



VALUES-THEMED ARTICLE: Spring 2017

Going to the Heart of Modern Education



With so much emphasis on academic outcomes and the growing concerns about the mental and physical wellbeing of many students today (as well as some teachers and parents), how can we give young children and adolescents a rich, fully rounded, holistic education that enables them to fulfil their true potential and prepares them well for life as informed, active and dynamic global citizens?

High-quality professional development of teaching staff is a complex task but can have huge benefits, including retention of talented staff and raised attainment for their students, so here are a few balls that teachers and others guiding and mentoring learners might like to start rolling!



- ❖ Combining a growth mindset with a focus on **personal development** and life-long learning - by both teachers and their students - can promote progressive growth that deepens understanding and builds confidence to better manage and shape all aspects of life.
- ❖ This strategy, aiming for excellence, is particularly inspiring and enlightening when all thinking, decision-making and behaviour is intentionally guided by shared school values and well-considered personal values.

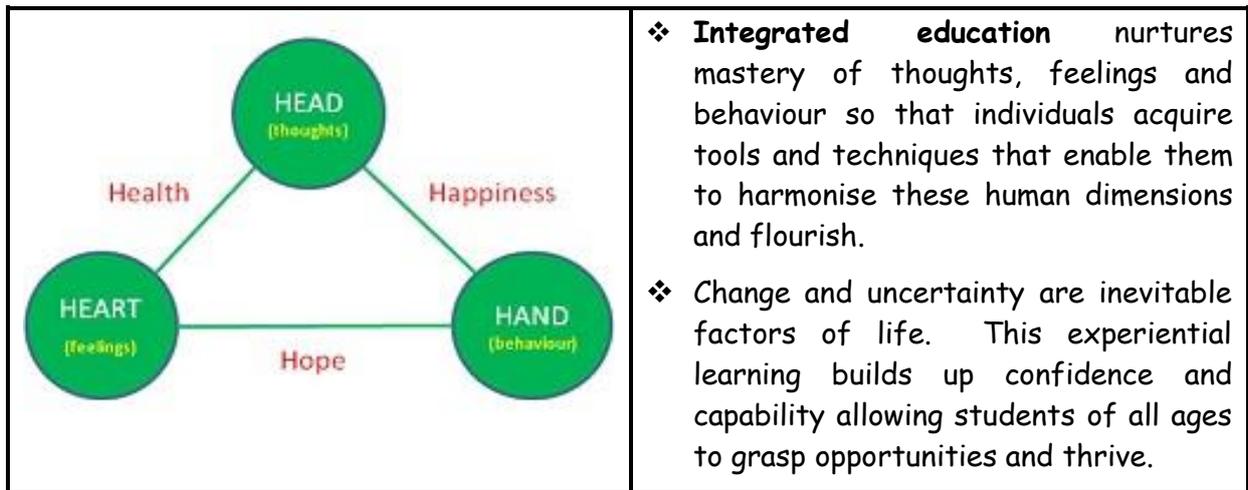
- ❖ Embracing personal development as an integral part of teachers' CPD and the school curriculum is ideal for a raising-standards agenda and improving teaching as well as educational experiences and outcomes. It encourages participants to be visionary and achieve goals, all the while constantly utilising the motivational qualities and the life skills being gained.



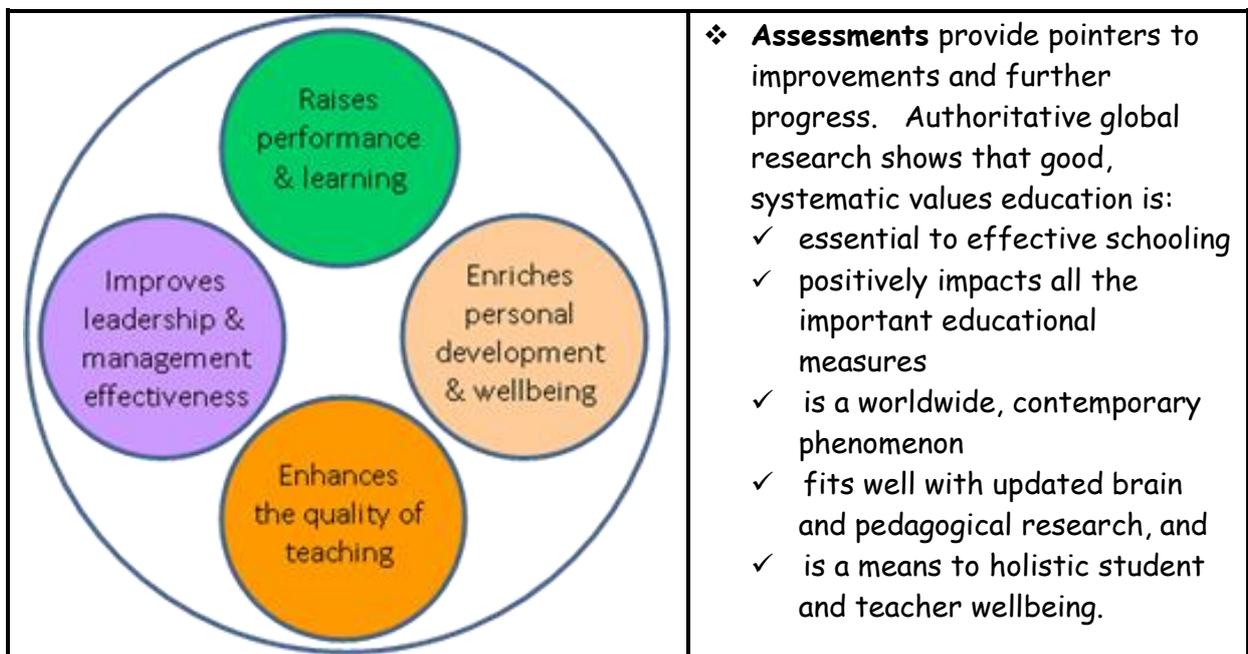
- ❖ Learning to **be still, reflective and mindful** helps with tapping into empowering, innate wisdom that can give meaning and direction to life.
- ❖ This practice of engaging with oneself enhances wellbeing and a sense of authenticity as participants consciously align what feels right within with how they choose to conduct their lives externally.

- ❖ Incorporating even short times of quiet reflection into teachers' practices and the school curriculum is ideal not only for participants to feel connected inside with their best self but also for consistent, quality teaching and learners excelling at academics. Developing this habit enables people to reach their full potential and expand their thinking horizons so as to connect effectively with the outside world.

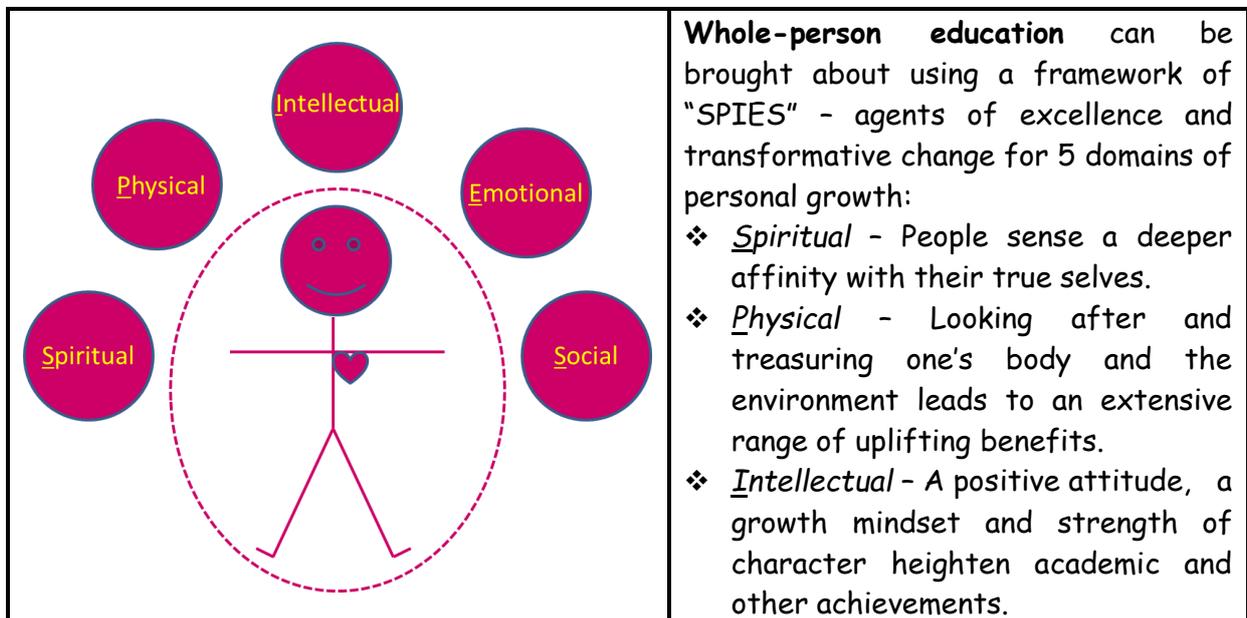




❖ The explicit and systematic exploration, practice and utilisation of values develops life-enriching emotional and social skills and other qualities that enable individuals to live fully each day and do justice to all their talents, abilities and passions. Schools are ideally placed to give learners the safe, supportive environments they need in which to discuss informatively, issues, concerns and matters of value and importance to themselves and others.

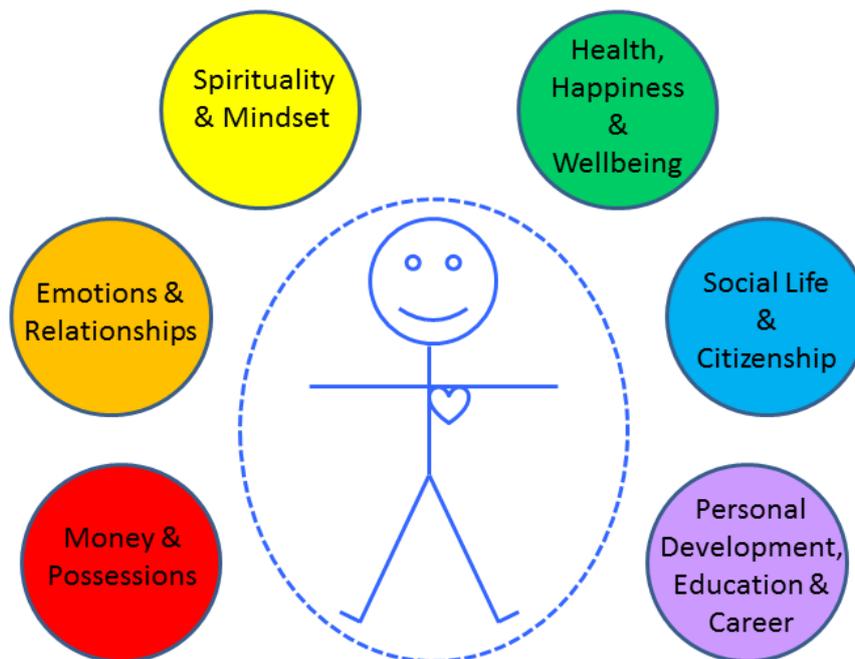


- ❖ Values Education is a dynamic, cross-curricular ingredient that engenders a stimulating culture with a constant buzz that excites the entire school community, including parents.
- ❖ An extensive variety of skills are needed for success in life. With the growing global movement of those who support the visionary teaching of character, values and wellbeing, increasingly greater emphasis is being placed on fostering in young citizens, essential life skills such as love, empathy, compassion, resilience and team working, with such qualities being ever more actively modelled and taught both in classrooms and at home and appreciated when the beneficiaries move into the world of work.



- ❖ *Emotional* - Competencies gained generate feel-good factors that enable people to function well, be happy and move their lives forward in fulfilling directions.
- ❖ *Social* - Individuals flourish as their capacities to engage actively and effectively with others, communities and life deepen.





- ❖ What is deemed **success** varies with each person. Some achievements may involve timescales, be visible and part of external life while others relate to internal life (eg emotional wellbeing). The measures depend upon what is valued.
- ❖ A paradigm shift is taking place in the education sector with the increasing awareness of how the core building materials for human wellbeing (such as purpose, positive emotions, engagement, trust, health and quality relationships) are critical to young peoples' accomplishments and ultimately, the future of communities, countries and humanity.
- ❖ **VALUES LITERACY** enables individuals and groups to select values so that they constantly strive to think, make choices and behave in ways that energise themselves and others to live authentically and shape their futures in accordance with what they believe can make tangible, enriching differences, not just to their own lives but also to the happiness and wellbeing of all living things and the long-term beauty and sustainability of our planet.

