



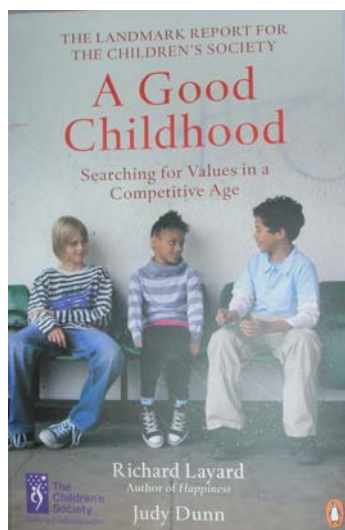
Neil Hawkes
Raising Achievement Service
Children, Young People & Families
Cricket Road
Oxford, OX4 3DW
neil.hawkes@btinternet.com

Bridget Knight
Children & Young People's Directorate
PO Box 185
Blackfriars Street
Herefordshire HR4 9ZR
bknight@herefordshire.gov.uk

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Editorial

A Major and influential new Report in the UK, *A Good Childhood* fully supports and endorses the development of values-based schools.



This landmark report, written by Lord Richard Layard, identifies Values Education as being a major way schools can help to counter the current excessive individualism and lack of positive values that is at the heart of many of society's problems. It refers to the work of West Kidlington School in Oxfordshire (see page 2 of this Newsletter) as an example of a school where adults are helping children to acquire positive values.

It says "...the school - its staff, parents and children- agree on a list of words which embody the values of the school. In West Kidlington there are twenty-two values words...Teachers are expected to practise the same principles as the children....And there are periods of silent sitting, reflecting on your inner self and how you are contributing to the needs of others. There is good evidence that such silent sitting improves well-being." (p7 9-9)

The report urges teachers and parents to exemplify and teach children the importance of key values such as respect and kindness.

This report has collected vast amounts of evidence and is a wonderful support for all of us who have seen values-based education as underpinning school culture in the 21st Century.

Read this too and discuss aspects with your staff - use it as a springboard for a reflective discussion about your ethos, values and practice in your own school.

Have you seen *The Rose Report on Primary Education*? Dr Tony Eade has studied it and written a response to Sir Jim Rose on behalf of The Values Education Trust. Tony gives evidence to persuade Sir Jim to ensure that Values-based Education is given a higher priority in his final report as the way to create a positive culture for teaching and learning in schools. Copies of Tony's response are available from Neil Hawkes.

Values Quality Mark

Congratulations to Chantry Primary School in Luton that has been awarded the Quality Mark as a Values-based School. If you would like to pursue this award for your school, please contact Neil Hawkes on neil.hawkes@btinternet.com.

Finally, we would like to commend the outstanding work of the schools featured in this edition. As you will see, there is lots of practical advice to help support your school on its journey to be values-based.

Silence at West Kidlington Primary School, Oxfordshire

Eugene Symonds, Headteacher

If you stand in the playground at West Kidlington before the start of school and just watch the children as they come onto the playground, it is anything but silent. Nor should it be silent, this is after all a school, where it is natural for children to begin their day by catching up with friends by laughing, joking, chasing or just enjoying being with each other. Despite this, we work hard here to ensure that there are times of stillness and silence each day.

A feature of our school is the daily reflections we encourage children to participate in. These are often conducted by staff in assemblies, but may also be pre-cursors to lessons, where children are encouraged to focus on themes or objectives. Children themselves also lead these sessions at times such as "class assemblies." These short periods of silence are supported by supportive ambience such as lighting, candles or music, and which encourage children to find a few moments of stillness. They often close their eyes, and aided by soothing music or narration, they are encouraged to find this peace. Even the very youngest of our children can do this. A by-product of this strategy is the calm feel to the school at times when children move around the school. The many visitors

to our school often comment on the serenity and stillness of these times, a feature of our school which all adults who work here value so much.

As facilitators in Values led school, we are clear about why we do this. The need for children to shake off, albeit temporarily, the pressures, anxieties or stresses they often deal with, is an essential element of our approaches. The "Values Conduit", or the methods we use to convey understanding of values such as "Peace, Respect, Hope, Trust or Courage, needs our children to be fully receptive. For this to happen, they need to be still and calm. Simple really.



Value for the month: Patience

We often ask them to "Open your hearts" as they sit in silent reflection. Our observations suggest we are more likely to impact upon children's understanding if we

prepare them in this way. If proof were needed that this

is a good thing, maybe the words of some of our children will help cement this.

*"When I close my eyes, it feels nice because you **just go still. You also know that you are going to hear about Values and I really like that.**" Maisie - Year 2*

*"It helps me relax, because I always have busy days. I have to get up at six o'clock and I like the stillness we feel when we are all together in our classroom or the hall. It is good that everyone does it. It helps me to understand the Value of the month. **Tom - Year 5.***

*"I like it when no-one speaks at the start of our reflections. I can't really say why but the music is always relaxing and I like it when someone starts to speak to us when we are all silent. I think it is really important because I think I understand more when I am calm and it helps me to forget my stress." **Jessica - Year 6.***

I am reminded of a comment a member of staff once made to, when she told me that the "silence in assemblies and reflections speaks volumes about this school." I think I know what she means.

Exploring our monthly value: responsibility

– Madeline Poote, Long Crendon Primary School, Buckinghamshire

With a year one class some of the language associated with our values can be difficult to understand. We explained that 'responsibility' is 'doing the right thing'.

Circle Time

We introduced our value for January by thinking about **New Year Resolutions**. We had a circle time to share what we did at home to help. The children talked about responsibilities they have at home such as:

- I am responsible for making my bed in the morning.
- I am responsible for laying the table at dinner time.
- I am responsible for keeping my bedroom tidy.

We talked about what we could do in the New Year to help at home now that we are in Year One. What other responsibilities could we have? Do we always carry out our responsibilities? How does it feel to be responsible and do things to help?

Each child had a brightly coloured envelope and a piece of paper with the title New Year's Resolution 2009. The children wrote or drew secretly what they would like to do in 2009 to be more responsible at home. They folded the piece of paper and put it in the envelope. The envelopes were hung on a washing line across the classroom with an explanation title I made. The resolutions displayed in this way are a visual reminder of the resolutions made. In a couple of months the children will look at their resolutions and discuss and think about whether they have been more responsible.

Role Plays

Using volunteers from the class I modelled short **role-plays** and asked the children which one was the right thing to do? For example, we did role plays to show how to take responsibility for our cloakroom. Firstly, we showed someone walking into the cloakroom, seeing a coat on the floor and walking right over the top of it, looking around to see that nobody was watching. Secondly, we showed someone walking into the cloakroom and jumping over the coat and continuing on into the classroom. Then, finally, someone walking into the cloakroom, seeing a coat on the floor and picking it up and hanging it back on the peg.

After the role-plays I encouraged the children with their talk partner to discuss what they had seen and feedback 2 thoughts to another pair. There was a lot of exciting discussion and children talked about their own experiences. The groups of 4 then fed back 1 thought to the whole class. From this we added to classroom rainbow promises 'We will keep our cloakroom tidy by taking responsibility for everybody's things.'

During our responsibility month we repeated this activity with different role-plays/examples of how to be responsible and do the right thing. The children also created their own group of role-plays to show to the class for us to decide which one was the right the right thing to do?

PSHE

We thought about how we are responsible for ourselves and related this to our healthy living topic.

We did a **speed drawing activity** which is where the children have 5 minutes to draw as much as they can. We introduced this with a short video about a brother and sister getting ready for school in the morning. The little boy was only 2 years old and needed his mother to get him ready. The little girl was 5 (the same age as the children in my class) and the video showed her getting ready for school in the morning.

After the short video shown on the interactive whiteboard, the children went away to their tables to draw ways in which they have to be responsible for themselves in the morning e.g. Cleaning their teeth, washing their face, brushing their hair, getting dressed, making their bed, eating all their breakfast and having a drink etc. The children loved the race against time to draw as much as they could. Some children were able to label their drawings too.

The children shared their pictures and talked about them on their tables. We then drew back together as a class and discussed how we take responsibility for ourselves and why it is important to clean our teeth properly and eat a good healthy breakfast.

Role Modelling

It was very important that as the teacher I **modelled showing responsibility** and doing the right thing. For example, when walking through the cloakroom I would pick up a coat and say out loud as I did what I was doing and why. I ensured I was on time for playground duty and collecting the children from lunch. The value was referred to at any appropriate moment and became a word that the children began using in the right context.

Posters

We talked about our responsibility for the **environment**. We discussed how we could do this by putting our litter in the bin, walking to school instead of driving, not wasting food, turning off lights, having shorter showers, recycling waste including composting our fruit at afternoon play – we made posters to persuade people to care for the environment and displayed them around the school.

Books

We read stories related to 'responsibility' and talked about them and how they relate to our own lives. This book was particularly useful:

'I'll Do It!': Learning About Responsibility: Taking Responsibility (Values) by Brian Moses. This book was really good and there was a lot of content in here for us to think about.



Values Day at Long Crendon School

Continued on page 4

Values Education comes to Castle Lower School

Karen Davis, Deputy Headteacher

In April 2006 Castle Lower School was a very different place. I was appointed at that time as the Acting Deputy and together with the Acting Head entered a school working under a Raising Attainment Plan from the Local Authority, where staff morale was extremely low and no consistent systems in place. It was definitely time for a new start!

I had previously worked with Values Education at St. Mary's in Clophill, Bedfordshire. It had given the school a common language to talk about feelings, thoughts, behaviours and emotions as well as a theme or goal; for example, everyone wanted to be respectful to themselves, each other and the environment. I felt that Values Education would be perfect for Castle.

I contacted Di Thomas, Values Consultant, who I had worked with in the past, and asked her to visit the school. I had previously discussed the idea with the Acting Head and she had agreed it would be good for the school. Di introduced Values Education to the staff and they instantly took to it. She then led a further meeting for parents and governors, who all approved. I then led further staff meetings where we worked together to create our list of Values which would be taught. We decided to stick to the twenty two Values suggested by Dr. Neil Hawkes. We then decided the order we would teach them in and how Values would look in our school.

As suggested, we would explore a different Value each month. The Value would be taught through at least two assemblies a week; a whole school assembly at the beginning of the week, led by myself, and Key Stage assemblies later in the week where the Value could be delivered more appropriately to the different year groups. Every class would have a thirty minute Values lesson a week, planned by myself to start with to ensure consistency and give the staff a basis on which to explore the Value of the month. Every class would also have a Values board celebrating those children who had successfully lived the Value of the month. Every Friday we would hold a Celebration Assembly, celebrating children's weekly achievements; the highlight of which would be rewarding living our Values. Due to our school name, we decided to have a large wooden castle built in our school hall on which we would stick "Values Bricks"; a brick stating the child's name, the Value that had been lived and how he or she had lived it. Staff, children and parents were invited to nominate anyone they felt had lived the Values.

Our first values was Values Education was *Respect*. It was an instant hit with everyone. Staff enjoyed teaching something truly meaningful to the children and something which supported work throughout the school. Values Education is now within all school life; it is reflected throughout lessons and is intrinsic to behaviour management. Children are able to articulate themselves through the language of Values and parents report how Values has permeated through to home life with children, for example, responding to their parents with *respect*, showing *courage* when meeting other adults or showing *patience* when younger siblings inevitably annoyed them. Everyone eagerly nominated each other for Values Bricks. Children and staff have all been celebrated for living our Values.

During our recent 'Outstanding' Ofsted inspection this year one inspector commented he was so impressed with Values Education he was going to take it back to his own school. In the report itself, the

Exploring our monthly value..(continued)

Other Ideas

- I purchased some classroom plants for us to be responsible for to teach them that some living things depend on us to stay alive. I created a classroom job rota and picked out the hat at the beginning of each week names to be allocated to different jobs. The job rota said 'who is responsible this week?' The children took responsibility for watering the class plants, tidying the book corner, collecting the register etc.
- We talked about how to take responsibility for our pets at home by caring for them by loving them, feeding them, keeping their water full and fresh and if necessary brushing them etc.
- The children were given 'choices' with regard to their behaviour. In a circle time we discussed how we can make good choices or not so good choices about what we do and that it is our responsibility to make good choices.
- Some children needed a lot of encouragement to become more responsible for themselves, e.g. getting changed for PE. Some children would not try to undo their top button for example, but when encouraged and given the responsibility we saw them doing more and more as the month went on!

lead inspector included a quote from a child who stated that at Castle Lower School the children learn '*how to live, how to respect and how to love*', a direct testimony to Values Education.



Despite these successes we are still keen to move Values Education on even further. We are planning to hold further staff meetings in the near future with the prospect of potentially altering a couple of the Values that we teach in order to ensure full relevancy to our children. We have also recently begun to work with other schools to support them as they begin their journey with Values Education. At Castle Lower we hope to attain the Values Quality Mark this academic year. I am confident that Values Education supports our school in going from strength to strength. I commend it to **all** schools.

Chantry Primary School – Gaining the Quality Mark

Neil Hawkes



1. Background

Chantry Primary School, Luton, has been implementing Values Education since the appointment of Cori Bateman, its current Headteacher. I carried out a school audit on the 8th December 2008, to see whether the school met the criteria for being awarded the Values Education Quality Mark. **The Quality Mark is a validation of a school's commitment to Values Education through a unique Values Education logo:**

I spent a whole day in the school, observing school assembly, lessons and school routines, talking with pupils, governors, parents and staff, speaking with the School's Council and the Headteacher and members of the Leadership Team.

2. Criteria

As a result of its application for the Quality Mark, the school had been sent a self-evaluation audit tool in order to decide if it met the criteria for the Quality Mark. The Headteacher sent me a comprehensive report pointing to evidence to support the school's application to be considered a Values-based School.

3. The school audit demonstrated the following:



The School's Values

- The school underpins its curriculum with positive human values such as honesty and respect.
- Values Education is considered an explicit element in the curriculum. Values have been selected and time allocated for their consideration.
- The person of the teacher, and all individuals working in the school, is valued and all staff and pupils are shown care and respect.
- Staff morale is high as there is an emphasis on the caring for self and others. There is a constant striving to raise and maintain self-esteem for all members of the school/setting's community.

- Staff model the values and a high level of consistency exists in adult behaviour.
- There is a focus on creating and maintaining positive relationships.
- Values Education is seen as an integral part of School Assemblies.
- Values underpin the ethos of the school/setting. The climate for learning is happy, calm and purposeful and one that promotes quality teaching and learning.
- Space is given for reflection.
- There is an emphasis on developing pupils' self esteem and ability to make decisions, reflect on feelings and emotions. Pupils are self-confident and know how to behave appropriately in different situations and scenarios.
- The school/setting communicates the values to the parents and the wider community.
- The school works with and in the community.
- Values are reflected in the school/setting aims, mission statement.
- Values linked to programmes, such as SEAL.
- Governors are fully involved in developing the school from a values perspective.
- Pupils are able to articulate their thoughts through using a values-based vocabulary.
- Everyone in the school/setting recognises and takes responsibility for self-improvement.

3. Outcome

I gave a verbal report to the staff at the end of the day and was delighted to announce that the criteria had been met and that the school would be awarded the Quality Mark as a Values-based School. I am sure that the school will continue to develop aspects of its Values Programme and be a model of good practice. Congratulations to the whole school community for embracing Values Education - it was a pleasure to spend a day in your school.

Good Practice Tips – Simon Poote

I am a teacher of the Foundation Stage class at Chinnor Primary School in Oxfordshire. I believe that children need to be secure within their environment, to feel loved and valued and to enjoy their learning. If they are happy, with high self-esteem, then they will learn irrespectively of whether we are directly 'teaching them' or not! This is principally, why Values Education is so important, because for the most part, the children are learning when you are not teaching. They are modelling themselves on our behaviour and actions far more than anything else.

I wanted to set up a climate for learning where children and adults, especially parents, could see how important modelling *values* is for the development of children. It isn't always easy and can be challenging when others do not understand what you are trying to achieve, especially if they do not share the same values or even see their importance within their own lives.

The following examples are ideas that I have used to create a *values based-classroom*:

'Meet and Greet'



In the mornings I open the doors a few minutes earlier than the official school start time. I think it is really important to say hello to each child individually, before saying hello to the parent or adult bringing them in. I bend down so that I am at the child's level and make eye contact and usually a physical connection (after getting to know the children). I usually hold their hand; give them a cuddle or even just a touch on the arm or shoulder, just to make a connection and to show warmth. If the child isn't used to that much contact, or feels shy, then I am careful not to encroach on their space and I do not cause the child to feel self-conscious if they are not feeling like talking. I believe that it is important to make the children feel valued as soon as they arrive. Often, just by asking children how they are feeling, you can give them a chance to have a personal moment with you that may otherwise not occur in a busy day at school! Sometimes children might say something that they have

wanted to tell their parents, who have been too busy to ask in the process of getting ready for school. This also gives a chance to include the adult or parent in the conversation (bridging the gap between home and school) and modelling the way that we should be talking to children – particularly *respect*.

'Silent Sitting'

Once the children have arrived, they are given time to put away their belongings, sign themselves in, spend a few minutes with their parents/carers and say goodbye. I always have relaxing music playing at this time, which is not necessarily heard, but is playing when the children are ready to sit down. When all the children have arrived and I have finished speaking to any parents/adults I ask two children to choose a pretend musical instrument to play, which is the prompt that we are ready for our daily silent sitting. The children all sit down (lights off) and close their eyes. They sit with their legs crossed and hold their thumbs up on one hand (keeping it close to their chests) to indicate they are ready. We then listen to the music for a few moments and then I will ask the children to imagine something, quietly talking them through a journey or reflecting on a particular thought. We also use the excellent *Relax Kids CD's*. After a few minutes of silent reflection, with some deep breathing I fade out the music and we say 'good morning' to each other.

'Classroom Promises'

When the children first settle in to the class at the beginning of the year, we talk about the most important values, which we would like to remember every day. The children will make some suggestions and we usually give a few examples we think are important. We then discuss those particular values and ask the children to help re-enact a value through role-play. I then photograph the children modelling a value, for example *love* and it is then put on a board for the children and adults to refer to. If a child isn't modelling any of these values throughout the year we will quietly say "have you forgotten our promise about showing *love* to each other? It is a good visual aid to reinforcing a value and to remind them about appropriate behaviour.

'Feelings' Boxes

Children sometimes don't want to talk about their feelings, or may not know how to articulate those emotions to others. We do a lot of work on 'labelling' our feelings and thoughts and asking the children to identify which emotions they are experiencing (emotional literacy). One way we can support this is to invite children to look out for each other's emotions. For example, the children may be involved in making a 'Feelings Box' such as 'Happy' or 'Sad' box. The children then put out these boxes and know that if they are feeling sad, they can put their name in the box. Children take turns to look in the sad box to see if there are any names and then it is up to them to go and cheer up the person whose name was in the box. Then, if the child is feeling happy again, they can put their name in the happy box. Adults may check on this from time to time and suggest that there are lots of happy people, so that means we are all showing *kindness* for example.

'Circle times'

We often have circle times to talk about particular issues or values that need to be addressed. The children and adults sit in a circle and I usually lead with a thought about a value. For example, "I have noticed that we are not showing 'respect' towards one-an-other. Our classroom is untidy and some of our equipment has been broken. What does it mean to show respect?" I will then put an item in the middle (usually a cuddly toy) and ask the children to sit quietly, whilst looking at the toy and think about what I have asked. Then, we will take turns to pass the toy around the circle, offering suggestions and thinking of ways we can show respect. We also use circle times to introduce a new value for the month, or to think about a particular problem. We value everyone's suggestion and we empower the right to not say something if we don't want to (although it is encouraged and we often come back to a child when they have had time to think).

'Values' Display

We have a large display board that is positioned so that everyone can see it as they enter the classroom. It has a picture of two children holding up a sign that reads; 'We are learning about the value of.....' We then have a different value each month, which we discuss and refer to. The display usually shows photographs of the children modelling a value, with speech bubbles stating the children's comments. For example, 'I showed *trust* when I let my friend look after my bracelet.' We often add work that relates to the value remind parents to see how well their children are showing good values.

'Stickers'

One easy way to reinforce values is to give praise when children have modelled a value. It is too easy to tell a child that they are not doing something they should; it is far more effective to identify and praise when they have demonstrated something you would like them to do. Young children like to know that their actions are appreciated in the same way as adults do and a little incentive or reward for their efforts works wonders. I have a 'sticker station' that is left out (on a trust basis) for the children to self-administer when they have modelled a value. For example, a child might come up to me and say that they noticed a tap was running in the toilets and they turned it off. I would say, "Thank you for being so *responsible* and making sure we are not wasting water. I think you deserve a sticker." The child would then go and chose a sticker themselves and I would trust them to only take one. Other children observe this trust and know not to take one without a reason and by identifying and 'labelling' that value, other children will want to show that they can be *responsible* for doing something else. Values Education is at the heart of our Foundation Class and has created a very positive learning environment.

Values Education Quality Mark



Did you know that your school can receive the Values Education Quality Mark? This can be used on headed notepaper and other school documents to show that your school is values-based. For more information contact Neil Hawkes (neil.hawkes@btinternet.com)