

Social and emotional learning: Reporting a system approach to developing relationships, nurturing well-being and invigorating learning

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Social Emotional Learning (SEL) is an educational imperative as it provides a platform for quality learning and outcomes integral to enduring, integrative learning and overall human development. It builds personal and group competencies and strengthens relationships central to all interaction and learning. Relationships influence the way students, staff and parents interact, learn, build community and develop well-being. Relationships establish a culture that is pervasive to the learning community and so provide a foundation for the exchange of beliefs, values, knowledge and skills. While educators accept that relationships are an outcome and a means for quality education, what is not so obvious is how relationships can be nurtured explicitly in a context of a crowded curriculum, growing accountability, expectations of an inclusive school community and heightened awareness as to the importance of well-being. This paper discusses an educational response to the enhancement of relationships through the implementation of SEL from a mission-based, strategic and preventative perspective. The paper outlines the context and rationale for the strategy with lessons and adjustments arising from its implementation. It highlights outcomes for students, staff and parents and concludes with implications for a renewed imagination for SEL. In so doing it reinforces SEL integration and sustainability through its cultural linkage to the vision and mission of the school, its adoption within the wider school community and recognition of its impact across the curriculum.

Rationale and context

*What you believe
is what you pay attention to,
what you care about,
what finally lives and matters in you.*

*It is not what you know that matters,
or changes anything:
It is what you believe –
And believe all the way through.
(Rohr, 2006)*

EDUCATIONAL SETTINGS have the potential to engage young people in ways that help them define who they are, why they are important, how they should act and who they can become. Optimising the learning and well-being potential of young people implies an expanded orientation for education that moves beyond a focus

on academic competencies to embrace human development and learning more holistically. It calls for a belief in the education of the whole person, to maximise potential and to offer meaning and contribution to personal and social experience.

There is extensive concern about the health, well-being and educational achievement of young Australians. Significant interest by Commonwealth and State Governments in values education, safe schools, child protection, social and emotional learning, drug education and student resilience reflect these concerns (Australian Catholic University & Erebus International, 2008). However, despite national policy efforts over the past 20 years, many young people still find it difficult to develop a strong sense of identity, purpose and connectedness with life and school (Eckersley, 2008).

The importance of relationships and their connection to quality learning is not new (ACU & Erebus International, 2008). That is, a learner will engage readily with learning when in an optimum state of well-being. Relationships establish the platform for human interaction and learning. They provide a foundation for the exchange of beliefs, values, skills, which in turn, impact individual and community well-being and influence social activity. Skills of well-being such as 'gaining the ability to understand our own emotions and using it to shape our own actions are competencies that are not only essential for our mental and emotional health: they are meta-abilities that are highly linked to school and career success' (Department of Education and Children's Services, 2008).

The International Commission on Education for the 21st Century (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation, 1996) speaks of four pillars that underpin quality education: learning to know; learning to do; learning to live together; and learning to be. Within the Australian context, the National Goals for Schooling (Melbourne, 2008) provide a foundation for young Australians' intellectual, physical, social, moral, spiritual and aesthetic development. Such goals 'go beyond simple measures of academic attainment ... to address the values, capabilities and dispositions of our time' (Pignatelli, 2007). The goals, both directly and indirectly affirm the significance of education as the 'profession of potential' (Hunter, 2006), and identify the means, privilege and responsibility for educating the whole person in a fashion that enables and empowers learners to learn continuously.

The paper describes the evolution of the SEL strategy within the Catholic education system in the diocese of Cairns. Focussing on the needs of 26 schools, approximately 10,000 students (K to 12), incorporating 1500 staff, the study reports on the motivation for the strategy, how it was implemented and the challenges encountered. Moreover, the paper reports on its impact in widening

a view of curriculum, meeting student needs, connecting beliefs and values to curriculum expression, and engaging learning communities towards holism and well-being for all.

Beginning in a single school, the intervention progressively incorporated a wider cluster of schools and currently has entered a phase of integration across the entire sector. At the same time, while the engagement of schools increased, so did an understanding of the intervention broaden, specifically in terms of its applicability and outreach within the school community.

Defining terms

Relationships are defined as a state of connection, a way of being in communion with self, others, creation and God. Relationships are the associations between individuals manifested in physical terms (touch, proximity), intellectual beliefs (attitudes, values) or psychological states (fears, feelings) (see Sultmann & Burton, 1993). The development of classroom and school cultures which promote resilience, social confidence and learning are dependent upon quality relationships (Cefai, 2008).

Emotional literacy reflects the well-being of individuals and organisations and is believed to enhance learning outcomes, individual well-being, relational quality and social connectedness (Zins & Elias, 2006; Roffey, 2008). Social and emotional skills are the building blocks of emotional literacy. Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) is the process of developing emotional literacy within safe, engaging and caring environments (Elias et al., 2003). Five core groups of social and emotional competencies (Collaborative for Academic Social Emotional Learning, 2009) have been identified:

- *Self-awareness* – accurately assessing one's feelings, interests, values, and strengths, and maintaining a well-grounded sense of self-confidence;
- *Self-management* – regulating one's emotions to handle stress, control impulses and persevere in overcoming obstacles; setting and monitoring

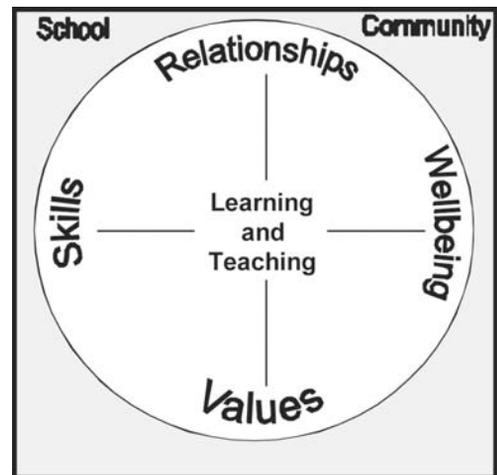
- progress toward personal and academic goals; expressing emotions appropriately;
- *Social awareness* – being able to take the perspective of and empathise with others; recognising and appreciating individual and group similarities and differences; recognising and using family, school, and community resources;
 - *Relationship skills* – establishing and maintaining healthy and rewarding relationships based on co-operation; resisting inappropriate social pressure; preventing, managing and resolving interpersonal conflict; seeking help when needed;
 - *Responsible decision-making* – making decisions based on consideration of ethical standards, safety concerns, appropriate social norms, respect for others, and likely consequences of various actions; applying decision-making skills to academic and social situations, contributing to the well-being of one's school and community.

The term well-being is defined as a positive and sustainable condition that allows individuals, groups, organisations and nations to thrive and flourish (Huppert et al., 2005). It is an holistic concept which embraces the emotional, physical, spiritual, social and cognitive dimensions to development and emerges when a range of feelings are combined and balanced. Well-being is dynamic and changeable, enacted differently in varying cultures and is about feeling and functioning well. In broad terms, well-being is the state of being flowing from the dynamic integration of a broad range of personal, social and experiential factors. It is the result of beliefs, manifested in values, given expression in skills, and shared through relationships. It is both an outcome and an input into the pedagogical components of the teaching and learning environment.

Figure 1 is illustrative of the dynamic interaction among elements significant to the teaching and learning processes of the school. It expresses the personal, social and

relational components of the teaching and learning process without identifying priority or sequence. This approach is centred on an ecological perspective that respects all aspects as important, with each having variable impact dependent upon factors immediate and external to the environment. The approach in its theoretical form avoids simple cause and effect relationships and permits interaction that can occur incrementally from any direction at any given time (see Roffey, 2007).

Figure 1: Dynamic elements of the SEL strategy.



SEL implementation and evaluation

Foundation Cycle (2000–2004)

The inspiration for nurturing an SEL strategy grew from the motivation of teachers and school counsellors to work with the development of the ‘whole’ person and the promotion of an integrated, whole school community. Moreover, the unfolding realisation that students were increasingly demonstrating a lack of coping skills, limited problem solving ability, low self-esteem, aggression and anger along with the desire by some parents to be more involved in what were perceived as critical years, galvanised ideas and intentions.

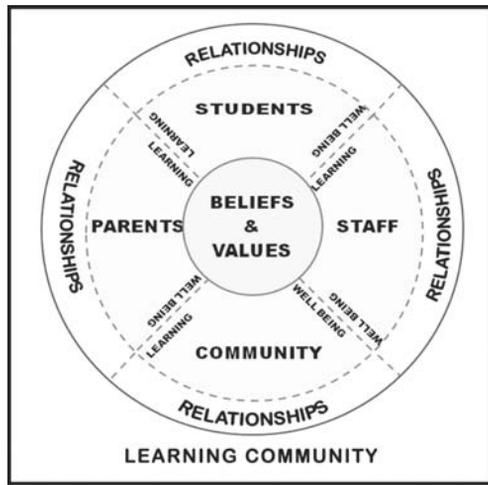
Instructional activities entailing a personal skills-based curriculum were commenced by specialist staff (counsellors and resource teachers) with a small number of selected students. However, as momentum grew and success deepened, the extent of the interventions expanded. Described as: ‘teachers taking responsibility for the learning and mental health of their students,’ teachers and administrators grew in conviction about the need for a direct and more generally applicable instructional program. In its infancy, the emerging intervention adopted *You Can Do It! (YCDI!) Education’s* social and emotional learning curriculum, *Program Achieve* (Bernard, 2006) and later, within its developing phase, incorporated the broader concept of SEL with adaptations to the initial strategy.

A consultant, trained in *YCDI! Education*, worked to support a cluster of school communities (students, staff and parents) that had committed to the SEL program. Program acceptance followed consultation and professional development but was restricted by personnel availability. Throughout the period of its implementation (2000–2004), four stages (see Table 1) were identifiable as schools responded differentially to the adoption of the strategy. Within each stage particular indicators revealed the extent and progress of strategy adoption. Nomination of these levels of engagement, together with their indicators, allowed consultants to distribute support appropriately and to specify the focus of their involvement. Moreover, school leaders were able to identify expectations and plan strategically.

With a focus on student wholeness and the engagement of significant others, this early work provided an explicit articulation of beliefs, values, skills and pedagogical strategies for all participant groups across the entire school community. Learning, well-being and relationships were all dynamically engaged. As shown in Figure 2 relationships are central to all learning and all learners (students, staff and parents), with skill devel-

opment being congruent with the beliefs and values of the learning community. Such a position was established as a consistent approach to the systemic implementation of SEL within the learning community.

Figure 2: The interaction of learning, well-being and relationships within the learning community.



Early success indicators

The attention given to the social and emotional needs of students in the Foundation Cycle did more than prepare them to learn more effectively in the classroom. It impacted their capacity for learning, work, play and life (see Zins et al., 2004). The early years of implementation offered considerable and consistent feedback. Within the first four years, 85 per cent of the schools within the system had committed to the strategy and effects were noticeable across all groups. Some outcomes summarised in Table 2 are reflective of the breadth and depth of responses at the end of this first cycle.

The cross section of responses is indicative of the impact of SEL on the participant groups. Growth for students was evident in relationships (‘I get along better now with my brother and mum and dad’); scholastic competencies (‘It has helped me with my writing’); emotional stability (‘It was nice to

Table 1: Stages and indicators within foundation cycle.

STAGES	INDICATORS
Stage 1: Infancy (Building school community commitment to SEL)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Principal initiation: information/explanation for selected staff. 2. Commitment by leadership to strategy development. 3. Explanation of program and implementation strategy to whole staff. 4. Whole staff and parent induction. 5. Staff decision to commit to strategy. 6. Professional Development (PD) framework planned.
Stage 2: Emerging (Establishing structures and support)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Intensive PD for all staff and parents. 2. Establishment of onsite reference team. 3. Annual induction for new staff. 4. <i>Program Achieve</i> timetabled for classroom teaching. 5. Yearly school overview is developed. 6. Visual symbols developed for school/classrooms. 7. Use of shared language by staff and parents. 8. Parent education processes. 9. Provision of ongoing reflection and evaluation.
Stage 3: Consolidation (Adopting SEL within school culture)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Whole staff PD continues systematically. 2. Monitoring teacher competence in teaching <i>Program Achieve</i>. 3. Whole school approach to shared SEL language. 4. Strategy outcomes integrated into whole school curriculum. 5. PD focus moves towards integration. 6. Active commitment to ongoing parent education. 7. Process for ongoing reflection and evaluation maintained.
Stage 4: Integration (Confirming SEL as mission intention)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Local support structures established within school to ensure strategy sustainability. 2. Minimal support from external sources. 3. Broadening of leadership responsibility at local level. 4. Internal induction processes for all new staff well established. 5. SEL application to wider educational functions. 6. Staff PD reflects holistic focus (Cognitive Intelligence + Emotional Intelligence). 7. Behaviour Management evolves to personal and social responsibility plans. 8. Student mentoring as accepted practice. 9. Parent partnerships and co-operative participation. 10. Established process for renewal of SEL focus in the life of the school.

Table 2: Summary of participant responses.

Students	Teachers	Parents
'I get along better now with my brother and Mum and Dad.'	'Work habits have improved; socialising has become even more apparent. Confident in himself, his attitude towards himself has improved immensely.'	'This program and the way it was introduced to our diocese have empowered me. It has meant that I have taken more responsibility for being all I can be. As a parent and as a person.'
'It's helped me with writing. Now I do good writing. Now I can persist more.'	'Being involved in this program has made me a better person and a better teacher.'	'Has opened a door of communication between siblings. A way of talking not arguing.'
'It helped me by letting it all out.'	'A student in my class receiving mentoring has gained valuable strategies – he can now organise his time more effectively. He used to be very morose but is now much brighter and happier.'	'Starting to do some homework and now getting to school on time and not wagging lessons. Is co-operating more at home with jobs.'
'Has helped me to stop and think, saying thank you, learned to walk away and not get angry, listen when Dad tries to help me.'	'Student now has a go at classroom activities whereas before he would just sit and look. He puts his hand up to have a go, something he wouldn't do before.'	'Not as much tension in the household. Definitely has improved in attitude.'
'When my sister was trying to get something I had first I let her have it. It was nice to get along.'	'They started out as very uptight individuals but are now very comfortable together.'	'My child is less depressed when coming home and appears to be getting on better with his classmates.'
'To be a better listener and organiser.'	'Students have been more willing to share feelings, more relaxed, more laughter.'	'You vastly improve the way you communicate with others – whether it is children or adults.'
'There's a nice teacher in my life now. She helps me know to get along better.'	'Students appear to trust each other more – open up to each other more.'	'The program has enabled me to catastrophise less.'
'It has helped me with my school work and the hard stuff.'	'Since concentrating on the program I have a better rapport with students and relationships are more positive.'	'My child now considers the 'bigger' picture more. That is, the results of actions.'

Table 2: Summary of participant responses (*continued*).

Students	Teachers	Parents
'I learnt to control my temper.'	'I got to know students in a way I had no previous connection with.'	'Many thanks for offering this program. We were getting to our wits end and now we 'see the light at the end of the tunnel!'
'Made me feel confident.'	'The lines of communication have been opened.'	'My attitude to all stresses and adversities has changed. I now look at challenges in a calmer more rational way.'
'I have learnt better thinking and behaving.'	'Some students are less outwardly aggressive and a lot more focused.'	'I feel more confident as a parent as I have gained great support and encouragement from listening to other parents and their experiences.'

get along'); on-task behaviours ('I listen to the teacher better now'); and self-control ('I learnt to control my temper'). For teachers, the SEL intervention revealed improved pedagogy, ('Has made me a better person and a better teacher'); enhanced student observation ('Students appear to trust each other more'); and improved relationships ('Better rapport with students'). For parents, consequences entailed personal empowerment ('I have taken more responsibility for being all I can be'), better communication ('A way of talking not arguing'); family relationships ('Not as much tension in the household'); and community ('Support and encouragement from listening to other parents'). Of interest is the overlap in commentary reported in Table 1 and the consistent theme of integrative development for all participant groups involved.

The Foundation Cycle offered substantial affirmation for cultural change with respect to SEL within schools. That is, the nurturing of emotional literacy and promoting overall academic performance through better engagement in the learning process. It was this impetus, registered at a forum of parents, staff, school and system leadership, which proved to be the catalyst in moving

SEL implementation into a new cycle with two core themes: sustainability and responsibility. That is, 'we don't want this to go away' and 'we want to share responsibility for it.' Thereafter, a new strategic interpretation of the strategy was to be applied. This was to take the form of a consolidation stage for the period 2005–2009.

Consolidation Cycle (2005–2009)

The forum's unanimous request that SEL be made sustainable and integrated into the mission of Catholic education was not without implications. For example, as the strategy was well implemented in the Foundation Cycle, SEL support from the central office was halved. This precipitated both new and ongoing responsibilities for the remaining consultant. The challenges included the generation of change management intelligence on implementation, the provision of continuing support for SEL implementation and the identification of effective and efficient practices to further consolidate the initiative at a systems level.

A number of significant lessons emerged from the experience of SEL implementation with the first cycle (see Appendix 1). These lessons facilitated the ongoing process of

implementation and were aligned with the contributions of respected international initiatives such as the Collaborative for Academic, Social and Emotional Learning (CASEL), the Social Emotional Aspects of Learning (SEAL), and *You Can Do It Education!* The common denominator arising from all initiatives was the establishment of social and emotional learning within the mainstream curriculum K to 12 (see Elias, 2006). The consistent message regarding implementation was that it is complex and requires a whole school approach that incorporates a positive ethos, a preventative/intervention approach to planning for sustainability, and collaborative partnerships (ACU & Erebus International, 2008).

Coupled with ideas from theory were outcomes of research conducted on the impact of the SEL strategy within the system schools to which it was applied. The Australian Council for Educational Research (ACER) (2009) was engaged to investigate the state of social-emotional well-being of cohorts of students across K to 12. Outcomes of the ACER study confirmed an important and predictable set of relationships. Students who performed well on the independently derived SEL measures were associated with schools where the SEL strategy was explicit and effectively implemented. This was particularly the case for K to 7 schools. Conversely, limited SEL competencies correlated significantly with restricted or nil application of the SEL strategy. Findings in theory and practice were synthesised and injected into the next stage of SEL implementation.

New Imagination Cycle (2010–2014)

In its proposed form the SEL strategy amalgamates research-based processes for effective SEL implementation with lessons from experience. It is concerned with a whole of system, whole of school community, strengths-based, inter-disciplinary preventative/intervention for the invigoration of learning through individual and organisational well-being. It generates processes able to be applied by system and school leadership, and provides

accessible practices for staff, parents and students. It is designed to capture and draw together key system intentions, educational movements and national initiatives into a cohesive overarching educational philosophy intent on influencing educational landscapes to support learning more holistically.

The new imagination for the SEL strategy is given expression through thirteen evidence-based components. The components have been adapted from research, advice of consultants (see acknowledgments) and are influenced by national initiatives such as Safe Schools, Drug Strategy and Values Education. They contribute to the development of environments that advocate emotional literacy by targeting external environmental factors (parents, staff and wider community) that impact learner well-being, achievement and relational quality while developing internal qualities and competencies of learners themselves. Furthermore, the components guide leadership in planning and act as indicators for an integrative approach to improving student outcomes and quality of life. The nomination and a brief description of each component are presented in Table 3.

Discussion and implications of the strategy

Empirical research and qualitative findings across a decade of implementation reinforced the positive relationship between SEL and enhancement of learning environments (Zins & Elias, 2006; Roffey, 2008). In short, effective SEL implementation prepared people for life while simultaneously preparing them for a life of learning (Elias, 2006). In this light, the SEL strategy enabled the development of strong and vibrant organisations (school communities) that create and sustain the fundamental conditions for life well-being and for a life of learning. Specifically, the strategy has been an intentional and systemic approach to invigorating learning, nurturing well-being, building relationship quality and strengthening the effectiveness of the processes,

Table 3: Core components of the SEL strategy.

CORE COMPONENTS	DESCRIPTION
Leadership	Personnel responsible and competent to lead and facilitate effective, sustainable school-wide SEL.
Developmental Curricula	Developmental implementation of evidence-based SEL curricula (K to 12).
Integration	Staff model, communicate and integrate SEL competencies in planning, teaching, assessment and reporting.
Systems Thinking	Understanding school as a dynamic and complex environment comprising a multiplicity of relationships and systems.
Relationship Plans	Generating systems of support and ways of developing and encouraging attitudes, behaviours and practices by the school community in fostering relationship literacy.
Student Intervention	Appropriate application of SEL competencies to address individual and group needs.
Additional Specialist Support	Engagement of assistance through student, school, family and community linked specialist services and support.
Positive Behaviour Policy	School-wide behaviour management policies incorporating SEL philosophy and practices.
Staff Development Staff Well-being	Staff formation in SEL. Promotion of inter-personal and intra-personal learning opportunities.
Family Capacity Building	Nurturing parent education and connectedness to school through provision of SEL opportunities.
Assessment and Accountability	Application of systems to audit, assess and report on SEL within the community.
Community Partnerships	Partnerships that promote community-wide understanding and commitment to SEL.
Liberating Voices	Active listening to all within the community to give expression to SEL needs and outcomes.

procedures and practices of the systems within which people work, learn and live.

The new imagination for the SEL strategy is a combination of vision and practical integration of learning associated with the history of the strategy (see Appendix 1). At the level of vision, findings confirm a breadth of application of the strategy (student, staff, parents), integration across the curriculum, and linkage to the overall vision and mission of the school. The practical aspects of the strategy relate to the organisational intelligence that has grown as a consequence of its progressive application.

The overview of the SEL strategy (see Figure 3) represents its connections to beliefs and values and the goals and outcomes to which it contributes. This overview is not a blueprint but a framework to support a systems approach to strategy implementation.

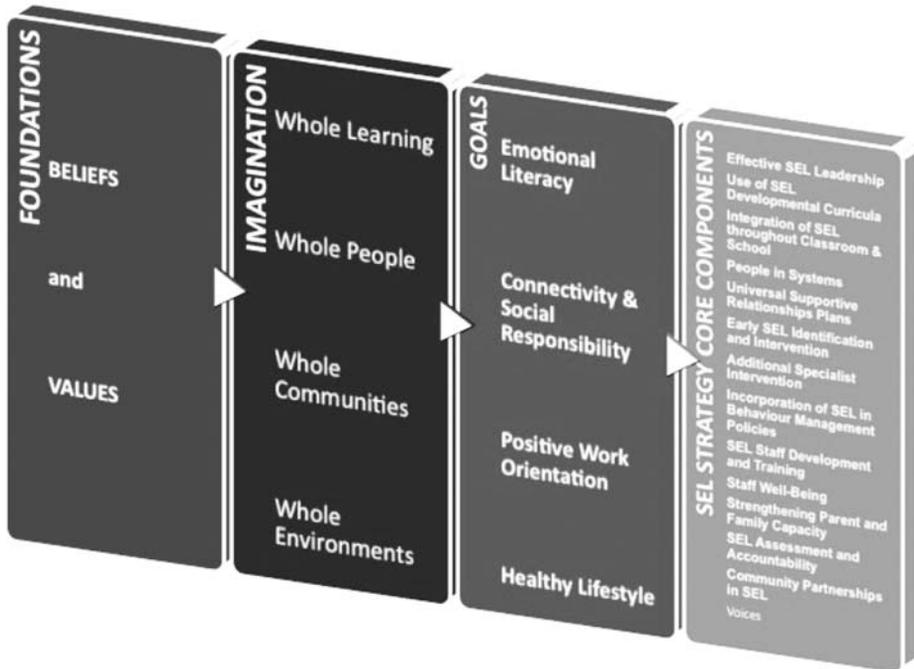
A central theme for SEL implementation is the alignment of the SEL strategy with the sponsoring organisations beliefs and values. Beliefs are important because they influence both ‘what we do and how we do it’, and, in turn shape the culture said to have a direct impact on outcomes for all students (Lindahl, 2006). Culture, understood as beliefs and

values in action, therefore constitutes a basis for mission experience within a school or classroom. In short, relationships, underpinned by social emotional competencies, provide the platform for human interaction and learning and build a congruent culture.

Expectations of the strategy underscore SEL as core business and promote its comprehensive and continuing implementation. Associated formation will be put in place in support of deep and collective reflection on the strategy. Formation envisaged to support social emotional learning and cultural change is designed to impact the inner and outer domains of a participant and engage the head, heart and hand in ways that are integrative. An illustration of a typical response to a formation experience that evidenced inner and outer integration is recorded as follows:

'I've noticed I'm more relaxed and seem to be taking a lot more notice of the positives in our class. I also did a lesson yesterday on the Circle of Concern and Circle of Influence. I've lost track of how many times I've referred to it since. I can see the kids really thinking about their responses to questions like, 'Why is your diary not here?' If they start to blame mum for not putting it in their bag then they stop themselves, give me a smile and say, 'I wasn't organised Miss.' Personally, I am finding this strategy, as well as 'Act Not React' thinking, very valuable, as I am a 'worrier'. My sister and mother both tell me that I let other people upset and annoy me so they were both very happy when I told them I am going to use this thinking in future.'

Figure 3: Overview of the SEL strategy.



Conclusion

The SEL strategy was founded on a felt need to respond to 'aberrant' student behaviour in ways other than being reactionary. It started with a localised stream of endeavour to provide explicit instruction on skills relevant to learning and well-being outcomes. Early indicators revealed the significance of a whole school preventative/intervention approach, staff development and parent engagement. In its evolved form, the strategy became a comprehensive system initiative. Progressive research revealed various levels of take-up and the need for consultancy support on a differential basis. At the same time, success was correlated with the courage and perseverance of participant groups, with attentiveness to core components of the strategy being fundamental. Key to future institutionalisation is an imagination for SEL to be aligned cohesively with the beliefs and values of the system within which it operates.

The Catholic School on the Threshold of the Third Millennium (1999) is an entreaty to explore new pathways and new educational models in supporting people towards fullness of life. The SEL strategy is a purposeful response to this entreaty. Arising from a belief in the mutuality of learning, the strategy endeavours to promote educational landscapes where shared intentions and strategies are a reality. Further, it underscores the view that relationships are critical to life quality and for a life of learning. Using a practical approach to the integration of beliefs, values and skills in the advancement of relationships, well-being and learning, the strategy provides an opportunity for the school community to engage a common focus. More significantly, the initiative serves to reignite the position of the whole person (student, staff and parents), central to the effective learning and teaching process.

The history of the SEL strategy suggests a shift from the short-term effectiveness of an innovation towards a focus on creating conditions for longer-term sustained holistic development (Cefai, 2008). It recognises the learner as operating in multiple environments and the significance of the individual within the life of the classroom. The strategy is built on an explicit instructional approach, the promotion of quality universal relationships and congruence with the beliefs and values of the education system that it serves. It provides a challenge to reconsider the essence of an 'education revolution' and the time-honoured tradition of education as a vehicle for empowerment in the process of liberation. The future of SEL within educational landscapes rests in a collective and determined response to *a call to believe and believe all the way through*.

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Appendix 1: Key learnings for SEL system implementation.

- Beliefs and values underpin learning and teaching.
- Being precedes doing.
- Relationships allow for expression of beliefs and values.
- Well-being within a school community is connected to relationship quality.
- Foundational to well-being is the quality of family and school relationships.
- Staff and parent formation are integral to development of student well-being. Relationships and congruency of adult actions are fundamental to student well-being.
- Well-being is enriched when participants acknowledge and respond to the connection among beliefs, values, skills and pedagogy.
- (SEL) skills contribute to academic development and support quality relationships.
- Instructional activities should incorporate a systematic approach to teaching social and emotional competencies, inclusive of an evidenced based, explicit and developmentally sequenced (Prep to Year 12) programme.
- Leadership at all levels is critical to implementation quality and sustainability. An evidence-based, strategic, whole of school plan is foundational to successful implementation.
- Well-executed implementation is essential.
- The leadership of the SEL school coordinator operating in partnership with school leadership and supported at system level.
- Relationships as integral to all aspects of school community life.
- Recognising that students operate within and across multiple and dynamic environments all of which require support and a common orientation.
- Relationships are experienced, multi-dimensionally, in the totality of school life. Whole people and whole communities are supported developmentally, cognitively, affectively and experientially.
- Professional learning is most effective when:
 - inclusive of the whole staff;
 - involves dimensions of the 'head', 'heart' and 'hand';
 - supportive of personal and professional growth;
 - ongoing and developmental;
 - delivered within the context of whole school development;
 - invitational, relational and non-coercive;
 - providing opportunity for reflection and professional conversation;
 - respectful of school timetabling and staff commitments.
- Change can be initiated at either individual or system level and knowing that irrespective of its beginnings a need exists for connection of both levels.
- Affirmation of the presence and prominence of relationships across all interactions and learning.