

Practising Unity of Head, Heart and Hand

**A Case Study of the
Human Values Program
at Sathya Sai Primary School,
Murwillumbah, Australia**

**Kaye McNaught
BA, BHA, DipEd, MACE**

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—Kaye McNaught

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Purpose

Education should serve not only to develop one's intelligence and skills, but also help to broaden one's outlook and make one useful to society and the world at large...

Education should help make students the embodiments of Human Values such as Truth, Love, Right Conduct, Peace and Non-violence. Academic knowledge alone is of no great value. It may help one to earn a livelihood. But education should go beyond preparation for earning a living. It should prepare one for the challenges of life.

—Sathya Sai Baba (20/1/1986)

This case study describes the Education in Human Values (EHV) program as it is exemplified at the Sathya Sai Primary School in Murwillumbah, Australia. It also describes and analyses the impact of this program on academic achievement and character development in school-aged children at the school. The central question being explored is:

‘To what extent does the Sathya Sai Education in Human Values program result in improved academic and character development in primary school-aged children?’

This case study primarily uses the method of naturalistic observation, together with simple opinion surveys, cross-checked with anecdotal comments and teacher observations and records. The writer is the Teaching Principal at this school, and has gathered information from observations, opinion surveys and discussions at the workplace. As a piece of small-scale evaluation by a participant observer, the findings provide a well-grounded basis for the school community to find answers to subsidiary questions such as: Are the goals being achieved? To what extent? Is the program being delivered as originally planned?

In the current educational climate, there is a resurgence of interest in values education. The author hopes that this case study of the Sathya Sai Primary School will provide valuable insight into the complex field of values education. The report may be of interest to professionals who are seeking to improve values education in Primary Schools.

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Definitions

Character: The display of humanness, through self-awareness and self-control, compassion and love for others; the understanding that human values are present in everyone, they are everyone's true nature. The assessment of character is concerned not only with reaching the highest academic outcomes, but also behavioural outcomes where children act with responsibility and respect for both themselves and others around them

Values: "...the ideals that give significance to our lives, that are reflected through the priorities that we choose, and that we act on consistently and repeatedly."

—*Emeritus Professor Hill: D.E.S.T., 2005, p8*

The five values which form the basis of the Sathya Sai Education in Human Values Program are:

Love is described by Sathya Sai Baba as, "*Love is selflessness. It is a form of energy which each individual transmits and receives every moment.*" (Sanatana Sarathi, May 1994) Love is recognising oneness in all. Love is unselfishness flowing from the depth of the heart or being. It affects all forms of life—it is something which grows with sharing.

Non-Violence refers to one's social obligations and general attitude of love towards the entire world and all its beings. The concept of non-violence is not limited to the physical aspect and includes thoughts and feelings. One should not wish to harm anybody either by thought, speech or bodily action.

Peace. Sathya Sai says (SSIB, 1973) "*Your life can be peaceful only when you can control the excitement of the body and the mind.*" When our internal emotional system is disturbed, restlessness, worry and confusion take over. Peace is a reality for those who have faith in their innate power to do good, be good and see good. Silent sitting and daily contemplation help to attain peace of mind.

Right Conduct is explained as "*That which does not inflict pain on you or others*" (Sathya Sai Speaks, Vol11) Right Conduct (used synonymously with Right Action) is choosing an action in keeping with one's conscience. It is conducive to one's own well-being and the well-being of all.

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Truth begins with truthfulness of speech, honesty and harmony of our thought, word and deed. The highest meaning of truth is described by Sathya Sai (Sanathana Sarathi, Oct 1994): *“The entire world rests on Truth. Everyone has to seek this Truth... Truth is the basic goal of human life.”*

Chapter 1:

Practising Unity of Head, Heart and Hand

‘The great challenge of education, and increasingly the expectation of parents, is for it to transfer to children not only the ability to learn and acquire skills for an increasingly complex world. It is also to assist in the building of character.’

—*Dr Brendan Nelson, Federal Minister of Education, ‘The Age’, 23/09/03*

1.1 Introduction

The Australian Federal Minister of Education, Dr Brendan Nelson, (‘The Age’, 23/09/03) has called for character building education as one way to ensure the positive participation in society of all citizens in the twenty-first century. Countries as diverse as Malaysia, England, Japan, Hong Kong and the United States are emphasising civic and moral education in the core curriculum (Kennedy, 2002).

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One educational program which is having remarkable success all over the world in the building of character is the Sathya Sai Education in Human Values (EHV). This program leads children to act in a unified way, using the intellect (in the Head) to link actions (the Hands) with feelings of care and compassion for all (from the Heart). It is therefore also called 3HV, or Head, Heart and Hand.

There is a growing agreement that values education is a key component in the creation of a tolerant and thriving global society. There is a convergence of ideas from different countries, cultures and perspectives, as well as agreement between public opinion, parents, teachers, educational psychologists and researchers, journalists, academics, government bodies and leaders, on the need for values education.

However, what is not agreed upon by all these groups is the most effective way to assist children and adults to express the values which define them as human beings. The author believes that the program called “Education in Human Values”, as developed by Sathya Sai Baba, has proven to be a most effective way of creating a peaceful and humane school community. As the products of this system, children of character, move out into the world, they will help to build a tolerant and thriving global society.

This thesis is in several chapters:

- Chapter 1 provides the background to the research, giving the history, conceptual framework and aims of the Sathya Sai Education in Human Values (EHV). It defines the essential teaching strategies of this integrated program for character development.
- In Chapter 2 the current context for values education is summarised, both in Australia and internationally.
- Chapter 3 is a detailed Case Study of the Sathya Sai Primary School in Australia. It describes seven major features of an established EHV.
- Chapter 4 deals with the assessment of character development. It considers ways to evaluate the impact of the EHV program, looking both at academic achievement and values acquisition. Evaluating changes in values acquisition in children presents difficulties to the researcher. Related research in values

education is discussed. A simple evaluation tool is designed and its ethical administration explained.

- The final chapter examines the results of a survey conducted at the Sathya Sai Primary School, Murwillumbah, NSW, Australia—the data related to character development, the results of the survey, and limitations. Conclusions are drawn about the effectiveness of the EHV program, and implications for further research are discussed.

1.2 Sathya Sai Education in Human Values (EHV) – History, Conceptual Framework and Pedagogy

1.2.1 History

Sathya Sai Baba is an educator living in India. He advises that the true role of education is to develop the growing child into someone who will help make the world a better place for everyone to live in, and this is best done by providing each child with a secure value system. In his words:

‘Education should serve not only to develop one’s intelligence and skills, but also help to broaden one’s outlook and make him useful to society and the world at large...

Education should help make students the embodiments of Human Values such as Truth, Love, Right Conduct, Peace and Non-violence. Academic knowledge alone is of no great value. It may help one to earn a livelihood. But education should go beyond preparation for earning a living. It should prepare one for the challenges of life’ —*Sathya Sai Baba, 1986*

Under the auspices of Sathya Sai during the 1980’s, the Education in Human Values (EHV) spread rapidly across the world. It originated in India, and by 1989 Sathya Sai EHV had been adopted by over 3 000 schools and 35 000 teachers across India. Teacher training programs were begun in the early 1980’s in England, Malaysia, Thailand and Australia, and voluntary EHV programs were run in the community. In 1992, Sathya Sai Schools were opened in Thailand, Zambia and Nepal. The December 2004 Newsletter of the British Institute of Sathya Sai Education listed 26 countries which now have formal schools with EHV (BISSE, 2004, on-line):

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SSEHV as an educational programme is taught in some form in over 170 countries. Formal schools based on the teachings of SSEHV can be found in the following countries:

•Kenya	* Zambia	* South Africa
•India	* Nepal	* Mauritius
•Japan	* Malaysia	* Indonesia
•Singapore	* Philippines	* Taiwan
•Thailand	* Australia	* New Zealand
•Sweden	* United Kingdom	* Greece
•Canada	* Argentina	* Brazil
•Chile	* Ecuador	* Mexico
•Paraguay	* Venezuela	

In Australia the Sathya Sai Primary School (Murwillumbah) began in 1997 with 11 pupils, and over the past eight years has gradually grown in numbers and facilities. In July 2005 the Australian school is operating with 80 pupils, in four composite classes from Kindergarten to Year 6.

1.2.2 Conceptual Framework

EHV is an international programme focusing on young children throughout the world. It aims to bring out the innate goodness of the child by accentuating the values of Truth, Love, Peace, Right Conduct and Non-violence. EHV rests on the following core understandings about humanity:

- all human beings are of equal value and are worthy of love, respect and consideration;
- all life is interrelated and interdependent;
- by increasing self awareness, individuals can access their conscience and make informed choices which raise them above the level of the instinctual responses of the animal kingdom, thus linking Head, Heart and Hand.
- teachers and parents act as exemplars for children

Sathya Sai Educational programs are designed to help children, teachers, and parents focus on the basic positive values which underlie a moral society. It is not the purpose of Sathya Sai Education to dictate the actions of an individual. Rather it aims to help each person be in touch with their own conscience and make choices for action based on the core values of truth, love, peace, right conduct,

and non-violence. In other words, personal transformation takes place in individuals, and each by his actions becomes an exemplar of values.

Sathya Sai Education has a very clear objective—to bring out human excellence in children. It is concerned with attaining the highest academic and behavioural outcomes, so that children act with responsibility and respect for both themselves and others around them. Successful students become aware of their values and motives, act with self-sufficiency, and perceive themselves as an important part of the world at large. They act according to the highest motives and work to build a compassionate society. This is described in the following way by the Institute of Sathya Sai Education in Thailand's psychologist, Dr Jareonsettasin (1997):

'What exactly is education? We cannot rest content with an educational system which is confined to academic achievement. It has to simultaneously promote human virtues. True education should make a person compassionate and humane ... Education must broaden the heart and expand one's love. Education does not end with the mastery of the meanings of words. It means cleansing the inner tools of the consciousness, the mind, the ego, the senses and the reason. It is not the head that has to be filled with education. It is the heart that has to be cleansed, expanded and illumined.'

The basis of the Sathya Sai EHV centres on human values that are universally recognised and respected: Truth, Right Conduct, Peace, Love and Non-Violence. These values are defined on page 9.

1.2.3 The Five Human Values

When EHV is established, teaching and learning of all aspects in a classroom occurs in an integrated way. The success or otherwise of an educational process can be judged by the actions of the children as they live their daily lives in schools, homes and the wider community—in other words by the display of character. What is meant by good character? The display of humanness, through self-awareness and self-control, compassion and love for others; the understanding that human values are present in everyone, they are everyone's true nature.

Professor Somnath Saraf (1997), former Vice Chancellor of the Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning in Puttaparti, India, explains how the five human values are linked with an aspect or domain of human personality and five ideals of education. Saraf states

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‘The values of love, peace, non-violence, righteous conduct and truth represent the five major facets of human personality...These values stand for all interpersonal and intrapersonal aspects of personality.’

The relationship between values and education is illustrated in Table 1.1:

Human Value	Ideals of Education
Truth	Knowledge
Right Conduct	Skill
Peace	Balance
Love	Insight or vision
Non-violence	Identity or oneness with all

Table 1.1 Relationship between Values, Personality and Ideals (Saraf, 1997)

From the work of Dr Jareonsettasin and Prof Saraf it can be seen that the EHV program involves all aspects of the child’s personality, and is not confined to one domain or one subject area.

Dr Pal Dhall, Director of the Institute of Sathya Sai Education in Australia, has further explained the five human values in terms of ‘Student Outcomes’ in each domain. The student outcomes are the observable behaviours which could form the basis of an evaluation of how well the human values are being expressed or ‘lived’. These are listed in Table 1.2 (Dhall and Dhall, 2004):

Domain and its related Value	Student Outcomes in each domain
Right Action	Manifesting self-confidence by doing the right thing, not just knowing the difference between right and wrong Capacity to make the right choices in the face of peer pressure –demonstrate lively conscience Meaningful service at school, home and community Regular healthy habits of eating, sleeping, physical activity, etc
Truth	Concentration and attention Positive self-identity Mental suppleness (seeing holistic picture of the world, not just ‘black& white’) Awareness of inner world of views, values emotions

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	<p>Problem solving skills using insight, imagination and creativity</p> <p>Honesty, reliability, integrity and determination</p>
Peace	<p>Capacity to show positive emotions of forgiveness, gratitude, optimism, self-acceptance and joy</p> <p>Capacity to manage negative emotions of anger, disappointment, grief, loss</p> <p>Generate inner peace through reflection, contemplation, creative visualisation, affirmation, prayer and other practices</p> <p>Focus and concentration</p>
Love	<p>Well-developed social skills</p> <p>Good communication skills</p> <p>Well-developed skills of negotiation, conflict resolution, self-assertiveness</p> <p>Expression of warmth, affection, spontaneity when appropriate</p>
Non-Violence	<p>Capacity to show empathy, concern for others in positive words and actions</p> <p>Understanding of own philosophy of life.</p> <p>Respect for other cultures and unity in diversity</p> <p>Appreciation of music, art, drama, literature</p> <p>Environmental awareness and care for the Earth</p> <p>Balance between individualism and mutuality</p>

Table 1.2 Personality domains linked to Human Values and Student Outcomes

The five human values are divided into operational sub-values or ‘building blocks’ that can be incorporated into all aspects of the school day. Some sub-values are listed in Table 1.3. The method of teaching, with examples, is further described in Chapter 3 below.

Love	Truth	Right Action	Non Violence	Peace
Care	Curiosity	Courage	Citizenship	Self Esteem
Compassion	Honesty	Determination	Cooperation	Balance
Consideration	Quest for Knowledge	Helpfulness	Teamwork	Calmness
Dedication	Self Awareness	Kindness	Balance	Optimism
Empathy	Self Esteem	Good Manners	Equality	Gratitude
Forgiveness	Understanding	Perseverance	Human Rights	Self Discipline
Friendship	Trust		Interdependence	Concentration

Generosity	Persistence	Responsibility	Justice	Equality
Gentleness	Self Reflection	Initiative	Loyalty	Happiness
Service	Truthfulness	Resourcefulness	Respect	Patience
Sharing	Discrimination	Organization	Friendliness	Self Acceptance
Tolerance	Integrity	Tolerance	Caring	Contentment
Patience	Spirit of Inquiry	Freedom Of Speech	Forgiveness	Reflection
Sincerity	Intuition	Enthusiasm	Flexibility	Self Respect

Table 1.3 The core values and sub-values

1.2.3 Pedagogy

At the Sathya Sai School in Australia the formal lessons follow the guidelines of the Sathya Sai Education in Human Values developed by the first teachers at Prasanthi Nilayam in India. These include the Five Teaching Techniques of:

1. Silent Sitting
2. Story Telling
3. Quotations
4. Group Activities
5. Group Singing

Several publications have provided details of the theoretical background, purpose and methodology of each of these five teaching techniques. (Dhall and Dhall, 2004; BISSE; Art-ong Jumsai, 1997; Farmer and Farmer, 1998). The Institute of Sathya Sai Education (ISSE) in Australia, under the direction of Drs Pal Dhall and Tehseen Dhall, has introduced another two compatible techniques to enhance the values learning processes:

6. Mind Mapping
7. Creative Visualisation

The following briefly describes the seven teaching techniques:

1.2.3.1 Silent Sitting

Silent Sitting gives children an opportunity to sit quietly and make their minds peaceful. It aims to develop the following capacities:

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- The ability to become calm and concentrated
- The ability to relax, quieten the physical body and become still
- The ability to put aside distracting thoughts
- The ability to listen to and become aware of inner feelings and inner voice (conscience)
- The awareness that happiness, peace and love come from inside not outside
- The ability to switch to an inner world of positive images and feelings, which builds self-confidence
- The ability to expand positive feelings to include all of the outside world

In the Sathya Sai classroom, Silent Sitting is used at the beginning of the Values Lesson. Peaceful music is played as a background during the quiet time to promote stillness and reflection. The teacher regularly leads the class through guided imagery to fill all parts of the body with light.

1.2.3.2 Story Telling

Throughout all of human history, Story Telling has been used to pass on wisdom and values from one generation to another. This technique supplements the ‘Moral Biography’ approach to values education—adding myths and legends, sacred stories and stories of well-known current heroes and heroines. Pedagogy of Education in Human Values requires that the teacher tells the story and draws the children into the fabric of it, not just by reading the words. The Story telling connects with the imagination and feelings or heart of each student.

Farmer (1998) writes:

‘As an educational tool, Story Telling nourishes the imagination, develops the ability to visualise, remember, embellish and interpret. Information is passed on, knowledge is gained, reasoning is awakened, curiosity is aroused, role models are provided and ideals are inspired.’

The critical element in the story is the moral dilemma. The process of resolving the dilemma gives the listener an operational model of behaviour. Once absorbed by the child, the model can be applied as part of an inner dialogue as a prelude to making a moral choice. For example, after hearing the story of the naughty young possum

which missed out on a treat because he spoke rudely, the child may think, 'If I am rude and insulting like Possum I might miss out too.'

After telling a story, the teacher explores the children's levels of listening and understanding using a sequence of questions to elicit further application of the values shown in the tale. The teacher also explores and evaluates students' feelings and reactions to characters and situations. Sometimes the teacher requests an individual creative response, to enable the student to absorb the story at many levels and organize the values within his/her worldview.

1.2.3.3 Quotations

The English language has many pithy sayings, memorable quotes, affirmations and daily thoughts for contemplation that can be used to provide moral guidelines and wisdom. Prayers and Quotations reach the sub-conscious mind and give the students an easily-memorised key to right choices. An example is the quote for Fairness: "Do as would be done by". At the Murwillumbah school one quote is adopted for the whole school for two weeks, relating to the Value of the fortnight.

In this way the teacher provides students with a valuable tool for creating positive thoughts which in turn determine behaviour. 'What a man thinks, so he becomes' is widely accepted in modern psychology. The teacher guides children to discuss and understand the quote, to learn it off by heart and to repeatedly say it out loud, thus filling young minds with valuable wisdom.

1.2.3.4 Group Singing

An integral part of each EHV lesson is a song based on human values. Group Singing is a technique which enhances the development of the child, in the following ways:

- Physical: Singing builds posture, corrects breathing, and promotes cooperation and teamwork.
- Mental: Learning a song builds memory and concentration. It is easy to remember the lines of a song, which if catchy, can play over and over in the mind reinforcing the value.

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- Emotional: Music and singing may be calming, or can be used to build a feeling of joyfulness and enthusiasm. Music speaks directly to the emotions.
- Social: Singing in a group builds self-confidence. Even the shyest child is carried along by the joy of the song and joins in, feeling part of the class.
- For example:

*Let there be peace, let there be peace, in
the world, in the world;*

*Let it begin with me, let it begin with me,
For one and All, For One and All.*

(Sung to Frere Jacques)

1.2.3.5 Group Activities

The aim of Group Activities is to allow students to actually practice what has been learned mentally and emotionally from the other teaching techniques. Group Activities are chosen to give students the opportunity to

- experience the values for themselves.
- learn to cooperate and interact with others, thereby demonstrating the appropriate behaviour.
- express what has been learned through their own creativity and
- develop self-confidence and the ability to examine their motives and attitudes.

The range of Group Activities provided by the teacher is only limited by imagination and resources. Frequently used activities include group discussion, art and craft, creative writing, games, role plays and attitude quizzes.

This teaching technique includes many components from three widely used methods of moral teaching: Values Clarification (eg moral dilemma activities), Cognitive Development (eg group discussion with guided questioning) and Role Play (where children may act out higher ideals and values). Further discussion of these values

education teaching approaches may be found in McMillan's Educating for Values (McMillan et al, no date).

1.2.3.6 Mind Mapping

In Mind Mapping the concept of a value is explored using a set of nine questions. This may be done either by the student alone or by the teacher working with the children. It is most important that this exercise be done by visually mapping the answers on a single page or on the whiteboard. This technique assists the student to synthesise different aspects of a value and inter-relate it with other values and experiences.

Figure 1.1 illustrates the nine questions used on the mind map, for the older student:

1. **What is the definition of the value?**
2. **What does the value look like?**
3. **How does the value make me feel when I am practising it?**
4. **How does the value make others feel when I am practising it?**
5. **What are the limits of the value?**
6. **What are the opposites of the value?**
7. **What are related values?**
8. **What are the obstacles to practising the value?**
9. **What are my experiences of the value?**

Figure 1.1 Questions used to explore a value (Dhall and Dhall, 2004)

A simplified version with just four questions is used for 5-7 year old students. This is shown in Figure 1.2:

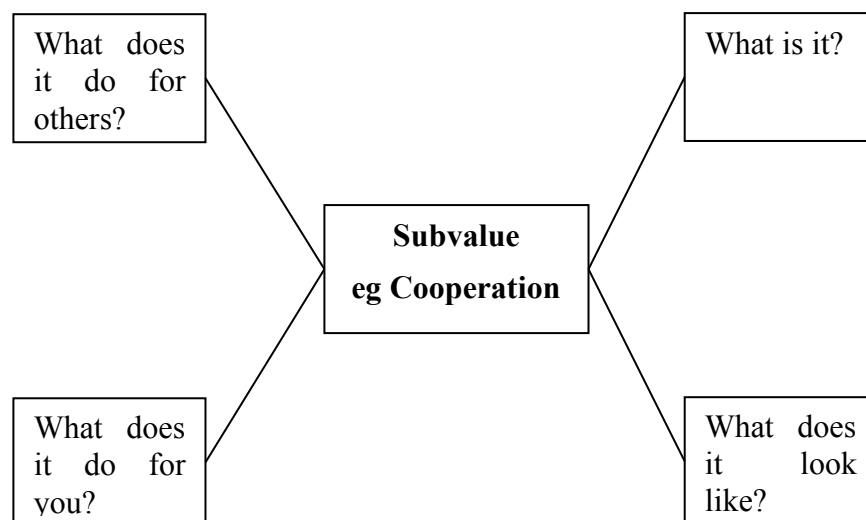


Figure 1.2 Simplified Mindmap

Mind mapping of a value –

- Improves comprehension and cognition
- Develops understanding of relationships between values
- Improves vocabulary
- Develops reasoning and memory
- Assists in emotional development and empathy

1.2.3.7. Creative Visualisation

An activity closely associated with Silent Sitting is Creative Visualisation. This may involve imagining going to a ‘Special Place’ that the child creates (eg in the country, by the sea, in a garden) where they know they will feel absolute peace, love and happiness. Visualisation is used in diverse ways, such as for relaxation, to assist with study and testing situations, or to prepare a young child for sleep. In EHV, through the power of imagination, a child can be led to visualise a situation or rehearse an action demonstrating the value being taught.

Creative visualisation can be used as part of Silent Sitting or as a Group Activity. Having each student imagine themselves practise the value being taught is a powerful technique often used at the close of an EHV lesson. Once the brain stores the memory of the human values response to an imagined situation, the child can draw on this memory in real life. Research in neuroscience has confirmed that Creative Visualisation provides a powerful tool for transformation: ‘... positive emotions can be both grounded in reason and enhanced by it... the circuitry of emotions and the circuitry of cognition partially overlap.’ (Padma, 2004). Therefore Mind Mapping and Creative Visualisation assist children in the integration and expression of values in their daily life.

1.3 Summary

The Sathya Sai Education in Human Values program can be summarised as follows:

Practising Unity of Head, Heart and Hand

- EHV was originated by Sathya Sai Baba in India and spread rapidly across the world in the 1980's.
- It aims to produce children of excellent character.
- It brings out the innate goodness of each child by accentuating the five values of Truth, Love, Peace, Right Conduct and Non-Violence.
- EHV is an integrated program which involves all aspects of the child's personality.
- EHV uses seven teaching techniques which assist learning and character development by engaging various parts of the brain.

Chapter 2:

The Context for Values Education

2.1 Introduction

In Australia and elsewhere around the world there are many calls for values education. It is useful to examine some of the major developments in the field in order to provide a context for the Sathya Sai Education in Human Values program. This chapter will describe the International perspective first, and then the Australian perspective.

2.2 The U.N. Pillars of Knowledge – an International Perspective

The challenge of educating children for an increasingly global society in the 21st Century has been shaped by a United Nations report called *Learning: The Treasure Within* (Delors, 1996). An International Commission on Education for the 21st Century, chaired by Jacques Delors (Pascoe, 2002), investigated educational provision around the world and proposed the following new ways of conceiving education

‘If it is to succeed in its tasks, education must be organised around four fundamental types of learning which, throughout a person’s life, will be the pillars of knowledge: **learning to know**, that is acquiring the instrument of understanding; **learning to do**, so as to be able to act creatively on one’s environment; **learning to live together**, so as to be able to participate and cooperate with other people in all human activities; and **learning to be**, the sensual progression which proceeds from the previous three. Of course, these four parts of knowledge all form a whole, because there are many points of contact, intersection and exchange among them.’

Of these pillars—**learning to live together**—was presented as the greatest challenge, and the 46th Session of the International Conference of Ministers of Education held in Geneva in September 2001 centred on this theme. It identified three global trends:

1. Increasing population movements.
2. Increasing gaps between rich and poor, both within and between countries.
3. Increasing globalisation of trade, travel and information technology, which creates a greater mingling of cultures.

Because of these trends, it was concluded that every national education system should give priority to **learning to live together** by such means as:

- Children developing an understanding of themselves and others — *insight*
- Children strengthening their own cultural identity and appreciating that of others — *identity*
- Children learning to manage conflicts and live in a spirit of respect for cultural pluralism, mutual understanding, peace and harmony — *balance, knowledge and skills* [Current author’s italics] (Pascoe, 2002)

The human values of the Sathya Sai EHV fit very neatly into this schema: EHV aims to develop *'knowledge, skills, balance, insight, and identity for the individual to contribute to a caring society'* (Saraf, 1997).

2.3 The Australian Perspective

In Australian society today there is concern about a perceived lack of values education in schools. Articles expressing this concern appear in the print media, on the internet and on the TV. The articles and programs highlight community concerns about social changes and the need to provide young Australians with better values—such as those that promote peace and understanding between all people, and care for the environment. The following three examples illustrate the perceived need for better values education:

1. *'Social Resentment Simmers in Schools'* by Gerard Noonan, Education Editor, Sydney Morning Herald, 2002, p12. In this article Noonan discussed how the resentment between rich and poor children shows up in schoolyards. He documented this by a three month study of three country towns in Australia.
2. *Putting on the Gloves against Bullies* by Alison Ribbon – Education Writer, 2002, p 9. The author reports on efforts in a Tasmanian school to tackle the issue of bullying.
3. The cover story in a recent *'Weekend Australian'* (Jan 29-30, 2005, p12) highlighted concerns about intimidation in schools via e-mails, text messages and Web sites. Dr Ken Rigby, Australia's key expert on school bullying, estimates that the number of children who do not feel safe at school is at least 125,000.

Such general concerns about the need for values have led educationalists to a search for effective methods to strengthen character as part of the educational experience. The following section describes major work by educational leaders in Australia.

2.3.1. Adelaide Declaration on National Goals

In 1999, State and Federal Ministers of Education in Australia agreed to the Adelaide Declaration on National Goals for Schooling in the Twenty-first Century (MCEETYA, 1999). The Declaration emphasises the importance of morals and

ethics in education, and identifies the following goals of education with the appropriate values that are shared in Australian society:

- *Developing the capacity to exercise judgement and responsibility in matters of morality, ethics and social justice;*
- *The development of a just, open ...socially cohesive and culturally rich society, free from all forms of discrimination;*
- *Developing an understanding and acknowledgement of the value of Aboriginal cultures and the value of cultural and linguistic diversity... to contribute and benefit from reconciliation;*
- *Developing active and informed citizens, able to exercise their rights and responsibilities;*
- *Developing an understanding of and concern for stewardship of the natural environment...to contribute to ecologically sustainable development.'*

These National Goals, it may be observed, link closely to the UN Pillars of Education mentioned previously.

The next stage was to explore which values are to be taught, and by what means, in order to implement such goals. The further exploration of these points led to the Commonwealth Government 'Values Education Study' and the eventual publication of the 'National Framework for Values Education in Australia', which is described in part 2.3.3.

2.3.2 College Yearbook: Values in Education

Another significant indicator of the level of concern for values education in Australia is the emphasis placed by the Australian College of Educators. The College Yearbook for 2002, 'Values in Education' (Pascoe ed, 2002), contains fourteen essays around the theme of 'the moral formation of children and young people', providing a historical and theoretical foundation, a variety of school perspectives eg Jewish, Catholic and Islamic, and some empirical studies. Several themes are highlighted in these essays:

- A renewed push for values throughout the world
- The importance of celebrating cultural diversity

- Children becoming confused by the contradiction in values shown in the media
- Schools around the world are seen as a central place to develop shared value systems and build citizenship

One of the strongest calls in the yearbook comes from Carr (cited in Pascoe, 2002) who writes:

‘Liberal education, for all its many benefits, has failed to deliver personal, moral, cultural and economic transformation. If at the end of schooling, a person thinks *that meaning and happiness are derived from a materialistic and self-seeking, rather than an altruistic values system, then...dislocation may continue inexorably.*’
[Current author’s italics.]

2.3.3 Values Education Framework – Commonwealth

In October 2002 the Minister for Education, Science and Training, Dr Brendan Nelson, invited schools throughout Australia to apply for the Values Action Research grants. The aim of this study was to gain information on what values are currently being taught in Australian schools, how these values are taught and how this compares with the way values are embedded in school education in Australia and other countries.

A surprising 700 schools from all States and Territories requested participation in the study. There followed a rigorous selection process in which applications were evaluated on merit. The final selection of 69 grant schools reflected a balance of sectors, school types, values education projects and locations across Australia.

Twelve of the study schools were asked to write up more detailed case studies, four focusing on school ethos, four on student resilience and four on teaching values in the school curriculum. The twelve case studies were grouped according to the key categories of values education activity identified through the study. These categories are:

- Examining the school’s mission or ethos in consultation with the local community
- Developing students’ civic and social skills and building resilience

Practising Unity of Head, Heart and Hand

- Ensuring that values are incorporated into the teaching programs for the key curriculum learning areas

The researchers emphasised that, in practice, once a school starts down the values track, efforts and activities should incorporate each of these three categories.

All projects at individual schools were completed in Term 2, 2003, and the resulting Values Education Study report was released by Dr Brendan Nelson in November 2003. The report contained a collation of the common or core values that are highly esteemed, a set of principles and a framework for improved values education across Australia. (see <http://www.curriculum.edu.au/values>).

The findings were discussed at the National Values Education Forum held in Melbourne in April 2004. Subsequently a National Values Framework for Australian Schools (D.E.S.T., 2005) was issued to all Primary and Secondary Schools. Particular values have emerged from Australian school communities and from the National Goals for Schooling in Australia in the Twenty-first Century. These values are now a mandatory part of the syllabus if a school is to receive funding from the Australian Government. Whether the values are taught as isolated units or are integrated across the curriculum is left to each school's discretion.

The Framework contains the following nine value statements (D.E.S.T., 2005) presented in alphabetical order:

- **Care and Compassion** – care for self and others
- **Doing your best** – seek to accomplish something worthy and admirable, try hard, pursue excellence
- **Fair Go** – pursue and protect the common good where all people are treated fairly for a just society
- **Freedom** – enjoy all the rights and privileges of Australian citizenship free from unnecessary interference or control, and stand up for the rights of others
- **Honesty and Trustworthiness** – be honest, sincere and seek the truth

- **Integrity** – act in accordance with principles of moral and ethical conduct, ensure consistency between words and deeds
- **Respect** - treat others with consideration and regard, respect another person’s point of view
- **Responsibility** – be accountable for one’s own actions, resolve differences in constructive, non-violent and peaceful ways, contribute to society and to civic life, take care of the environment
- **Understanding, Tolerance and Inclusion** – be aware of others and their cultures, accept diversity within a democratic society, being included and include others

Individual schools are given a set of guiding principles for implementing their own approaches to values education in partnership with their local communities.

2.4 Convergence of ideas

There is considerable similarity between the values and aims of the United Nations Pillars of Knowledge, the objectives of the Adelaide Declaration on National Goals for Australian Education, the Commonwealth’s National Framework for Values Education, and the Sathya Sai Education in Human Values ideals. These are compared in Table 2.1

This table shows a degree of convergence of ideas from different perspectives. For instance, the ideal of ‘Identity’ in EHV is concerned with student outcomes of *‘positive self-identity, capacity to show empathy, respect for other cultures and unity in diversity.’* (cited in Table 1.1 above). This equates to the U.N. ‘strengthening of own cultural identity and appreciating others’, the values of the Adelaide Declaration and the final Framework values of Understanding, ‘Tolerance of diversity.’

Sathya Sai Education in Human Values - Ideals	U.N. Pillars of Knowledge	Adelaide Declaration – shared goals	Commonwealth National Framework for Values Education
Knowledge	Developing mutual understanding	Shared stewardship of natural environment	Responsibility, Respect for others
Skill	Managing conflict, showing respect for others	Capacity to exercise judgement and responsibility	Care and Compassion, Doing your best
Balance	Living in peace and harmony	Socially cohesive and culturally rich society	Fair Go, Freedom
Insight	Understanding of themselves and others	Active and informed citizens	Integrity
Identity	Strengthening own cultural identity and appreciating others	Acknowledgement of cultural and linguistic diversity	Understanding, tolerance of diversity

Table 2.1 Comparison of Goals and Values Frameworks (compiled by K.McNaught from previous references)

However there is a major difference between the SSEHV program and the other frameworks: the U.N. Pillars of Knowledge, the Goals and the Commonwealth Framework are sets of aims, with no defined methods of how to achieve them. In contrast, EHV has a

- i) a philosophy
- ii) a framework of values
- iii) a definitive pedagogy, a unique set of processes to be applied in teaching and learning activities
- iv) a developmental system.

It provides a complete system that is lacking in other educational models.

EHV is actively taught in a Sathya Sai Primary School in Murwillumbah, Northern New South Wales. The school is now in its ninth year of operation. This school provides an opportunity to investigate the effectiveness of the EHV: is it achieving what it claims to do? A detailed Case Study of the operations of the school, described in Chapter 3, was completed. A further smallscale evaluation was carried out to determine *'To what extent does EHV result in improved character development in Primary school-aged children at Sathya Sai Primary School, Murwillumbah?'* The investigation of this question forms the basis of Chapter 4 of this report.

2.5 Summary

- The United Nations identified four Pillars of Knowledge essential for education in a global world.
- In Australian society today there is concern about a perceived lack of values education in schools.
- The Adelaide Declaration on National Goals for Education identified key values, knowledge and skill components.
- The Australian College of Educators is one major body in Australia which contributed to the values debate with its 2002 College Yearbook: 'Values in Education'.
- The Australian Government is taking the initiative with a Values Education Study and National Framework For Values Education in Australian Schools.
- There is broad agreement between the values identified by these groups and the values which underpin the Sathya Sai Education in Human Values Program.
- Sathya Sai Education in Human Values offers a complete educational system for values acquisition, in contrast to other models.
- This thesis is a case study of the Sathya Sai Primary School in Australia in an effort to determine the impact of EHV on academic standards and character of the pupils at the school.

Chapter 3

A Case Study of the Sathya Sai Primary School, Murwillumbah

3.1 Introduction

Both in Australia and across the world there is a call for values education. Character building through human values education is the heart of the Sathya Sai Primary School, Murwillumbah. Models of values education have their strengths and weaknesses. The Sathya Sai Education in Human Values (EHV) model has been used in dozens of countries and is known to be effective in a variety of cultures. This case study is to determine the key elements of the EHV program as it operates in a

mainstream school in a Western country. This case study of the program and practices at this Australian school provides a model for teachers and school communities around the globe.

3.2 Background

The Sathya Sai Primary School in Australia was established at Mt Warning, Murwillumbah, in 1997, with 11 pupils. Upon entering its ninth year in 2005, the school has 80 students, a part-time Principal, four Classroom Teachers, and several part-time Specialist Teachers in the areas of Art, Music and Special Education. The school also relies on regular assistance from up to 20 volunteers (parents and friends of the school) each week.

It is in the remarkable position of being the only Sathya Sai School in a Western country that combines the State Curriculum with Education in Human Values in a non-religious, multicultural setting, educating students from a wide range of backgrounds in the community.

The Tweed Shire, where the school is situated, is recognised by the State Government authorities as being one of the most disadvantaged in New South Wales. In 2004, 47% of all families in the Shire received parenting payments (Social Security support), and it is an area of high need and high unemployment levels for the last decade.

Indicators of the diversity of background of the school community is evidenced by the following data from the Sathya Sai School, Murwillumbah:

- Income: 33% of families rely on Social Security payment; 67% of families have a breadwinner;
- Parenting: 47% of families are sole parent families
- Special Needs: One child has Ausperger's Syndrome, one has physical disabilities, and a number have learning difficulties such as dyslexia.

In this school, education is free for the eighty students, while the teachers' salaries are funded by the government. Some teachers and support staff work extra hours on a voluntary basis. Parents pay a small resource fee and the school relies on donations

mainly from community members who support the educational philosophy of the EHV program.

3.2.1 Mission Statement¹

“The mission of the school is to bring out Human Excellence in children. Human excellence is the development of good character, the end product of education. In an atmosphere of love and respect, each child is encouraged to excel and aspire to his or her full potential.”

To fulfil this mission, the staff and administration will provide:

- A loving and nurturing environment for the growth of character, the development of noble ideals and the enrichment of virtues
- Opportunities for responsible citizenship through a focus on the integration of the Human Values of Love, Truth, Right Conduct, Peace and Non-Violence
- A better understanding of all cultures and beliefs, and a sense of unity amidst diversity
- A challenging curriculum that promotes academic excellence
- Encouragement of parent-teacher-school cooperation and the promotion of community involvement
- An opportunity for parents to play an active role in the integrated development of a socially conscious and ethically mature student.

3.2.2 School Ethos²

“The school’s goal is to achieve academic excellence together with the development of student character by

- Creating and maintaining a school culture permeated by the Human Values of Love, Peace, Truth, Right Conduct and Non-Violence
- Encouraging kindness, tolerance and an appreciation for the unity of all cultures

¹ Mission statement and Ethos from page 2-3, Parent Handbook of the Sathya Sai Primary School

² Mission statement and Ethos from page 2-3, Parent Handbook of the Sathya Sai Primary School

- Nurturing the student's ability to use the human values in day-to-day decision making
- Teaching students how to discourage harassment and bullying peacefully but effectively
- Encouraging students to be positive, take responsibility, practise selfless social service
- Promoting healthy lifestyles
- Teaching students how to put a ceiling on their desires and not to waste time, energy, money, food and knowledge
- Using dynamic teaching techniques such as teacher modeling, experiential learning and other methods to promote values.”

3.3 The Essential Elements in the EHV school

There are seven essential elements that define the Sathya Sai Primary School.

- Staff Development
- Formal EHV Lesson
- Integration of values into all Key Learning Areas
- School Discipline and Welfare System
- Student Assessment and Reporting
- The Parent Partnership
- The School's Administration

As it is a mainstream school, these features are similar to many other schools. However the subtle differences in all areas together create a dynamic values-oriented learning community.

3.3.1 First Element: Staff Development

‘The profession of a teacher is the most responsible one in every country. If the teacher strays from the path of truth the entire society will suffer. So you must make every effort to live an upright life.’

—*Sathya Sai Baba, 1997*

Although parents are the child’s first teachers, subsequently school teachers become highly significant adults for most children. Teachers usually have a great impact on the development of the child’s character. Children learn largely by emulating those around them, and therefore it is vital that teachers of human values themselves practise what they teach, and lead by example. How does a school develop staff of this calibre?

The selection of staff follows accepted professional practice of advertising, interview and initial appointment for one year. All staff are required to meet State Teacher Registration criteria. They are also expected to undertake further training in Sathya Sai Education in Human Values. New teachers are given a familiarisation and induction program, organised by the Principal, and then linked with one of the existing teachers in a Mentor-Mentee relationship. All teachers participate in Whole-school Curriculum Days four times a year for a variety of ongoing educational activities. In addition each teacher is encouraged to attend subject-based Professional Development courses twice a year. These professional development activities are common to most schools. What is specific to the Sathya Sai School are the next three strands of ongoing teacher development:

Strand 1: Group Values Planning

As part of Staff Professional Development, teachers meet together at the beginning of the semester to discuss and set the timeline for particular values and sub-values to be taught. The five overarching values of Right Action, Peace, Love, Truth and Non-Violence form the foundation and the superstructure of all activities at the school. However these are separated into building blocks: appropriate action statements or sub-values. These provide a clear focus for children, staff and parents each week.

Practising Unity of Head, Heart and Hand

The plan for teaching the sub-values is made by the teachers, taking into consideration each of the following:

- a) *The perceived needs of the students.* For instance at the start of each year it is necessary to help new students feel comfortable and to develop a group awareness within the class. Hence the value of Love through 'Understanding Others and Building Friendship' is often chosen for this time of the year. Or the value of Right Action through the development of a code of 'Good Manners for the Classroom' is appropriate to begin the new year.
- b) *The School's focus event for the term.* This may be the Annual School Concert, or a Multicultural Dance or an Outdoor Education Camp. Wherever possible, the sub-values chosen relate closely to this event eg Non-Violence as 'Care of the Environment' will be a focus for the Outdoor Camp.
- c) *The themes being studied in Human Society and Environment (HSIE) and Personal Development, Health and Physical Education (PD/H/PE).* Because these two subject areas are the most concerned with the development of values, it is easy to coordinate particular sub-values with content-based activities in these subjects. For instance when the topic for HSIE was 'British Settlement in Australia and Colonisation', the children were enabled greater understanding of the sub-value of Forgiveness.

Although this group planning takes time, it has many benefits:

- a. The staff practise cooperative group work (and the human values that help individuals work together)
- b. Teachers develop a deeper understanding of the sub-values and the main values
- c. Colleagues share their understandings and curriculum ideas
- d. Teachers listen to values songs and select core pieces for the EHV program, music and performance items
- e. The strengthening of collegial relationships creates a cohesive atmosphere and sense of purpose that pervades the school

Strand 2: Weekly Reflection – Raising Consciousness

A second method of continuous teacher development takes place at the weekly Staff Meetings. Each meeting begins with a period of Reflection on the sub-value to be taught the following week.

The Reflection is led by one staff member on a rostered basis. It may consist of a story or a quote from any source, a poem or a song, a guided visualisation, questions for discussion or a mind map exploring the limits of the value. All members of staff contribute equally to the discussion—each seeks a better understanding of the sub-value as it applies to his/her own life. The acceptance of each other's views builds understanding and harmony within the group. Because each staff member has his/her own personal history and standpoint, this creates a wonderful diversity of responses and a respect for the various cultures and worldviews. Through synthesis, a deeper realisation of the values is gained. Teachers then become better able to demonstrate and explain the values to their students.

Strand 3: Continuous Awareness

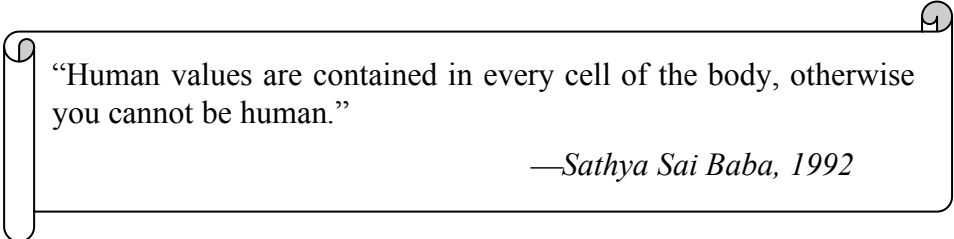
A third and critically important aspect of staff development is the daily practice or role modelling which occurs in class. Each teacher consciously tries to demonstrate ways of applying the particular sub-value of the week. As this is done, the teacher may explain to the students the thought processes or actions being taken. For instance when students are being taught the skills of Goal Setting through 'Taking Small Steps Towards Big Goals', the teacher joins in the process. She may say, "My goal is to mark all your schoolwork every week, instead of it piling up! So my small step is to mark one subject every night."

By the teachers cultivating the values, and sharing their personal journey with the children, they are acting as role models. This shows that the values are not just for children, but a way of life that we choose in which honesty, determination and openness are important. They are teaching authenticity.

In conclusion, by **choosing and planning** which sub-values to teach, by **weekly reflection** and by **modelling the values**, staff themselves are continuously growing stronger in the understanding and practice of the very human values that they teach. It brings a certain joyfulness and satisfaction in the job as the teachers feel they are

part of the learning process too. They are better able to practise unity of head, heart and hand – “The hands do what the heart has approved of the ideas coming from the head” – which is the objective of the EHV. Thus the teachers are prepared for their role in a school where pupils will consciously or unconsciously accept them as heroes and imitate their human qualities.

3.3.2 Second Element: The Formal Human Values Lesson



“Human values are contained in every cell of the body, otherwise you cannot be human.”

—*Sathya Sai Baba, 1992*

The Formal Human Values Lesson at the Sathya Sai Primary School takes place every Monday morning. It sets the scene and gives the values theme for the rest of the week. A particular sub-value is used for two weeks to enable reinforcement and deeper understanding by the children. It is the teachers’ belief that the human values are actually present in everyone, unformed, unawakened — like the seed awaiting the soil, water and sunshine so that it can sprout and grow. So for children to live their lives according to the values already within them, certain situations and teaching methods are required. Such triggers include expectations and examples set by parents and teachers, a language of values, and the cognitive, affective and behavioural activities taught in the formal lessons.

The formal EHV lesson turns around the seven teaching techniques of

1. Silent Sitting
2. Story Telling
3. Quotations
4. Group Activities
5. Group Singing
6. Mind mapping
7. Creative Visualisation

The techniques are explained in full in Chapter 1. The benefits of each one in the learning process are highlighted as follows:

3.3.2.1 Silent Sitting

Silent Sitting gives children an opportunity to sit quietly and make their bodies and minds peaceful for a few minutes. In the Sathya Sai classroom, Silent Sitting is used at the beginning of the Values Lesson, and frequently throughout the day. Peaceful music is played as a background for the quiet time of stillness and reflection. Sometimes the teacher will lead the class through a guided mental journey, filling all parts of the body with light. At other times the teacher will lead the children to think about the quote, or to keep saying it in their minds.

Silent Sitting is a technique used only rarely in other values programs. Yet it helps bring balance to a child who may be caught up in the action and reaction of the classroom. Silent Sitting provides a time for introspection and gives acknowledgement to the inner resources of the student. It is an aspect of the EHV school that children and teachers enjoy. It is a technique that helps the children develop self-control which is readily transferred to the home.

3.3.2.2 Story Telling

The story is the lynchpin of the EHV lesson. Education in Human Values requires that the teacher tells the story and draws the children into the fabric of it, not just by reading the words. The Story telling connects with the imagination and feelings or heart of each student.

The critical element in the story is the moral dilemma. The process of resolving the dilemma gives the listener an operational model of behaviour. Once absorbed by the child, the model can be applied as part of an inner dialogue as a prelude to making a moral choice.

The story remains the class focus for not only the EHV lesson but also literacy activities in other lessons throughout the week.

3.3.2.3 Quotations

Each fortnight a new Quotation is displayed in each classroom and at the entrance to the school. The Quotation is frequently used in Story Telling, and sometimes

repeated in the song to be sung. It heads the weekly school newsletter and the child's homework, so that it acts as a trigger throughout the week, stimulating thought and action according to the value being learnt. It is heard being repeated by children in the playground and at home.

3.3.2.4 Group Singing

At the Sai School, the Group Singing is a technique used at the beginning or the end of the EHV lesson to inspire the children. A song is often revisited several times throughout the week in class, as children enjoy the repetition of a bright, catchy song. Often the song becomes part of the whole school assembly on Fridays, and all classes sing in unison as they absorb the value indicated in the song.

3.3.2.5 Group Activities

The aim of the Group Activities is to allow students to actually practice what has been learned mentally and emotionally from the preceding techniques. Frequently used activities include group discussion, art and craft, creative writing, games, role plays and attitude quizzes. The range of Group Activities provided by the teacher is only limited by imagination and resources.

Group Activities are revisited again during the week as part of Health, English, Science, PE, Art or Drama lessons. This gives the students even more opportunities to practice and integrate the values into their daily behaviour.

Whole school excursions are made where the students interact with the local community and actively demonstrate the human values. To develop social conscience, understanding and compassion students carry out such activities as singing and entertaining elderly folk at a Nursing Home each month; they participate in Clean-Up Australia Day by improving the environment in the nearby park; and they help celebrate tolerance and multiculturalism at the Annual Harmony Day in town.

3.3.2.6 Mind Mapping

Mind mapping assists the student to synthesise the various aspects of the value and relate this to other values and experiences.

3.3.2.7 Creative Visualisation

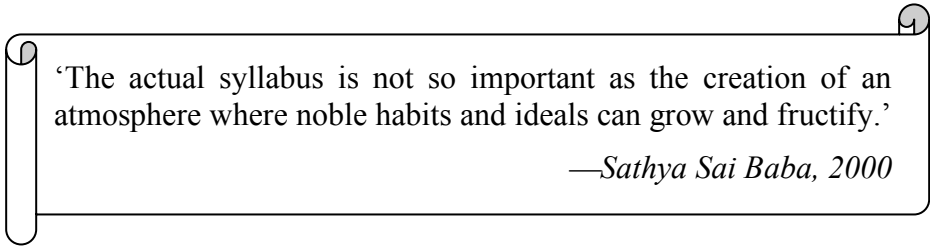
Through the power of imagination, a child may be led to visualise a situation and rehearse an action demonstrating the value being taught.

Creative visualisation can be used as part of silent sitting or as a group activity. A powerful technique to use at the close of an EHV lesson is to have each student imagine themselves acting out the focus value.

In conclusion, it is clear to teachers at the Sai School that the seven-step format of the human values lessons enables the values to affect each student in a variety of ways, according to his/her preferred learning style. The seven teaching techniques are tools for teaching knowledge, skill, balance, insight, and identity. With the variety of approaches used, it is possible not only to influence intellect, emotion and behaviour, but also to reach each 'inner child', building the awareness of conscience.

Teachers hear the children talk about a value, and observe the children write about and practise a value in the classroom. But when adults see the expression of that value in a child's behaviour in the wider world, truly they begin to see the unity of Head, Heart and Hand!

3.3.3 Third Element: Integration of Values into all Key Learning Areas



'The actual syllabus is not so important as the creation of an atmosphere where noble habits and ideals can grow and fructify.'

—Sathya Sai Baba, 2000

Alongside the formal EHV lesson, the teachers look for ways to integrate the value into the Key Learning Areas, or subject areas. At the Sathya Sai Primary School, the teachers find a myriad of ways to integrate the values into the Key Learning Areas throughout the week. Some of the most successful activities are created by the teacher "spontaneously"! The essential prerequisites are a constellation of circumstances: the teacher has the value/sub-value in his/her heart and mind and is

Practising Unity of Head, Heart and Hand

on the lookout for that ‘teachable moment’, the teaching situation creates the appropriate context, and the child is receptive. The only limit is the creativity of the teacher.

The following list of some of the ways in which values integration takes place in the school is only a starting point. Here is an example:

Value: PEACE

Subvalue: Self-Discipline - being organised.

English Lessons

Many of the English activities help children think through and rehearse the actions which flow from the application of the subvalue to different situations. Examples are:

- Write a story about a time you were not organised, and a disaster followed.
- Design a poster advertising Self-Discipline
- Create an acrostic poem about Self-Discipline
- Read a novel and find a character who showed self-discipline
- Unjumble the words to make the quote on self-discipline
- Dictionary research: what other words have similar meanings to ‘Organization?’
- Make up a role-play about Tidy Tammy and Messy Mandy, the twins

Human Society and Its Environment Lessons

In HSIE students again learn to apply and adapt the subvalue and explore it in different ways. It is much easier to be peaceful when you have returned your library books on time.

- For your current project, draw up an outline of what you hope to achieve each week. This is your Organisational Plan!
- For your study of ‘The Sea’, sort the creatures you select into given categories
- Practise being organised by returning your research books to the library on time

Science and Technology Lessons

In Science the focus is on building greater understanding of the subvalue and reinforcing it in different ways such as using graphs and technology.

- Learn different ways of recording data as you observe your plants growing
- Using the computer, design a poster containing the quote for the week
- Put information onto a graph to show how it can be better organised

Personal Development, Health, Physical Education Focus

Practising Unity of Head, Heart and Hand

In this subject area students personalise the subvalue, and are part of the social group. The proper functioning of the group depends upon the value. Sporting activities are excellent for the practice of good relationships, dealing with others' needs, building fair play and sportsmanship.

- Set yourself a goal and start a weekly exercise program to work towards it
- Make up a chart to fill in as you complete your daily jobs
- Assess your own self-discipline: fill out the checklist to find out your Organization Rating!
- Make up names for the sports teams using sub-values eg Courageous Cats, Peaceful Pandas, Keen Kangaroos, Determined Dinosaurs
- Children give extra points to the team that cooperates the best, or the team that encourages each other the loudest.
- Identify and discuss your reasons why you believe a particular team showed the best cooperation.

Languages Other Than English (LOTE) Lessons

This subject provides scope for reinforcement and application of the subvalue.

- Learn the weekly quote in a different language
- Practise the value of organization when doing your LOTE activities

Creative Arts Lessons

In the Creative Arts the subvalue is explored in powerful ways which build emotional understanding and integration of the values in the child's personality.

- Act out a drama which incorporates the subvalue being learnt
- In a group, make up a song about the value to the tune of a nursery rhyme or well-known tune. This can be sung to the rest of the school at assembly.
- Illustrate the story told in the EHV lesson
- If Dance is the topic, ask students to demonstrate a dance in two different ways: one disorganised, the other well-organised. Which do they prefer?

Each of the above examples has actually been used at the Sathya Sai School, as applied by the class teacher. These teaching strategies describe the various ways to embed the values into the seven different Key Learning Areas in a school.

Integrating the values with other subjects is a simple and effective way to meet curriculum demands. At the same time this produces a school community which practises human values continuously throughout the day. It is up to the teacher to choose and create the best activities that provide for a fun-filled yet satisfying classroom.

3.3.4 Fourth Element: The School Discipline and Welfare System

‘Character should keep pace with the advancement of intelligence. The development of intelligence without corresponding development of character is an exercise in futility.’
—*Sathya Sai Baba, 2000*

A further vital element of the Sathya Sai Primary School is to make sure that the discipline and welfare procedures are underpinned by human values. The school atmosphere is conducive to mutual respect, cooperation, and helpfulness. The morning school assembly sets a harmonious tone with greetings of thanks that acknowledges the joy of being at school together. Before morning tea and lunch breaks, the classes again pause and give thanks for their food, in song. At the end of the school day, teachers and children close with appreciation. In this way a unified atmosphere becomes part of the normal school ethos.³

At the Sathya Sai Primary School, the children are expected to follow the Classroom Rules which are displayed in each classroom:

Year 2/3 Classroom Rules

- * Display the 5 Human Values
- * Show respect
- * Put up your hand to speak
- * Listen to the teacher and follow directions
- * Give your best effort
- * Keep the classroom clean and tidy

The prominent display of these expectations that we show the human values is a reminder not only to the students but also to teachers and volunteers that the school

³ Copies of the prayers and songs are in Appendix 5

holds the values in high esteem. Many schools have classroom rules similar to the last four. What makes it easier for the children at the Sai school to follow is the consistency of expectation: across all classrooms and in the school playground. The children and adults become steeped in a culture of human values.

There is a set of consequences for inappropriate behaviour in the classroom (eg children being too noisy, wandering around, disturbing others or being late to class). This involves a warning and Time Out at lunchtime for repeated poor behaviour. After three Time Outs, further action is taken in the form. Parents are contacted to devise an appropriate way of helping the student improve behaviour.

There is also a set of more severe consequences for unacceptable behaviour (eg violence to others, rudeness to teachers, teasing of students). This results in Immediate Time Out at lunchtime and removal to another room, with the possibility of in-school suspension.

Similarly, children have a set of Playground Rules and Consequences, based on the human values: Inappropriate behaviour is recorded and Time Out is meted out after an appropriate warning. Unacceptable behaviour leads to immediate Time Out and even more serious consequences.

Playground Rules

**Display the 5
Human Values**

No Hat, No Play!

Hands Off!

Respond to the Bell

Play Fairly

During Time Out, the student is expected to reflect on his/her poor behaviour. Each student is assisted with thinking through what happened, writing down why, and thinking of a plan to stop similar behaviour in the future. The final stage of the self-reflection requires the student to work out what values he/she needs to practise in future in order to avoid Time Out. In this way, through discussion, self reflection and making a written commitment, the student is led to an insight into their own

behaviour. This is the basis of their awareness of the human values. A copy of the Time Out sheet appears in Appendix 3.

The Sathya Sai Primary School, like every school, has a structured policy for students who do not respond to the actions taken above. This involves a range of options including Parent/Teacher Interviews, Behavioural Contracts, short or long

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suspensions, obtaining outside professional advice, and in extreme circumstances, termination of enrolment. It is a mark of the success of the EHV program that over the past three years the need for any disciplinary consequences more severe than in-school short suspension has not arisen.

Reward System

On the other hand, in the school each teacher looks for opportunities to provide students with encouragement and rewards when appropriate behaviour is shown. Verbal praise is often used, and each class teacher implements an appropriate reward system for his/her class. The most commonly used are:

Star Cards: 20 stars = 20 minutes free time or a small prize

Sticker Cards: 20 stickers = 20 minutes free time or a small prize

Group Points: x points = 20 minutes free time or a small prize

Individual Points: x points = 20 minutes free time or a small prize

At the weekly School Assembly, certificates are awarded to students who demonstrate a particular human value, or excel whilst doing their class work. These students are acknowledged by the whole school at Assembly, and their photos and names are included in the weekly School Newsletter. The Principal gives a weekly School Service award to recognise a student who has shown selfless service, or 'Love in Action', to the school community.

Every student may qualify once a term, to receive a Principal's Award for showing Excellence in Human Values. The Principal presents these awards to all students who have received no Detention for a whole term, that is for ten weeks. The Principal is usually able to give this award to around 90% of students at the end of each term. This shows that a very high proportion of the students are aware of and practicing Human Values at consistently high levels.

The School Management Board provides a Perpetual Shield Trophy and a voucher for the student who is judged to have shown the highest level of Excellence in Human Values over the past 12 months. This Award is made at Presentation Evening in the last week of the school year and the shield hangs in the school hall with the recipient's name engraved on it.

Welfare

The school has a Students' Representative Council (SRC) to enable students to have a say in how the school is run. Each semester, students in Years 3, 4, 5 and 6 nominate to be elected as their class representative. Each nominated student prepares a short speech for the whole school assembly. Following the speeches, all students in the school cast their vote in a democratic process to choose one representative from Year 3, two from Years 4 and 5, and three from Year 6. These eight students form the SRC. This meets on a weekly basis with the Student Leadership and Welfare Coordinator to make suggestions as well as consider student requests for changes to activities or facilities within the school. These students participate in a Leadership program designed to build human values such as leadership, responsibility, self-discipline, self-confidence, tolerance and flexibility.

There are many sources of support for students with special needs. The school has a part-time Specialist teacher - Support Teacher for children with Learning Difficulties. Teachers and parents nominate children who are not progressing at the expected level. These students are individually assessed and a support program is designed and implemented for each child. These are reviewed every term.

A nominated Student Welfare Coordinator is available most lunchtimes to talk to students. The School Management Board has a Bursary Fund for subsidies or sponsorship for any student who requires financial assistance for uniforms or camps. Literacy and Numeracy support for children who fall behind the expected levels is sought each year by the school through the Commonwealth Grants Scheme. Counselling Services are available in the local area on a fee-for-service basis, and the school may assist through its Bursary Fund. There are a large number of Parents and Volunteers who assist as reading tutors on a weekly basis. These volunteers enhance the EHV by their example of self-less service and support. They also provide individual care and attention for children with special needs.

Central Role of Teachers in Discipline and Welfare

By far the largest support each child receives on a personal and continuous basis is the care, compassion and inspiration from his/her own teacher. All teachers create a warm, supportive and disciplined atmosphere, where each student is treated as

Practising Unity of Head, Heart and Hand

special and individual. Teachers have high expectations that students will enjoy each day, complete their set work and demonstrate exemplary behaviour. At the Sai School, the students are active learners and the teachers are the facilitators, guiding, encouraging and providing feedback. Teachers actively look for ways to provide positive reinforcement to students for their skills, achievements and values-directed actions. The teacher/student relationship is the most powerful element in a school which is building students of character.

3.3.5 Fifth Element: Student Assessment and Reporting

‘Students have to imbibe the nine important qualities which are as precious as nine gems. These are: spirit of sacrifice, humility, the spirit of selfless service to society, friendliness, discipline, commitment to integrity, truth, love, non-violence.’

—*Sathya Sai Baba, 2000*

”How well is my child progressing?” Naturally each parent wants to hear how their child is developing, both academically and in character. The Sathya Sai School provides an ongoing internal assessment for every pupil, and encourages parents to engage in dialogue with teachers. The school is required by Government regulation to administer the Basic Skills Tests at Year 3 and Year 5 level. The school also provides opportunities for additional external assessment by standardised test at Years 3, 4, 5 and 6, which students are encouraged to enter.

3.3.5.1 Internal Assessment

The Sathya Sai Primary School provides student assessment through two written reports and two oral reports each year. In addition there are occasions when the parent or the teacher initiates contact to discuss a particular achievement or concern.

One of the key features of Sathya Sai Education is the partnership between the teacher and the parent in creating a consistent culture of human values in the child’s home and school environment. The parents play a vital role in values formation and the school enlists parental involvement to support the school’s values program. (More details are listed below under 3.3.6 Parental Partnership)


The school’s written report (see Appendix 2) is modelled along the lines recommended by the NSW Board of Studies. This gives information to the parent on how a child is developing according to the expected outcomes for each subject.

The assessment is made on the basis of samples of work, tests, observations and interviews. Children in all classes develop an individual portfolio of work to record their performance.


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A second part of each child's written report makes observations about the student's demonstration of the human values and his/her work habits (Appendix 2).



Students also fill out a Self-Assessment sheet to track how they view themselves in their practise of Human Values in work and play at the school. This sheet (Figure 3.1) is filled out twice a year, just prior to the Parent-Teacher Interviews.



Self-evaluation Form



Name: Date:

Almost
always 
Usually 
Only
sometimes 





































1. I am helpful in class.			
2. I obey school rules.			
3. I keep my things tidy.			
4. I try to do my best work.			
5. I think about, and use, the human values.			
6. I am able to work by myself.			
7. I try to be friendly to everyone.			
8. I listen and pay attention in class.			
9. I am good at following directions.			
10. I participate enthusiastically in service activities.			
11. I am on time for lessons.			
12. I wear my uniform neatly.			

Figure 3.1 Student self-evaluation form

3.3.5.2 Academic Level of Students - External Assessment

Each student in Year 3 and Year 5 sits for the Basic Skills Tests. These are annual, state-wide assessments of Writing Skills, Reading Skills and Numeracy Skills. The student receives a detailed report of his/her performance in Basic Skills in each area in comparison to children of similar age. The teacher also receives a copy of this report and the school has an indication of how the children in the class compare with the state average range.

The results for 2004, published in the school's Annual Report (online: www.sathyasaischoolaust.org), read as follows:

In 2004 all Year 3 and Year 5 students participated in the statewide Basic Skills Test (BST) and Primary Writing Assessment (PWA). (One Special Needs student was excluded from participation in the Year 5 BST).

In Year 3, 82% of students achieved skill bands 2 or higher in Literacy compared to 91% of the state. 100% of students achieved skill bands of 2 or higher in Numeracy compared to 90% of the state.

In Year 5, 100% of students achieved skill bands 3 or higher in Literacy compared to 93% of the state. 100% of students achieved skill bands of 3 or higher in Numeracy compared to 94% of the state.

It was possible to track the achievement of only two of the Year 5 group, who were at this school for their Year 3 testing in 2002. Each of these students showed a gain of over 13 points in their literacy, when the expected average is 6-7 points. This shows exceptional improvement.

The School Board identified three students in Year 3 who did not reach the benchmark, and as a result implemented a Reading Support program in 2005.

In addition to this compulsory testing at Years 3 and 5, students at Years 3, 4, 5, and 6 are encouraged to participate in the University of New South Wales Academic Competitions. This scheme operates across Australia and the South Pacific Region. It provides optional testing for students in Science, Computing, Mathematics and English. The school administers these tests, which provides valuable experience and feedback to the individuals (and their parents) who participate. In 2004, Sathya Sai students obtained two High Distinctions (placing them in the top 1% of the competition), three Distinctions, and six Credit Certificates..

3.3.5.3 Assessment of Character Development

There is much anecdotal evidence of children at the Sathya Sai Primary School developing strength of character. Teachers and parents frequently observe and commend children in the growth in good habits and attitudes. Visitors to the school and the general public also find the behaviour of the students remarkable. For example the teacher in charge of a five-day interstate student excursion reported in the school's newsletter:

Congratulations Year 5/6 on your Canberra/Dubbo Excursion!

‘The recent trip away by Year 5/6 was an absolute success. The children’s behaviour was impeccable. They were so well behaved that bus drivers, teachers and parents from the school we went with all commented on our children’s lovely manners, maturity and ability to adapt to changing situations. The Year 5/6 children represented our school beautifully and I want to thank and congratulate each one of them for being so wonderful. They truly were an example of Living Human Values’. Tanya Hansen

A parent opinion survey in October 2003 showed positive growth in values for 73% of student instances.⁴ A similar survey in October 2004 resulted in 78% showing positive growth in values. All the fourteen students who have graduated from Year 6 to secondary schools have adapted well to the mainstream schools and are successful in their studies.

However, the assessment of character development is a complex matter, and is dealt with more fully in Chapter 4, section 4.3.2.

⁴ For details see Chapter 4: Data and Results

3.3.6 Sixth Element: The Parent Partnership

Parents should give “both love and law” to their children.

—*Sathya Sai Speaks Vol.XVII*

Education is a partnership between parent and teacher. The parent is the child’s first and foremost teacher, and the most effective education occurs where parents and teachers work together to help the child reach his/her highest potential. There are two institutions which play a vital role in the development of every child – the home and the school. The challenge for any school committed to building excellence in education is to nurture a close partnership with the parents. Sathya Sai EHV acknowledges that the parents have the primary influence on values formation. As a matter of policy the school seeks the active involvement of parents in these ways:

3.3.6.1 *Enrolment Interview*

This is the starting point of the introduction of the child to education in human values. At the enrolment interview, a new parent talks to the Principal and teachers seeking to find out more about EHV, its philosophy and processes. The Principal also seeks to find out to what extent the parent would support the teaching of the human values and reinforce them in the home. Questions that the Principal may ask range from a basic level of ‘Will the parent ensure that school uniform is worn appropriately?’, ‘Will the parent assist the student with the weekly values homework?’ to a deeper involvement of the parent with the school – ‘How would the parent like to contribute to the culture of the school?’

3.3.6.2 *Newsletter*

A weekly circular from the school goes out to parents every Monday. This is the main vehicle for keeping families informed about the sub-value of the fortnight and the activities of the school. The focus on the value is done by incorporating the quote and explaining the sub-value in a bulletin from the Principal. It encourages the daily recognition of the value at home and at school.

3.3.6.3 Happy Homework

The school encourages all students to apply themselves for fifteen minutes a night to reading and writing activities. The Happy Homework Diary also gives a range of family oriented activities from which the child chooses one each day. The children are not only encouraged to explain the value to parents, but given opportunities to put it into practice. For instance if the focus is on the sub-value 'Service', younger students are asked to help Mum or Dad with the housework. Older students may be asked to interview adults to find out about their voluntary community service activities and explore why they take part.

Thus homework becomes an important channel of communication between home and school. The parent gains insight into what is being emphasised each week. By encouraging the parent and the child to work together on the value, the teacher keeps the family informed. The school assists the child to create a consistent culture of values by this partnership. This is designed for powerful values learning outcomes.

3.3.6.4 Direct Parent Contribution

Each class at the school has a number of ways in which parents may offer their help regularly, according to their interests and skills. The list includes: Parents-as-Tutors for Reading, Maths, Computing, Gardening, Arts and Crafts, Swimming, and Cooking.

Other parents choose to give their time and energy to organise and prepare the weekly 'Healthy Treat Tuckshop', maintain the school's lawns and gardens, build props, make costumes for major drama productions, or do typing and clerical work for the office.

The parents' participation as volunteers has many benefits:

- It establishes their affiliation to the school, through the investment of their energy, their love and their heart.
- They set the example of self-less workers engaged in service
- Working together creates a sense of community and fellowship
- It emphasizes to the child the importance of the school in the lives of the family

The benefits of direct parent contribution become very clear during the Term 3 Art/Musical Production. Volunteer parents and friends cheerfully work on weekdays and weekends, painting props, making costumes and musical accompaniment. At this time, students, parents and teachers are working towards a common goal – to express and share the values that they hold dear. The school becomes a focal point of the values culture, and the public performance becomes a celebrated achievement.

3.3.6.5 Parents and Friends Council

The formal body for parents and friends of the school is called the Parents and Friends Council. This group meets every term to provide support for the activities of the school. Its members form themselves into various Working Groups to coordinate different tasks: Transport Sub-committee, Tuckshop Sub-committee, Uniforms Sub-committee etc. The Parents and Friends Council is represented on the Local School Board to facilitate communication between the administration of the school and the parent body.

3.3.6.6 Teacher Accessibility

To maintain the Parent-Teacher Partnership, with the student as the focus, teachers provide regular formal reports to parents (described in Step 5 above). More importantly, teachers liaise informally with parents either before school or immediately after. Where there are exciting or disruptive changes taking place in the family, or particular family events happening which are important to the overall development of the child, the teacher is informed. How easy it is for the teacher to share the child's joy at the birth of a new sibling, or to encourage a student to show the new skills learnt at soccer training the previous night.

3.3.6.7 Parent Workshops

Parent Workshops are held at least twice a year, so that parents can learn more about a particular aspect of the school. Parents often seek more information about EHV, its formal and informal teaching. A workshop is provided to assist volunteers as readers and school helpers. Parents are kept up to date when the Board of Studies makes changes to Key Learning Areas, such as the Quality Mathematics Program. Evening and afternoon forums were found to be the most effective way to enable maximum attendance at these workshops.

3.3.6.8 Parent Opinion Surveys

Each year parent opinions are sought by the Principal, either orally or in writing, to gain feedback about a range of general issues. Feedback is given on the EHV process, the effectiveness of the administration, communication lines, curriculum matters, uniforms and any other matters of concern. As a result of the surveys, issues are brought to the attention of relevant persons so that improvements can be made. In this way the school strives to be accountable and to provide the best educational service to its students.

Two examples of parent opinions from the Term 4 Parent Evaluation of ‘Values Growth in My Child’ are as follows:

‘The school has made a fantastic influence on L’s emotional and personal growth and really supports the values of respect, self respect, tolerance and understanding of others. Thank you so much.’⁵

‘M has always been a very good natured fellow... He has grown in his ability to explain the reasons for his behaviour...he often takes on the role of “peacemaker” with other children-especially outside the school... I heard him say to another boy who was misbehaving: “It’s not strong to be mean D – It’s weak.” I thought it was amazing to see the values being expressed like this and the little boy was certainly stunned by such a statement!’⁶

With awareness that parents are busy people with jobs and domestic responsibilities, Sathya Sai Primary School encourages parent participation. It is essential that parents and teachers are united in their support for the EHV, so that the positive expectations of home and school reinforce each other. Under these circumstances the child is encouraged to cultivate harmony of good thoughts, good words and good deeds. This is the goal of Education in Human Values.

3.3.7 Seventh Element: The Role of Administration

‘Look up and aim high should be the motto. Low aim is actually a crime!’

—*Sathya Sai Baba, 2000*

⁵ P.B.

⁶ J.C. A copy of the Values Growth Evaluation Sheet appears in Chapter 4: Evaluation

Practising Unity of Head, Heart and Hand

The Administration of a Human Values school must follow the highest values that are being taught. All members of the Governing Body and the School Management Board are committed volunteers who strive to show the unity of Head, Heart and Hand that is the aim of the Sathya Sai Education in Human Values.

The school's governing body is Sathya Sai School NSW (Inc), whose Chairperson is also the Director of the Australian Institute of Sathya Sai Education (ISSE), Canberra. The governing body delegates day-to-day management to the School Management Board which meets twice a term. The Chairperson of the School Management Board is also the Deputy Director of the ISSE, to ensure a close working relationship with the Institute in Canberra.

The effective administration of the school depends to a large extent on the selfless voluntary service of these Board members, including those who provide the financial management of the school. The Sathya Sai School NSW (Inc) appoints staff and advises the Principal where necessary.

The school Principal is responsible for all educational matters at the school. As the first point of contact for new parents, the Principal profoundly influences the human environment of the school. Members of the public, teachers and students with particular problems to be resolved look to the Principal. It is the Principal who fosters a climate of trust and unity within the school community. The Principal at Sathya Sai Primary School is expected to

- Model the values she/he wishes to see developed
- Maintain an active interest in what the students are learning, by holding regular discussions with students, and by being visible in the school and accessible to students and parents eg during playtimes and bus duty
- Handle priorities in the order of: students first, teachers and parents next, paperwork last
- Keep continuous personal contact with staff members, including teachers, cleaning staff, maintenance staff and volunteers; being prepared to do more listening than talking

Practising Unity of Head, Heart and Hand

- Actively prepare for and participates in Staff Meetings and Parent Council Meetings
- Be honest and fair with teachers and parents
- Delegate authority effectively
- Actively and accurately represent the teachers at Board, Trust and Administrative Meetings
- Link the school with the community

The School Office functions under the guidance of the Principal, and all office staff are expected to exemplify the human values as they work. The School Secretary also participates in the Staff Reflections each week and encourages the implementation of the value for that week.

Building harmonious relationships in the office is just as important as in the classrooms. In practical terms, telephone communication aims to be courteous, positive, and efficient. Written communications strive for accuracy and clarity. The highest standards of honesty are expected in paying bills, drawing up accounts, and dealing with finances. Care of the environment is borne in mind through recycling of paper waste, efficient use of machines such as photocopiers, and minimum comfortable use of lighting, heating etc. The School Cleaning staff take a pro-active role in assisting in recycling and caring for the environment.

Generally the current Principal encourages an 'Open Door' policy to make herself readily available, whilst maintaining confidentiality and security of personal information.

External Checks and Balances

Board of Studies Registration: The Sathya Sai Primary School is subject to two forms of inspection and accreditation. The first is necessary for registration with the New South Wales Board of Studies. The school is inspected over several days and must meet detailed criteria with respect to legal, financial and educational accountability. From July 2005, the school is required to make its Annual Report to the Board of Studies available publicly.

Upon completion of the Board of Studies Registration process in 2003, the inspectors spoke in glowing terms about the school's programs, especially how well the values have been integrated with all subjects. Registration was given for six years.

SAI 2000 Accreditation: The second form of accreditation is in accordance with procedures laid out in a document called SAI 2000, 'Standardisation – Accreditation – Inspection'. The document was developed by the Institute of Sathya Sai Education. The inspection process was instituted by the Institute to ensure high standards will emerge in all Sathya Sai Schools around the world. The inspection process is

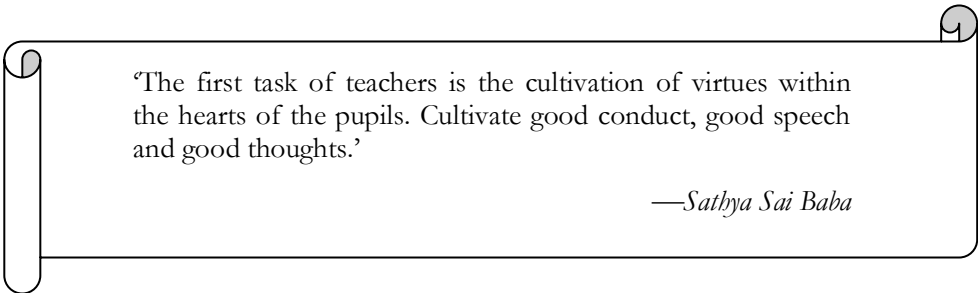
In a preliminary stage, before inviting inspection, teaching staff, parents, students and administration of the school actively engage in self-evaluation. Following the self-evaluation, the Director of the Institute of Sathya Sai Education in consultation with the Principal invites a formal inspection. The self-review and formal inspection were carried out at the Sathya Sai Primary School, Murwillumbah, in the period October 2003-May 2004. Accreditation was received for a six-year period.

Thus the SAI 2000 provided an external inspection process and report from a professional educational team to give the key stakeholders information for school improvement.

Financial and Legal Accountability: The school is required to meet strict accountability requirements as set down by the Commonwealth and State Governments. These include meeting Occupational Health and Safety guidelines, Child Protection legislation, Taxation and Superannuation laws, and regular audited financial accounts and statements.

Students and parents of the Sathya Sai Primary School unconsciously and consciously look to the administrative staff to be excellent models of human values, demonstrating unity of head, heart and hand.

3.3.8 Conclusion



'The first task of teachers is the cultivation of virtues within the hearts of the pupils. Cultivate good conduct, good speech and good thoughts.'

—Sathya Sai Baba

Practising Unity of Head, Heart and Hand

Educationalists, teachers and parents wish schools to give students a sense of identity and strength of character. When schools give these attributes, the society will be enhanced by the presence of these young adults. In the New South Wales Board of Studies syllabus for all subjects, the ideal values and attitudes in students are stated explicitly eg Self Acceptance, Tolerance of Others (PD/H/PE), Working Cooperatively, Fairness, Caring for the Environment, Respect for Laws (HSIE) and Appreciating Art and Music, and Self Expression (Creative Arts)⁷. Some of these values and attitudes match closely with the stated aims of Sathya Sai Education: Knowledge, Skills, Balance, Insight and Identity.

Many schools choose particular programs to promote the development of positive values in students. ‘Mindmatters’ is a program for secondary student which promotes mental health; ‘The Healthy Relationships Program’ is designed for primary school students to build their social skills, tolerance and self esteem. ‘You Can Do It’ is a program that spans both levels, primary and secondary. It teaches positive thinking and study skills which lead to success.⁸

These are worthy programs, but will have limited success if not supported by the whole school approach. More importantly, each of these programs has been designed to ‘fix’ a perceived problem. In contrast, the Sathya Sai EHV program is a developmental program which aims to provide each child with the competencies, capacities and inner structures to meet any challenge in the classroom, playground, home and wider society. It gives children inner strength and personal mastery in every domain of their personality– feelings, thoughts, emotions, social skills, moral courage and the capacity to act. In other words, it links head, heart and hands so that children make active choices for their own betterment and for that of society.

In the 1970’s the sociology of education brought to the fore the notion of ‘the hidden curriculum’. It was recognized that the power of the whole school environment to influence each student is stronger than the educational experience of actual subjects taught. In other words, all schools teach values whether these are explicit or implied. It becomes imperative that to build character, a school

⁷ For full details see Appendix: Values in Key Learning Areas or www.boardofstudies.nsw.edu.au

⁸ For further details of these programs and others see References

community needs not only to choose the values that it teaches explicitly, but to create structures, relationships and situations that support this learning.

3.3.9 Summary

This thesis has identified seven elements in Sai schools that help create a character-building learning community. Such a community fosters character traits based on Human Values in its future citizens.

- The teachers are the lynch pin of the educational process. There are several processes in the Sai School that heighten the awareness and practice of human values by the teachers.
- The Formal Human Values lessons provide the focus. A variety of teaching strategies provides multi-sensory engagement, addresses diverse learning styles, and reinforces integration of the values in the children.
- In the Sai School values are integrated into all the Key Learning Area. This gives them even greater strength and relevance by creating context.
- In the Sai School, values pervade the whole school system, including discipline, welfare, assessment, reporting and student award structures. Thus the human values guide the hidden curriculum.
- Regular assessment and reporting of both academic and character development in the Sai School encourages continuous striving for excellence in both areas.
- Special attention to and involvement of parents in the Sai School encourages the child to practise the values consistently in a wider context.
- The vision of the Principal leads the school community, supported by advisors and the ISSE. All administrative staff embody the values and constantly strive to reinforce them throughout the entire school structure.
- The school Administration is accountable to the Board of Studies, State and Commonwealth Funding bodies, its governing body and the ISSE.

Chapter 4:

Evaluating the EHV

Part 1 – Process of Evaluation

4.1 Introduction

The Sathya Sai Education in Human Values (EHV) is claimed to lead to the development of character and at the same time to motivate children to high academic standards (Saraf, 1993; Jareonsettian, 1997) The programs in EHV are claimed to lead children to act in a unified way, using the intellect (Head) to link actions (Hands) with feelings of care and compassion (Heart).

How can the effectiveness of this values education be evaluated in the Australian context? This chapter discusses possibilities and describes one investigative approach which has been used at the Sathya Sai Primary School in NSW. The focus question for this research is *“To what extent does EHV result in improved character development in Primary school-aged children at Sathya Sai Primary School, Murwillumbah?”*

4.1.2 Contextualising the Evaluator

Naturalistic observation has been chosen as the preferred method for this study. Naturalistic observation, or ‘practitioner research’, aims to describe a complete and accurate picture of a program. According to Robson (2000) it is widely used in small-scale evaluations where an experimental or quasi-experimental approach is unlikely to be feasible. Robson states (2000):

‘In Evaluative Research, the 1960’s concentration on experimental and quasi-experimental design has been superseded by the current trend towards pluralistic approaches’

In the case of the EHV and its impact on the character development of primary school-aged children, the outcomes to be measured are clear, but how the measurement can be done remains problematic.

An experimental approach does not seem feasible within the school: one cannot create a control group at the same school by excluding a part of the student body from the integrated whole school values process. This would be unethical, as parents have chosen this school because of its values education, but also impractical given the nature of classroom teaching.

A control group may be taken from another school, as a basis for comparison. This approach has been successfully used in other countries to assess the development of social and emotional intelligence. Four different projects of this type by Schaps, E.; Greenberg, M.; Hawkins, D. and Weissberg, R are summarised by Daniel Goleman (1997). The current researcher was unable to use this method of evaluation due to time and cost constraints, but this is clearly a desirable way to evaluate the program in the future.

It may be possible to have a single-group outcomes evaluation, involving a pre-test and a post-test, and compare the differences. This method has been used by Lantieri

in New York City schools to evaluate Conflict Resolution strategies (Goleman, 1997). However people are notoriously complex, and as explained by Robson (2000):

‘Many evaluations show equivocal outcomes... Theoretical or methodological difficulties start to arise when one wants to move from simply saying there has been a change, to claiming the change can be attributable to the program itself and not to some other cause.’

It was decided that for the current study that a small amount of quantitative data collected would be supplemented by observation, interviews and examination of existing records to produce an essentially qualitative report. The important reason for the evaluation from the point of view of the school was to measure what the program had achieved.

A study of this nature may be used by the teachers and parents to explore areas for improvement. They can ask questions such as: ‘Why does the program achieve its effects?’ ‘How does it work?’ It could also lead to further avenues of research. For instance, are parents involved in the EHV program more likely to use the technique of silent sitting in the home, for themselves and/or their children when compared to parents at a different school?

I was in the unique position of being both Principal and a teacher at the Sathya Sai Primary School. The benefits of such a position include:

- Having a broad overview of the operation of the EHV program both inside and outside the classroom.
- Being able to make multiple observations and confirmations, rather than being restricted to a limited period of observation.
- Being accepted as part of the school community, thus eliminating an ‘artificial setting’ and researcher-respondent impact on children and teachers.
- Having access to staff’ and parents’ comments and observations.

On the other hand, the drawbacks are:

- Having an active, insider role can mean the researcher loses objectivity. However, in this study, observations are supported by documented evidence that demonstrate that the findings are a function ‘solely of respondents’ and not of researcher bias (McMurray et al., 2004)

- As the Principal, the temptation is to give a more ‘glowing report’ than is strictly accurate. To counteract this possibility of researcher bias, data has been presented in total, not selectively.

In addition, to maximise the integrity of the research, the writer has first of all stated the position, so that readers are aware of it and can take it into account. Secondly in this evaluation there will be some outsiders’ qualitative comments with which to compare the observations by the researcher and teachers. Thirdly the author carried out anonymous opinion surveys for two years to gain parents’ view about character development as an adjunct to the naturalistic observations.

As discussed in part 1.2.2, character development includes both academic achievement and general behaviour. To restate from chapter 1: ‘Sathya Sai Education has a very clear objective: to bring out human excellence in children. To achieve this, it is concerned not only with reaching the highest academic outcomes, but also behavioural outcomes where children act with responsibility and respect for both themselves and others around them.’

It is easier to obtain data on academic achievement than behavioural changes, however the latter can be assessed to some extent by such indicators as levels of discipline, conduct towards others, and care and concern for society. This chapter will firstly evaluate indicators of academic outcomes, then secondly discuss behavioural outcomes.

4.1.3 Evaluating character development

4.1.3.1 Academic Achievement

An objective measurement of academic achievement can be obtained from assessing literacy and numeracy. For primary school children in Australia the first universal testing for academic levels is in Mathematics and English in Year 3 in the form of a Basic Skills Test prepared by the Educational Measurement Directorate. (Department of Education and Training, yearly publications).

In Year 3 students are aged 7-9 years old. Schools and parents receive a detailed set of results data for each child, showing individual achievements, the basic levels expected and the State Average levels. Schools are not allowed to disclose the results publicly in ways which allow comparison between schools, to prevent the results

being used as 'league tables'. However each school can use the data to inform teachers about the areas of high and low achievement in that particular school.

The usefulness of this information is limited, but the testing is more valuable when the student reaches Year 5 (age approx 10 years). Authorities then provide data showing the individual child's development in mathematics, reading, writing and grammar.

A second method of gathering academic achievement data is a review of the reports written by teachers. Formal written reports for each child are issued to parents in most schools at the end of Semester 1 and Semester 2. These reports show each child's level of academic achievement compared to the expected outcomes established by the New South Wales Board of Studies in each of six key learning areas. These are English, Mathematics, Human Society and Its Environment including Languages other than English, Science and Technology, Personal Development/Health and Physical Education, and finally the Creative Arts. Selected outcomes, particularly those related to values and attitudes, are listed in Appendix 1. Although outcomes are explained in detail by education authorities, there is a fair amount of variation between individual teacher assessments even within a school, so comparison between schools will have limited validity. (The difficulties of comparing outcomes from one school to another are described by Kevin Donnelly in *The Weekend Australian*, September 2005.

Data for academic achievement at the Sathya Sai Primary School has been drawn from the Basic Skills Tests for Years 3 and 5 in 2003 and 2004. Statistics are presented in this report on the assumption that they will not be made available to the general public.

4.1.3.2 Values Development

There are no agreed quantitative measures of values development (Dhall and Dhall, 2005). When assessing values development it is difficult to find objective evidence. Blandford (2003), in his study of the Cherbourg State School, Queensland, (which implements a version of the EHV), identified measures of school performance as indicative of values development. He used student attendance, numbers of disciplinary events, levels of vandalism and care and concern for property, to reflect behavioural changes. (These measures were backed up by anecdotal evidence from

staff and comments expressed by students). Blandford's study showed a remarkable improvement in all these measures after the implementation of the EHV program at the Cherbourg School⁹.

An impact study done on the Sathya Sai School, Ndola, Zambia by Dr Manchishi (Majmudar, 2000) found that:

'SSEHV had a positive impact on pupils' development and this was displayed in the general behaviour and the level of discipline, readiness to abide by the school's regulations, willingness to work hard towards improving academic results and give voluntary service to the school.'

No details of the methodology were given in making this assessment. It is assumed that observation and anecdotal evidence were used.

At the Sathya Sai Primary School, Murwillumbah, the objective measures used by Blandford are not of great use, because student behaviour is generally exemplary. For example, in Term 1 2005—a period of ten weeks—two children out of 81 received a detention, and no child received an internal or external suspension. Student absenteeism with no explanation is typically less than 2% each term. An external Accreditation Inspection Team (Sarraj, 2004) in 2004 commented that there was no evidence of vandalism and that:

"The school feels like a nice place to be and the students obviously enjoy attending."

"The quality of visual art and craft work is very high and this was evident from the classroom and school hall displays of artwork."

Visiting teachers are frequently quite outspoken in their comments to staff about student behaviour. Two examples from Term1, 2005, are typical. A visiting Special Consultant¹⁰said

Your children are quite delightful. They have such good manners. Today I was stunned when each one said 'Thank you' as they left, after I had tested them.

A guest sports teacher commented:

"What sort of school are you here? Your children are very good. They concentrate very well. They are the best group I've had!"¹¹

These anecdotal comments give an idea of the atmosphere at the school. It is likely that the low incidence of problems such as vandalism and behaviour requiring

⁹ Verbal report by Blandford to author October, 2003.

¹⁰ Personal comment to staff 10/03/05 by P. Allen.

¹¹ Comment to Principal 25/02/05 by A. Amilcar.

suspension in this school is because of EHV. This contrasts with the situation at Cherbourg, where measures showed a marked change before and after EHV was introduced at the school.

In 2004, the Accreditation Review team for the ISSE called SAI 2000 carried out a three-day inspection of the School in Murwillumbah. This is an Accreditation Process for Sai Schools to ensure high standards. This review process is lengthy and is exacting. (See Chapter 3 section 3.3.7.)

Through observation, and discussion with focus groups of students, parents, teachers and administration, the Review Team made these observations of the values development in students (Sarraj, 2004):

‘II Student Outcomes

Emergence of Human Values

‘It is evident that human values are emerging in the children of the school. The community recognises the transformation in terms of character and good behaviour of the children who have joined the Sathya Sai School compared to children from other schools.’

Whilst these anecdotal comments from professional visitors to the school are reassuring, this evidence is not an assessment of the *extent to which the children are acquiring the values*. Individual teachers comment on the values development twice a year on the children’s written reports, but these comments are couched in broad terms—for example *Considerate to others – Almost Always, Usually, or Needs Improvement* (for details see the Student Reports, Appendix 2). The students themselves also complete self-evaluation sheets and make journal entries as they progress with the EHV. These sheets are subjective, and are designed to encourage student self-awareness and understanding of positive school-related behaviour (see Self-Evaluation Sheet, Figure 3.1). Neither of these evaluations shows how children have changed over a period of time.

4.1.4 Designing the Evaluation Tool

For the purpose of this study a simple tool to measure values acquisition is required. It seems logical to relate character development to the sub-values or ‘building blocks’ selected as the whole school focus each term—such as showing patience, friendship, or caring. This provides teachers and parents with feedback about the success or

otherwise of the EHV. Any tool needs to be easy and quick to implement, as parents and teachers are busy people.

Attempts to measure values acquisition elsewhere include survey instruments. A useful method of assessing character was developed by Fred Bulach (2002) who began by asking: 'How can character be measured accurately?' He developed a survey instrument to measure the degree to which behaviours associated with the identified traits are present or absent. His instrument consists of 96 behaviours associated with 16 character traits. It can be used by teachers or students to describe their perceptions of student behaviour on a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (never) to 5 (always). Bulach used this instrument in over 220 elementary, middle and high schools in Atlanta, Georgia, USA. Despite some concerns about validity (eg that students report only on what they think other students do or think, and their perceptions could be inaccurate), Bulach was able to conclude that '...the survey showed [that] the students who are exposed to a character curriculum have more positive scores.' (2002).

Another example of a useful assessment tool is the values questionnaire developed by Australians Lovat and Schofield (1998). This is a two-part questionnaire about values in three categories: Education; Self and Others; and Civic Responsibility. Students are asked to rank themselves according to "What I Think" in a range from 1 to 6 on Likert scale, where '6 – *Strongly agree*' is the highest rating and '1 – *Strongly disagree*' is the lowest. This questionnaire was administered at Wesley College in Western Australia before and after a new Values Education Program of twenty weeks was implemented. The authors, Millett & Kay (2001), reported:

'We attempted to chronicle changes in the values held by boys in a number of ways. The most obvious is the questionnaire on values... We are well aware that obtaining evidence in values is problematic... We supplemented the survey data with other data based on experiences in the classroom and from other sources within the College.'

Results showed that there were modest gains between the February questionnaire and the July questionnaire, although none of the changes over this time were statistically significant. However, the supplementary qualitative data supported the direction of change. Millett and Kay (2001) concluded:

'We can infer that the classes had a positive impact on the values held by Year 5 boys as a whole. The most marked change was in the reduced number of

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boys holding strongly negative views at the end of the semester, as compared with the findings at the start of the year.’

The acquisition of values is a complex process. Hill (1991) explored three components of values—cognitive, affective and volitional. That is, children can describe what they value using the language of values (cognitive level); they can believe in certain values with differing levels of intensity (affective level); and they can choose to act in line with their beliefs about values (volitional level).

Children do not necessarily acquire values in a linear way. Some of the relationships between cognitive and affective processes can be seen in the following table, linking Bloom’s Taxonomy of cognitive development and Krathwohl’s five different affective steps that children take towards the internalisation of values (Krathwohl, Bloom, Masia, 1964):

Cognitive Objectives	Affective Objectives
Knowledge	Receiving: active attending
Comprehension	Responding: satisfaction on attending
Application	Valuing: voluntary responding
Analysis and Synthesis into new organisations	Conceptualisation of each value
Evaluation: judge and value material and methods	Organisation of these values into systems
	Characterisation of the individual

Table 4.1 Relationships between cognitive and affective processes

Understanding the complexity of values development shows why measurement of values in children is problematical.

Whilst Lovatt’s questionnaire has given useful and valid data, its application to a primary school such as Sathya Sai Primary School is questionable as the respondents are young, some only five years old. These children cannot read or write. Under the

circumstances it is necessary to take into account either teachers or parents to evaluate the changes in values. Teachers are trained to observe children attending to their lessons and to encourage the children in using the vocabulary of values. They have a fair understanding of each student's cognitive level of the values. Under the guided situations at school, in the class and in the yard, teachers can also assess the affective and volitional processing of the values.

However, is the student demonstrating the value outside the school? Has it become part of the child's character? For example, does the student show patience in relationships with siblings? Whether the student has developed such understanding in the wider world of home and community is more likely to be known by the parent. Changed behaviour outside of school is the acid test. It shows that there is transference of values-oriented behaviour beyond the guided situation of the classroom. Consequently, parental evaluation is critical to any values-based evaluation. Therefore a Parental Survey was considered most appropriate for this study.

The Survey Sheet—Values Growth Observed by Parents (Sample in Table 4.2) subsequently drafted was designed to target the subvalues being taught during the first three terms of 2003, and twelve months later was modified to suit 2004.

**Survey - Values Growth
Observed by Parents**



Question - Have you observed any changes in your child's thoughts, words and actions in relation to the values and sub-values which have been highlighted since the start of the school year?

Value	Behaviour	Much worse	A little worse	No change	A little better	Much better	Always has done this
Right Action	Being responsible, taking care of belongings, and personal safety						
Right Action	Understanding – building social skills eg good manners, listening						
Right Action	Service: helping others						
Peace	Sincerity: communicating with truthfulness						
Peace	Flexibility: problem solving						
Peace	Is able to sit quietly and be peaceful						
Truth	Self-confidence, honesty						
Truth	Self-discipline: setting goals and working to achieve them						
Love	Displaying friendliness						
Love	Showing appreciation						
Love	Co-operation with others in work and play						
Non - Violence	Respect and care for our bodies						
Non - Violence	Caring for the environment and other beings						
Non - Violence	Fairness: playing by the rules, respect for others						

Do you have any general comments to make about our EHV and the impact it is having on your student and your family?

Thank you for your feedback. Please be assured that your information will remain confidential.

Table 4.2 Survey of Parent Opinion

4.1.5 Administering the Evaluation Tool

The survey for parents was designed and administered to ensure validity. This was achieved by employing several means.

- A five-point scaled opinion survey (Likert Scale) for ease of administration.
- Sheets were colour-coded to enable identification of each class group, but otherwise maintain anonymity.
- Respondents were given the choice to fill out a survey form indicating their observations of their child since the beginning of the year—that is, any changes observed over the previous 9 months.
- Each class teacher was asked to give one survey form to the parent/s of each child at the end of the Parent-Teacher interview in October. The teacher described the process and requested participation. Parents were asked to go to a private room and complete the form.
- Anonymity was assured by providing a post box in the designated room.

The method used ensured confidentiality, anonymity and freedom of choice. It also minimised teacher influence or expectations. Some parents chose to take the Survey Form home to consider and discuss with partners before responding.

4.1.6 Ethical Considerations

In any research involving school children it is necessary to maintain confidentiality so that neither the students, parents nor staff can be identified. Other considerations from the Research Ethics Board are also required for the purpose of accurate and ethical research. The Privacy Policy of the School Management Board sets criteria for handling, use and storage of personal data. It is believed all these criteria were met.

Anonymity was ensured in the administration of the survey by having no names attached to the documents. Survey sheets were personally handed to each parent who came to a Parent-Teacher Interview, with the request that the parent complete the survey in a separate room and place it in the box provided, unobserved. Parents were told that they did not have to complete the survey, so no coercion was used. Parents could exercise their freedom of choice not to fill it out.

Survey sheets were colour-coded so that respondents from each class level could be grouped. A third, non-teaching member of staff coded the answers into a class result, so that any personal comments identifying students, staff or parents were eliminated. The class results were then handed to the researcher, and the survey forms filed in a locked cabinet.

Chapter 4 will present the data and results from the investigation. Data relating to academic achievement and values growth observed by parents will be provided and discussed in an effort to answer the focus question: *“To what extent does EHV result in improved character development in Primary school-aged children at Sathya Sai Primary School, Murwillumbah?”*

4.1.7 Summary of Part 1

- The goal of this research is to provide a complete and accurate picture of the effectiveness of EHV on the character development of children at Sathya Sai Primary School, rather than to test a hypothesis.
- The study was carried out at the Sathya Sai Primary School, Murwillumbah, Australia, which operates a values-based curriculum.
- This methodology is a ‘participant observation’ research technique. It was designed in such a way to incorporate measures that authenticated observations and reduced subjectivity.
- The assessment of character development includes both academic development and values development.
- State-based Basic Skills Test results in Numeracy and Literacy were used for an assessment of academic levels.
- Researchers have shown that assessment of values development at one school is problematic, for a variety of factors.
- For values development, a simple evaluation tool soliciting parental opinion was designed.
- Issues of validity and ethics were addressed.

Part 2 – Findings

4.2 Introduction

To what extent does EHV result in improved character development in Primary school-aged children at Sathya Sai Primary School, Murwillumbah?

There is evidence of the effectiveness of Sathya Sai Education in achieving the twin goals of character development and academic achievement. This has been the experience at Sathya Sai schools in India, Zambia and Thailand (see Chapter 1). Therefore in order to evaluate the level of character development at Sathya Sai Primary School, Murwillumbah, data has been collected in relation to both academic achievement and values acquisition.

4.2.1 Measurement of Academic Achievement

4.2.1.1 2003 Results

Although results are based on small numbers of students, **in 2003 students in Years 3 and 5 were generally equal to or above the State mean in writing, reading and numeracy.**

Comparing the school mean performance of the students in Sai School to the state figures, Year 3 boys scored 1.5 points higher in Writing, 1.1 points higher in Literacy and 0.7 points higher in Numeracy

For girls in Year 5 the figures were 1.8 points higher in Writing, 0.7 points higher in Literacy and 1.8 points higher in Numeracy.

These figures are shown in Table 4.2 (Note: All data is provided by the Educational Measurement Directorate of the NSW Department of Education and Training.)

	Year 3 School Mean	Year 3 State Mean	Year 5 School Mean	Year 5 State Mean
Writing Skills				
Boys	52.6	50.1	*	55.5
Girls	*	52.2	59.3	57.5
Literacy				
Boys	50.9	49.8	*	56.7
Girls	*	51.4	60.1	58.4
Numeracy				
Boys	54.0	53.3	*	60.1
Girls	*	51.4	61.6	59.8

(*There were insufficient students of this gender to generate an average.)

Table 4.2 Results of Basic Skills Testing 2003

4.2.1.2 2004 Results

The academic results in 2004 showed mixed performances. In Year 3 the boys scored 2.5 points higher than the State Mean in Writing and 0.7 points higher in Numeracy, but 0.9 points lower in Literacy. There were insufficient numbers of girls in Year 3 to establish a school mean, except for Literacy. Several new girls arrived in the two weeks before the testing period, which means they effectively sat for the test on the basis of their previous schooling.

In Year 5 the boys' scores were 1.4 points lower in Literacy and 0.8 points lower in Numeracy, while the girls scored 2.7 points higher in Writing and 1.7 points higher in Literacy. These results are shown in Table 4.3

	Year 3 School Mean	Year 3 State Mean	Year 5 School Mean	Year 5 State Mean
Writing Skills				
Boys	52.6	50.1	*	55.5
Girls	*	52.2	59.3	57.5
Literacy				
Boys	48.8	49.7	55.1	56.5
Girls	45.7	51.4	60.1	58.4
Numeracy				
Boys	53.3	52.6	60.3	61.1
Girls	*	58.4	*	60.3

Table 4.3 Results of Basic Skills Tests in 2004

4.2.1.3 Longitudinal Results

Basic Skills Testing also gives longitudinal information about the progress of individual students over a two-year time frame. Drawing on the Basic Skills Assessments, academic progress can be tracked by comparing the same student's results in Year 5 with Year 3. There were only two students who could be tracked in this way, as in 2002 there were only 4 students in Year 3, and two had left the district by 2005.

The data shows that for each of the two tracked students who were tested in Year 3 in 2002 and again in Year 5 in 2004, there was a remarkable leap in academic scores. Over this 2 year period the expected gain is 6-7 points, according to guidelines from the Measurement Directorate. Yet one of the students gained 13.0 points in Literacy and 17.6 in Numeracy. The other gained 15.8 in Literacy and 1.2 in Numeracy (Note: this student was already at a high level of achievement in Year 3).

From the small sample size of data presented in Tables 4.2 and 4.3 it cannot be concluded that Sai School gives excellent academic education. In 2003, the student

achievements were generally equal to or above state averages. In 2004 achievements were mixed, with several new students in the group. However for the two Year 5 students who had spent three years at the school, longitudinal data showed excellent academic progress. As the school's student numbers increase and test data are obtained for further years, it will be possible to have a broader base for academic assessment.

.....

4.2.2 Assessment of Values Development

The '*Values Growth Observed by Parents*' Survey was administered at the end of Term 3 in both 2003 and 2004. All families were asked to participate. The response rate was 55% in 2003 and 50% in 2004.

4.2.2.1 2003 Results and Discussion

The results of the survey in 2003 are shown in Table 4.4. At the time of the survey there were 47 children present, and 26 forms were returned (55%). Note: The number in the final column was not included when calculating behavioural changes as a result of attending the school.

	Much Worse	A little worse	No change	A little better	Much better	TOTAL	Does this well and always has
Total observations	1 .3%	22 6.7%	64 19.7%	133 41%	105 32.3%	325 100%	[64]

Table 4.4 Results of Opinion Survey 2003

The survey reported 7% of values-related behaviour worsened; 20% showed no change, and almost 75% reported improved—becoming either a little better or much better. Note that in two cases the negative behaviour reported related to the student being inconsiderate of family members and showing impatience, as described by the parents on the survey form. Since children naturally go through developmental phases where there is a need for greater independence, the figures could have been affected by this phenomenon.

4.2.2.2 2004 Results

The results of the Survey for 2004 appear in Table 4.5:

	Much Worse	A little worse	No change	A little better	Much better	TOTAL	Does this well and always has
Infants (Kindy/Year1/Year 2)	2 .7%	1 .4%	38 14%	120 47%	97 38%	258 100%	[60]
Primary Classes (Year 3/Year4/Year5/Year 6)	0 0%	2 1%	48 32%	53 36%	46 31%	149 100%	[74]
Total observations	2 .5%	3 .7%	96 23%	173 41.5%	143 34.3%	417 100%	[134]

Table 4.5 Results of Opinion Survey 2004

In 2004 the school was large enough to separate the survey data into two parts. There were 71 students in total—37 in the Infants classes and 34 in the Primary classes. 21 forms were returned for the Infants and 15 for the Primary grades, giving a response rate of 50%.

In summary, the negative observations were much fewer in 2004, being only 1.2%. About 23% indicated no change, whilst almost 76% reported observing positive changes in their children's behaviour. Once again there were a large number of observations that the children 'Does this well and always has' which are indicative of excellent character.

4.2.2.3 Discussion of 2004 Survey Results

The overall figures from the opinion survey are positive in two ways.

Firstly, the degree of positive change observed is high: 85% for the Infants classes (Kindy/Year1/Year2) and 67% for Primary Grades (Year 3/4/5/6), or 76% overall. Only 1% of responses were negative for each group.

Secondly, the level of response for ‘Does this well and always has’ rose from 19% for Infants to 33% for Primary children. This could indicate that the children are learning to act according to the values in their early years, and retaining these values-based behaviours through their later years. Children in the Infants classes range from 5-8 years in age and in the Primary levels from 9-12 years.. Only 14% of Infants show no change, whilst this proportion rises to 32% of Primary children. The comparison of observations in the ‘No change’ column could be interpreted as follows: the younger children are responding strongly to the values-based education, whereas the older children have reached a stable and more consistent pattern of values-based behaviour.

This factor, together with the higher observation of positive changes in the younger children, is consistent with anecdotal observations from teaching staff that children 5-8 years old are more responsive to the values program.

4.2.2.4 Limitations of the Parent Opinion Survey of Values Growth

The figures in the parent opinion survey of values growth are not statistically significant as ‘hard data’. However they are indicative of parental opinion about the changes seen, talked about and heard in the children’s words and actions. These observations are a useful qualitative guide for the following reasons:

- The range of responses provided allowed equally for positive and negative change to be indicated – from ‘Much worse’ to ‘Much better’. There was no bias towards the positive.
- The response rate was 50% in 2004 and 55% in 2003. A response rate of more than 30% in an opinion survey is considered sufficient to allow for valid analysis.
- Parents completed the survey confidentially without teacher influence.
- The parents are close to their child and spend time with the child, either individually or as a family group. A child spends far more time each week at home than at school. Approximately 7 hours per weekday is spent at or in transit to school, adding up to 35 hours a week—out of about 112 waking hours available (allowing 8 hours of sleep). Thus the parent has the potential to observe a lot more of the child’s behaviour than the teachers. The

observations will therefore be valid for that child within the limitations of the parent's subjectivity.

- It is likely that the child will express his/her values and belief systems more truly in the home environment than in the school. At school the dynamics between students are closely monitored, teachers model and remind them of the values, and constantly encourage appropriate behaviour. Students look for opportunities to please their teachers and gain recognition for showing values. Peers demonstrate and talk about the values. With all this support at school, it is easier for children to assume the normative behaviour by copying. At home the values may be emphasised to a greater or lesser degree, and the children behave more automatically or spontaneously. Thus they will unconsciously display their true level of integration of the values.

If a child can move beyond the process of acquiring particular values at school, transferring them to daily life and in the home, it indicates a deeper acquisition and understanding. The practice of values in the home indicates that they have become a part of the student's character, which is the highest level of Krathwohl's affective process (Macmillan, undated) and the fulfilment of the aim of the EHV program.

4.2.2.5 Comparison of 2003 and 2004 Surveys

There was a remarkable similarity between the results of the survey over the two years of the study, which tends to vindicate the methodology. Comparative results are shown in Table 4.6.

The main change over the year was that the number of observations in the negative category 'A little worse' reduced by 6%, and the positive observations increased a little. The category 'No change' rose by 3% in 2004, which—not being a quantitative judgement—could indicate students having reached a satisfactory level of values acquisition, just as much as it could indicate that the school has had no effect on values acquisition. The nature of the question precluded interpretation of this response.

	Much Worse	A little worse	No change	A little better	Much better	TOTAL	Does this well and always has
2003 Total observations	1 .3%	22 6.7%	64 19.7%	133 41%	105 32.3%	325 100%	[64]
2004 Total observations	2 .5%	3 .7%	96 23%	173 41.5%	143 34.3%	417 100%	[134]

Table 4.6 Comparison of 2003 and 2004 Opinion Survey results.

In conclusion, in the parents' eyes, children at the Sathya Sai Primary School are showing positive growth in values-oriented thoughts, words and actions—in both 2003 and 2004. This echoes the teachers' observations (as recorded on each child's end of semester written report) and the anecdotal evidence of parents, teachers and visitors to the school.

4.3 Effectiveness of Education in Human Values

How effective, then, is EHV?

There is evidence from the measurement of Writing, Literacy and Numeracy Skills that some children at SSPS are achieving above the State Mean, and some at average levels. Academic achievement is an important part of the school's curriculum, and some individuals are showing much higher than expected gains in the areas measured.

The indications from the Parent Survey of Values Growth are positive. There is similarity between the two surveys undertaken, in 2003 and 2004. 73% of respondents observed positive growth in values in 2003, and 78% in 2004.

There is abundant qualitative evidence that children at the Sathya Sai Primary School develop and increasingly demonstrate sound, values-based behaviours. This is demonstrated by self-evaluation sheets, school reports, parent opinion surveys, observations, and anecdotal comments by visitors and the general public. In addition, children and staff recognise instances of values-based behaviour by such measures as certificates and awards.

The fourteen students who have graduated from Year 6 since the inception of the school have enrolled in a variety of secondary schools. According to information gained by the Principal from personal contact with parents and students, these children have been well prepared for the transition to secondary school.

To be successful, a values program must provide opportunities for each child to acquire strong, positive inner beliefs, and safe, supportive situations to act according to these beliefs. Findings by a recent study in a Perth school (Millett & Kay, 2001) concluded that:

‘Values education works well as an integrated program that takes into account thinking skills, a community of inquiry, a supportive school environment and learning culture.’

Feedback at the Sathya Sai Primary School validates the effectiveness of its Education in Human Values, which creates a dynamic learning culture based on these same principles. Centred on the values of Love, Peace, Truth, Non-Violence and Right Conduct, the Sathya Sai EHV is a developmental program which aims to provide each child with the competencies, capacities and inner structures to meet any challenges in the classroom, playground, home and wider society. It seeks to build the character – with feelings, thoughts, positive emotions, social skills, moral courage and the capacity to act. In other words, it fosters in children the linking of head, heart and hands for their own betterment and that of society.

4.4 Where to From Here?

This thesis describes the philosophy and operation of the Sathya Sai Education in the Sathya Sai Primary School in Murwillumbah, Australia. It describes various methods of evaluating EHV at the school, assessing its effectiveness in building good character in its pupils.

As with much research, the thesis has raised more questions that require further investigation and analysis. The next logical step would be to instigate research and gather more data to document changes that take place in the students’—and even teachers’ and parents’—character development. Such research would be valuable for the school community as a whole, but also to mainstream educators and curriculum planners—given the current climate of increasing demand for effective values

education. The results of the research may lead to more questions about the mechanisms at work in the EHV program.

An important aspect of further research would be a more objective assessment of the children. The Parent Opinion Surveys could be supported by longitudinal studies following the children as they progress from Kindergarten to Year 6. It would be useful to research such questions as:

- How quickly are the values recognised?
- At what developmental stage do they become integrated into the child's personality?
- What is the relative impact of the teacher's values compared with the expectations of the social group?
- How much change can be attributed to the normal developmental stages that every child goes through?
- Are there some key factors in the teaching and learning processes at this school which make a singular difference?
- Are there special characteristics of the families of children at the school which are making a significant impact?
- Are the children able to continue to live by the values as they enter their teen years?

These are some of the many aspects that invite further investigation. This information could enhance understanding of effective values programs, as well as providing objective external measures of the success of the EHV as applied to the Sathya Sai Primary School in Murwillumbah.

However, three areas stand out for immediate specific research:

Firstly, within the school: to determine the critical factors affecting values-oriented behaviour as children move from the age of 5 to 12.

Secondly, a comparative study of values-oriented behaviour at the Sai School and a similar school—matched for size, demography, ethnicity, etc. This would enable significant conclusions to be made about the success of the Sai School's EHV.

Practising Unity of Head, Heart and Hand

Thirdly, conduct a follow-up study of former students to ascertain the degree to which they have continued to practise the values in later years.

At this preliminary stage, evidence indicates that the EHV gives positive benefits. In the long term, however, more detailed and quantitative data is required that will convince the community, educational authorities and professional peers.

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Relevant Web Sites

For those interested in accessing more information directly through the internet:

Board of Studies: Detailed syllabus documents for Australian schools are available on each State Government website. New South Wales materials are at www.boardofstudies.nsw.edu.au

Commonwealth Government: Links to various values education programs, and information about the latest Australian research may be accessed at www.curriculum.edu.au/values/links

Living Values: an Education Program a program using twelve key values of freedom, peace, respect, tolerance, honesty, unity, humility, cooperation, happiness, responsibility, simplicity This program originated in USA. To find out more about this program go to www.livingvalues.net/

Mindmatters is a mental health promotion resource for secondary schools. It is funded by the Commonwealth Department of Health under the National Mental Health Strategy and the National Youth Suicide Prevention Strategy. For more information go to www.curriculum.edu.au/projects/mindmatters

Values For Life is a new concept in the development of welfare, resiliency and early literacy for young students. This program was created in Australia and is related to the Healthy Relationships Program developed by Karen Brunskill. See www.valuesforlifeeducation.com

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