the middle school
• undertaking the review of core values platforms and identifying how they might be made more prominent
• exploring ways by which the school could participate in developing community harmony.

A Year 7 student leadership team demonstrated the values within their classrooms and were values spokespersons for their respective classes.
They also acted as a focus group for teachers monitoring the progress of values education within their year group. This focus on student responsibility gave the project momentum and sustainability.

The school also developed and explicitly taught the nature and spirit of the NSW values to all Year 7 students through a specially developed wellbeing program. Each Year 7 class has a one-hour period once per fortnight taught by the year advisor in which the values are examined. Values charts are on display in each Year 7 classroom.

Values education was also made an explicit part of the pastoral care program. Pastoral care involves looking after the general wellbeing of the class and dealing with day-to-day issues, mostly during roll call time. One teacher described the approach in the following terms:

During roll call each day, I encourage the students to engage in a values discussion. I lead the discussion and initially we talked about the difference between passive and active participation. Most students saw participation as 'listening' and 'speaking' during group discussions. Getting all students to participate in a discussion by both speaking and listening was a hard task, but we did achieve quite a good rate of success. Some interesting topics for our discussions about values this year have included responsibility, integrity, caring and respect.

A number of other pragmatic efforts were pursued in an effort to implement the project:

- Students were actively encouraged to demonstrate and live the values in their school and personal lives. Accordingly, they participated in community events such as Anzac Day, the Red Shield Appeal, Clean Up Australia and Riding for the Disabled.
- Faculty head teachers encouraged their staff to teach values in ‘teachable moments’, that is, when they arose in classrooms during scheduled classwork.
- Assembly addresses became a crucial vehicle to communicate the values message. Every assembly included some reference to a key value, which might be reflected in concurrent activities within the school or the community.
- The deputy principal used a ‘talking values’ approach, taking every opportunity to talk values, for example, with the executive when discussing planning, with students when visiting their classes, and with students and parents when dealing with discipline or welfare issues.
- Values forums were used with students in Years 8–9.

Griffith High School reported significant improvements in the culture of classroom learning environments and commented:

Teachers are encouraging students to equate their actions with the values to which they have all been exposed [and] teachers and students are able to talk a common language when discussing classroom management issues.

### Table 1: Focal points of schools' values education projects

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School</th>
<th>Focus</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Griffith Public School</td>
<td>Explicit teaching of values in Stage 3 classes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Griffith High School</td>
<td>Explicit teaching of values in middle school classes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kalinda School</td>
<td>Explicit teaching of values related to the school rules</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Griffith East Public School</td>
<td>Staff development in values education and explicit teaching of values across the school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Griffith North Public School</td>
<td>Social Skills Program</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wade High School</td>
<td>Values education and student leadership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hanwood Public School</td>
<td>Values education and student leadership</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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MERRYLANDS–GUILDFORD CLUSTER
New South Wales

Creating Connections in Diverse Communities

Cluster coordinator: Belinda Guidice, Merrylands High School

Participating schools:
- Merrylands High School
- Guildford Public School
- Guildford West Public School
- Hilltop Road Public School
- Merrylands East Public School
- Merrylands Public School
- Sherwood Grange Public School

UAN critical friend: Dr Katina Zammit, University of Western Sydney, New South Wales

KEY MESSAGES

1. When a critical mass of students are given responsibility and supported by all staff to participate in school policy planning and decision-making processes, they demonstrate increased levels of maturity, critical thinking, engagement and prosocial involvement in the life of the school.

2. Participation in values education projects can provide a safe learning environment for teachers to expand their repertoires of practice through the sharing of strategies and supportive debriefing.

3. Sustained whole school professional learning builds a more vital and engaged school community and should involve the voices of students, teachers and parents/caregivers in genuine partnerships.

4. Teachers who routinely monitor and evaluate the impact of what they teach and how they teach it as part of collegial discussions make substantive positive changes to their content and practice, and grow as teachers and as people.

5. Teachers who start with a values proposition in their curriculum design have a better chance of connecting to students’ lives because the selection of content will be more relevant and engaging.

6. In primary and secondary schools, working as a cluster leads to a greater awareness and understanding of issues relating to transition and the needs of primary-aged students and adolescent learners.
The Merrylands–Guildford Cluster, located in western Sydney and comprising seven local primary and secondary schools, examined the links between quality teaching, the settings and pedagogy for the delivery of curriculum (how one teaches) and values education. Building on the work in Stage 1 of the VEGPSP, Creating Connections in Diverse Communities asked teachers to conduct action research into quality teaching. Schools examined the curriculum from a content perspective (what one teaches), and teachers were encouraged to examine the specific content of their lessons and curriculum programs and how this influenced student learning in terms of values education.

More specifically, the cluster sought to:
- improve school community knowledge, understanding and application of values education
- collate data (as a pre-test and post-test) on school community values across the classroom and school
- explore the link between values education and quality teaching
- provide explicit professional learning on strategies to integrate values education into curriculum and classroom practice
- embed the core Values for Australian Schooling from the National Framework into the curriculum across the schools
- have schools design curriculum units of work or co-curricular activities that explore values across curriculum and classroom practice
- have students increase their understanding and application of values.

The project featured an ongoing professional learning program. The majority of professional learning was delivered by the cluster coordinator to a core staff team of 24 teachers from across the cluster. A number of teams were established at the cluster, school and student levels. For example, a core team of 26 student leaders across the cluster schools received ongoing values education professional learning and then designed and implemented initiatives for the cluster that explored the meaning of values.

The teams informed students, staff and parents about the links and connections between the Values in NSW Public Schools policy, the National Framework and the Quality Teaching in NSW Public Schools framework.

It is particularly noteworthy that while the cluster was committed to including a student voice in all decisions within the project, students were also involved in the project design discussions. Students were actively engaged at all levels of decision making. For example, at Merrylands High School, which has a student population of approximately 730, 250 students participate in formal leadership programs in the school. The depth of commitment to student leadership is further manifested in that student leaders were encouraged to attend staff meetings to contribute to the decision-making processes in the school. The cluster coordinator reflected the effectiveness of this approach by commenting on the increase in student capacities in areas such as confidence, self-esteem, critical thinking, responsibility, motivation and engagement in school life.

The project explored 25 strategies that support values education within curriculum and classroom practice. These included a range of cooperative learning strategies, critical thinking skills, reflective journal writing, narrative, decision-making and problem-solving skills and explicit discussion about values, listening, conflict resolution and social skills learning. Embedding these strategies into classroom and curriculum practice was intended to improve teachers’ pedagogical practice and enhance students’ ability to explore and demonstrate positive values.

Staff, students and parents participated in group work activities that explored the core values of the Values in NSW Public Schools policy in terms of:
- What does each value look like in classrooms? Across a school community? From a student leader’s perspective?
- What do our schools do in values education in terms of policy and procedures, classroom and community partnerships?
- What type of school do we want?
The student team was highly involved in the project’s implementation. This core team of student leaders from the seven schools designed and implemented initiatives for the cluster that explored the meaning of values. For example, episodes from the television series The Simpsons were used to explore positive and negative application of values. Student leaders created a professional learning session on Quality Relationships that they delivered to all the staff in the cluster. They also created a Values in the Classroom DVD and multimedia footage to support other initiatives.

The other core teams were the cluster team and core school personnel team. Collaboratively, these staff members received the professional learning outlined above. It was their responsibility to relay information and professional learning back to each partner school. They were also the staff members who wrote the case-writing examples for their school and participated in action learning. These staff members designed the curriculum or co-curricular units that embedded the core values of the National Framework and values education strategies into curriculum and classroom practice.

The UAN adviser for this cluster noted that:

This strategy provided the means for teachers to embed values education into their units of work and explicitly make links to the national, state or local community values. Students learnt about values in context, not as separate, decontextualised concepts. This authentic learning of values made obvious what had previously been implicit in some of the units.

The cluster devoted a lot of attention to the issue of school climate and improving it. The coordinator designed a school climate survey, which focused staff attention on issues such as ‘How important is …?’ and ‘How evident is …?’ All staff across the cluster, the student leadership team and a sample of parents completed the survey; responses were discussed during professional learning sessions.

To enable teachers to reflect on their own pedagogical practice and share good practices across the cluster, staff took part in a classroom climate exercise, brainstorming the following questions:

- What are the characteristics and skills of successful students?
- What are teachers doing well in classrooms to support students?
- What do teachers need to improve on to further support students?

The cluster case study and UAN adviser reported that as a result of the project, teachers across the cluster now use explicit values education strategies and the ‘backward mapping’ process as a consistent approach to programming across schools. There has also been a discernible development of closer professional relationships among core team members, which has improved pedagogical practice, especially in terms of making the classroom environment more conducive for effective learning. The explicit values focus has resulted in stronger connectedness to students’ lives because the selection of content is now more relevant and engaging.
SHIRE 4 VALUES CLUSTER
New South Wales

Students Building Bridges through Values Education

**Cluster coordinator:** Lynne Edwards, Gymea Technology High School

**Participating schools:**
- Gymea Technology High School
- Engadine High School
- Heathcote High School
- Jannali High School

**UAN critical friend:** Dr Fiona Hilferty, University of Sydney, New South Wales

**KEY MESSAGES**

1. Values education and values clarification activities provide an entry point for addressing or examining issues of perceived cultural dissonance.

2. Student leadership can be a major driver of interschool collaboration expressed through a series of student-led interschool events, such as community values forums, and workshops and drama performances.

3. Teachers need to interrogate their own values and explore how they are expressed in their classroom practice before they can teach values dispositions. It is important not to assume that values are universally understood by all members of the school community.
Students Building Bridges through Values Education from the Shire 4 Values Cluster had two goals:

- to encourage students from the four project schools to meaningfully connect with students from different and diverse cultures
- to facilitate collaboration between student leaders from each school in planning, preparing and presenting a community values forum.

The first goal is significant because each of the project schools is located in the Sutherland Shire – a largely monocultural area of Sydney. The Sutherland Shire comprises predominantly middle-class Anglo-Australians. Much media attention focused on this region following the Cronulla race riot of December 2005, and many of the participant teachers commented at the beginning of the project that their concerns about racial intolerance within the area had prompted their own involvement in the project.

The project built on existing interschool cultural exchange programs. Community harmony was the focus of the exchanges. Students from each school’s leadership group accepted responsibility for organising and conducting project activities.

Students were brought together with the explicit goal of exploring multicultural values, an undertaking that through both content and process promoted authentic learning of social justice values, tolerance, understanding and inclusion among students.

In related project activities, both within and between the cluster school communities, students were given opportunities to gain greater understanding and respect for others by being exposed in a planned way to the many cultures that exist in Australia.

These activities were planned in a variety of ways. A community forum leadership group managed the overall activity at a cluster level. Within each school, a student leadership group provided planning input into community forum and other individual school activities. Some of the activities included whole year-level groups participating in values days. Peer support leaders were involved in values-based activities and different year leadership groups represented the school at special events.

The culmination of this school-based work was a community values forum held late in 2007. The UAN adviser commented on the organisation of the event and on the strength of the student involvement:

The forum itself was chaired and presented by a number of students from each of the cluster schools. The main focus of the night was the National Framework values of respect and tolerance, inclusion and understanding. Students defined what these values mean to them and their school. The school leaders displayed impressive qualities of confidence, assurance and deep reflection in their speeches...

The play told the story of a young girl who became separated from her school friends while on an excursion to Chinatown. The girl’s anxiety at being in such a new environment is soon replaced with excitement as she meets a group of young people from diverse cultural backgrounds. The girl brings her new friends to the Shire to introduce them to her old friends – who initially are cautious and unwilling to interact. The play ends with a message of optimism as new friendships are formed and cultural barriers are broken down.

Through the play, the students humorously challenged stereotypical views of different ethnic groups (for example, that all black men can dance). The play provoked much laughter among the audience but in highlighting the multicultural reality of Australia today it also challenged the isolated and monocultural idealisations of Shire life. Overall, the play was thought-provoking and engaging, and highlighted the need for, and commitment to, change within the community.

While the effectiveness of examining values though a student-written play was undeniable, there are other lessons to be learnt from the Shire 4 Values project. The presentation of values through drama evident in this student event demonstrated students confronting important issues using humour, questioning stereotypes and other values-rich approaches. However, successful, ongoing and sustainable values education practices rely on the whole school community being vigilant and constantly reinforcing values messages.
During the course of the project the cluster began to realise the necessity of putting in place structures to ensure the long-term sustainability of values education in their school communities beyond student-focused events. As the UAN adviser observed:

Some schools have put structures in place that will ensure the long-term sustainability of values education within their communities. This includes the celebration of various days, for example, Harmony Day and Anzac Day … that sustain the language of values. Two schools have gone further by embedding values language into their core welfare and discipline policies.

At a broader school community level, parent and community groups responded positively and reported increased engagement with the some of the issues brought forward through the values education project.

Some student outcomes from project activity included students’ reflecting that they have a new-found respect for teachers – a consequence of witnessing teachers’ genuine commitment to the project and to mentoring student leaders. Moreover, students acknowledge that there was a problem, and that they now have pathways and new understandings to help them address newly perceived issues. As one student commented:

To make real change we must work on a community scale rather than just an individual school effort … by participating in the forum I know how hard my school is going to have to work in this area of respect and valuing others, but I also know that this will be achieved.
Building Cultural Bridges

Cluster coordinators: Pinad El-Ahmad, Malek Fahd Islamic School and Catherine Ryan, Punchbowl Public School

Participating schools:
- Malek Fahd Islamic School
- Arkana College
- Caringbah High School
- Cronulla South Public School
- Punchbowl Boys High School
- Punchbowl Public School

UAN critical friend: Dr Carol Reid, University of Western Sydney, New South Wales

KEY MESSAGES
1. Values education approaches provide a common ground for diverse communities to negotiate what they have in common through a lens of democracy, dialogue and shared action.
2. Information and communication technologies provide a space where stereotypes and myths about cultures can be challenged through person-to-person online communications.
3. Clusters of schools can be brought together to address a perceived problem by using a range of values-driven activities in ways that provide for long-term and sustainable change. Once relationships are established, ongoing conversations can continually loop back to values education and build on shared new learning.
4. Parents play a vital role in legitimising and supporting values education approaches across cultures. When students see the bonds of friendship developing between adults, the power of this active role modelling encourages them to move beyond racial and cultural stereotypes towards greater intercultural understandings.
The Unity in Diversity cluster came together as a result of the Cronulla race riots. The main purpose of the Building Cultural Bridges project was to build relationships between groups in the cluster’s community to improve respect for individual identities and respect for other cultures. The cluster focused on the values identified in the National Framework to resolve conflict and build positive futures for the whole community. As the UAN adviser for the cluster observed:

Values education … is understood here as being central to cultural negotiation, which this cluster has been attempting to unpick through the lens of democracy, dialogue and action … this is because a democratic and dialogic approach was necessary at the level of school staff to overcome considerable emotional effects generated by the Cronulla riot … One of the outcomes, revealed in focus groups with parents and students at the end of the project, is that fear was central. Given this, one of the key aims became geographic; to have students work together on each other’s turf on projects of mutual benefit, that in and of themselves provided the scaffolding for clarification of values.

This notion of place- and space-based racial divides was a starting point for project activity. Project activity was based around four places and spaces: beach space, virtual space, environmental space and cosmopolitan space. The centrality of beach life in Sydney cannot be underestimated. Public transport is linked to few beaches in the Sydney metropolitan region, and Cronulla is one of them.

At a cluster level, five main activities involved all the schools: the Beach Awareness Course, a collaborative website, the Bankstown forum, the Tree Troopers and Gunamatta Bay – A Silent Conversation. A showcase of values education at the Sutherland Shire Community Hall was a culminating event.

In the Beach Awareness Course four schools spent the day on the beach. The beach provided an iconic Australian common space through which values could be mediated. The cluster coordinator saw the activity in the following way:

The first thing our schools did together was go to Cronulla beach for a beach awareness day. This was a fantastic opportunity for students from Cronulla, Punchbowl and [the] Muslim [schools] to meet for the first time. They were able to learn about the beach and how to be responsible at the beach together. This was a really good way of supporting the values our cluster focused on. It was also a really positive way for students, because it made them see how much they had in common with one another. In this particular activity the students shared learning in that they learnt that being responsible and respectful on the beach was in the common interest of all who want to enjoy the beach. It was also the first step in our cluster in teaching self-awareness as well as awareness of others and in that respect students owned the learning as well.

The collaborative website was an intranet website where students could visit one another online and discuss impressions of activities and other issues that interested them. The virtual space encouraged students to challenge stereotypes being presented in the mainstream media. Importantly, the work connected with their lived experiences rather than the more disconnected reports they were reading in the media. As one student said:

I learnt that everyone thinks in different ways … I also learnt that no matter how different a person is you can learn to cooperate with them.

The cluster UAN members and university students from the University of Western Sydney assisted with the development of the website.

The cosmopolitan space of the Bankstown Civic Centre was the location for the Bankstown forum, which brought students together to understand self and others. Students explored their personal, social and cultural identities through music, dance, art, story writing, drama and photography. The values that emerged from this gathering were understanding, tolerance, inclusion and respect. As the UAN adviser shared:

During the day, one of the activities most enthused about was the informal and spontaneous handball tournament that developed at lunchtime while waiting for the lunch to arrive. This reminds us that friendship among children can emerge in the sometimes tiny spaces of shared fun.
The environmental space project was known as Tree Troopers. Tree Trooper day was an environmental program run by Bankstown Council. The activity was designed to raise awareness about local environmental issues and the way they articulate with national and global issues. The program also enhanced responsible active citizenship. The Tree Trooper activity was held near Punchbowl Boys High School.

Gunamatta Bay – Crossing the Bridge, A Silent Conversation was a forum held in conjunction with Gymea High School at Gunnamatta Bay. The purpose of the forum was to provide an environment in which students could reflect on values at a deeper level. Up until this forum there was concern that student interactions, conversations and activities were at a level that may not have overtly promoted reflection on values and how they integrate with real-life, everyday experiences. It is important to recognise that the initial forums and activities stimulated student engagement and connection with lived experiences such as the beach context and cultural diversity associated with the Cronulla riots.

The Gunnamatta Bay forum provided the cluster with insights into how students, parents, teachers and members of the community felt about and related to particular values.

Students engaged in a range of activities which later fed into the ‘conversations’ activity. This was facilitated by University of Western Sydney students who had been trained to conduct focus groups with students in each activity as well as with parents and teachers. The questions asked were: ‘What makes you Australian?’ and ‘What does it mean to be Australian?’ The focus groups enabled participants to share their views and explore the focus values in the context of their personal beliefs and identity.

As a consequence of involvement in the project, teachers report that they are using a common and explicit values language; that relationships have improved between students, and students are generally exercising better self-discipline and have a more genuine regard for each other.

Students are better able to articulate the effect their behaviour has on others. The cluster has also seen some changes in the students who have taken part in the values education interschool activities. Student reflections from Punchbowl Public School after the Bankstown forum show various positive responses to the values activities:

- During the day I met a girl from Cronulla Sth and another from Arkana College who were friendly and funny in the Teamwork session. I also met up with my cousin who attends Arkana College. I later met two girls from Malek Fahd and another from Cronulla Sth who were friendly. I found that we all liked similar things and laughed at the same things no matter where we came from! It was great meeting people and finding we are same.

- I got to know new people at the forum. While some had a different religion to me and went to different schools we were alike in other ways. We had similar ideas, we said the same things, enjoyed the same food and drink. I also got to know their friends and they met mine.

Another noteworthy outcome from the Unity in Diversity cluster reflected upon by the cluster coordinator was that teachers in the cluster seem to be taking a greater interest in values education as a way to frame the content they teach and the way they teach it. At Malek Fahd Islamic School, for example, programs in the primary school and the high school history, society and the environment faculty have been redeveloped to incorporate values into content by building on citizenship activities. In the primary schools, the values have become a planning framework for curriculum and individual units of work.
VALUES NEWCASTLE
New South Wales

Explicitly Teaching Values in Newcastle Government Primary Schools

Cluster coordinator: Wendy Cheek, Booragul Public School

Participating schools:
- Speers Point Public School
- Booragul Public School
- Fennell Bay Public School
- Hamilton North Public School
- Jesmond Park Public School
- Kahibah Public School
- Mayfield West Public School
- Merewether Heights Public School
- Wallsend Public School

UAN critical friend: Dr Kerry Dally, University of Newcastle, New South Wales

KEY MESSAGES
1. Values education promotes positive interpersonal relationships across the school community and is closely linked to quality teaching.

2. Structured reflection periods for all staff and students create better learning environments – classrooms where students are settled and more attentive and teachers communicate calmly and clearly in a common values language.

3. Teacher understanding of values approaches grows over time: from a perception that values education is about teaching interventions designed to change and improve student behaviour to a more personal and deeper values perspective that raises questions about what and how teachers teach and leads to transformational practice.

4. Developing values-centred schooling requires a global multifaceted approach that includes engagement with all members of the school’s community, a negotiated common values language and repetition, reinforcement and explicitness in all aspects of school life.
Values Newcastle comprises nine primary schools located in the suburbs of Newcastle and Lake Macquarie. The school populations represent a diverse range of cultural and socioeconomic backgrounds. Schools adopted their own unique styles of implementing values education, while following a common set of processes and practices.

The cluster’s project, Explicitly Teaching Values in Newcastle Government Primary Schools, set out to:
• place values at the core of the schools’ cultures
• develop a consistent values-based language and set of expectations within each school for describing standards for student behaviour
• focus on promoting good interpersonal relationships in the belief that these relationships would promote and support quality teaching practices
• raise expectations within all the schools about patterns of student and staff behaviour, student and staff leadership, and the profile of the school in its local community.

The cluster adopted a whole school approach and wanted to make values explicit in curriculum content, school practices, assemblies and parent interactions. As the UAN adviser noted:

The … cluster planned to adopt the West Kidlington (UK) primary school model where children would be taught values explicitly in three-week cycles. After the first term of implementation, the cluster decided that three weeks was not long enough to cover each value and a five-week cycle was adopted in most schools. This meant that two values were covered in each school term. The values cycles commenced with whole staff meetings at each school to develop commonality of understanding and consistency of approach. This was reinforced by whole school assemblies and information provided to parents through school newsletters and display boards.

Supporting staff with appropriate professional learning, the project implementation took on multifaceted approaches and included structured sharing and reflection sessions. Some of these strategies were:
• the creation of values education staff teams within each school
• regular face-to-face meetings between the cluster principals and/or staff teams

• interschool visits by teachers to observe classrooms and teaching practices in other cluster schools
• a combined staff development day for all the staff of the cluster schools
• student forum days for small groups of students from each school
• active involvement of parents in the project.

These focused and ongoing interactions among staff, students and families provided a collaborative and supportive network among the schools. This network played an important role in maintaining momentum, commitment and enthusiasm for the project by providing a forum for solving problems, sharing ideas and resources, and celebrating success.

As the project unfolded, more specific intentions emerged at the individual school level. Four schools decided to adopt a specific values focus during their daily or weekly student assembly structures with the intention of making student classroom behaviour consistent with the values. Others decided they wanted to immediately provide situations that allowed students to demonstrate values through their actions.

All schools involved in the project set about making a commitment to affect positive change within their school communities beyond ‘word speak’, that is, they wanted to transfer knowledge about values into action or ‘lived values’. Their common purpose was to ‘see and feel’ change from within the schools in terms of students doing more than ‘talking the talk’; they wanted students to actually ‘walk the talk’.

Others identified positive student-to-student relationships as an immediate focus area in particular areas of the school – playgrounds and toilet areas. Mayfield West Public School identified a specific values education target:

• to create positive behaviours/values in specifically identified problem areas on the school campus.

All schools gradually came to the position of trying to prioritise the development of a consistent values-based language to be used by all in the school community. Bit by bit all schools developed more purposeful, positive classroom
environments with a view to measured improvement in student learning outcomes. The UAN adviser for the cluster commented on this aspect of the project:

The responses to the staff, student and parent surveys all 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 ... 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.’

Another feature of the cluster was the common reflective practices employed by both students and staff during the course of the project. Many of the schools introduced ‘reflection times’ – periods of quiet contemplation where students spend a few minutes sitting in silence and reflecting on what they have learnt throughout the day, their own actions or on positive encounters they may have had with their peers or teachers. This reflective practice relates to values education in that it provides time and a common process for students to take the values learnings to a new and deeper personal or individual level as part of their everyday routine.

Teachers reported that this practice resulted in calmer and more peaceful classrooms, and helped students to be more settled and attentive at school.

The schools also introduced ‘reflective journals’, in which classes record incidents where students have 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 are also being used to develop students’ higher order thinking skills, such as analysing problems, understanding and debating different perspectives, and developing solutions. As the UAN adviser observed:

The student surveys revealed that since learning about values, 96 per cent of students understood why values are important and 97 per cent of students try to be a better person (at least some of the time). Thus, the reflective practices are 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.

All schools in the cluster reported a variety of positive changes at the conclusion of the project. Some of these accounts cited:

- a decrease in poor behaviour referrals in some schools
- reports of more respectful conversations between students
- observations that students demonstrated a growing capacity to incorporate the values when discussing their own and others’ behaviours – as a consequence, for the younger students, the need for behavioural intervention dropped markedly
- reports of quieter and more focused assemblies with greater respect shown by all members of the school community
- reports that learning about ‘responsibility’ had resulted in students being more independent in their approach to tasks and that students appeared to be working more cooperatively and taking greater pride in their work.

The work of the cluster made impressions on key project personnel. A teacher noted:

I thoroughly believe in the value of an explicit approach to values education and, even though we might have to give it a lot more time before seeing significant changes in the children’s behaviour, I am sure we are on the right track!

The cluster coordinator at Booragul Public School enthused:

I have been thrilled by the changes and new directions for our individual school, and have found this project to be one of the most important and influential things I have ever done as an educator.
WESTPEERS CLUSTER
New South Wales

Linking Values Education to Peer Support and Storyfest

Cluster coordinator: Dianne Franks, St Joseph’s Primary School

Participating schools:
- St Joseph’s Primary School, Grenfell
- St Francis Xavier Primary School, Lake Cargelligo
- St Joseph’s Boorowa
- St Mary’s Primary School, Young
- St Mary’s War Memorial School, West Wyalong

UAN critical friend: Dr Helen Russell, Charles Sturt University, New South Wales

KEY MESSAGES
1 School clusters located in rural and remote areas undertaking values education approaches benefit from the network of support provided by jurisdictional officers, university mentors, statewide and national briefing sessions, and experienced values education mentors. The flexibility built into the action research model underpinning the Stage 2 projects further encouraged stepped and supported learning for these school communities.

2 While schools and teachers may begin their involvement with values education processes from a position of established practice, in this case peer support, as professional learning takes teachers further into values education concepts and processes, their learning and engagement deepens and changes.

3 Successful values education approaches such as peer support lead to students developing leadership qualities that transfer to other aspects of their school life. In this cluster, students initiated service-learning activities around the values of social justice, care and compassion, and service and citizenship. Successful values education approaches foster the development of the whole child.

4 As with a number of other clusters, the power of narrative through stories, in this case Storyfest, provided opportunities for students to demonstrate the value of empathy. Students were able to articulate empathy and link faith-based values with school values.
WestPEERS decided to incorporate their Linking Values Education to Peer Support and Storyfest project with an existing well-established peer support program. The existing peer support program in all participant schools had the support of staff, students and parents. Schools wanted to integrate the changes, not to radically alter their existing programs, especially the values inherent in their school policies. However, as the cluster further developed its project, the focus shifted to implementing Storyfest, a student-centred teaching strategy designed to support and empower students.

Storyfest is a technique of storytelling that:
- develops knowledge and understanding of the Values for Australian Schooling
- explores the values implicit within each story
- allows students to experience the power of story to shape an appreciation of the values.

Storyfest is a gathering of students and teachers for storytelling purposes. In preparation for the Storyfest, students learn storytelling conventions, including attentive listening, use of voice and other strategies for engaging an audience. Students use a variety of genres, including parables, fables, folktales and modern picture books. They are encouraged to read a selection of stories before choosing the one they want to deliver. They then make a story map followed by a short sequence of writing to help them learn the story. In this way the students are encouraged to make the story ‘their own’ and to take on its messages about key values. In the Storyfest process the students engage other students not only in the story but in values education by discussing the values-rich messages of the story.

A specialist in Storyfest technique visited all the schools in the cluster, and professional development supported teacher engagement with the technique. The work began with a gathering of staff from the whole cluster. The Storyfest specialist conducted activities, games and reflection based around the power of story to hand on values.

A number of the clusters and schools in Stage 2 have connected to the power of story as a vehicle for drawing upon students’ imaginations and tapping into a sense of fun and enjoyment. Story is a powerful scaffold for communicating complex and sometimes abstract values concepts in a way that children can more readily relate to.

Schools undertook a six-week storytelling unit culminating in a Storytelling Festival and Celebration Ritual/Liturgy geared to the outcomes from religious education, English and other key learning areas. The unit was also linked to roles of the lifelong learner and values across the curriculum. It involved the Year 5 and 6 students, their teachers and parents. The main task for the children and their teachers was to ‘tell a story, with a positive life-giving message, to an audience’. Ideally it was to be a published story such as a fable, scripture, fairytale or contemporary fiction.

In English, a number of narratives explored a range of themes, including freedom, tolerance, difference and justice. The week before Storyfest, school peer support groups discussed how a good audience helps the storytellers during the festival. They developed posters to remind the audience about how a good audience behaves, by asking questions such as, ‘What is your responsibility as an audience?’

Storytellers worked in teams to develop seating plans to accommodate the age and needs of young audiences. Students decorated the storytelling theatre and decided on the order of the stories and how to greet the visitors to the Storyfest.

Some student comments about the experience included:

My story about the lion and the mouse tells us that small friends can be powerful allies. This is very important because we must respect others regardless of size or age.

The moral in my story was justice and fairness and that one good turn deserves another. If we didn’t have justice and fairness in the world people would be sad and angry.

My story had the message that we must use what we have wisely. I think this is important in the world.
because we must use and conserve the world’s resources well. We have to make a world where people can stand up for what they believe.

Teachers reported a range of changed student and school community behaviours, including heightened student self-confidence and students being able to make connections between values in their stories and the values identified in the National Framework.

This cluster is characterised by its remoteness, and those involved in the project commented on its community-building aspect. As Storyfest brings together students, staff and families, the project has the potential to be an ongoing and sustainable service-learning approach. Significantly, the Storyfest approach connected strongly with the religious education curriculum in this cluster of Catholic schools.

As the UAN adviser observed:

The power of story in values education was used effectively through Storyfest and the potential for narratives to provide an opportunity for empathy and wearing someone else’s shoes. The non-threatening nature of the narratives (ie the people in the stories were not people we knew) and in some instances children used animal stories to demonstrate values. Students were not only required to tell the story but were also asked to critically analyse the narrative. This required higher order thinking and an understanding of the feelings of others. Children were hence better able to explain things in terms that both they and teachers understood.

WestPEERS began their involvement with the project with the express purpose of building on what they saw as a strong values base. However, the cluster coordinator commented on a number of unexpected outcomes from the project, which indicated that staff at the school gained new and deeper understandings about values education. Some of these were:

- a greater understanding of emotional cognition demonstrated in relationships between younger and older students
- independent engagement of all students in the learning process and school activities
- closer relationships between staff and staff, and between staff and students
- confident and quality relationships with all members of their school and wider community
- parents used the values language in many situations (eg the canteen lines and reading helpers)
- the values education project stimulated topical conversations about values issues locally, nationally and globally
- discovering the power of story to bring about transformation in a student’s understanding of values
- greater competency in the use of the metalanguage of values.
FERNY GROVE CLUSTER
Queensland

Growing People, Changing Communities

Cluster coordinators: Lorelle Holcroft, Samford State School and Sue Wilton, Prince of Peace Lutheran College

Participating schools:
- Samford State School
- Prince of Peace Lutheran College
- Grovely State School
- Patricks Road State School

UAN critical friend: Professor Peta Goldburg, Australian Catholic University, Queensland

KEY MESSAGES
1. Teacher professional learning in the values domain is as much about increasing teacher knowledge, skills and repertoires of practice as it is about facilitating the personal growth of teachers as people and as values education role models.

2. School communities will focus on the values in the National Framework in a manner that reflects the needs of the school community. This will nearly always involve selecting particular values and working with them in localised programs to create meaningful conversations.

3. Values education is a curriculum concept that is best infused across all key learning areas and school policy and practice.

4. Children will best engage in learning when they feel the learning offered is personally relevant and when values education links to their way of making meaning in their worlds.

5. Values education approaches build student resilience and self-esteem by creating a sense of belonging through a network of positive relationships with caring adults.
In *Growing People, Changing Communities* the Ferny Grove Cluster focused on improving school values education practices by scaffolding values education learning through the philosophy in the classroom pedagogy, and drama in the classroom. The cluster reflected on core school values in all key learning areas and embedded values in school action and language. Professional learning in the cluster provided personal development opportunities for all teachers.

The project adopted a whole school implementation approach and operated at four levels: classroom, school, community and across-cluster.

At the classroom level, it involved philosophy in the classroom pedagogy to explore core values through a process modelling respect, tolerance and inclusion. In drama classes, philosophical questions and values conflicts were explored more deeply through interactive theatre.

At the school level, the language of values was introduced at staff meetings, school assemblies and chapels. As well, schools developed a shared understanding of what core values look like in action at the school.

At the broader school–community level, staff and community attended courses about relationships, self-awareness, pastoral care and spirituality, and engaged in Funworks, a community forum program.

As part of the professional development program, staff members received mentoring with a trainer in their classroom before attending a second training day. The mentoring involved a trainer from Buranda State School visiting the school, watching teachers facilitate a philosophy session in their classroom and then providing constructive feedback. All staff reported the mentoring experience as a positive one for their own learning.

Other professional development activities included team-building exercises and some Life Be In It games, such as team relays, stage jumping and trust games. All schools reported positive feedback from staff in response to these activities. The reasoning behind this type of teacher-focused activity was a recognition that teachers needed to build their emotional wellbeing and positive relationships in their workplace in order for them to be able to self-reflect and to model the core values in their classroom. This is ongoing work for teaching staff, which is reflected in the availability of free personal and spiritual development courses for all staff through the project.

The cluster project documentation reported that a set of cultural changes occurred in the schools. Children enjoyed the freedom to explore some of the ‘big questions of life’ and this enjoyment led to an increased motivation to listen to each other and be able, when the opportunity arose, to present ideas of their own. Many teachers reported children more actively listening to their peers and showing respect for the thoughts of others. As children participated more and gained confidence in the process, they also opened themselves up to a deeper ‘knowing’ of each other. ‘Intentional listening’ was cultivated to encourage this process.

Children began to practise compassion and respect for each other — not because they were taught that this is the right thing to do, but because they were beginning to enjoy hearing the creativity of each other’s ideas, and feel the value of receiving such respectful attention themselves. In practice they were *experiencing* the mutual benefits of a values-centred classroom.

Occasionally, during a philosophy lesson teachers reported that ‘a ripple of wonder’ was heard around the group as a student presented an idea that was clearly creative and new. The process, therefore, inherently encouraged and built respect and care for others. Aside from the pedagogy of philosophy in the classroom itself, the subjects discussed through philosophy lessons also aimed to develop values in an intentional and explicit way.
One of the lessons conducted by almost all classes in the philosophy project was around the issue of stealing. Through the discussion of the idea as presented in a story, children openly explored the issue of stealing and whether there could be any situations where stealing might be the right thing to do. Teachers reported that, rather than fostering a morally flexible view of stealing, this discussion revealed that children had a deep understanding of the ways that stealing hurts individuals and groups in our communities. They have a more fundamental grasp and appreciation of the notion of honesty and trust through open-ended philosophical engagement than they might have had through the more didactic imposition of a rule such as ‘you should not steal’.

Using philosophy in the classroom, children also explored topic areas around civic rights, religion, multiculturalism, and community roles and responsibilities. The methodology creates a safe and supportive learning environment for such issues to be deeply explored. As children explored their own ideas and challenged the ideas of others they assumed ownership of the values as they wrestled with thought-provoking and challenging questions and formed their own conclusions in the context of their own lives and experiences.

Another positive outcome of the philosophy in the classroom approach reported by the cluster is the increase of potentially ‘teachable moments’ for values education. Teachers reported many instances, both inside and outside the classroom, of being able to show children clear examples of ‘what respect for each other looks like’ and how children can learn to express their freedom and individuality in appropriate ways. Moreover, some teachers claim improved thinking skills and improved relationships in the classroom as a consequence of being involved with the project.

Cluster schools reported less fighting and bad behaviour. They observed that students began developing the ability to talk through their differences in a more respectful way.

One teacher reported on the sort of subtle changes in student behaviour that indicates internalised values learning:

Philosophy is starting to impact outside the classroom when children are talking among themselves. For example, over lunch I overheard two girls talking about a movie that they had seen and the way they were ‘respectfully’ disagreeing impressed me. Their conversation went something like this: ‘I think the movie was good because ...’ The other student responded with: ‘I agree with you but I also think it was good because ...’

The cluster concluded that philosophy in the classroom is a very effective pedagogical tool for teachers to use in values education. The pedagogy nurtures the professional learning of teachers in that it develops stronger relationships with students and, sometimes, with parents.

In the cluster’s final reflections on their project, participants provided observations on a number of values education implementation matters. These included:

- Professional development should aim to facilitate not only the increase in knowledge and skills of the educator, but also nurture the emotional, social and spiritual development of the inner person of the teacher as values education is dependent to a great extent on the person of the teacher.
- Values education is fundamentally about the way we live together – it’s about relationships.
- Values are communicated and experienced through such things as the availability of pastoral care and support in different forms for all members of the school community.
- Values education is enhanced by personal reflection on learning and relationships. Values education teachers are able to make everyday links between classroom learning and life, meaning and purpose.
- The teaching of higher order thinking and skills of reasoning are strongly linked to the development and ownership of values.
- Teaching children to be reflective, self-aware, and mindful of their world is central to producing internal personal change.
- Story is a powerful vehicle for helping children identify values in everyday life and explore paradigms for making choices in conflict situations.
- Humour and fun are integral in values education, interwoven into the human experience of the school community.
- Creative arts, including the visual arts, provide the opportunity for students to express what they believe and to explore their own identity, gaining insight into their own inner emotional world.
• To be most effective, values education should involve the whole school community. Parents, staff and other community members need forums for engagement in the articulation and implementation of values ideas.

• While values are transferred to children through modelling, values education needs to also include explicit statements of beliefs about the world (world views), and explicit links need to be made from these beliefs to the way schools and classrooms operate.

• A quality education (including values education) should include units of work aimed at teaching about interpersonal relationships, communication and conflict management skills.

• Values being fostered by schools should be observable in all the processes, systems and physical environments in the school, including processes of regular evaluation.
TOOWOOMBA NORTH CLUSTER
Queensland

Values Alignment Project

Cluster coordinators: Dan Feehely (until December 2007) and Debbie McKay, Toowoomba State High School – Wilsonton Campus

Participating schools:
- Toowoomba State High School – Wilsonton Campus
- Harlaxton State School
- Wilsonton State School

UAN critical friend: Dr Marian Lewis, University of Southern Queensland, Queensland

KEY MESSAGES

1. When values approaches drive pedagogy, teachers concentrate in the first instance on establishing positive and respectful relationships with their students. This transforms the teacher and the learner and contributes to more confident, trusting and caring relationships.

2. Successful values education approaches produce closer teacher–student relationships and involve confronting challenges for teachers, as curriculum content is not the sole focus of attention in the development of the whole child.

3. Values education acts as a change agent for teachers who feel disengaged as they can experience a renewed appreciation of the power of positive relationships. As one teacher reflected, 'Values education has resurrected my belief in why I am a teacher, the importance of being a teacher and the importance of being a good teacher.'

4. The values and approaches to values education promoted in the National Framework can be integrated successfully into existing school programs, such as Innovative Designs for Enhancing Improvement in Schools. Values education is not an additional item on the curriculum agenda.

5. Parent and school partnerships are essential in values education. However, teachers need to drive change at a personal, classroom and whole school level to embed and sustain the changes.
In 2003 the three schools in the Toowoomba North Cluster commenced a two-year formal engagement with IDEAS (Innovative Designs for Enhancing Improvement in Schools) with its process of whole school revitalisation. Through IDEAS, each of the three schools developed a pedagogical framework consisting of a shared vision (underpinned by explicit values) and a school-wide pedagogy. The cluster saw its Stage 2 Values Alignment Project as a logical continuation of their IDEAS work, as it provided a way of building on what had already been achieved, in particular extending the work on values.

The cluster’s vision was to inspire IDEAS schools to engage in journeys of self-discovery which lead to sustainable excellence in teaching and learning. IDEAS was used by schools as a framework for exploring the Queensland State Education – 2010 agenda and school planning and accountability requirements. Details about it can be found at www.education.qld.gov.au/staff/development/ideas.

The schools were unified by the shared objective of implementing strategies to support values education in three main ways:

- through a whole school approach which sought to connect values to all aspects of school life, especially by actively seeking to work with parents
- through infusing values education into key learning areas by improving teaching repertoires and ensuring that teachers were using a common language and values-rich content
- by clearly articulating target values that were identified in local communities.

The five-year values journey undertaken in this cluster demonstrates how values can form the centrepiece of teacher professional transformation. Other reported effects include broader community relationships and stronger and more positive relationships between students and teachers, and teachers and teachers.

Harlaxton State School’s particular project focus was to create a values-based pedagogical framework consisting of a vision, explicitly articulated underpinning values and a school-wide pedagogy. Through engagement with IDEAS, Wilsonton State School and Wilsonton Campus (8–10) developed a pedagogical framework underpinned by explicit values.

It was known that the Access Program needed to deal with content such as sex education, drug education and bullying (these are systemic requirements). It was also known that these issues would link to values education. A more subtle and complex understanding that emerged over time was that while drug and sex education and bullying comprised the teaching content, values education was the process. As the cluster coordinator said:

Values education is about pedagogy and not necessarily about the content that you are teaching.

The four Wilsonton values are the organisers for the Access Program. An example of the process teachers followed in developing values-rich curriculum is that while the content of a session may be conflict resolution, the value being highlighted is success and recognition. As the values facilitator for the cluster clarified:

What you have to do is make sure that in the series of lessons there is specific and ongoing reference to values ... the explicit nature of those Wilsonton values is good, but the focus has to return to the pedagogy again.

The cluster arrangement was used to enable the schools to meet regularly, support each other, share ideas (as well as various burdens) and use the creative pressure that comes with the need to report to each other to further the projects in each school.

A whole school approach was used to advance the project. Each school sought staff and community participation in common ways. The issues raised by the values education project – the explicit teaching of the Values for Australian Schooling – were discussed in staff meetings and aligned with existing curriculum arrangements. All schools cross-referenced the IDEAS school values with the values identified in the National Framework, a process that added meaning to both sets of values.
While the cluster was pursuing similar goals, individual schools used different approaches to suit the specific needs of their local contexts. For example, at Harlaxton State School, the school community contributed to developing its ‘whole child values education approach’. After an initial audit of the informal values approaches used by teachers, it was found that values were being taught inconsistently in an ad hoc manner. Some teachers drew on a variety of available health and wellbeing programs to address issues such as student resilience and self-esteem.

Staff recognised that the curriculum would be enhanced with the addition of planned, explicit teaching of values. Thus Harlaxton State School developed a whole child vision, and its school values – resilience, respect and relationships – were used as umbrella headings for units of a values education approach that ran weekly in pastoral care groups.

Central to this staff understanding of the importance of a consistent approach to values education, was their ongoing professional learning over the course of the project. As the UAN adviser for the cluster noted:

> These teachers recognised the importance of both reflection on practice and professional conversations with colleagues – and working in cycles, to allow for refinement and ongoing development of the program. The success of these teachers further reinforced the IDEAS notion that teachers are the key to successful change.

At Wilsonton State School, strong leadership from the cluster coordinator resulted in professional learning sessions demonstrating the links between Stages 1 and 2 of the VEGPSP. This included providing an overview of the Stage 1 findings and helped to chart the course of Stage 2.

The school’s first action was to complete a year-level values audit of the school curriculum. From this it was apparent that some year levels focused heavily on values while others did not. At the end of 2006, the staff revisited the school’s IDEAS core values of teamwork, seeking opportunities, meeting challenges and success and recognition, and tried to align them with the Values for Australian Schooling through a matrix. All staff addressed the key question: How will we move from discrete values education lessons to support cross-curricular values approaches in all key learning areas? Collegiate groups worked together to identify the values in their classrooms and how they fitted into the matrix. The matrices were collated and a whole school matrix produced. This resulted in a detailed snapshot of the school’s core values and what they looked like in classrooms throughout the school. This strategy provided direct involvement of all staff and built ownership of the process.

Toowoomba North actively sought to work in partnership with parents. Over time, and after a series of initiatives such as parent forums, newsletters and inviting parents into the school to join the values education pastoral care committee, relationships of greater trust and depth grew. As the UAN adviser observed:

> There was a significant shift in understanding during the values education program … initially, the stated aim had been … to reflect the values of the community. This was problematic – the communities were diverse and there could be no assumption that common values were held or that they should necessarily be reflected by the school. It became clear that working with the community in values education was a more subtle project requiring more than reflecting the values of the community. Being explicit about the values that had been collaboratively identified – and working with the community to deepen understanding of what these might mean in action – was perceived to be a more significant endeavour.

The cluster reported some key changes in student–teacher relationships. As more teachers became familiar and comfortable with the values approaches being used in the cluster, they were able to make adjustments and improvements to their teaching. The UAN adviser referred to some outcomes in this regard:

> A December 2007 teacher survey indicated that not all teachers were making the link between what is in their planning document and their pedagogy. It was suggested that a teacher may include values in their planning, and in their lessons – but if they don’t see the significance of this, then the students pick up the message that this is not important. It was also observed (within the school) that where teachers were seeing the importance of establishing...
relationships and of respecting their students – this was reflected in the behaviour of their students.

In general, the teachers who were not embracing the values of ‘relationships’ and ‘respect’ were experiencing the most difficulty with their students’ behaviour. Where teachers are embracing values education as something that is important and to be embedded in practice – their pedagogy is enhanced. Where teachers perceive that the problem lies with the students (a deficit approach), the quality of teaching does not improve. This was a crucial insight.
OXENFORD CLUSTER
Queensland

Philosophy in the Classroom and Beyond

Cluster coordinator: Val Faulks, Oxenford State School

Participating schools:
- Oxenford State School
- Gaven State School
- Arundel State School
- Biggera Waters State School
- Upper Coomera State College (Prep – Year 12)

UAN critical friend: Dr Christine Tom, Bond University, Queensland

KEY MESSAGES
1 Philosophy in the classroom can be used to develop and implement a learning framework based on ethical reasoning that is inherently rich in values education concepts.
2 Inquiry-based learning is enriched when teachers systematically develop students’ deep thinking and analytical questioning skills.
3 Values education through philosophy in the classroom teaches attentive listening and helps students understand and accept different points of view and perspectives. The values inherent to the pedagogy reinforce and foster key values in the National Framework.
4 Values dispositions must be actively modelled by teachers in their teaching practices.
5 Values dispositions must be explicitly taught through meaningful dilemmas and scenarios to ensure that students have a common understanding of the dispositions and are able to see and understand what they look like so they can apply them in their lives.
6 While philosophy in the classroom develops students’ understanding of the big questions, students are at different levels and sustained teaching is required to move understanding into action.
Oxenford’s Philosophy in the Classroom and Beyond was a predominantly primary school based project. A number of the Oxenford cluster schools were participants in Stage 1 of the VEGPSP. The cluster sought to implement philosophy in the classroom to deepen students’ understanding of the Values for Australian Schooling as described in the National Framework.

At inception, the project sought to set up a Gold Coast North Philosophy in the Classroom cluster with shared professional learning and a network of support and exchange of ideas. As the project unfolded, however, activity was less cluster-based and more targeted to specific school contexts.

All schools in this cluster wished to use philosophy in the classroom as the key pedagogy for embedding values into an integrated curriculum. This reflected both the initial work undertaken in this area in Stage 1, as well as a long-term engagement with this approach to pedagogy and curriculum.

While philosophy in the classroom was a prime focus in Stage 1, each of the schools in this Stage 2 cluster undertook their own localised approaches to values education which reflected a range of issues, including a deeper understanding of the connection between values education and philosophy in the classroom, changing school demographics, explicitly embedding the values across the curriculum and actively teaching children prosocial values dispositions. The approach also fostered students’ learning skills. As one school coordinator expressed it:

Through the implementation of philosophy in the classroom we aim to improve reasoning abilities of students, improve the quality of student thinking about important matters and examine ethical issues and having students become more thoughtful and responsible with an understanding of behaviours the Australian society considers worthwhile. Philosophy in the classroom is a powerful tool through which students can engage with and reflect on the [values identified in the National Framework].

Gaven State School staff saw the connection between thought or notion and action. They wanted to teach the meaning of individual values so that students could move from a theoretical understanding of a value to values lived in action. This meant making the abstract concrete and attaching it to meaningful experiences in students’ lives. As one teacher put it:

We are hoping that once we teach the values of respect, understanding and tolerance, and show the students through role-play and literature, they will be able to act in a way that demonstrates the values we are reinforcing. If we teach that respect involves using manners, then we are hoping to see the students using their manners in reflection of what they have learnt about being respectful.

Biggera Waters State School recognised the importance of a strong leadership group to oversee and monitor their values education approaches. The school formed a Values Education Committee and developed an action plan, which included a timetable for professional development and training, and a description of project activities for students, staff and the community.

The Biggera Waters State School committee also created a learning network that involved linking with a teacher at Upper Coomera State College, who acted as a mentor and critical friend, shared expertise in the form of good practices and resources, and established an internal support mechanism in the form of an internal weekly emailing and discussion list called Philosophy Corner.

At Oxenford State School, the project goal in Stage 2 was to continue the school’s implementation of philosophy in the classroom. In Stage 1, the focus was looking at values as behaviours and how the values identified in the National Framework were exhibited as behaviours during a community of inquiry. In Stage 2, the focus moved to the whole school environment using the learnings from the community of inquiry to discuss how the values can be seen and explicitly nurtured. A greater emphasis on parent participation was another feature of Stage 2, as was a series of activities directly involving explicit teaching of values through structured multidisciplinary approaches.
Some of the projects undertaken across the school at Oxenford are described in Table 2.

The Oxenford UAN adviser reported a range of positive outcomes from the Oxenford cluster:

- Students have become more reflective thinkers in values education discussions, and are able to:
  - use reasoning to base ideas and opinions
  - reflect on their behaviour
  - develop and ask better questions
  - participate with more confidence in philosophical discussions
  - better problem solve
  - verbalise thoughts and opinions
  - empathise more with others
  - listen effectively to their peers and teachers.

- Philosophy in the classroom also develops a sense of peer support and reinforces positive interactions between students and the community.

- Teachers in the cluster report that they are now using a philosophical community of inquiry approach to teaching values and have expanded their pedagogy to include values education in other areas of the curriculum.

- They also report that the values project has enabled colleagues to gain a deeper understanding of students’ opinions and beliefs, and that this has given them the opportunity to reflect more effectively on their classroom and teaching practices.

**Table 2: Oxenford’s values education projects**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year level</th>
<th>Values focus</th>
<th>Year-level project activity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Years 1 and 2</td>
<td>Doing your best</td>
<td>Doing the best for the environment by planting a garden in front of the classroom, caring for it and keeping it litter-free. Created a tile mosaic which says ‘Doing your best’.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Years 1 and 2</td>
<td>Fair go</td>
<td>Created a banner depicting ideas on ‘fair go’ developed in class discussions. Years 1 and 2 students were paired to design a square of fabric for the school banner, which includes photographs, drawings and words that depicted ‘fair go’.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Years 1, 2 and 3</td>
<td>Care and compassion</td>
<td>Each student made a basic hand-stitched teddy bear and decorated these bears with messages about caring for others and showing compassion.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year 3</td>
<td>Integrity</td>
<td>Produced a series of short plays on the theme of ‘integrity’.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Years 3 and 4</td>
<td>Honesty and trustworthiness</td>
<td>Made a hessian craft display – students at the centre are surrounded by speech bubbles with statements that reflect the values of honesty and trustworthiness in their lives.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Years 4 and 5</td>
<td>Respect</td>
<td>Wrote and produced a dramatisation with a message about ‘respect’.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year 6</td>
<td>Understanding, tolerance and inclusion</td>
<td>Buddying with Years 1 and 2 to teach them to dance and then presenting to the dance to parents on Open Day.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Years 6 and 7</td>
<td>Responsibility</td>
<td>Developed a ‘responsibility’ kit for each student consisting of photos and artefacts that symbolise the value. Students wrote their own plays with the theme of ‘responsibility’. Other students worked in pairs to create a visual display of the values.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Years 5 and 7</td>
<td>Freedom</td>
<td>After class discussions on the concept, the group created plaques with messages of ‘freedom’ to place in a newly constructed Anzac garden.</td>
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</tbody>
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PULLENVALE ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION CENTRE CLUSTER
Queensland

Storythread: A Transformative Tool for Delivering Quality Values Education

Cluster coordinator: Dr Ron Tooth, Pullenvale Environmental Education Centre

Participating schools:
- Pullenvale Environmental Education Centre
- Brookfield State School
- Chapel Hill State School
- Fig Tree Pocket State School
- Greenbank State School
- Kenmore South State School
- Middle Park State School
- Pullenvale Primary School
- Upper Brookfield State School

UAN critical friend: Professor Peta Goldburg, Australian Catholic University, Queensland

KEY MESSAGES
1 Propositions or statements of intent about how a values education approach will be explored in a cluster provide a focus for research, unify thinking and create dialogue in ways that build sustainable values education communities. A number of clusters in Stage 2 used a proposition to spotlight the intention of their work.

2 As well as professional learning undertaken in small group discussion, teachers in this cluster were mentored one-on-one by the project coordinator. Structured elements of this interaction included narrative inquiry interviews, reflective journals, folios and focused dialogue. This type of personalised professional learning is a model that offers powerful transformational opportunities.

3 Storythread is a powerful means of self-expression, exploration of others and critical thinking about the big issues that shape human history and experience. When students learn through story and connect to narrative, drama and place, they become engaged in emotion, mind and body, or 'head, heart and hands'.

4 Story, when set in a pedagogical framework, engages students with both core curriculum content and connects them to important values concepts, such as care and concern for the environment and the people who inhabit it, empathy, responsibility, historical understanding and social consciousness.

5 An essential message from this cluster experience is the power of 'attentiveness' or close, engaged observation. Attentive listening allows teachers and students to make deep connections to place, each other and themselves. More than this, deep attentive listening, implemented in planned values education activities, builds positive relationships and communities.
Pullenvale used an existing constructivist pedagogy based on environmental narrative. Storythread: A Transformative Tool for Delivering Quality Values Education explored the use of the Storythread teaching and learning framework to teach values effectively across the key learning areas in the collaborating schools.

A core idea of the project was to use Storythread to help teams of key teachers across the cluster move through a values transition that would lead them into a deeper understanding of the value of sustainability as a focus for their own teaching and for student learning.

In its simplest form, Storythread is a way of telling stories about people and their strong connections to place that Pullenvale Environmental Education Centre (PEEC) staff use with schools that visit the centre. Each Storythread invites teachers and students to become part of a story journey where they are asked to think about themselves and the world in new ways as they participate in problem solving within the context of an interactive story. This allows them to engage with story characters as they work together in teams to resolve issues that model life situations. In this way, Storythread allows individuals to deal with quite complex social and ecological values and concepts within a narrative structure as they become engaged in the interactions of real and fictional story characters in real settings.

By using Storythread in this way, the values project provided opportunities for teams of teachers in each of the eight Pullenvale cluster schools to explore how Storythread might be used to deliver values education in classrooms and possibly across whole schools. The project used an action research approach to test the following key proposition:

When committed and skilful teachers use the ‘nesting model’ to describe the interconnected nature of reality, and then apply ‘attentiveness’ and ‘story’ as vehicles for exploring this model and the values identified in the National Framework in action, then they significantly improve their chances of growing sustainable values communities in schools.

The project fell naturally into three phases of action.

**Phase one: creating a space where a values education community can grow**

This preparatory phase was designed to engage the schools in the project and establish procedures and mechanisms for successfully delivering the project.

A key initial technique for achieving engagement was a series of ‘dialogue workshops’ predicated on the assumption that participants needed to talk through issues and in the process develop insights about, give shape to and form commitment to the project.

Another major area of initial development was the collaborative preparation of a detailed and sequenced plan of how the PEEC team would actually work with teacher teams in cluster schools as part of the total project, particularly how they would support those teachers as part of their school community in developing, implementing and reflecting on their values units.

It was agreed at this initial stage that a fundamental tenet of the project was the need for the school leaders themselves to continue to be involved in the process of values education at both a personal and strategic level. The first workshop therefore invited school leaders into ‘a dialogue’ about the nature of values education and how they might influence more directly what was happening in their schools.

Teacher workshops were also a key strategy for successfully implementing the project. The workshops were times that the whole project team participated together and provided a critical point for maintaining a sense of unity and common purpose over the 18-month project. Many teachers commented on how important this workshop was for them in gaining an understanding of what the project was and what it might mean for them as teachers.
Phase two: using Storythread to design and implement values units that aim to develop sustainable values communities in classrooms

Teachers worked with PEEC mentors to design, write, implement and evaluate new values-based units in the belief that these units would act as powerful exemplars of how values education can be central to classroom curriculum implementation across the key learning areas.

Drama specialist teachers from PEEC provided key teachers with support in their classrooms. This was a specialised and additional service provided by PEEC to ensure the up-skilling of these teachers in a variety of Storythread drama strategies, including deep listening and attentiveness.

PEEC teachers gave considerable thought to how to best support this process while also being conscious of the fact that they had a major role in capturing the story of the unit from this inception stage. In light of this, they designed and creatively prepared a folder to be presented to each teacher for them to store moments of their units in action.

Phase three: writing and publishing a series of ‘school unit stories’

These stories captured the essence of the journey taken by individual teachers and their students. Some of the main insights from the project include:

- The nesting model (sense of self, then respect for others, then respect for place) is a powerful metaphor for values education principally because it provided a common language. In many classrooms the nesting metaphor gave teachers a common language for talking about values. The metaphor simplified the process by providing a single concrete image or symbolic reference point – a ‘nest’ where individuals felt valued, protected and safe.

- Teachers found that by identifying this common language they were able to emphasise a positive relational approach that really worked in most situations.

- Attentiveness is a core values skill. A key tenet of the Storythread project is that if a person or a community develops the ability to be attentive to other people, and to the world around them, then their capacity to value, appreciate and even love will grow. In this project the terms attentiveness and deep listening are synonymous. Each requires students to sit silently just watching what is happening in natural spaces, or maybe listening to others and even their own inner thought.

- Story is a powerful vehicle for values education. Story gave teachers a way to engage students at the beginning of their values journey. It allowed them to hook students straight into values discussions. Introducing values in this way generated a feeling of adventure that excited children. Many students were so captivated by the story that teachers had no problem engaging them in deep values reflections right from the start.

There was a realisation that what teachers were dealing with in a combined Storythread and attentiveness method was a powerful new pedagogical approach based on direct experience, observation and inquiry. This is what excited and energised teachers in this project.
SUSTAINABLE VALUES TOWNSVILLE CLUSTER
Queensland

Values in a Sustainable World

Cluster coordinators: Anthony Ryan and Patricia Duffy, Townsville Central State School

Participating schools:
- Townsville Central State School
- Garbutt State School
- Magnetic Island State School
- Oonoonba State School
- Railway Estate State School
- Rasmussen State School
- Townsville State High School
- Townsville West State School
- Thuringowa State High School

UAN critical friend: Dr Angela Hill, James Cook University, Queensland

KEY MESSAGES
1 The approach adopted by the cluster builds on the ‘key elements and approaches that inform good practice‘ outlined in the National Framework, and notes that good practice incorporates the key elements suggested as part of this framework (pp 6–7 of the National Framework).

2 Teacher development is vital to the successful implementation of values initiatives. A useful scaffolding model to direct this teacher development includes the following elements:
   - focusing on a curriculum vision
   - enacting powerful, active pedagogies
   - designing rich assessment tasks that promote student reflection as well as technical competence
   - the development of a strong conceptual base to contextualise values education work.

3 Assessing values education is problematic when approached from a traditional core curriculum key learning area perspective. However, switching the focus to an assessment of learning using assessment rubrics that add a values dimension to the aspects of learning based on key learning areas creates deeper assessment conversations.
The Values in a Sustainable World project aimed to expand on the successful implementation of the Stage 1 project by deeply embedding the values from the National Framework into the curriculum. Units of work on sustainability were also developed within this project. The Sustainable Values Townsville Cluster moved beyond its concentration on peer support during Stage 1 to more comprehensive values education approaches across all aspects of school life.

The approaches relied on teacher development in the following areas:
- focusing on a curriculum vision
- enacting student-centred, active pedagogies
- designing rich assessment tasks that promoted student reflection as well as technical competence
- developing a strong conceptual base to contextualise ‘values education’ work.

The project’s focus was on developing curriculum-based models founded on UNESCO’s interlocking model of sustainability to provide a framework for teachers to develop units that allowed students to take responsibility for future sustainability in local, national and global contexts.

Initially, the schools investigated how a common curriculum framework could be used as a vehicle for values education. The main objective was to embed the notion of sustainability into day-to-day activities of the schools through a values education approach. Sustainability was considered to be a good model for more than just the environment. The schools were not solely concerned with environmental sustainability but also addressed other concepts such as ecological, social and other notions of sustainability. With this agreement, the schools then proceeded with individual projects.

One school started by working the UNESCO sustainability model and the National Framework into their planning pro forma. However, this was not a simple process and involved a cultural shift and change of direction for many teachers. Teachers were concerned that a concentration on sustainability would distract from teaching the core curriculum.

In one school, a local wetlands unit was developed using a common curriculum framework that focused on sustainability. A number of people and agencies were involved in the project, such as the Queensland Wetlands Program, Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority, James Cook University and Townsville City Council. By involving these local agencies, the school engaged the wider community and students began to understand the relationship between the government departments and local authorities responsible for the health of the wetlands. Importantly, students were involved in a range of out-of-school activities as the unit unfolded, such as canoeing and water testing.

A key issue the teachers faced in creating the units was ensuring that they were engaging students in more than just activities. They wanted the units to not just provide information, but to challenge students’ higher order thinking, introduce them to critical thinking and encourage them to ask questions for themselves.

While individual schools in the cluster focused on their own projects, schools within the cluster and outside of the formal cluster worked on shared projects as well. The COME HOME – Breathing House Exhibition involved three diverse schools, all within ten kilometres of each other: Townsville Central State School (an inner city school with students from diverse cultural backgrounds), Garbutt State School (an inner city school with a large number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students), and Stuart State School (a small rural school).

This whole school, community arts based project aimed to develop a sense of self and connectedness for the students that would assist them in managing their lives positively and safely while being involved in and supported by their community.

Most importantly the COME HOME – Breathing House Exhibition was about children connecting to their elders in a meaningful way. Over eight weeks, a team of eight artists from the local arts community and interstate worked with the children and local and interstate artists to transform a mid-suburban house into a
community wonderland representing the relations of young people to special elders in their lives. Ceramics, poster painting, collages, drawings, sculptures and snippets of interviews with students formed an interactive sound installation which was displayed in a local house. The house was open to the whole community and over five thousand people attended this living display of artefacts that connected students to special elders in their lives.

A key learning from the Stage 2 project was the importance of a whole school approach, and how this can mean an array of smaller projects springing from teachers looking at their curriculum content, practice and making changes to what they teach and how they teach it. The project asked teachers to educate the whole child with the attendant values dispositions and skills to allow them to participate as effective local, national and global citizens. The four sustainability curriculum organisers of environmental, ecological, economic and social sustainability allowed teachers to focus clearly on this goal.

At Rasmussen Primary School, teachers said that the project helped them make their teaching: real-world, real-life and they now embed values into the curriculum, not as optional add-ons.

Two project teachers from another school teaching a unit that focused on human rights had their classes approach businesses about funding to make a school pack to send to other countries. According to one of the teachers:

The students have shown immense interest in the topic, independently creating logos and developing business cards.

The teacher was so overwhelmed by their responsiveness that she began to question the techniques that should be employed to monitor such growth in students. She also began to question her more formal classroom teaching as a result of seeing the way the students engaged with business people.

Another teacher pointed to the importance of relationship building in successful teaching:

I implemented the unit last year, but I’ve noticed that the students in my class this year have not embraced the topic as much. This has led to discussions among school staff regarding what is different this year, whether the students are just interested in showing their values in different ways, are they perhaps more interested in the environment than care and compassion towards people? On reflection, I feel that I have not actually developed the depth of relationship with those children as yet.

Another insight from Rasmussen Primary School was that involvement in the project has produced a new school ethos:

Staff are outlining that this is a very exciting time for the school as they are beginning to live the vision that was discussed years earlier. It is not just work on a paper, but a whole shift in the school community towards a more peaceful ethos.

Several cluster schools pointed to the way embedding the values into the curriculum has affected students:

The project led to an audit of the curriculum framework with a view to embedding the values. Students have become involved in international projects in embedding the curriculum units, and were so engaged in their unit ‘Speak out – Make a difference’ that they have become proactive in changing some school organisation. Staff noted observable changes such as a calmer school with more focused learners.

At one of the high schools, however:

The culture of separateness has also presented an issue within the project. People who are in English and SOSE work well together already, but there is a slight reluctance or lack of ability to see the way to come together as a group of four. Basically, this is unfamiliar ground for all involved but the teachers are very willing to engage in and work through it. The enthusiasm of staff has enabled the project to maintain momentum. Also at the same school where the project focused on water management staff have noticed a behavioural change in the water use practices of the students and the next step is to consider transference to other classes, particularly in the lower levels.
CROSS BORDERS CLUSTER
Northern Territory, South Australia and Western Australia

Online Environments Creating Sustainable Schools through Values Education

Cluster coordinator: Mark Sparvell, Victor Harbour Primary School

Participating schools:
- Victor Harbour Primary School, South Australia
- Mataranka Primary School, Northern Territory
- Birdwood High School, South Australia
- Chrysalis Montessori School, Western Australia
- Spearwood Primary School, Western Australia

UAN critical friend: Emeritus Professor Robert Crotty, University of South Australia, South Australia

KEY MESSAGES
1 Information and communication technologies can deliver successful values education approaches across distance and cultures to bring new and different understandings and perspectives to students and teachers in a variety of rural, remote and metropolitan settings.

2 A values education process that explores values propositions as a starting point for learning is a useful scaffold for developing a discourse and vocabulary to support student cognitive development. When students can clearly see a purpose for learning that connects to what they believe and understand to be important in their lives, more sustained and meaningful learning takes place.

3 Relating to a values education community of practice and having easy access to values education research findings and current theoretical developments is vital in fostering consistent, strong and supportive values education leadership.

4 Professional learning in the values education area, as well as imparting new teaching and learning strategies to teachers, can lead to the reassessment of ethical, professional and interpersonal behaviours on the part of teachers.
The Cross Borders project, *Online Environments Creating Sustainable Schools through Values Education*, embedded values in an environmental curriculum that had sustainability at its core. This was based on the premise that values cannot be taught in themselves, but rather are learnt within carefully constructed contexts that are designed to allow students to interact with those values.

Each of the participant schools in this cluster designed micro-projects within the area of environmental education. All projects were linked by the key proposition: how can we pursue an explicit values education agenda with an environmental education for sustainability perspective?

This cluster was unique in that it was represented by schools from three states and territories across Australia: South Australia, Northern Territory and Western Australia. The characteristics of the participating schools are their remoteness, the diversity of their student cohorts and the cross-jurisdiction make-up of the schools.

A common theme drawing these schools together was the UNESCO sustainability framework as a curriculum organiser. The cluster used the Centra distance communication system which offered a range of real-time video technologies to bring students together for values discussions in an online classroom.

Centra is a real-time, web-based learning software incorporating tools for lesson delivery, professional development and meetings. It features voice-over-IP capabilities, a shared workspace environment and an intuitive user interface permitting live conversations as well as text chats. It is freely available to all South Australian teachers through the Department of Education and Children’s Services. The services provided by the department include building teacher capacities in e-learning technologies and professional support materials.

Virtual classrooms afford geographically isolated schools the opportunity to share teacher expertise, bridge isolation and bring intercultural perspectives to remote sites.

The Cross Borders cluster coordinator conducted professional development for teachers on how to use the technology. Teachers then brought together student online communities from participating cluster schools in virtual classrooms to work with values-rich dilemmas.

For example, students were brought together to discuss the issue of fairness. Using diverse teaching strategies, classrooms firstly conducted lessons with their classes about fairness in a range of contexts. Using Centra, classes from the cluster schools were connected to one another. The moderator, in this case the cluster coordinator, then guided students through a discussion about the concept of fairness and how it is demonstrated in their daily lives and in the rules of the school and broader community. The moderator then challenged students with a dilemma which progressed their understanding of fairness to a new level by having them think more deeply about the concept. Rather than there being the usual class group, students were exposed to a bigger discussion involving a greater range of perspectives. This discussion then formed the basis of ongoing teaching and learning in individual classrooms.

The power of this online environment for the conduct of values education approaches was apparent to the cluster UAN adviser:

> Despite the initial difficulties the Cross Borders cluster has achieved some outstanding results. These outcomes and reflection on the factors that formed the cluster have delivered remarkable information. The cluster has something to say to schools in remote areas. It has something to say to schools that use or would like to use innovative online technology in order to broaden student horizons. For schools where there is an emphasis on the environment and ecology, the cluster shows that this curriculum area can be greatly enhanced by using this curriculum as a mediator for teaching values.

As well as schools coming together for cluster projects using Centra, individual schools also conducted environmental projects to suit their local contexts. For example, Birdwood High School, South Australia, explored economic and environmental sustainability. Its Youth...
Environment Council connected the values in the National Framework to the UNESCO sustainability framework.

Victor Harbor Primary School in South Australia, on the other hand, focused on its local marine environment. Chrysalis Montessori School, Western Australia, combined Montessori philosophy and practice with modern pedagogy. The Montessori curriculum explicitly espouses environmental awareness and promotes responsibility for global ecological imbalance.

As echoed in the Pullenvale cluster, learning about the natural environment should take place in the natural environment. Students’ appreciation of learning about the environment is heightened when they are exposed to values propositions that provide a moral compass for students to refer to when adopting values-centred environmental dispositions.

It is also evident that students in this cluster formed a growing self-knowledge of their world locally and globally.
E-SCHOOLS: YORKE PENINSULA CLUSTER
South Australia

Creating Futures through Values and Sustainability

**Cluster coordinators:** Michelle Hawthorne, Port Vincent Primary School and Beth Faulkner, Stansbury Primary School

**Participating schools:**
- Port Vincent Primary School
- Edithburgh Primary School
- Stansbury Primary School

**UAN critical friend:** Emeritus Professor Robert Crotty, University of South Australia, South Australia

**KEY MESSAGES**

1. Shared leadership assisted this cluster with common understandings about values education, whole of cluster community and meaningful values action.

2. In a cluster characterised by schools with small cohorts of students, values education forums and activities provide a vehicle for students to share, exchange and debate a diversity of values and opinions.

3. Students own and make strong connections between values education and behaviours that they see as useful in their everyday lives. As one student put it, ‘We don’t need school rules. We should use our values. They are the rules for life.’

4. A most significant change in this cluster is a cultural shift from perceiving school rules as regulators of student behaviour to focusing on school and community values and restorative justice as key drivers in developing self-knowledge and self-discipline in students.

5. Teacher reflective practice that focuses on the whole child rather than the transfer of key learning area curriculum content leads to transformed teacher practice.
The E-Schools: Yorke Peninsula Cluster was established initially within the South Australian Sustainable Schools Program. The sites share common visions and values and have undertaken collaborative projects over the past few years. These have included student forums regarding sustainable practices, staff professional learning related to pedagogical practice, and values projects in the areas of community history and environmental education.

In the Creating Futures through Values and Sustainability project, a set of values was developed at each site, using collaborative and inclusive practices through student and community consultation. At each site values were aligned with the National Framework.

Parent feedback within the cluster acknowledged that one of the strengths of small schools is the opportunity they provide for safe and supportive learning environments. On the other hand, challenges in this context include lack of social interaction with peers and an absence of opportunities to build resilience in students.

Staff undertook professional learning using the Values for Australian Schooling Kit and allied resources. The cluster also held values education forums at school, led by student representatives and an outside facilitator. The aim was to develop common understandings of sustainability and associated links to values education.

A major project focus was the ‘kids teaching kids’ approach to sharing learning. This approach was an acknowledged part of the community capacity-building strategy. Students chose to use a rainbow as a symbol for the forum. As one student said:

Rainbows, like values, exist but can’t be touched; you just know they are there. ... Rainbows mean a promise ... Rainbows are part of creation stories and link environment and rules for living.

The community manifesto that arose from the ‘kids teaching kids’ forums led to environmental actions at sites throughout the remainder of the project. It also firmly established links between values and environmental sustainability.

As a cluster, staff set out to identify links between values and pedagogy based on a key cluster focus question:

What teaching and learning strategies will enhance community capacity building and achieve a shared vision of sustainability?

In order to address this question, the cluster examined how it built relationships with students through the explicit teaching of values, and how it supported teachers to reflect on and change their pedagogy and further develop positive attitudes and practices to support sustainability.

One of the key activities was to align the values in the National Framework with the UNESCO Educating for a Sustainable Future framework. The product of this exercise is reproduced in Table 3 on page 97, and demonstrates how local, national and global goals can become a focus for whole school values education planning.

Multiple year levels in each grade were characteristic of these small schools. Students were therefore very responsive to the transformation occurring within the school, and to whole school approaches to teaching and learning.

The schools believed that an inquiry process would be the most appropriate pedagogy to work with students towards a values education approach to the UNESCO sustainability framework. As a cluster, the schools undertook a values audit and were supported by the values education contact officers from the South Australian Department of Education and Children’s Services (DECS). The purpose of this was to give each site some initial baseline data from which they could assess progress as the project unfolded.

For the first two weeks of school in 2007 and 2008, the cluster conducted two weeks of focused values activities. These activities sought to engage school communities in explicit site-based classroom practices aimed at engaging students, developing their social skills, enhancing their sense of responsibility in intercultural, local, national and global contexts,
and building their resilience through inquiry-based learning activities.

At Port Vincent Primary School, for example, staff, community and students were involved in determining a Site Learning Plan. Values were adopted as the umbrella under which this plan now operates. Staff planned a Building for Success start to the school year as an extension of the Bounce Back and Well Being Framework programs. The program also included developing the students’ Well Being Ambassadors project, individual resilience and cooperation skills.

Students and staff participated in a values audit to determine their level of awareness, understanding and use of values in a range of both school and broader contexts. They were asked a range of questions both as a group and individually. The report provided the school with a guide to the students’ understanding of values and their relationship to learning and schooling.

After this rich values activity, units of work were developed that focused on environmental sustainability in the local Yorke Peninsula area. Units developed included:
- Monitoring of Coobowie inlet with District Council of Yorke Peninsula
- Examining ecological footprints: alternative energy
- Habitat (including monitoring of species)
- Tourism and impacts of humans on the area
- Comparisons: built and natural environments.

Groups undertook monitoring of the Marina and Reef Watch activities and forwarded results to the Conservation Council of South Australia. Units of work relating to the biodiversity of the Gulf St Vincent were developed. Some of these have been shared with teachers at a Southern Shores conference. From these units of work, students became more aware of the wellbeing of others and of impacts on environments.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>National Framework for Values Education in Australian Schools</th>
<th>UNESCO: Educating for a Sustainable Future</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Fair go</strong></td>
<td>Participation: being a proactive and productive individual and group member; contributing to the ecological and social wealth of the community and the nation; active participation in decision-making and democratic processes. Participation also implies the need for inclusive systems and processes that promote equity and enable students to become advocates for their local environment and communities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Care and compassion</strong></td>
<td>Care: planning and acting with concern for the wellbeing of self, others and all species; respect for self and others; a commitment to principles of social justice; and opposing prejudice, dishonesty and injustice.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Responsibility</strong></td>
<td>Responsibility: being accountable for your actions (as individuals and in groups); resolving differences in constructive, non-violent and peaceful ways; contributing to society and to civic life; taking action for the environment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Integrity; Honesty and trustworthiness</strong></td>
<td>Critical thinking: promoting, supporting and undertaking critical reflection on systems, assumptions and values.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Doing your best</strong></td>
<td>Excellence: pursuing the best practice possible in moving towards sustainability; striving for the highest personal achievement in all aspects of schooling and individual and community action, work and lifelong learning.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Understanding, tolerance and inclusion</strong></td>
<td>Cooperation: committing to work together to achieve common goals; this requires negotiation.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
There have been a number of outcomes from the work in the cluster. As a teacher commented:

Students have been very positive about their involvement in cluster activities and have been able to sustain relationships as they have worked in the same groups each time we meet.

Another notable outcome was the perception that student cluster leaders developed confidence, and willingly undertook leadership roles. For example, one student from each school presented at a Twilight Values Seminar, facilitated by a values education contact officer from DECS in South Australia. The students negotiated their presentation with school coordinators, communicated via email, articulated the programs at each site and at cluster level, and answered questions confidently from 80 teachers who were present in the audience.
EDMUND RICE MINISTRIES CLUSTER
South Australia

Engaging Youth and Promoting Values: An Integrated Service-Learning Approach

Cluster coordinators: Vince Fleming and Lynne Moten, Rostrevor College

Participating schools:
  • Rostrevor College
  • Saint Paul’s College
  • Christian Brothers’ College

UAN critical friend: Emeritus Professor Robert Crotty, University of South Australia, South Australia

KEY MESSAGES
1. Service learning can to be supported by integrated values-rich curriculum content across key learning areas.
2. The values identified in the National Framework can be effectively married with the Heart Values as set out in the Edmund Rice Education Australia Charter and with other values of the Catholic faith tradition.
3. While values are intrinsic in the Catholic ethos and more specifically in the religious education learning area, values education can also be successfully infused across the curriculum to provide another lens for students to explore values concepts and their own contemporary world.
4. When students, through a variety of values-driven teaching and learning activities, understand the experiences of others they can develop empathetic character.
5. Creative values-driven curriculum design can effectively engage middle years boys with learning that speaks to their immediate and parochial concerns, as well as with learning that draws them out into the wider world of national and global issues.
The broad intention of the **Engaging Youth and Promoting Values** project was to integrate into the mainstream curriculum, on a shared basis, the service-learning programs already running separately in the cluster’s three secondary Catholic boy’s schools. Service learning within the cluster was described by Lynne Moten, Service Learning Coordinator, Rostrevor College, as:

The boys (the schools involved are single sex) are encouraged to assist and stand in solidarity with the poor and marginalised in our world, and to be aware of and respond to social justice issues.

Service learning takes place in the three colleges as part of an outreach program of the Religious Education and Retreat programs within the schools. By Year 11 the students are required to complete 50 hours of service within a wide variety of organisations. Every second year, some staff and students travel to India to be directly involved in quite specific social work and extend the service-learning notions located in the school ethos.

One of the main purposes of the project was to foster a culture of innovation in values education across the cluster by bringing elements from the social justice ethos of the schools into the middle years studies of society and environment (SOSE), English and religious education curriculum.

According to the UAN adviser for this cluster:

The good practice achievement of this cluster is that the *National Framework for Values Education in Australian Schools* has been utilised in such a way as to link the service-learning framework and the curriculum.

The three schools focused on different social justice areas, and wrote explicit values-rich units in English, SOSE, and religious education. The topics chosen were child and slave labour, environment protection (particularly water management), and refugees. The units sought to develop students’ skills in researching and gathering information as well as empowering them to make informed decisions and take responsibility. To do this, teachers employed various teaching strategies and approaches. The cluster case study reported that the project provided ‘an excellent vehicle for the sharing of resources and expertise’ and ‘to enhance values education and integrate delivery and assessment across disciplines’.

The purpose of this work was to develop in the students an increasing awareness of social justice through focusing on the values of compassion, care, social inclusion, justice, charity and empathy, and to explore these outside the ‘pigeonhole’ of religious education and so ‘create more holistic experiences for students’.

The processes used in the project included mapping the values of the *National Framework* to the other values criteria of Catholic faith traditions, engaging staff in professional development in interdisciplinary teaching, and developing appropriate learning resources. At Rostrevor College, the integrated social and religious education subject was relatively new and teachers were grappling with fully integrating the subject areas. Values education approaches provided a new way for teachers to infuse values learning through contemporary issues across a range of learning areas other than religious education.

Arguably, faith-based schools maintain values approaches through particular religious teachings and belief systems and through traditions. The values education project offered these Catholic colleges the opportunity to examine values approaches through a different lens. As the UAN adviser put it:

While it has been assumed, since Edmund Rice schools are Catholic, that these values have been taught ‘anyway’ as part of religious education, this project has highlighted the *National Framework* and presented an opportunity to name these values in a different way. They align beautifully with the Catholic faith and, more specifically, with the ethos and Charter (Heart Values) of Edmund Rice schools.

The middle school staff from the cluster came together to plan, develop, document and provide resources for units of study that integrated service learning into English, SOSE and religious education. These teachers wrote the units and conducted training for staff at their own schools. One of the purposes of this was to enable all middle years teachers to come to be actively involved in the project.
An example of a unit of work that demonstrates the integration of values education into an interdisciplinary middle years curriculum is the unit on the novel *Parvana* by Deborah Ellis. This novel tells the story of a young girl in Afghanistan struggling during the years of oppression under Taliban rule. Teachers used the novel across the three learning areas of English, religious education and SOSE, and explored Australian, Afghan and United Nations perspectives on approaches to women’s and refugees’ rights, equality, responsibility and empathy.

The rich values-based integrated unit of work brings together powerful curriculum design elements that make the content of the unit highly engaging for middle years students. Whereas an English approach may have helped students to understand issues and analyse plot and character in the book, the added dimensions of exploring the values within the story, the study of Islam, researching the Australian experience of refugees and the role of the United Nations enriches the unit with values perspectives set in local, national and global contexts.

The UAN adviser remarked further on the cluster curriculum development process:

The curriculum writing was not a necessary part of service learning. It was an add-on. However, it had some unexpected effects. In the first place, it brought the three schools involved in the cluster together. They had a joint focus and they had the purpose of sharing curriculum materials. What eventuated was a shared experience and the outcomes have become available for use across the cluster.

What had previously been confined to a specific aspect of the school experience, the service learning, and what to some extent had been seen as separate from the mainstream schooling, now became embedded in the main curriculum stream because of the shared curriculum writing ... The new structure was entirely new and moved in its own direction. It was not specifically service learning. It was now a recognisable form of values education.

Through pre- and post-unit surveys, the cluster reported students’ deeper thinking and critical reflection. Some teachers reported many of the participating students exhibited an increased empathy to disadvantaged groups and the environment. This empathy was fostered through a variety of pedagogical approaches that provided an opportunity for students to better appreciate the situations of others. These included the use of simulations, exploring contemporary dilemmas and provision of opportunities for social action campaigns.

The cluster case study also claims that some students have developed a greater sense of self. This manifested in ‘noticeable changes in attitudes, behaviours and actions’. During the delivery of the three units at the three schools, teachers reported that many of the students involved acknowledged verbally and in writing that they felt more aware of their own values and their place in society in relation to others locally and globally. As the UAN adviser for the cluster observed:

As with most ethical dilemmas, the students contemplated answers which may not have been immediately available ... In particular, the responses of students show clear examples of self-knowledge. The students have distinguished what intentions are present in a situation in which people have been exploited. They have reflected and rejected those intentions. They have come to a real self-knowledge and have proposed alternative solutions. This is a considerable outcome.
SEA AND VALES CLUSTER
South Australia

Making a Difference: Living Our Values in Local, National and Global Contexts

Cluster coordinator: Marion MacKenzie, Seaford 6–12 School

Participating schools:
• Seaford 6–12 School
• Seaford Rise Primary School
• All Saints Catholic Primary School
• Moana Primary School
• Noarlunga Primary School

UAN critical friend: Emeritus Professor Robert Crotty, University of South Australia, South Australia

KEY MESSAGES
1 Capacity matrices can be incorporated in teaching and learning units to enable teachers and students to add a values dimension to all key learning areas. This values dimension in the secondary school setting is manifested in students taking a proactive responsibility for their learning and actions.

2 Communities of practice emerge when teacher professional learning is both a process and a practice deeply embedded in the school ethos.

3 Distributed leadership in values education drives transformational whole school change.

4 Disengaged secondary-aged students respond to values education approaches when they are connected to real issues in the students’ lives. As the coordinator said, learning for this age group needs to ‘engage or enrage’.

5 Students in a values-rich environment take more responsibility for their own and others’ learning and behaviour. Teachers are therefore more able to target assistance to specific needs groups in more focused classroom environments.
The aim of the Sea and Vales project, **Making a Difference**, was to skill teachers through professional development in the delivery of values education and to provide opportunity for staff to work in teams to develop and to begin implementing civic and environmental projects through the curriculum and through co-curricular activities.

There were two levels to this project: one at a cluster level, which served as a think tank and mutual support structure; and another at the individual school level, where schools developed and implemented particular localised interpretations of the project. Cluster representatives met regularly to share and support one another with any issues the cluster was facing.

A major focus of the cluster’s work was professional development. Initially, this took the form of all schools participating in a cluster closure day. One hundred and seventy staff attended this session, and heard Associate Professor Terry Lovat deliver the keynote address. Ms Joy De Leo from the Asia Pacific Network for International Education and Values Education facilitated and unpacked how to incorporate values education into teaching and learning. In the afternoon each school worked in teams to develop learning units across all learning areas and action plans to implement values education.

Across the cluster, 54 staff representatives from each school and a neighbouring school attended a two-day session with Margaret Bishop on Constructive Pedagogies. This professional development was used to further skill staff in the creation of rich learning tasks that have a community or environmental focus.

Individual schools embarked on localised interpretations of the project. At Seaford 6–12 for instance, units of work including a developmental values matrix were designed in all subject areas.

The Seaford 6–12 staff also developed a consistent set of behavioural expectations for collegial support based on the school values.

The Student Representative Council worked with a cartoonist to interpret the school values on posters to be displayed around the school. A community-based project involving the local council and one of the cluster primary schools was undertaken. A school vision statement was developed that involved whole community consultation.

Evidence of values can be seen across all sites in banners, posters, newsletters and elsewhere. Action plans were developed for each class, implementing a rich learning task with a values basis themed with ‘respect’. Rubrics for students assessing development in learning focused on ‘responsibility’ for self were developed. Parent forums entitled Living our Values depicting and demonstrating the school values were held with students. The cluster coordinator enthused about the impact of using visuals to reinforce the values work in the cluster:

> The visuals … have been described as the ‘easy stuff’ – erecting the signs, the posters in classrooms, the postcards home, writing Values into Site Learning Plans and Student Behaviour Management Policies, Values Awards at assemblies and so on. What they have provided in our schools is, by working through explicit activities, a common understanding and language of our individual school’s values. They are at every turn and in all sorts of forms to refer to and to be reminded of. Staff, students and parents use the language of values to communicate with one another, improving the quality of dialogue and the building of more positive relationships at all levels.

> Doing just this can have a huge impact on enhancing cohesion within a school and across the cluster as students, families and community partners transition from one site to another.

Cluster staff explicitly taught the value of respect by focusing on self-respect through health, including establishing Healthy Eating Guidelines and being involved with the school vegetable patch. It was also achieved through the Environmental Waterwatch Project, undertaken with three local schools and the local council.

Eighteen care groups in the middle school and two at Year 10 (approximately 500 students) implemented a lifelong learning book *Tomorrow’s Citizens Today*. The book was adapted from Dr Jennie Bickmore-Brand’s work. Students
selected community service activities from the book that they could do at school, home or in the community.

At Moana Primary School, staff concentrated upon a more pragmatic approach using multiple strategies to involve the students in a variety of school-based and community activities. Some of these included:

- A long-term joint community spaces project was designed between Moana Primary School, the Seaford–Moana Neighbourhood Centre, and the City of Onkaparinga, which would enable the building of relationships between administration, staff, students and families at school; the management, staff and clients of the Neighbourhood Centre; Families in our Community; and the City of Onkaparinga. The dream was to design and actualise a shared community space that would develop from joint consultations with all parties involved.
- A peer group project involved interaction between buddy classes and residents of a local retirement village, specifically through hosting a concert and morning tea at a cluster school.
- Aboriginal Reconciliation Week, NAIDOC Week, and other culturally important occasions were celebrated.
- Respect and responsibility were specifically taught. The social education teacher played a pivotal role in ensuring the consistent delivery of programs, and the consistent use of common language.

All Saints Catholic Primary School nominated a values coordinator to guide the staff through the background of the project, who it involved, the cluster project itself, professional development opportunities and, most importantly, discerning what values education means for a Catholic school. Activities included:

- focusing the school on respect – ‘for ourselves, others and the environment’
- year-level Learning Communities met regularly to discuss their work in relation to class mission statements and to work on their projects.

The Seaford 6–12 School provided a useful model for how student agency can be improved by adding a values spotlight to existing curriculum. Seaford 6–12 used capacity matrices as a mechanism for mapping curriculum outcomes in ways that are useful, clear and values-rich for students. Capacity matrices enable students to track the progress of their learning in terms of knowledge, skills and values. The cluster coordinator described this as self-directed learning. It is an effective method of teaching students how to reflect on what they learn and link it to active citizenship.

The Seaford 6–12 School reported various patterns of improvement since it became a values school. Teachers commented that they perceived noticeable changes at the school since the values education had become a whole school approach:

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.

The UAN friend for this cluster observed the linkages between values education and good practice in teaching and learning, in that values education:

- provides some form of vital leadership for the program
- promotes core ethical values as the basis of good character
- promotes core values as the basis of all aspects of school life
- embeds these core values in a value system, a structure that itself can take many forms
- has staff commitment to model and teach values within this structure
- has active parent and community participation in the values program, with their participation being drawn into the structure
- provides opportunities for students to practise values in and beyond the school and therefore beyond the boundaries of the structure.
THE BROADER HORIZONS CLUSTER
Tasmania

Expanding Horizons

Cluster coordinator: Melanie Hammond (to December 2007) and Amanda Singleton, Ridgley Primary School

Participating schools:
- Ridgley Primary School
- Cooee Primary School
- Waratah Primary School

UAN critical friend: Dr Sharon Pittaway, University of Tasmania, Tasmania

KEY MESSAGES
1. Values education is not a one-off set of lessons that can be delivered over time, but rather a ‘continuous approach across all learning areas, which provide ongoing opportunities to express, discuss, represent and learn about the many values which are critical to enriching and improving the lives of every individual’. Accordingly, teachers need to examine their own values and those of the school community before embarking on values education in classrooms.

2. Values education approaches and propositions allow teachers to examine their own values and how these values relate to their pedagogy. It is important that teachers recognise that values education is more than implementing a series of strategies to improve student learning. It involves a conscious ‘plan, do, study, act’ action research methodology that recognises and acknowledges when something is not working and points the way forward.

3. An artist-in-residence program is an effective way to engage students with a different culture and to support intercultural understanding through the core curriculum. A broad community engagement strategy with a shared values focus to consolidate values learning across the community is essential if messages learnt in classrooms are to be supported in other environments.
The main purpose of the Expanding Horizons project was to implement and sustain a culture of explicit teaching and learning of values within the cluster schools. The Broader Horizons Cluster schools are located in north-western Tasmania, in varying distances from the coastal port of Burnie. Because the region is largely monocultural, the cluster perceived a need to look outward in its curriculum approaches by engaging with a chosen country, in this case, Indonesia. The schools worked with Indonesian artist-in-residence Mr Samuel Indratma to develop a range of artwork and drama pieces. The activities were pathways for developing friendships, respect, tolerance, inclusion and understanding across the world. More specifically, the project sought to:

- implement and sustain a culture of explicit teaching and learning of values within the schools
- develop an awareness of values (as individuals, as community members, as part of the school community)
- build teacher capacity (confidence in their practice, capacity for reflective practice, broaden repertoire of strategies, to be ‘walking the talk’)
- improve student behaviours within the school communities
- build student capacity (for decision making, reflection, action, to articulate emotions and reactions)
- develop intercultural understanding of values (through explicit teaching, relationships, intercultural language learning).

During the implementation phase of the project, the cluster recognised a need to examine the schools’ values approaches. More specifically, they were interested to expand the focus of the project to:

- provide a broad range of opportunities to assist students to understand how values impact on the way we live, and relate to others.

The UAN adviser in the Broader Horizons cluster worked closely with teachers to support them to examine their personal and professional values. The approaches threw light on the need to make a purposeful transition from personal values to specific values-based teaching approaches. A powerful tool for assisting in this process is described in the UAN report and presented below. Teachers were asked to reflect on and respond to the following statements as part of a professional learning exercise:

**TEACHING STATEMENTS**

The literature says that ‘good teachers demonstrate an ability to transform and extend knowledge, rather than merely transmitting it; they draw on their knowledge of the subject, their knowledge of their learners, and their general pedagogical knowledge to transform the concepts of the discipline into terms that are understandable to their students. In other words, they display their pedagogical content knowledge ... Good teachers show respect for their students; they are interested in both their professional and their personal growth, encourage their independence, and sustain high expectations of them’ (Ramsden, Margetson, Martin & Clarke 1995).

**I believe everyone can learn.**

There are common goals each student must achieve, but we can take different paths to reach these common goals. It is not the job of the teacher to force uniformity in learning. It is the job of the teacher to support individuality. Understanding and capitalising on the diversity of each student, allowing them to use their individual strengths, is paramount to good teaching.

**I believe everyone wants to learn.**

The secret is to find the right motivation. It must be kept in the teacher’s mind that each student is different, so their motivations are different. Students are eager and energetic. With a little guidance in the right direction and a small push, they will seek out and discover the answers they are seeking. They will experience, first hand, the effects of their decisions. There is no better way to learn this than through first-hand experience. Students, guided by the teacher, will make some serious decisions. They will then experience, first hand, the effects of their decisions. This is all designed to prepare them for the real world.

**My emphasis in teaching is on learning.**

My teaching goal is to facilitate learning (helping students learn) and I believe that teaching plays a major role in that. Learning is primarily the student’s responsibility, whereas teaching is my responsibility. My emphasis is on helping the student to learn, rather than just dispensing my knowledge to them. I am there to ‘light their candle’, not just ‘fill their bucket’.
After these professional learning and teacher reflection activities were completed, a variety of learning experiences across the schools were implemented in classrooms. They focused on cultural diversity and respect.

Ridgley Primary School incorporated the Tribes Program, with a linked focus on Harmony Day, customs, farming and Indonesian life. The school adopted a prescribed approach to the explicit teaching of values. They discussed running a four-week focus on each value that would be taught explicitly in the classroom and reinforced throughout the school at any given opportunity, and communicated to parents and the wider school community.

Waratah Primary School’s Year 2, 3 and 4 class used a Y chart to explore the idea of responsibility during a lesson focusing on this value. This class felt that responsibility sounds like ‘manners’, ‘getting along’, ‘working quietly’, ‘busy’. In contrast, it felt ‘stressful’, ‘happy’, ‘lonely’, ‘scared’, ‘proud’, ‘respect’. Responsibility looked like ‘working hard’, ‘cleaning’, ‘being careful’, and ‘being upset (if you didn’t want to clean your room). Like the Ridgley class, the Waratah class related their understanding of responsibility to school and home contexts.

In part of the program teachers combined the Waratah K–P–1 and Ridgley Prep–1 classes to encourage a shared learning experience and enable the two groups to work together more cohesively. The students were divided into two groups to work on the Milly, Molly series of books.

The Milly, Molly books were written for children between the ages of four and eight; the books promote the acceptance of diversity and the learning of life skills and how to deal with day-to-day issues. Students develop understanding about honesty, respect for others, difference, tenacity, exercise, cooperation, respect for nature, bullying, stranger danger, forgiveness, trustworthiness, responsibility, loyalty, loss and grief. The books encourage students to look at values such as responsibility, and to think about their own responsibilities at home and at school.

‘Community circle’ time was also used as a vehicle for the values project. Teachers brought their class members together several times a day to meet in a community circle for sharing, discussions on learning, reflecting on the day and celebrating. This community circle practice was a first step in implementing the essential protective factors that foster resiliency: caring and sharing, participation and positive communication.

Even though this explicit teaching of values occurred in schools across the cluster, as the project unfolded some teachers began to look more closely at the congruence of what was being taught and the modelling of the school values by the school community. After each school worked independently at developing their own approaches, it became clear to the cluster coordinator that there was a need for a more consistent and coherent approach to values education across all the cluster schools. As the coordinator put it:

The one thing that has stuck in my mind as being the pivotal learning curve is that everybody needs to be aware of and appreciate personal values before we can instil this in our classroom. After much in-depth thinking, both with myself and other colleagues, I have come to the conclusion that in order for us to instil and respect any value type with children then we must in turn reflect upon and identify with our own values first. We cannot expect our children to live by a set of values and norms if we are unable to adhere to them ourselves ... On reflecting on these few examples of our journey, it has become clear that teaching values cannot be done as a neat package of stand-alone lessons but [must be] a continuous program across all learning areas, which provides ongoing opportunities to express, discuss, represent and learn about the many values which are critical to enriching and improving the lives of every individual.

This reflection was reinforced by the UAN adviser for the cluster, who noted:

While the explicit teaching of values is important, as evidenced by the case studies emerging from the Values Education Good Practice Schools projects, it is my contention that it is even more important for teachers to be encouraged to reflect on their own values and how these inform their teaching, and the decisions they make on a daily basis that impact not only on their students’ learning outcomes, but on their lives. It is not enough for teachers to ‘teach’ values – they must be aware of their own values so
that their teaching and the relationships they develop with students can benefit from this awareness. In the current context of the explicit teaching of values, teachers’ practice cannot remain unexamined. More must be done to encourage teachers to examine their practice, to ensure there is an alignment between rhetoric and the reality played out in the classroom.
Engaging Students in Values Education: A Student Action Teams Approach to Making Values Explicit

**Cluster coordinator:** Geoff Jones, Darebin Schools Network

**Participating schools:**
- Preston North East Primary School
- Bell Primary School
- Burbank Primary School
- Keon Park Primary School
- Northland Secondary College
- Preston East Primary School
- Preston South Primary School
- Reservoir District Secondary College
- Reservoir East Primary School
- Ruthven Primary School

**UAN critical friend:** Dr Merryn Davies, Victoria University, Victoria

**KEY MESSAGES**

1. Student action teams harness purposes for learning that connect with the interests students bring to school. Students gained confidence and competence in operating as change agents within and outside their school communities. Teachers reported an increased maturity in students as an outcome of this student-centred approach.

2. The student action team process and the values-rich content of their activities enabled students to gain skills associated with research, analysis and presentation of results.

3. Students developed a common values-based language and explored abstract concepts in complex language. As one student said, ‘We didn’t know what values were at the start. We thought it was the cost of something.’

4. As with a number of cluster values education approaches, teachers as researchers undertook evidence-based actions to guide improvement to their pedagogy and signpost directions for the whole school by documenting successful practice.
The Darebin Schools Network is located in the north-eastern suburbs of Melbourne, an area characterised by a diverse range of cultural groups and high numbers of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families. The schools have a long established partnership working on Victorian education initiatives. In its Stage 2 project, Engaging Students in Values Education, the cluster sought to:

- engage students, teachers and parents in investigating, constructing, articulating and enacting the operation of the Values for Australian Schooling in their school, local and wider communities
- make a significant, sustainable difference to student, whole school and local community values, awareness, attitudes and behaviours
- involve young people in school community decision making about values, in defining and shaping community values and goals and in creating new values roles for themselves
- investigate, develop, evaluate and document explicit school and classroom policies, programs and practices that incorporate effective values education based on productive pedagogies (specifically, student action team approaches)
- continue to enhance student leadership, action, participation, responsibility and wellbeing in the schools.

Student action teams (SATs) are a student-centred, teacher-guided approach to identifying an issue in a school setting on which students can undertake research and subsequently effect change. Like Manningham Cluster, Darebin used the strategy to identify ways of making values explicit in the cluster schools.

The cluster used two key processes to implement the project: a program of action research and a professional learning program for teachers. The whole project was constructed as an action research inquiry, with research questions being investigated at the cluster level, within individual schools and by each SAT, as illustrated in Table 4.

The other key approach to the cluster project was professional learning. Professional development was strongly emphasised by the cluster and was designed to give teachers: first, a deep understanding of the values subject area (discipline knowledge); second, skills and knowledge in the principles of effective teaching and learning (pedagogical knowledge); and third, a knowledge of how students learn a specific subject area together with effective strategies and practices that support such learning (pedagogical content knowledge).

The core professional development strategy involved building and supporting the project team as a professional learning team – or more precisely, a professional action inquiry team (PAIT). The PAIT was the cluster’s means of developing a culture of professional collaboration and collective responsibility across cluster schools. By working in a collaborative manner

Table 4: Darebin Schools Network’s action research inquiry framework

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Level</th>
<th>Research questions</th>
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| Cluster | How can a SAT approach be used effectively to implement a quality values education approach?  
How does working in a cluster facilitate and enhance this?  
How can good practice in values education enhance the quality of teaching and learning and improve student outcomes? |
| Schools | How can SATs be used to promote teaching and learning about values?  
Specific questions of interest such as: Which of the national values is present or absent in the school?  
How can a SAT approach to values education foster intercultural harmony? |
| Students| Each SAT developed and investigated an identified specific research focus and questions based on local issues and contexts. For instance, one SAT researched the extent to which the values were actually being practised at the school and which ones could be better emphasised so as to enable the school to better engage the children. |
on real work-based action research of relevance to their own classrooms, teachers committed themselves to an extended process of critical reflection, sharing of experiences, ideas and expertise, and to an ongoing cycle of inquiry that promoted deep team learning.

Complementary yet integral to the PAIT model was a commitment to approaching the project as an action inquiry. Firstly, the PAIT collectively, and then teachers individually, selected the research focuses and decided on what research questions were important to examine to gain insights into current and best practice. The cluster found that action research, supported by case-writing techniques, assisted teachers to become more reflective practitioners and systematic problem solvers.

Professional conversations and study group forums were established. Time was set aside at most meetings for teachers to engage in collaborative interactions and conversations around topics identified by the group. For example, a mid-term review meeting called Stop, Look, Listen and Think was held in early June 2007 to provide an opportunity for reflection, sharing of ideas and concerns, and finding solutions to common problems.

Teachers were encouraged to share their thoughts on the following questions:
- Where is your project up to at the moment?
- What seems to be working well?
- What are some of the facilitating factors?
- What do you have concerns about?
- What are some of the key blockers or inhibiting factors?
- What is one interesting idea you would like to share?
- Do you have any questions you’d like to put to other project team members?

Three half-day forums were held as part of the project. The first forum’s purpose was to introduce SATs to engage them with values education issues; and to set directions and provide impetus for the research stage of the project. Approximately six to eight students, and their teachers, from each of the eleven schools participated in the morning forum. SATs were asked to prepare several items for the forum:
- a poster of the SAT’s definition of ‘What is a value’, in their own words
- three artefacts or objects (each with an explanatory card) to donate to a Museum of Values (Each object was to be chosen to symbolise or represent a different value. Each school was allocated one value from the values identified in the National Framework and was able to choose two of their own. The explanatory cards were to explain, justify or describe how the object symbolised the particular value.)
- three cards with values words or phrases of the SAT’s choice.

The forum program was structured around three main activities:

Why are values important?
An amateur theatre group dramatised several values-laden scenarios. Students were invited to resolve the scenes, choose endings, discuss and clarify the values being displayed.

A Museum of Values
Each school team was invited to contribute their museum artefacts and cards to a central display table, giving a brief explanation. Mixed school groups were allocated a value from the National Framework and challenged to construct a museum display around that value using contributed objects and cards.

Planning research
Students were engaged in a range of activities designed to investigate and work on values issues in their own schools. As each team accepted, they were handed a Letter of Charge, which set down the purposes of, and their obligations to, the project. This moved on logically to the final activity, which engaged students in thinking about how they might undertake the task of researching values in their schools. A number of forums were arranged to share outcomes from these activities.

The Darebin Schools Network reported that the SAT approach was highly successful in
engaging students in values education, offering authentic, relevant learning experiences and producing significant rather than superficial learning outcomes. Teachers reported observing students becoming highly literate and competent values users, capable of reflecting on, analysing, modifying and engaging values in real-life situations.

Further, the network saw evidence that the five essential pedagogical ingredients of the SAT approach have been powerful factors in enhancing student engagement with values education and in promoting significant, deep learning outcomes.

Importantly, values were seen to be inherent in the SAT approach – values such as trusting students, doing respectful things, being socially useful, making an important difference to one’s community, being a responsible leader, engendering inclusion and teamwork. Moreover, enabling students to question and envision the sort of community in which they want to live is not only in itself a values journey, but the deeper, implicit intention to empower students to undertake such a task, in the first place, is pre-eminently a values statement – a commitment to valuing students as important members of our community.

The Darebin Schools Network concluded that the SAT approach enriched the values education project and produced outcomes that were not possible using more traditional, teacher-centred approaches. The project was enriched by the explicit focus on values language and concepts.
DUNMUNKLE CLUSTER
Victoria

The Ripple Effect of Values Education

Cluster coordinator: Jacqueline Moore, Murtoa College

Participating schools:
• Murtoa College
• Rupanyup Primary School
• Minyip Primary School
• Our Lady Help of Christians School

UAN critical friends: Dr Patricia Cartwright and Dr Marian de Souza, Australian Catholic University, Victoria

KEY MESSAGES
1 Modelling is a critical aspect of values education. As the cluster coordinator asserts, ‘Students learn more from the person we are “being” and the behaviours we demonstrate than the content we are teaching.’

2 Integrated curriculum is an effective method by which to combine current curriculum content with explicit values education.

3 Secondary teachers should understand that values concepts need to be taught explicitly and consistently, and should not assume that their students have an understanding of these concepts.

4 It is important to achieve a critical mass of staff support when implementing values education to support the congruence and sustainability of the work over time.

5 Case writing is a useful tool for teachers to reflect on their practice and can be used as a professional learning tool both within the school and in wider learning communities.

6 The National Framework complements the Victorian Essential Learning Standards (VELS) in areas such as personal and interpersonal learning, communication and thinking. VELS supports opportunities for students, both to develop their understanding of values and to demonstrate them in action.

7 Values education is approached differently in primary and secondary settings. This difference relates to the amount of teaching time available for individual classes as well as to the stages of student development. Despite the differences, key issues affect both settings:
   • the capacity of the students
   • the teaching styles of the teachers
   • the time available for integrating values education into existing curriculum
   • the willingness of teachers, parents and students to work together and persevere.
Dunmunkle’s values education project, The Ripple Effect of Values Education, took each of the participating schools on a values journey. The project was designed to enable participating schools to work independently in some curriculum areas but together in others. The three small primary schools and one secondary school in rural Victoria have collaborated on a range of education issues for approximately 20 years. Collaborative curriculum projects include Literacy, Engaging Boys and the Thinking Curriculum.

The cluster structure provided professional support for four separate (but related) projects at the individual school level. The cluster objectives were to strategically plan for the explicit teaching of values and to bolster student leadership and peer support programs in the schools.

Rupanyup Primary School focused on the Habits of Mind program as a teaching and learning tool for values education. The cluster project was intended to enable the school to learn more about the Habits of Mind program, its link to values and means by which it could use them both implicitly and explicitly to motivate and engage students in their learning.

Our Lady Help of Christians School set out to make values education more ‘visible’ throughout the school. The school wanted the children to live and speak the values ‘talk’ and show that they understood and could interpret the values and make them meaningful in their lives as individuals. The school envisaged that students would be able to live and speak the core values; to show acceptance and tolerance for those who are ‘different’, while growing and maturing into responsible and thoughtful young Australians.

Murtoa College, Minyip Primary School and Rupanyup Primary School made values explicit in teaching and learning, and aimed at improving the schools’ cultures. The cluster reviewed the school policy and mission statements to explicitly incorporate values; undertook a whole school development of classroom culture; reviewed the student leadership structure and peer support program to enable students an opportunity to ‘live’ the school’s values; and developed of units of work explicitly linking values with the Victorian Essential Learning Standards.

School communities noted the need to work in partnership with the whole school community to gain support for values education approaches in rural and remote areas. At Minyip Primary School, the school initiated a Shot of Life project, based on Habits of Mind, and values language and ideas. Students were given a camera to take home for photos to be taken of people displaying any of the Habits of Mind or values principles. These photos were displayed in a hall in Minyip. It is a project that worked to integrate the school and the community.

Rupanyup Primary School initiated a Don’t Fence Me In project. This project involved five after-school painting sessions where parents and students constructed figures that are now decorating the school fence. Photos were taken and have been displayed in the school, linking what is shown with particular values. The school also introduced a Home/School Responsibility project as a means of linking home and school values. Parents were asked to complete a form that reflected on the values used by the student out of school time. These parent ‘reflections from home’ were published in the school newsletter, and then given back to the student to display at home.

A variety of strategies was used to enable the Dunmunkle Cluster schools to make values an explicit part of their day-to-day work. Each school undertook a review of school policy to make values more central to the school’s mission. While Minyip Primary School completed its review of school policy and managed to incorporate the Values for Australian Schooling into its charter, the other schools remained very much in the developmental stages of reviewing policy.

The Habits of Mind program was one of the major projects implemented by the cluster. Each school implemented variations of the program. The approach was modified to suit the school and the students. One finding is that while the Habits of Mind program was generally successful...
with Year 7 students, they found it difficult to be self-reflective. This had implications for both the work done in primary schools and the ways it can be followed up in the secondary context.

Another strategy had students keeping a journal in which they wrote their goals for the semester. These goals were transferred to individual report cards, which meant that the goals had a life beyond the classroom. It was noted that the students from Our Lady Help of Christians School were involved very successfully in a range of reflective processes. The cluster case study concluded that the faith-based ethos of the school contributed to the success of the approach to reflection taken by students and teachers.

The cluster also had a strong focus on fostering student leadership through values education. The leadership activity was launched when a consultant worked with student leaders in all four schools to highlight the importance of leadership roles. Each school used its student leaders to assist with the implementation of values education through such programs as Peer Mediation and Student Councils and by involving students in modelling and disseminating information and experiences about how a school can ‘live’ its values.

Schools in this cluster reported a large amount of values education activity. The UAN report observed that the wider community, parents and casual relief teachers commented positively on the observed changed behaviour of students in both classrooms and in the schoolyard.

The cluster coordinator gathered key outcomes and learning from the projects delivered across schools. These include:

- Students learn more from the person we are ‘being’ and the behaviours we demonstrate than the content we are teaching. Values must be modelled. Students are astute and quickly recognise teachers who do not ‘walk the talk’.
- Some students do not have other strong, positive role models in their lives. Their teachers, rightly or wrongly, sometimes fill this void.

- Schools need to provide links between values and the real world – they do not exist in a vacuum and students need to be immersed in opportunities to think, act and reflect.
- Introducing values education concepts through an integrated curriculum approach is an effective method by which to combine curriculum content with explicit values education teaching.
- A team approach is a powerful tool, both when developing values-rich units of work and when implementing them in the classroom.
- Treat school-based values education as an ongoing not a one-off program. ‘Don’t rest on your laurels.’ You may introduce an initiative with support of the community, but it won’t be long before the cohort changes (staff, students and parents) so you must be prepared to reflect and keep working at it.
- It’s important to involve the entire community as much as possible, especially in the initial stages of your project. The cluster found that by giving everyone a chance to contribute at the beginning, such as via surveys, there was an increased take-up of the project purposes.

The cluster coordinator’s reflection on the overall conduct of the project highlighted the fact that schools and teachers can operate at very different levels of engagement with values education:

In general, the project has seen the further development of values education in all schools in the cluster, though perhaps not to the same extent in all contexts. There has continued to be a focus on the explicit teaching of values, as well as the continuation of embedding values principles in all area of the curriculum. This has resulted in the development and implementation of creative and innovative programs that have added to the overall resources and ideas available to all schools in the cluster. While some teachers indicated initial reluctance to be involved in the work of values education, this reluctance has largely dissipated. Teachers have been able to witness the growing confidence and understanding demonstrated by students. They have begun to see that values education has become part of the culture of the schools.
MANNINGHAM CLUSTER
Victoria

Listening to the Student Voice in Improving Teaching, Learning and School Culture in Values Education

Cluster coordinator: Sue Cahill, St Charles Borromeo Primary School

Participating schools:
- St Charles Borromeo Primary School
- Our Lady of the Pines Primary School
- St Clement of Rome Primary School
- St Gregory the Great Primary School
- St Kevin’s Primary School
- Sts Peter and Paul Primary School

UAN critical friends: Professor Judith Chapman, Dr Patricia Cartwright and Dr Marian de Souza, Australian Catholic University, Victoria

KEY MESSAGES
1. Student agency, characterised by students feeling that their learning connects with real-world issues, builds resilience, empowerment and a sense that they can make serious and important decisions about issues that are important to them and take actions to make a difference in their worlds.

2. When student action teams articulate an issue and a purpose for learning, the skills, expertise and knowledge that the students need to address that issue are actively embraced. This form of lifelong learning is transformational as students become managers and leaders of their own learning.

3. A whole school approach to values education focusing on the value of respect as the accepted and expected basis for relationship building produces a calm school ambience, fewer behavioural issues, and students who are engaged with their learning.

4. A school and parent partnership in learning and community-focused research and action is a powerful educational approach for schools to adopt to deepen student engagement and create congruence between real life and learning.

5. Mentors and critical friends encourage teachers to articulate their experiences and critically reflect on their pedagogy in an improvement cycle that is safe, respectful and productive.

6. Supported by the scaffold provided by successful student action team approaches in Stage 1 of the VEGPSP, teachers in Stage 2 felt confident that the gains from Stage 1 were such that they could build an ethos based on values education more purposefully across the whole school.
Listening to the Student Voice in Improving Teaching, Learning and School Culture in Values Education intended to explicitly teach values in each of the six cluster schools and to establish mechanisms to ‘listen to the student voice’ about ways of improving teaching, learning and school culture through values education. Manningham Cluster participated in Stage 1 of the VEGPSP with a very strong focus on student action teams (SATs) to develop student resilience, self-confidence and leadership skills. In Stage 2, the cluster consolidated and extended their student focus work to values action teams (VATs) with a focus on stronger parental involvement in the project.

SATs and VATs use a particular form of scaffolded learning with students placed at the centre of learning. Students working in groups focus on a values-rich activity. They identify the values, form values propositions, initiate group activities, research and collate data and apply their learning in practical situations. Often, these situations take students out of the classroom and into various community settings.

SATs were formed in each cluster school. At St Charles Borromeo Catholic Primary School, for instance, the SAT comprised ten students from Grades 5 and 6. They met with their values school coordinator (a teacher) fortnightly in a formal meeting and informally as required.

Through their research programs, the SATs identified where the teaching, learning and school culture in their schools could be better aligned with the values in the National Framework. The SAT process enabled the school to listen to student voices about how teaching, learning and school culture might be improved and connected to the real world.

During Stage 1, SATs identified a number of developmental directions they wanted to move towards to strengthen the SAT voice and process in their schools. Stage 2 of the project provided the potential for this work to be progressed through the establishment of VATs. The key development here was the inclusion of a parent voice to the already existing student and staff voices. The potential of this developmental aspect of the work attracted the following comment from the cluster UAN adviser:

Potentially, the VAT will become an official working group in each school, continuing to steer values in the school. This group could maintain resources, assist with policy development, and work on professional development in the school. Student involvement in the VAT would also continue to involve students actively in values education beyond the funding timeline.

From this scaffolding process, a number of approaches to embedding values into school practice ensued. For instance, the explicit teaching of values was carried out in each classroom, every week, on Monday afternoon between 1:30 and 2:30. The values were put into an order by the members of the SAT. The same value was taught in every class for three weeks. The staff used the same teaching resources as their main support and a pack of material was made up of other supporting resources and a list of picture storybooks pertaining to the particular value.

Some of the schools also explicitly taught values at morning assemblies. The assembly was used to highlight the current value. A variety of strategies were used to do this, including a story relating to the value being read aloud, a role-play performed or observations shared about a certain value in action. Values certificates were awarded by staff, students and parents. Silent reflection by students, teachers and parents was a part of each assembly.

Visual displays in all classrooms and other public places in the schools further strengthened the explicit embedding of values.

Another developmental aspect of this cluster work was the movement towards a whole school values education approach as a result of their participation in Stage 1 of the VEGPSP. This included the addition of values approaches to all of the schools’ planning documents, including curriculum design and planning documents, school policy and procedures documents.

The SAT also produced a values newsletter to introduce ‘new’ values as the program
The SAT process also led to the school being designated a 'no put down zone' in an attempt to foster respect of self and others. The students involved in this strategy assigned themselves to a classroom and a teacher to become the values representative, whose responsibility was to share information and to discuss any questions or concerns.

The SAT process produced a whole school 'buddy program' where all students and staff were partnered with another member of the school community. The SAT extended this program 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 residents' childhoods, workplaces and lives. 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.

A professional learning community approach shaped the work of this project. A strong professional group included the six school coordinators, the cluster UAN advisers, the cluster consultant and the cluster coordinator. This group met regularly to support and learn from each other and used their professional learning to go back to the individual schools to listen to and work alongside the SATs. At the same time, the school coordinators, with support of the cluster coordinator, delivered ongoing professional development to the staff in their respective schools.

At a cluster level, professional development of staff and students was ongoing and regular. Major presentations were given by Professor Terry Lovat and Dr Neil Hawkes. The cluster consultant regularly engaged the staff in professional learning about quality teaching.

The Catholic ethos of the schools in Manningham Cluster created a beneficial context for the development of values education since it provided a common understanding and interpretation of the values which has, for the most part, removed any potential tensions associated with ambiguity and uncertainty. The new coordinators found themselves in a supportive and understanding network where the Catholic ethos provided a common core.

Students and teachers developed a sense of ownership of the work being undertaken. As well, students developed self-confidence, leadership and team skills, and resourcefulness through their participation as action researchers in the project. The project has been a constructive and encouraging learning opportunity for teachers and students alike. Most importantly, the quality of the relationships between members of the school community are characterised by mutual respect.

One school in the cluster has put plans in place for strategies to:

- rewrite the school's vision and mission statements to explicitly incorporate values education
- make changes to school organisation and/or culture that will reflect the values work that is being achieved in the classroom
- change the assembly format so that values education activities and achievements can be celebrated with the whole school
- look at the discipline plan to ensure that values education is foregrounded in the way this is written and ultimately implemented
- look in detail at the curriculum design to seek opportunities for a student values 'voice'
- ensure that all classrooms are redesigned to explicitly become values-rich spaces in their visual displays, classroom structure and approaches to student relationships.

In the words of the cluster UAN report:

The work of this cluster has been outstanding in many respects. At the final meeting of the cluster UAN colleagues and cluster staff attempted to analyse the features of the work of the cluster that contributed to its success.

The following features were identified: engagement, authenticity, coherence, respect, embeddedness, leadership, ownership, empowerment, clarity of purpose, philosophical commitment, transformational relationships and lifelong learning.
Socratic Circles: Many Cultures, One Community

**Cluster coordinator:** Catherine Devine, St Monica’s College

**Participating schools:**
- St Monica’s College (Catholic faith-based school)
- Thornbury Darebin Secondary College (secular-based government school)
- Australian International Academy (Islamic faith-based school)
- Siena College (Catholic faith-based school)
- The King David School (Jewish faith-based school)

**UAN critical friend:** Professor Judith Chapman (with additional support from Emeritus Professor David Aspin and Adam Staples, Australian Catholic University, Victoria)

**KEY MESSAGES**

1. Through its shared inquiry methodology, Socratic circles pedagogy encourages a deeper engagement with and understanding of values concepts in the middle secondary school.

2. Socratic circles pedagogy promotes equitable and productive discussion that respects divergent opinions, and moves participants beyond stereotypes to more sophisticated understandings.

3. The Socratic circles pedagogy can be used in a range of secondary school key learning areas to provide opportunities for social interactions among students from different cultural and faith traditions to discuss important, relevant, significant and sometimes contentious social issues.

4. Student self-expression through various artistic mediums complements and consolidates values education learning, and demonstrates the learning to new audiences, thereby strengthening values education outcomes across school communities.

5. The Socratic circles pedagogy provides a safe and supportive vehicle for students in the secondary school to explore intercultural and interfaith understandings.
The Melbourne Interfaith Intercultural Cluster’s project, *Socratic Circles: Many Cultures, One Community*, provided opportunities for students of different faiths and different cultural backgrounds to interact with one another, discuss issues relating to community identity and values, and foster greater intercultural and interfaith understanding.

The Socratic circles pedagogy, which involves the examination of important issues through shared inquiry, was integrated into curriculum design and delivery in a range of key learning areas with Year 10 students. The Socratic circles method was used to promote equitable and productive discussion on sensitive issues that were inherently loaded with very different values and cultural perspectives. The method fosters respect for divergent opinions, freedom of expression and engagement in questioning – all of which was intended to lead to greater understanding and confidence for the students involved. The method is particularly suited to use with adolescent learners in secondary schools.

The project began with a series of cluster meetings designed to enable school coordinators to distil the aims of the project and plan for meaningful student gatherings. Student gatherings were held at which the Socratic circles methodology was used to shape student discussion.

Socratic circles methodology involves grouping students into ‘inner’ circles of approximately six students who adopt a discussant position and an equal number of students into an outer circle. Those in the outer circle are asked to comment on the quality of the discussion, keeping in mind a number of criteria, such as contribution to discussion, respect for others’ opinions and other aspects of the dialogue.

A folio of stimulus material relating to a significant social or cultural issue is presented to students prior to the proposed class. The inner Socratic circle reacts to the folio material, which is often framed as a focus question, such as ‘What does it mean to be an Australian today?’ The folio might contain a poem, a newspaper article, a scene from a movie, a poster or an object destined to stimulate thought about the issue. Students are given time to think about the significance of the material in the folio and ‘read’ the text critically. Students are taught to attend to the text by highlighting significant words, phrases or larger parts of the text. They take notes on the text and these are used when they are speaking in the inner Socratic circle. The process is not confronting, as some classroom discussions can be, because students have the chance to prepare responses which encourages more considered participation. As a UAN adviser for this cluster observed:

One advantage of Socratic circles as a learning strategy is that it provides for systematic dialogue and the objectification of possible conflict.

Throughout the process, students are also taught how to formulate questions because this is a key component of the inner circle discussions. Often students are more experienced in answering questions than asking them. However, the ability to ask questions is a crucial skill in the development of dialogue and deep understanding of the values that underpin our society.

The Socratic circles methodology was used by the cluster schools during class time at each school. The cluster decided at its first meeting to directly involve students from the Year 10 level. This appeared to be the most appropriate year level as the students were not yet completing their studies for the Victorian Certificate of Education but were sufficiently mature enough to contribute to the discussions given the complexity of the content. The methodology was introduced to as many subject areas as were prepared to become involved. It was also used at different times during the year when the schools met for social and cultural gatherings, including the celebration of Purim with the King David School, Ramadan with the Australian International Academy, Saint Monica’s and Saint Catherine’s feast days with Saint Monica’s College and Siena, and on both Australia Day and Harmony Day at the Thornbury High School.
The first student gathering, held at the King David School during its festival of Purim, was an opportunity for the participating students from the non-Jewish schools to learn about Jewish culture and enjoy the informality of many of the activities. Another student gathering held at Siena College involved a tour of the local church and the school’s chapel. The religious significance of these places was explained to students. At the Australian International Academy during the month of Ramadan students participated in an Iftar meal to ‘break the fast’. Again, students learnt of the significance of this sacred ritual in the Islamic faith.

At each of these gatherings, the values of understanding, tolerance and inclusion, freedom, respect and responsibility were foregrounded. The nature of the interfaith and intercultural student mix combined with the methodology of the Socratic circle gave everyone involved the chance to express their opinions respectfully, to develop understanding of the issue and the other people involved, and to behave responsibly and inclusively. In short, the methodology became a vehicle for mediating the practice of the four values the cluster was focusing upon.

A significant feature of the cluster’s approach was the development of a collection of student artwork to express aspects of the project as the work and relationships developed. Poems, prose, music, drama and student artwork were used to complement the Socratic circles methodology. At the third student gathering, after significant engagements among students from diverse backgrounds had occurred, the focus was on art, culture and values. Each of the 60 students involved created a piece of artwork they felt expressed what they had learnt about values as a way of reinforcing them and providing a vehicle for discussing them.

Some of the feedback received from students in the form of vox pops, reflection sheets, Socratic circles feedback sheets and pre- and post-testing indicates that the interactions among some of the students resulted in a change in perception on the part of many students about other cultures. Individuals soon realised that we all share many values and through mutual respect we can come to understand each other more deeply. So too they learn and live the core values that we share and which bind us as a civil and free community. This level of improved cultural awareness is demonstrated in many of the student reflective comments:

The second Socratic circle was at the Immigration Museum and at the Yarra River, where we discussed a lot about the Aboriginal culture and values – especially about the history of the Yarra (especially to the Aborigines). We were given a tour around the Yarra and a little introduction on the history of the river when the Aboriginal people were there. Afterwards we went to the Immigration Museum and achieved more of an understanding on immigration and the Aboriginal people. We then had Socratic circles on values we shared [in Australia] – especially among the Aboriginal culture. Everyone in the circle shared their views on what they thought about the events of the day and the influence on values on Australian culture – respect, tolerance, inclusion, responsibility and acceptance. Overall I enjoyed both the Socratic circles as it was an eye-opening experience for me. It helped me to develop into a better person and improve my overall confidence. It is fantastic to be part of such a program and to share my views and ideas on various topics.

The UAN report observed that the Socratic circles method contributes significantly as a form of safe student support in managing exchange about issues with different and sometimes contentious values positions:

One of the advantages of Socratic circles is that it gives student support and direction when discussing potentially difficult and contentious issues. There is safety in the structure of the Socratic circle. Students know their roles, they have had an opportunity to read material from the media file; they are not being asked questions they haven’t seen before, or asked about things they haven’t had a chance to think about before.

Finally, students overwhelmingly report that their confidence in speaking publicly was increased by their participation in Socratic circles methodology. It would therefore seem that the Socratic circles technique plays a role in improving students’ communicative abilities as well as deepening their understanding of different world views and different values perspectives.
STUDENTS FOR THE BIOSPHERE CLUSTER
Victoria

Considering Self, Others and the Local and Global Environment

**Cluster coordinator:** Marnee Fraser, Students for the Biosphere Cluster (until January 2008) and Anne O’Bryan, Dromana Secondary College

**Participating schools:**
- Dromana Secondary College
- Balnarring Primary School
- Dromana Primary School
- Mt Martha Primary School
- Peninsula Special Development School
- Red Hill Consolidated School
- Somers Primary School
- Somers School Camp

**UAN critical friend:** Dr Libby Tudball, Monash University, Victoria

**KEY MESSAGES**

1. Values education strategies, within classrooms and in the natural environment, give students both a place and a language for expressing feelings and reflecting on their relationships to self and others, and on their responsibilities as global citizens.

2. Schools can connect in local ways to global issues. The cluster found that the core value of respect allowed them to connect to the UNESCO sustainability framework, which, when unpacked, provides the foundation for understanding important global issues at a more concrete level.

3. Values education concepts link strongly to the Victorian Principles of Learning and Teaching and support the key principles of positive relationships and promoting a culture of respect for individuals and their communities.

4. When parents work with their children on real-life environmental projects, significant drive, authentic learning and tangible community building ensues.
The prime purpose of Considering Self, Others and the Local and Global Environment was to inject the values from the National Framework into the teaching and learning programs of the participating schools. The cluster hoped to improve teaching and learning outcomes and enable the students to behave appropriately in the context of self, others and the local and global environment.

Whole cluster activities were designed to enable all seven schools in the cluster to have their individual projects unified under the cluster’s umbrella project. Significant links and partnerships were developed with a variety of community groups and external organisations, including:

- CERES (Centre for Education and Research in Environmental Strategies)
- Mornington Peninsula Shire
- Sunrise Energy Management
- Ecostrategies
- Clean Ocean Foundation
- Environment Protection Authority
- Australian Conservation Foundation
- Mornington Peninsula and Western Port Biosphere Reserve Foundation.

To encourage this unity of purpose, the cluster coordinator drew the attention of all cluster schools and teachers to the National Framework and explored with them its connection to the Students for the Biosphere project. At each of the cluster schools, two representatives volunteered to represent their school in values team meetings, which acted as a think tank to enable individual schools to progress their projects in individual school settings. With this structure in place, a number of practical, cross-cluster activities were pursued.

A cluster student leader’s team was formed to act as peer mentors in each school. Students worked in small groups and identified ‘respect’ as the key value required to enable all students to feel safe and supported at school. They suggested that respect should operate at a number of levels, including self, others, respect for the environment (physical and natural); and that this value also needed to be modelled and exemplified by all school staff.

At Somers School Camp the values of challenge, tolerance, awareness and self-esteem were the focus of attention. All school practices were reviewed in terms of their consistency with these four values. The review revealed that in some instances this consistency was not present, and therefore recommended further research and action. The school aims and ethos evolved into a living document as the school blended the values into them. This process involved the whole staff, visiting teachers, parents, children and critical friends from the University of Melbourne, La Trobe University and the Australian Council of Educational Research. The review culminated in the preparation of a values diagram (see Figure 2 on page 125).

These values were then applied to the curriculum, school structures and policies, procedures and rules, funding priorities, decision-making procedures, discipline and welfare policy as well as pastoral care approaches. It became a living model which permeated all aspects of Somers School Camp.

At Peninsula Special Developmental School, two teachers developed a ‘term manual for values’. They worked together to provide resources and ideas for classroom strategies that would help other teachers to include values education teaching and learning in their classes.

At Red Hill Primary School the project focused upon developing a positive classroom culture. As one teacher commented:

> We began our focus on values education by doing what we often do: thinking about what makes a good school, and what goes into creating a positive classroom environment for teachers and students. The intention was ... to create a foundation where our students will develop the understanding and skills to become better global citizens and will grow from being responsible and respectful children into adults with these values as well.

A consultant conducted a professional development day at which staff awareness about values education was raised. Staff were provided with new ways of thinking about values education that was weaved into classrooms explicitly.
One such activity was the Five Whys: Determining Why We Come to School. Through the Five Whys, students determined their purpose for attending school. For example, Grade 6 students had to consider the question: ‘Why am I coming to school to do Grade 6 this year?’ Through a graphic organiser one student ascertained that:

through doing her best and taking responsibility for her own learning she could prepare for high school which would enable her to go to university. Then she could become a teacher so she can make money to get married, build a house, and have children. She could reflect that by coming to school in Grade 6 it would ultimately enable her to ‘have lived a great life’.

This showed that the student was able to take responsibility for her actions and see that certain behaviours are valued in the community, and that by ‘doing her best’, she may achieve her goals. This activity highlighted to students that they come to school not just ‘because they have to’, but to establish themselves as lifelong learners. The project has spawned numerous other similar activities.

At Balnarring Primary School the staff developed values through their Point Leo beach camp experience. Teachers were keen to see values education integrated into the whole school program in diverse ways, and see the school’s strong emphasis on ‘valuing the environment’ as a good way to teach and model values such as care and compassion, responsibility, respect and doing your best:

We decided to look particularly at how we could embed values education into our Point Leo beach camp experience for the Year 6 students. We believed that we needed to develop both explicit classroom strategies and modelling of good behaviours and practices into our values program. Children need to have a clear conception of each of the values if they are to be capable of putting them into practice! Since our staff team was involved in planning our goals for the outdoor education camp, we decided to explore how we could then move on to expand out strategies for values education.

The cluster’s work shows how a whole school ethos and whole school planning can be instituted. As the cluster’s UAN adviser pointed out:

Research shows that when whole school planning and community-wide commitment to values education occurs, the process is more likely to be embedded into the school. Teachers and students told me that the spark for the next step came from parents on the School Council keen to see values including respect and understanding of our Indigenous heritage and culture, as part of school programs. A parent who is an artist, keen environmentalist and has lived in the Northern Territory, laid the seeds for the development of a project that has become known as the ‘Ghost nets project’. They learnt that in the Gulf Country in Northern Australia, local Indigenous people are worried about the fishing nets that entangle marine life in the warm waters off the coast. The Red Hill children have created beach artwork collages from the beach refuse that tell a story about what is there in their local area, just as Indigenous communities have told stories through outdoor art for generations.

It also shows that whole school action is achievable when a social, environmental or cultural issue, sometimes contentious, is made the focus of the school’s work.

Tellingly, one of the cluster case studies showed how students moved from talking about values to acting in ways consistent with values being promoted. The UAN adviser again noted this:

But when I asked one of the Grade 5 boys proudly wearing his school environment committee badge what he liked about being part of the group, he promptly said: ‘There’s more to life than video games you know! We have to do our best to look after nature around here!’ His first comment connected strongly with the Values for Australian Schooling, and expressed his own desire to ‘accomplish something worthy and admirable, try hard, and pursue excellence’.
Figure 2: Somers School Camp values
Attributes of an Aussie

**Cluster coordinator:** Amy Palmer, Eastern Goldfields College

**Participating schools:**
- Eastern Goldfields College
- South Kalgoorlie Primary School

**UAN critical friend:** Dr Alan Pritchard, University of Western Australia, Western Australia

**KEY MESSAGES**

1. Classroom management strategies that focus on highlighting positive behaviours in a values context lead to improved relationships between students and teachers.

2. Values education approaches such as teachers mentoring students who in turn mentor younger students create supportive and safer school environments.

3. When a critical mass of school staff commit to improvements and undertake targeted professional learning in values education, they can create successful and sustainable values education practices over time that have direct and positive impact on students.
In *Attributes of an Aussie*, Eastern Goldfields sought to develop emotional literacy to help students to value commitment, empathy and personal responsibility. The schools developed two strategies to address their purpose: mentoring (peer support) and restorative justice. The mentoring program specifically addressed the values of inclusivity, care and compassion, respect and responsibility.

Baseline data gathered at the outset of the project indicated a need for both schools to implement strategies to address the values of respect, responsibility and understanding, tolerance and inclusion. At Eastern Goldfields College, for instance, a greater number of enrolments of at-risk students raised concern about increased behaviour incidents. The Behaviour Management in Schools Plan was outdated and punitive in its nature. In a new context of increased enrolment of at-risk students, a working party identified the need to review the Behaviour Management Plan and consider conflict resolution skills that would assist students in developing and strengthening communication skills. In addition to this it was identified that the behaviour had to be viewed in the context of teaching and learning and the manner in which students were engaged at school.

At Kalgoorlie South Primary School, discussions between staff and parents saw the development of a number of complementary projects to develop and strengthen relationships both within classes and in the wider school community. The peer support approach involved an integrated multilevel peer support program as follows:

- Staff at Eastern Goldfields College trained Year 11 students.
- Thirty Year 11 and 12 students trained Grade 7 (South Kalgoorlie Primary School) students.
- Twenty Grade 7 students then trained Grade 3 and 4 students at the primary school.

This cascading ‘train the trainer’ program was delivered by two experienced facilitators, supported by a peer support consultant.

The explicit teaching of values became a major aspect of the project. Students participated in a variety of activities that required them to explore their own values and the values of others. Staff members across the college used the ‘Values across the Curriculum’ resources to embed values-focused activities into each learning area of the curriculum. Each classroom in the college displayed a set of values posters that highlighted the values of respect, responsibility and understanding, tolerance and inclusion. South Kalgoorlie Primary School also explicitly taught values in all years of schooling.

The peer support program was used as a model to develop a program tailored to the specific needs of the students in both of the schools involved in the project. The basic organisational structures of the peer support program were used; however, much of the content was revised to reflect the goals of the project.

Students reported a range of learnings from their participation in the peer support program. They included:

- Through the different activities I have realised that everyone’s ideas should be acknowledged and everyone should be treated with respect.

- It [peer support] gave me a better understanding of how to understand other people’s views and beliefs. Before, I wasn’t very tolerant.

Some of the Year 11 leaders’ comments included:

- A boy in my group and his friends used to fight a lot at the start. One session they were fighting when another boy said, ‘Stop it! Haven’t you been listening to any of this.’ They stopped.

- One Year 7 believed that the world would be boring without bullies. We challenged that view … In the end she was listening more and was starting to be more tolerant of others.

From the Year 7 students:

- Older students aren’t like teachers. We can say things we mightn’t say to teachers [about a problem] and that helps.

- I really learnt that bullying isn’t much fun.

The restorative justice component of the project assisted students to resolve high level conflict.
The UAN report noted one of the strengths of the program was the empowering nature of students working with and helping other students in a values-based framework. As he said:

The program is an excellent example of cross-school cooperation. It won an Excellence In Education award presented to both schools by the State Minister of Education. An interesting spin-off of the program is the leadership development of students in both schools and the conscious growth in awareness of the importance of role-modelling across almost all of the student leaders in both schools.

Classroom Management Strategies is a formal program based around five days of professional development, with peer support and peer feedback, and focused at a classroom level. It emphasises positive communication and the building of respect through positive relationships. Over 60 per cent of college staff was trained in applying this program in their classroom. By virtue of the numbers of staff involved, a common values language was established for the whole school community.

Cooperative Learning Strategies is based on five principles:

- positive interdependence
- individual accountability
- face-to-face interaction
- social skills
- evaluation of the social skills goal and academic goal set in each lesson or group of lessons.

There are over 100 specific strategies; teacher professional development might start with three or four strategies, with more added as the teacher gains familiarity and confidence.

Explicitly teaching values in the cluster schools included the display of colourful stimulus posters. As has been mentioned in a number of cluster reports, these posters encouraged discussion, and gave teachers a common language around which to focus values approaches. An episode reported in a teacher’s case writing gives a sense of what was accomplished:

An experienced teacher, who had experienced difficulties with a tough class, trialled these cooperative strategies with the support of other staff. At the end of the course he placed three columns on the whiteboard and asked students to work in three groups to comment on what they had learnt this semester. He then left the room and waited outside, expecting on his return to see factual comments written. What he found were the following comments written: ‘We learnt manners, we learnt how to work in groups and the many different ways to work in groups, we learnt time management, we learnt how to speak to each other, we learnt how to respect people, we learnt how to generate ideas, we learnt how to sink or swim together, to learn manners to get replies, and how to get along with people we normally wouldn’t get along with, if you respect people you get attention and we learnt how to value each other more.’
WA DISTANCE EDUCATION CLUSTER
Western Australia

Values at a Distance: Embedding Values in Key Learning Areas

Cluster coordinators: Frances Herd and Miranda Free, Schools of Isolated and Distance Education

Participating schools:
- Schools of Isolated and Distance Education
- Carnarvon School of the Air
- Cosmo Newberry Remote Community School
- Cue Primary School
- Gascoyne Junction Remote Community School
- Kimberley School of the Air
- Meekatharra School of the Air
- Shark Bay Primary School

UAN critical friend: Professor Barry Down, Murdoch University, Western Australia

KEY MESSAGES
1. Isolated and remote schools can participate in successful values education approaches that broach distance and create sustainable school networks using information and communication technologies.
2. Collaborative values education curriculum development implemented across sites using information and communication technologies provides personal and collective teacher professional learning and spans the isolation that distance can create.
3. Students are important evaluators of curriculum content presented to them, and can become better engaged when that content is linked to their lived experiences.
The Values at a Distance project faced a unique combination of challenges. The WA Distance Education Cluster is spread across thousands of kilometres. Even though the schools in the cluster have a long-term relationship, the schools have very different local contexts and needs. The smallest school in this cluster is Cosmo Newberry Remote Community School, which has approximately 15 students. Gascoyne Junction Remote Community School has a total community population of 70 and an enrolment of 30 students. The Schools of Isolated and Distance Education in Perth, on the other hand, have an enrolment of approximately 500 students in Years 8–10.

The students catered for by the schools in this cluster range in age from four years to seventeen years and live in a wide range of communities. Students also come from diverse backgrounds including: students travelling Australia or the world; students whose local high school does not offer the subjects they wish to study; full-time students unable to attend a local school due to geographical isolation; and students suffering from a long-term illness.

These remote and isolated small communities are serviced using technologies to span distance and diverse student cohorts drawn from a variety of communities provided significant challenges for the implementation of a values education project. However, with strong project design and positive and consistent leadership the UAN adviser observed that the cluster achieved the following key project outcomes:

- appreciated the complexities of working with transient communities and teachers
- acknowledged the different starting points of teachers, communities and students.

During Stage 2 of the VEGPSP the schools in this cluster came together with the expressed aim of designing and publishing a values-rich curriculum in the key learning areas of English and mathematics to:

- improve the behaviour, social interaction and group work of students in real or electronic classrooms
- maintain the engagement, motivation, attendance and participation of students learning in remote contexts.

The educational programs were developed for delivery in two modes: print and online with two separate programs in English to cater for at-risk and mainstream students and one program in mathematics that can be used by students across the Year 8 educational continuum.

To further build on the explicit values education units of work, the schools in this cluster sought to link activities and programs to values education to support the work done within key learning areas. Within this whole of curriculum values approach, schools went about the task using a variety of approaches to suit their local contexts including:

- community forums on values education
- working on students’ resilience
- working on skills for life
- the Friendly Schools and Families program
- implementation of the Aboriginal literacy strategy
- the We all Value Every Student (WAVES) program

The Values at a Distance project involved negotiated involvement with several schools from rural Western Australia, part of the Schools of Isolated and Distance Education network. Distance education is undergoing significant change regarding pedagogy and modes of delivery and it was important that schools involved continue to be open to using online delivery with individuals and groups of students.
The project instigated several alternative means of communication between the participants including teleconferences, emails, mail, faxes, phone calls, and a face-to-face conference in Perth so that all could keep abreast of the progress of all the cluster schools. These diverse strategies proved successful in supporting the professional learning of schools involved in the project. An unexpected outcome from the project was the growth in information and communication technologies by teachers in remote areas who otherwise may not have had access to this type of professional learning.

A face-to-face conference provided the cluster with the opportunity to upskill participants by inviting a consultant from the Western Australian Department of Education and Training to present a workshop on mapping the Western Australian Core Values to the *Values for Australian Schooling*. A mini-conference provided the opportunity for the *Values for Australian Schooling* to be presented to the project participants and the structured discussions at this stage enabled the community representatives (principals, teachers, parents) to reflect on their beliefs and values and challenge their thinking before getting involved in trialling the materials.

To determine a starting point with students, all cluster schools agreed to use the Monitoring Standards in Education Social Outcomes of Schooling Survey to evaluate student thinking about values education, available at [www.det.wa.edu.au/education/mse/socialoutcomes.htm](http://www.det.wa.edu.au/education/mse/socialoutcomes.htm).

A feature of the unit development process was the trialling of units with students and the subsequent improvement of the unit following feedback from students and teachers at the different sites. This process built the units from teacher practice and was a professional learning exercise, and valued the voice of students in the unit development process. These process steps have values education approaches embedded in the activity.

The trial of the materials in the second semester provided many opportunities for the students to participate in real-time sessions on Centra, an online real-time communications technology that allowed teachers to speak to students on the internet and via the telephone. Teachers reported that the students engaged in the sessions positively and, in some instances, attended school more frequently in order to participate.

As a result of participation in the project, there has been a heightened awareness of values education generally, and the *Values for Australian Schooling* more specifically. The breadth and depth of that understanding varies significantly across the project among the teachers, students and parents involved.

The cluster found that good practice in values education necessitates the development of a shared understanding of values by all stakeholders from the outset. They found that it is vital that all stakeholders are delivering the same message. They further found that in the case of distance learning, that multiple communication modes assist in keeping all participants engaged and on message.

Another key observation from the cluster was the primacy of explicit teaching of values in real and meaningful contexts. As the case study report noted:

> Explicit teaching of values was a key issue. We believe it is not sufficient to accept that ‘values are embedded in the curriculum’ and are therefore ‘covered’. This was evidenced by many of the teachers involved in our project saying that they thought they ‘knew’ about values education but realised they had only a very limited understanding when they became involved in the project.

Values education must be seen as relevant and important to all and needs to be in context to the people and the environment they are living in. Although there are *Values for Australian Schooling* common across Australia, the development of values education needs to be localised and contextualised in order for each student to best internalise them. Each students needs to be able to relate the ideas and concepts to themselves, take ownership and responsibility and, hopefully, develop and grow into citizens that contribute positively to their communities.
### Appendix 1: Values Education Good Practice Schools Project – Stage 2 clusters

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cluster</th>
<th>State</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Airds–Bradbury Cluster</strong></td>
<td>New South Wales</td>
<td>This project devised ways to implement across the cluster the NSW policies on Aboriginal education, cultural diversity, community relations, multicultural education, literacy, anti-racism, student welfare and safe and ethical practice in ways that were consistent with the National Framework.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Cross Borders Cluster</strong></td>
<td>Northern Territory, South Australia, Western Australia</td>
<td>This project traversed three states and territories and targeted specific values education activity, including civic and environmental responsibility, community service as well as teaching specific social and resiliency skills.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Darebin Schools Network</strong></td>
<td>Victoria</td>
<td>In this project student action teams were challenged to investigate the meaning of the values in the National Framework as they are applied and interpreted in their community. They subsequently developed and implemented action plans which led to a wider and more explicit and consistent articulation of the values in school practices and community attitudes and behaviour.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Dunmunkle Cluster</strong></td>
<td>Victoria</td>
<td>The development of programs across a range of key learning areas coupled with a student leadership project aimed to involve and educate students about the value of individual and collective responsibility.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Eastern Goldfields Cluster</strong></td>
<td>Western Australia</td>
<td>This project developed emotional literacy through restorative justice practices to help students to value commitment, empathy and responsibility through the stages of development, starting with middle childhood to late adolescence.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Edmund Rice Ministries Cluster</strong></td>
<td>South Australia</td>
<td>Service learning was developed and strengthened through collaboratively developed integrated teaching and learning experiences embedded across the key learning areas of English, studies of society and environment, and religious education.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>E-Schools: Yorke Peninsula Cluster</strong></td>
<td>South Australia</td>
<td>‘Kids teaching kids’ was a part of community capacity-building strategy. Values and pedagogy were linked to help create a shared sustainable vision of the future.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Ferny Grove Cluster</strong></td>
<td>Queensland</td>
<td>This project focused on improving school practices by using tools of philosophy, effective communication and drama into key learning areas.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Griffith Primary and Secondary Schools Cluster</strong></td>
<td>New South Wales</td>
<td>This project involved student action groups leading a series of community events highlighting the values outlined in the National Framework.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Manningham Cluster</strong></td>
<td>Victoria</td>
<td>This project used a ‘students as researchers’ approach to have both staff and students look closely at the personalised learning of students and their experiences with the teaching in values education approaches.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Melbourne Interfaith Intercultural Cluster</strong></td>
<td>Victoria</td>
<td>This cluster discussed issues around community identity and cultural values using a technique called Socratic circles.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Oxenford Cluster</strong></td>
<td>Queensland</td>
<td>Philosophy in the classroom was used to deepen students’ understanding of and ways of applying the values within the National Framework.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Pullenvale Environmental Education Centre Cluster</strong></td>
<td>Queensland</td>
<td>Pullenvale used an existing constructivist pedagogy based on environmental narrative. This project was about exploring the use of the teaching and learning framework Storythread to enable the values to be effectively taught across the key learning areas.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sea and Vales Cluster</strong></td>
<td>South Australia</td>
<td>This project built on the interschool cultural exchange programs that were currently in place. Community harmony was the focus of the exchanges.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cluster Name</td>
<td>State/Region</td>
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<td>-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Shire 4 Values Cluster</strong></td>
<td>New South Wales</td>
<td>This project built on the interschool cultural exchange programs that were currently in place. Community harmony was the focus of the exchanges.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Students for the Biosphere Cluster</strong></td>
<td>Victoria</td>
<td>This project encouraged students to take responsibility for the care of their immediate and wider environment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sustainable Values Townsville Cluster</strong></td>
<td>Queensland</td>
<td>This cluster consolidated the work completed in Stage 1 of the VEGPSP through a successful peer support program and developed curriculum-based models originating from UNESCO’s interlocking model of sustainability.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>The Broader Horizons Cluster</strong></td>
<td>Tasmania</td>
<td>This project used a collaborative, reciprocal relationship with an Islamic Indonesian primary school to explore values and beliefs from an intercultural perspective.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>The Lanyon Cluster of Schools</strong></td>
<td>Australian Capital Territory</td>
<td>Lanyon focused on the multiliteracy idea of technology through the Learning by Design framework. This framework enabled teachers to address the diversity of students by creating inclusive digital learning environments relevant to the changing world of the twenty-first century.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>The Merrylands–Guildford Cluster</strong></td>
<td>New South Wales</td>
<td>This project sought to identify good practice ways of implementing values education through improved teaching practice and by making values an explicit part of the content of what is taught.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Toowoomba North Cluster</strong></td>
<td>Queensland</td>
<td>This cluster sought to develop values-oriented curriculum across all key learning areas.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Unity in Diversity in South Western Sydney</strong></td>
<td>New South Wales</td>
<td>This project used an across-cluster action research approach to devising ways of linking the cluster schools around the notion of cultural understanding and devising ways of addressing it in classrooms.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Values Newcastle</strong></td>
<td>New South Wales</td>
<td>This project identified a set of agreed values across the nine government schools in the cluster and then explicitly taught them in three-week cycles.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>WA Distance Education Cluster</strong></td>
<td>Western Australia</td>
<td>This project sought to embed values education principles across all key learning areas and assessment resources.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>WestPEERS Cluster</strong></td>
<td>New South Wales</td>
<td>In this project schools used peer support and Storyfest to have children consider the values in the <em>National Framework</em>.</td>
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## Appendix 2: Stage 2 University Associates Network

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cluster name</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Airds–Bradbury Cluster</td>
<td>University of Western Sydney</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Dr Leonie Arthur</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cross Borders Cluster</td>
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<tr>
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<td></td>
<td>Dr Merryn Davies</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dunmunkle Cluster</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Dr Patricia Cartwright</td>
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<td>Dr Marian de Souza</td>
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<tr>
<td>Eastern Goldfields Cluster</td>
<td>University of Western Australia</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Dr Alan Pritchard</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Edmund Rice Ministries Cluster</td>
<td>University of South Australia</td>
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<td>Emeritus Professor Robert Crotty</td>
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<tr>
<td>E-Schools: Yorke Peninsula Cluster</td>
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<td>Emeritus Professor Robert Crotty</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ferny Grove Cluster</td>
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<td>Professor Peta Goldburg</td>
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<tr>
<td>Griffith Primary and Secondary Schools Cluster</td>
<td>Charles Sturt University</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Dr Peter Grootenboer (to October 2007)</td>
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<td>Dr Tracey Smith</td>
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<tr>
<td>Manningham Cluster</td>
<td>Australian Catholic University</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Professor Judith Chapman</td>
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<td>Dr Patricia Cartwright</td>
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<td>Dr Marian de Souza</td>
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<tr>
<td>Melbourne Interfaith Intercultural Cluster</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Professor Judith Chapman</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Emeritus Professor David Aspin</td>
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<td>Adam Staples</td>
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<tr>
<td>Oxenford Cluster</td>
<td>Griffith University</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Dr Christine Tom</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pullenvale Environmental Education Centre Cluster</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Professor Peta Goldburg</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sea and Vales Cluster</td>
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<td>Emeritus Professor Robert Crotty</td>
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<tr>
<td>Shire 4 Values Cluster</td>
<td>University of Sydney</td>
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<td>Dr Fiona Hilferty</td>
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<tr>
<td>Students for the Biosphere Cluster</td>
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<td>The Broader Horizons Cluster</td>
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<tr>
<td>The Lanyon Cluster of Schools</td>
<td>University of Canberra</td>
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<td>Dr Thomas Nielsen</td>
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<td>The Merrylands/Guilford Cluster</td>
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<td>Dr Katina Zammit</td>
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<td>Toowoomba North Cluster</td>
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<td>Dr Marian Lewis</td>
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<td>Unity in Diversity in South Western Sydney</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Dr Carol Reid</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Values Newcastle</td>
<td>University of Newcastle</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Dr Kerry Dally</td>
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<td>WA Distance Education Cluster</td>
<td>Murdoch University</td>
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<td>Professor Barry Down</td>
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<tr>
<td>WestPEERS Cluster</td>
<td>Charles Sturt University</td>
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<td>Dr Helen Russell</td>
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### Appendix 3: Acronyms

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Acronym</th>
<th>Full Form</th>
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<tr>
<td>ACTAP</td>
<td>ACT Assessment Program</td>
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<tr>
<td>CERES</td>
<td>Centre for Education and Research in Environmental Strategies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DECS</td>
<td>Department of Education and Children's Services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ICT</td>
<td>Information and communication technologies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IDEAS</td>
<td>Innovative Designs for Enhancing Improvement in Schools</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MCEETYA</td>
<td>Ministerial Council on Education, Employment, Training and Youth Affairs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PAIT</td>
<td>Professional action inquiry team</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SAT</td>
<td>Student action team</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOSE</td>
<td>Studies of society and environment</td>
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<tr>
<td>UAN</td>
<td>University Associates Network</td>
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<tr>
<td>UNESCO</td>
<td>United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization</td>
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<tr>
<td>VAT</td>
<td>Values action team</td>
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<tr>
<td>VEGPSP</td>
<td>Values Education Good Practice Schools Project</td>
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<td>VELS</td>
<td>Victorian Essential Learning Standards</td>
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<td>VENEs</td>
<td>Values Education Networks</td>
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<td>VEPAC</td>
<td>Values Education Project Advisory Committee</td>
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</table>
Appendix 4: References


Hord, SM 1997, Professional Learning Communities: Communities of Continuous Inquiry and Improvement. Austin: Southwest Educational Development Laboratory. Available at www.sedl.org/pubs/change34/


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