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Scaffolding Peer Collaboration through Values Education: Social and Reflective Practices from a Primary Classroom

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Abstract: Peers create one of the most significant contexts for developing prosocial values. This paper reports on a yearlong study of thirty one year 4/5 students where antisocial values were deep-seated. The aim of this qualitative research was to examine how to reduce antisocial behaviour and promote peer collaboration. The notion of whole-class scaffolding was applied to use the collective knowledge of the peer group and develop mutual respect to reduce antisocial behaviour. Social and reflective practices included: the Daily Social Circle; Weekly Class Meetings; student reflection logs and interviews and parent surveys. Two themes generated from the findings examine how students changed from 'antisocial behaviour' to 'developing mutual respect' through explicit values education. The findings suggest that whole-class scaffolding of peer collaboration was effective when values education was linked to students' collective needs, supported by targeted social and reflective practices. This research contributes to our understanding of operational values education.

Introduction

Peers create one of the most significant contexts for child development and socialisation because they influence the formulation of an individual's values and understanding of social norms for behaviour (Ladd, Kochenderfer & Coleman, 1996; Rubin, Bukowski & Parker, 2006; Wentzel, 2005). In the classroom teachers are presented with a range of social and emotional issues to resolve that can take time away from the academic program. For example, when students have anti-social tendencies or are the perpetrators or victims of bullying it is difficult for teachers to create a collaborative classroom where students are confident and enjoy working together (Rigby, 2007). When children do not develop constructive peer relationships they are more likely to experience social and emotional difficulties (Ladd & Burgess, 1999; Schmidt, Demulder & Denham, 2002), affecting their capacity to collaborate and become successful learners (Boyd, Barnett, Bodrova, Leong & Gomby, 2005; Ladd, Kochenderfer & Coleman, 1996; (Zins & Elias, 2007). It is argued in this paper that working with the peer group to negotiate shared understandings about core values that develop prosocial behaviour is as an effective use of 'teacher time' to maximise student learning.

The aim of the current research is to examine how to scaffold peer collaboration, through the explicit teaching of values education to promote mutual respect as a social norm for behaviour. Two themes generated from the findings are used to frame the data analysis which reflect the changes made by the students as they shifted from 'antisocial behaviour' (Theme 1) to 'developing mutual respect' (Theme 2). The outcomes of the social and reflective practices directed how the teacher/researcher scaffolded whole-class teaching of

values to reduce antisocial behaviour amongst peers. The findings suggest that teaching values explicitly, supported by targeted social and reflective practices, facilitates whole-class scaffolding by the teacher and more able peers to develop positive relationships and peer collaboration. This research contributes to knowledge about effective values education in a primary classroom. Further background to values education in Australia is examined next to contextualise the current research.

Background to Values Education in Australia

There has been considerable groundwork over the last decade and a half to establish values education as a core part of Australian Schooling and make explicit to students the expectations of becoming an active member of Australian society. In response to the range of existing values education programmes across government and non-government schools the Australian Government, after wide community consultation, established 'The National Framework for Values Education' (Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations [DEEWR] , 2005). All ministers of Education in Australia also agreed to the 'Melbourne Declaration on Educational Goals for Young Australians' (Ministerial Council on Education, Employment, Training and Youth Affairs [MCEETYA], 2008) which stated that the role of schools was to support students to:

- Develop personal values and attributes such as honesty, resilience, empathy and respect for others
- Have the knowledge, skills, understanding and values to establish and maintain healthy and satisfying lives
- Act with moral and ethical integrity and are committed to national values of democracy, equity and justice
- Participate in Australia's civic life.

Currently these goals are integrated within the General Capabilities in the Australian Curriculum (Australian Curriculum and Assessment Reporting Authority [ACARA], 2014) to formally embed values education across all learning areas. This highlights values education as a "central principle underpinning the school curriculum offerings, the curriculum design, pedagogy, content and assessment" (Mitchell, 2012). Wood, Bruner and Ross's (1976) metaphor of scaffolding and Vygotsky's (1978) zone of proximal development (ZPD) are examined in the next section to conceptualise 'whole-class' scaffolding (Smit, van Eerde & Bakker, 2013) of collaboration in the current research.

Theoretical Perspectives
Scaffolding

The metaphor of scaffolding emanates from the research of Wood et al. (1976) and usually refers to a temporary process that enables students to perform a task that they do not yet have the competence to complete independently. Originally the term referred to dyadic relationships between the teacher/expert and the student/novice where the task is broken into incremental steps and the scaffold was a transitory support (Rojas-Drummond, Torreblanca, Pedraza, Vélez & Guzmán, 2013). More recently Smit et al. (2013) have argued that the concept of whole-class scaffolding is a legitimate extension of the usual dyadic relationship associated with scaffolding. They suggest three key characteristics to conceptualise whole-class scaffolding: diagnosis; responsiveness and handover to independence. The cumulative

nature of the process is the result of "many diagnostic and responsive actions over time … that is deliberately employed to foster long-term learning processes" (Smit et al., 2013, p. 817). Similarly, in the current research these stages are echoed in the implementation of social and reflective practices that allow the teacher/researcher to diagnose scaffolding that is responsive to the needs of the whole class which is repeated throughout the year. The longer term goal is to develop students' independence to collaborate successfully with their peers. Vygotsky's (1978) ZPD is elaborated in the next section to conceptualise the process of scaffolding collaboration within the context of the current research.

Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD)

Vygotsky's (1978) sociocultural theory proposes a distinct viewpoint about human learning and development which privileges the social and the potential for human learning with assistance. In particular, Vygotsky's concept of the ZPD foregrounds the social, collaborative, and interactional nature of learning. In this paper the notion of the ZPD which is defined as "the distance between actual developmental level as determined by independent problem solving and the level of potential development as determined through problem solving under adult guidance or in collaboration with more capable peers" (Vygotsky, 1978, p. 86) refers to scaffolding from a whole-class perspective to mediate learning (Rogoff, 1995).

Vygotsky's (1978) ZPD also defines the higher mental functions that are in the process of maturation, suggesting changing mental functions that happen over time with scaffolding that is targeted within the ZPD. Teachers' interactions with students create zones of opportunities for targeted scaffolding within the ZPD, where Vygotsky (1978) asserts true learning occurs. The term scaffolding is typically referring to academic tasks for classroom research (Hogan & Pressley, 1997; Pawan, 2008). In the current research the focus is on social and reflective activities, using the collective knowledge of the peer group, because it is argued in this paper, that students need to have the prerequisite skills to participate in discussions when working with each other to enhance their learning.

In the next section the role of the teacher to develop collaborative values through scaffolding within the collective ZPD is discussed to meld the theoretical and practical aspects of the research, using Vygotsky's sociocultural theory.

Scaffolding Collaboration

Collaborative learning is a pedagogy that is student-centred and values-focussed so it is compatible with research where students are encouraged to examine their values, develop mutual respect and learn how to work together. It is often used when referring to sociocultural perspectives on learning where primacy is given to knowledge as a social rather than individual concept and supports the premise of using the collective knowledge of peers. Ideally, when there are students who have different backgrounds, knowledge and experience, ideas are exchanged that allow the individual to question their perspective and learning to occur (Battistich & Watson, 2003). This suggests a more flexible approach to teaching where students have increasing control over the experience of working in a group (Hart, 1992) and a level of independence. But there are assumptions that students have developed communication and interpersonal skills to work together (Gillies & Ashman, 1996; Hart, 1992; Johnson & Johnson, 2003). Therefore, the teacher's facilitative role is to diagnose the needs of students so they develop the skills and confidence to work together.

The relational component is evident when the learner is assisted by the teacher/expert or more capable peers but the role of emotions is often implicit in such classroom research. In this paper it is highlighted as an enabling factor (Renshaw, 2013) in scaffolding within the ZPD and acknowledged as important to establish relationships based on trust and mutual respect. It beyond the scope of the current paper to discuss the role of emotions but this has been examined in depth elsewhere (Morcom, 2014, 2015). In the next section there is a description of the school profile and research participants to provide the context for the classroom study and the choice of qualitative research design and an action research process.

School Profile and Research Participants

The classroom teacher, who was also the researcher, worked at the current school for several years prior to the research and was aware of the negative impact of students' antisocial behaviour. There had been a general decline in academic standards for several years prior to conducting the research. At a school level a large percentage of students scored well below the benchmark for the compulsory National testing programs so there was additional government funding to support 'catch up' Literacy and Numeracy programs.

There were several school pastoral care programs operating to meet the social and emotional needs of students which included an adult mentoring program and a chaplaincy program. Teachers identified students who would benefit from working on a one to one basis with an adult mentor each week. The chaplain conducted voluntary lunch time sessions with students and visited classrooms to support the teaching of values. These programs met with some success but antisocial behaviour was entrenched with a large group of students across the school, particularly in the Year 5 student cohort. This affected peer relationships and interrupted the instructional program when the classroom teacher had to manage social and emotional issues.

In Table 1 below, there is an overview of the school profile and details of the research participants.

School Profile	Research Participants
• Low socioeconomic area • Additional funding for catch-up Literacy and Numeracy support programs • School priority: Pastoral care and values program to address bullying issues	Years 4 and 5 students n= 31, aged 9-11 years n= 17 boys (n= 9 x Year 4 & 8 x Year 5) n= 14 girls (n= 5 x Year 4 & 9 x Year 5) n= 31 parents/guardians

Table 1 School profile and research participants

The Year 5 cohort of students was distributed across four Year 4/5 classes in an attempt, by the school's administration, to minimise the damaging impact of antisocial behaviour. Thirty one Year 4/5 students and their parents, who participated in the research, gave informed consent for the teacher/researcher to conduct the research. Due to the fact that many families had ongoing contact with the school because bullying had continued over many years, the nature of data collected was highly sensitive and revealed the complexity of addressing these issues. In the next section the choice of qualitative research design is

examined to understand how this approach is suited to the current research that needed to accommodate and understand the points of view of all stakeholders.

Qualitative Research Design

Qualitative research is suited to longitudinal research which is grounded in the naturalistic setting of the classroom where rich descriptions of the context and perspectives of the participants are required to interpret the research (Carr & Kemmis, 1986; Denzin & Lincoln, 2000, 2005; Richards, 2005). In the current research the methods and data collection sources were embedded in the teaching practices of the classroom and provided in-depth detail not only about the classroom context but also about the students and their perspectives, feelings, and experiences. From a teaching perspective these details were essential for the teacher/researcher to target scaffolding collaboration but also to collect thick, rich data for the research.

Qualitative methodology makes transparent to others that the researcher is situated within the research with their values and assumptions (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000, 2005; Patton, 2002). In this case the dual role of the teacher/researcher could be considered a privileged position for conducting the research because it meant there was a relationship based on trust and mutual respect that had been established with the students. The teacher/researcher witnessed the cumulative changes in students' behaviour and attitude towards peers and their learning on a daily basis and, over the long term, for the school year. From this position the teacher/researcher could access sensitive data about students' perspectives, feelings, and experiences that may not have been possible for a researcher who was not teaching the students. Observations and the effects of the social and reflective practices, based on first-hand experiences with students who were taught by the teacher/researcher, contributed to the authenticity of the interpretations made from the findings.

An action research process of 'plan, act and reflect' was used to systematise the collection of data from authentic teaching and research activities (Burns, 2000; Richards, 2005). These activities were also part of the regular routines in the classroom so they were less intrusive for the students (Patton, 2002) while conducting research. The social and reflective practices generated data on a daily, weekly and term basis. By the end of the school year there were many diverse sources of data created that could be triangulated to confirm the teacher/researcher's interpretations of the research findings. Each day anecdotal notes and observations were made on the teacher/researcher's work plan and integrated into weekly reflections, after the Weekly Class Meetings at the end of the week. The field notes were collated into labelled files to record data from all other sources such as the Daily Social Circle and related research activities. The sociograms that were conducted each term were placed in the respective files.

By the end of the research there were four large files of each term's activities and two separate sets of student reflection logs, one for each semester that students completed over the school year. Other relevant data from parent interviews and surveys were added to classroom artefacts which included the 'Y' charts for the Class Agreements and other reflective surveys conducted with the students. The final interviews with students were collated and a copy given to the Critical Friend to the project to read and evaluate, which is discussed later in the findings.

In Table 2, the data sources generated from the teaching and research activities are listed in Column 1 and their links to scaffolds to develop, rehearse and reflect on values to build collaboration are listed in Column 2.

Data sources	Scaffolds [To develop, rehearse and reflect on values]
Five Class Agreements [core values] (Negotiated at the beginning of the year) 1. Mutual Respect (interpersonal) 2. Appreciating others/No putdowns (interpersonal); 3. Attentive Listening (communication) 4. Participation/Right to pass (inclusion) 5. Personal Best (positive mindset) (1-4) adapted from Gibbs (2001) and (5) adapted from Bernard (1996)	• Establish shared understanding about the core values of the classroom • Develop interpersonal and communication skills as fundamental to collaboration • Develop responsibility for behaviour
Daily Social Circle (Conducted daily for 5 minutes) Children stated their name and expressed how they felt at the start of each day	• Rehearse and reflect on core values • Share ideas and feelings with peers
Weekly Class meetings (20-30 minutes duration) Teacher and students wrote an agenda that prioritised the discussion each week about classroom/playground issues	• Present ideas in a supportive context • Understand the perspective of peers • Develop skills to engage in collective participative decision making
Sociograms (Conducted each term) Students nominated 4 peers for each round of social groups based on 2 criteria [1. Make a new friend 2. Learn to work collaboratively]	• Identify aspirational friendships • Promote social cohesion within groups and the classroom
Other teaching/research activities • Student reflection logs • Student interviews conducted at the conclusion of the research • Parent surveys conducted each term • Parent night at the end of the research	• Reflect on the progress of the classroom social practices

Table 2 Data sources and scaffolds for collaboration

The negotiation of social and reflective practices was an integral part of an authentic student-centred approach to scaffold students' participation and commitment to the process (Arnold & Walker, 2008) to address antisocial behaviour. A brief overview of the data sources that were generated from the teaching and research activities in Table 2 is elaborated in the next sections to provide relevant background before the findings are presented. These are some of the activities that promoted values discourse and are directly linked to teaching values explicitly through reflective practices to support student collaboration, reduce antisocial behaviour and promote mutual respect.

The five Class Agreements: Mutual Respect; Appreciation for Others; Attentive Listening; Participation in activities but also the Right to Pass and Personal Best were negotiated at the beginning of the year with students. The 'Y' charts were used to list peer

suggestions for what each agreement 'looked like' (Students' behaviours in action), 'sounded like' (Students' spoken words) and 'felt like' (feelings students experienced) when the agreement was practised. The charts made explicit the core values of the community, linking with students' background knowledge to develop shared understandings about the abstract concepts embedded in the agreements and the parameters for behaviour. This was the first activity that was introduced to the students to address antisocial behaviour. The 'Y' chart for 'mutual respect' is elaborated in the findings as an exemplar of how interpersonal and communication skills were introduced to the students to scaffold collaboration through values education.

The Daily Social Circle, where students stated their name and how they felt each day, allowed the teacher/researcher to rehearse and reflect on the core values listed in the 'Y' charts and for students to share their ideas and feelings with peers. The Weekly Class Meetings were conducted at the end of each week throughout the year and provided a forum for students to present their issues and concerns in a supportive context, suggest ideas to each other and gradually come to understand the perspective of their peers. Using this activity not only developed students' skills to engage in collective participative decision making but also the skills to negotiate solutions about current issues that were important to them.

Sociograms were conducted for each round of social groups in an effort to reduce antisocial behaviour. Students nominated four peers in the classroom with whom they would like to work or get to know better. The teacher/researcher identified aspirational peer friendships and created groups to promote social cohesion within the classroom. Social groups were changed on a regular basis to allow students opportunities to work with all peers by the end of the year but also to develop, rehearse and reflect on the values enacted within their new groups. The other teaching and research activities to promote reflection were: student reflection logs; student interviews conducted at the conclusion of the research; parent surveys conducted each term and a parent night which was held at the end of the research. These data sources contributed to the teacher/researcher's knowledge base about the students' issues. The ongoing data collection, iterative analyses and triangulation of data, enabled the teacher/researcher to use the collective knowledge to scaffold within students' ZPD. How the data were analysed, using major themes that emerged from the findings, is discussed next.

Data Analysis

It is acknowledged that social learning is complex and dynamic and that there are confounding factors in the classroom that provide challenges when interpreting data (Saldana, 2011). Therefore, using a manual open coding system of emerging patterns and themes (Yin, 2012) was flexible enough to organise and analyse large volumes of qualitative data. Student interaction patterns and the development of friendships were examined through the use of sociograms, teacher observations, student feedback, reflection logs and parent feedback from surveys and interviews and reported as case studies.

As additional data were collected it was cross referenced for triangulation validity. Preliminary interpretations emerged during the iterative process of collecting and analysing data to make decisions about the direction of the teaching in the classroom and the social and reflective practices that were required to progress the research (Denzin, Lincoln, 2001, 2005; Yin, 2012). The major themes of 'Relationships, Leadership and Friendship' from the larger study are reported as case studies elsewhere and reflect the teaching emphasis of the research (Morcom, 2005, 2012). For this paper data are drawn from the case studies to highlight the values discourse in the classroom and the evidence of the changes in students' behaviour.

Findings and Discussion

The findings reflect the aim of the research to examine how collaboration was scaffolded by reducing antisocial behaviour. The analysis and interpretation of the data is examined using two themes: 'antisocial behaviour' (Theme 1) and 'developing mutual respect' (Theme 2) to frame the analysis and interpretation of the data. These themes reflect the changes made by the students as they shifted from 'antisocial behaviour' to developing 'mutual respect' towards each other.

First, in order to track the macro changes during the research the teacher/researcher constructed two tables to compare changes in students' behaviour after a year of targeted scaffolding, using the social and reflective practices listed in Table 2. Class Profile 1 (Table 3) represents data from the beginning of the study which is compared with Class Profile 2 (Table 4) at the end of the study.

Secondly, 'developing mutual respect' (Theme 2) is examined using two reflective charts constructed with students at the beginning ('Y' chart for 'mutual respect') and near the end of the study (Chart for 'annoying behaviours') as well as a social activity 'dance lessons'. The findings are presented using these themes to draw together a variety of data that are evidence of the changes students made in their perceptions, values and attitudes regarding their behaviour and relationships with their peers.

Theme one: Antisocial Behaviour
Class Profile 1 (At the beginning of the year)

In the initial analysis the teacher/researcher grouped the students into four categories, based on the demands made by students on 'teacher time'. The criteria for organising students into the four categories or groups were adapted from research conducted by Allard, Cooper, Hildebrand and Wealands (1995). Allard et al. (1995) examined how 'teacher time' is directed in the classroom in relation to students' gender. Similarly, in the current research, how 'teacher time' is directed to address antisocial behaviour is examined.

In Table 3, Class Profile 1 (that follows), the students who are in bold font displayed uncooperative behaviours on a regular basis (See Groups 2 & 4) at the beginning of the year. In addition, the students who are underlined actively bullied their peers and this behaviour was documented by the school administration. Even though most of these students had established reputations as either the victims or perpetrators of bullying from previous years, when parents were informed by the school administration, parents often shifted the blame to other families or downplayed their child's participation in bullying.

The students were placed into four groups, after triangulating data from the first sociogram nominations, the teacher/researcher's observations of student behaviour during the first few weeks, student reflection logs, parent interviews and the school data about student misbehaviour. The four groups provided a starting point for the teacher/researcher to consider which students could be placed with supportive peers to develop aspirational friendships and reduce the incidence of antisocial behaviour.

For the purposes of the current research an additional criterion of antisocial behaviour informed the adaption of Allard et al.'s (1995) four groups. When students behave in an antisocial manner there is an inequitable amount of 'teacher time' required to deal with these issues which can detract from the learning program. The students in Groups 2, 3 and 4 required 'teacher time' to address antisocial behaviour that affected all students' learning.

	Group 1	Group 2	Group 3	Group 4
Group criteria	Academically able Independent	Popular but exhibited antisocial tendencies	Middle of the road - often ignored by peers	Social, learning and behavioural - issues
Class total of 31 students	Eileen (leader) Margaret Helen Claire Joey Jack Dean new boy week 4 (leader)	**Daren** (leader) **Peter** **Denis** **Lindsay** Angela (leader) Dean Henry Susan Justin (left school in Week 4)	Christine Catherine Karen Phuc Huong Ann Mary Judy	**Wendy** **Jason** **John** **Damon** **Seven** **Nathan** **Michael** **Audrey**
Total	7 students	9 students	8 students	8 students

Table 3 Class Profile 1 (At the beginning of the year)

At the beginning of the year most parents requested interviews with the classroom teacher/researcher to express their concerns about antisocial behaviour. The seven students in Group 1 (academically able and independent) had the potential to become prosocial role models for their peers because they did not participate in antisocial behaviour. Group 2 had nine popular students who also had antisocial behaviour. The criterion of popularity was based on the teacher/researcher observations of students' behaviour in the classroom and playground and the confidential sociogram data. Group 2 students were of concern because they often initiated antisocial behaviour and enlisted the support of students from Group 3 (middle of the road) and Group 4 (social, learning and behavioural issues) to participate, often as bystanders, and the antisocial behaviour was not challenged. The priority for the parents of the children in Groups 3 and 4 was to address their social and emotional needs to make a friend at school. Despite being at the same school since pre-primary, there had been little improvement in this area.

Opportunities for authentic problem solving were modelled during social practices such as the Weekly Class Meetings by the teacher/researcher and more capable peers who had well developed social and emotional skills. There were only four Year 5 girls and two Year 4 boys who consistently demonstrated mature behaviour and had the potential for leadership in the first four weeks of the school year. However, the teacher/researcher identified from log entries in the students' reflections early in the year that working with friends was a common motivating factor to adopt prosocial goals.

The following entries from Lindsay, Daren's friend, reflect these aspirations and both boys were placed in the same social group. Daren was appointed as a group leader by the teacher/researcher in an effort to elicit support. This situation provided a different opportunity Daren to experience positive peer regard when he fulfilled his leadership role with his group. Lindsay bullied two peers in the classroom with Denis, Michael and Daren in Term 1. In the quotes that follow, Lindsay indicates his understanding of the impact of his behaviour and shows his progressions towards appreciating the importance of self-control.

> The best thing about school so far is that two of my friends [referring to Denis and Michael] are in this class. This week I have felt mainly annoyed because I am not sitting next to my friends … I would like to see everyone sit next to who they want to. I am going to be good. (Reflection Log, Lindsay, 5th February, 2004)

Two wrongs don't make a right. People have feelings. (Classroom Meeting, Week 2, Term 1, Lindsay, Year 5)

I have got a new friend Daren. Our group has self-control. I got one of people that I chose to sit next to. (Lindsay's Reflection Log, Term 2, 29th April, 2004)

The extracts from the students' reflection logs and interviews at the end of the project are exemplars of the appropriation of collaborative values adopted by students like Lindsay, reflecting prosocial behaviour observed by the teacher/researcher in the classroom. The first three quotes show that Lindsay understood the values underpinning collaboration even though he had not yet appropriated these behaviours. But, one could argue that being in the same group as his friends was a catalyst to adopt prosocial behaviour.

There was extensive qualitative data from all stakeholders by the end of the study. Parents completed a survey each term and attended a final parent night with their children to discuss the results of the project and provide feedback to the teacher/researcher and the Critical Friend to the project. Students completed reflection logs after the Weekly Class Meetings and participated in a range of social and team building activities to scaffold collaboration. The teacher/researcher's field notes and observations confirmed that the majority of students were collaborating, friendship circles had widened, and antisocial behaviour was reduced which is also reflected in Class Profile 2 which is examined next.

Class Profile 2 (At the end of the year)

There were no reports from the school administration about bullying or antisocial incidents in Term 4 for the research class. Yet some students remained on the fringes of groups. When the final sociogram was conducted in Term 4 there were eight students who did not receive peer nominations. In Table 4 below that follows, this criterion has been added to indicate the students in Groups 3 and 4 who received 'no peer nominations'. These students will be referred to in the discussion of the second major theme from the findings. The numbers in brackets, prior to each student's name, listed in Groups 1 and 2 indicate the total number of peer nominations. Similarly the students who were the leaders for the last round of tribes are indicated after each student's name.

The repositioning of the number of students between the groups from Table 3 and Table 4 is as follows: Group 1, increased from 8 to 18; Group 2, decreased from 9 to 4; Group 3, decreased from 8 to 5 and Group 4, decreased from 8 to 3 respectively. There were sixteen students in total at the beginning of the year in Group 3 and Group 4 collectively which was reduced to eight students at the end of the study in Term 4. Audrey, Steven and Jason had moved from Group 4 to Group 3 because they did not take the same amount of 'teacher time' to resolve social and emotional issues.

Although students such as Catherine and Claire from Group 4 were also chosen by their peers to be a leader, they did not receive sociogram nominations and remained on the fringes of social groups but they no longer actively rejected by peers. In contrast some of the students in Group 3 were actively rejected by their peers during class activities, by not being chosen when there were opportunities for partner and group work. John was usually perceived by the teacher/researcher as a 'middle of the road student' but when he was elected as a leader he behaved in an argumentative and stubborn manner with his group. As a result Damon was voted leader to replace John for the last half of Term 4. The students in the group brought this issue to the weekly class meeting and peers made the suggestion to change leaders so there could be some group cohesion.

Group 1	Group 2	Group 3	Group 4
Prosocial behaviour Independent worker	Popular but exhibited antisocial tendencies	Middle of the road No peer nominations	Social/ learning difficulties No peer nominations
(9) Eileen (leader) (8) Henry (leader) (7) Dean (6) Susan (leader) (4) Phuc (3) Wendy (leader) Mary (leader) Ann Helen Jack (2) Lindsay (leader) Joey (1) Karen (leader) Nathan (leader) Christine Judy Angela Margaret	(9) Daren (8) Peter (2) Denis (1) Michael	John (leader for week 1-4) Damon ((leader for week 5-7) Audrey Steven Jason *actively ignored or avoided in partner and group work by peers in the classroom	Catherine (leader) Claire (leader) Huong
18 students	4 students	5 students	3 students

Table 4 Class Profile 2 – At the end of the study

When comparing students' positions in the four groups from the beginning of the year (Table 3) with the end of the year (Table 4) it can be argued that as increasing numbers of peers adopted prosocial behaviour they were becoming less tolerant of antisocial behaviour. For example when the criteria for leadership were established by the students early in the year the qualities listed were: prosocial; caring and a positive attitude towards their work. By the last round of sociogram nominations one could argue that there were many peers who demonstrated these qualities, particularly with the increase in student numbers for Group 1, from seven to eighteen students, who did not have antisocial tendencies. The majority of leaders were elected by their peers from this group. This supports the contention that mutual respect was an important value upheld by the majority of the class.

There were thirty two leadership opportunities throughout the year so most students experienced a leadership role. Lindsay, Eileen and Nathan become a leader on two occasions. Eileen, Dean, Henry and Susan received the most peer nominations for each sociogram and supported others when less experienced peers held a leadership role. These changes indicate the development of prosocial behaviour and the positive impact of student leadership on the students' self-confidence and attitude to academic work as most of the student movement was to Group 1, who were the more academically capable and/or independent students.

In the next section three activities are examined to illustrate how 'developing mutual respect' was scaffolded by the teacher/researcher through reflection with students and observation in social activities. The charts for 'mutual respect' and 'annoying behaviours' were negotiated with students in Term 1 and Term 4 respectively. The series of 'dance lessons' were conducted in Term 2 with all the Year 4/5 students. These lessons allowed the teacher/researcher to observe and compare the social development of all students in the Year 4/5 cohort in a setting outside the classroom.

Theme Two: Developing Mutual Respect

In the next section the 'Y' chart for the value of 'mutual respect' is examined because it is representative of the values embedded in the five Class Agreements. It has been chosen to illustrate the depth of knowledge and understanding that the students possessed. Developing mutual respect was at the core of reducing antisocial behaviour so understanding students' perspectives was important to facilitate scaffolding. The 'Y' charts remained in a prominent position in the classroom all year and were referred to during social practices such as the Daily Social Circle and Weekly Class Meetings. The teacher/researcher's intention was to make explicit the social concepts in the agreements so students had immediate feedback and could reflect on their behaviour.

Reflective Activity: 'Y' Chart for 'Mutual Respect'

The social and reflective practices were central to developing a whole-class approach to resolving social and emotional issues and connecting students' behaviour with the impact of their actions on their peers. The students' language on the 'Y' charts reflected the 'collective' perceptions and understanding of the peer group and provided a common language to articulate when the agreement was being practised. The following elaboration is taken directly from the class 'Y' chart, revealing that many students possessed the appropriate knowledge and language to express these concepts but not always the motivation to enact them.

> Mutual respect 'looked like': working cooperatively; behaving in a respectful way; taking turns; everybody being allowed to talk; using active listening; keeping your hands and feet and other objects to yourself; not taking other people's things and not fiddling.
> Mutual respect 'sounded like': Using manner; please and thank you; ignoring silly words; using lift ups such as 'great job!' 'Thanks for helping me' 'I like that idea' and asking other people's opinions.
> Mutual respect 'feels like': I can be myself; people like me for who I am; I am respected; making lots of friends; trusted; safe; comfortable and happy. ('Y' chart for Mutual Respect, Classroom artefact, 16.2.04)

Commercial intervention programs, to teach social and emotional skills, had been in operation across the school for several years prior to this research (Bernard, 1996). These programs identified generic interpersonal and communication skills but did not target students' immediate concerns. The use of 'Y' charts and social and reflective practices it is argued were relevant to addressing students' immediate concerns and provided a framework for change, through targeted whole-class scaffolding of values.

The next group of students' comments illustrate the diverse characteristics of students, their perceptions about school and the social practices. Students such as Denis found it difficult to change his antisocial behaviour. He persisted bullying his peers for most of the year. He remained friends with Lindsay who stopped bullying in Term 1. Joey was an independent worker but took the year to widen his friendship network. Both Mary and John were shy students who developed self-confidence and increased their friendship group. Angela was quite argumentative and became very possessive of her friend Eileen. Eileen's friendship group increased so peers competed for Eileen's attention which Angela found challenging.

> I learnt not to argue and be sensible. I have been happy to come to school because there's nothing to do at home and I have friends at school. I listened to other people's opinions and I learnt that we are all different and how to get along with each other. (Student interview, Denis- Year 5, 2004)

> It has been really calm for me because people take care of each other. Last year I didn't have many friends but this year I have made friends even with the girls. (Student interview, Joey-Year 4, 2004)

> I have more friends now and I don't feel so shy because I can be myself and people aren't so mean to me anymore. I can feel safe. (Student interview, Mary- Year 5, 2004)

> Last year I felt lonely and played in the sandpit on my own. I used to dig tunnels. This year I have … [Writes a list of friends]. (Student interview, John- Year 4, 2004)

> Before everybody would bottle things up and not get to tell the whole class. I learnt to ask for help when I needed it so I didn't get so upset. (Student interview, Angela-Year 5, 2004)

The teacher/researcher was continually analysing data and feedback from the students' reflection logs to identify further social activities that would support collaboration. Some students persisted with behaviours that their peers described as 'annoying'. In the next reflective activity how the students defined 'annoying behaviours' is examined in terms of the collective knowledge of the peers and their efforts to address the issue.

Reflective Activity: Chart of 'Annoying Behaviours'

In Term 4 the teacher/researcher noted that students in Groups 3 and 4 (See Table 4) engaged in behaviours such as sucking hair, making funny noises or taking materials that didn't belong to them. Their peers complained about similar behaviours in their reflection logs when they wrote about the social progress of their group. The following chart lists the 'annoying behaviours'. Students could then decide if they would change or persist with these unsociable behaviours to deliberately annoy their peers and risk ongoing alienation from their peer group. Students defined annoying behaviours as follows.

> Mimicking others; Pulling faces; Being a know all; Walking around knocking people's equipment off their desk; Butting in when other people are talking; Not listening to what people are saying; Being bossed around; Drawing on yourself; Telling lies; Talking when you should be working; Following me around; Staring at me. (Extract from Annoying Behaviours Chart, Classroom artefact, 11.11.04)

The social and reflective practices contributed to the teacher/researcher's social knowledge about the students and gave clues about how to support the changes in their friendship networks. One of the strategies implemented was the Daily Social Circle in which students stated their name and mood with a short explanation. This acknowledged their emotions and provided social knowledge about peers. During these sessions students revealed their friendship aspirations, what they were looking forward to in their daily lives and what made them happy, sad, excited or angry. In addition the agenda items for the Weekly Class Meetings revolved around social and emotional issues such as sharing play equipment, playing games according to the rules and making friends which indicated the immediate problems that students were experiencing. Students also had opportunities for organised

social interaction during formal dance lessons, conducted once a week for ten weeks, where the teacher/researcher could observe students' behaviour in another context with peers from other classes who persisted in antisocial behaviour.

Social activity: Dance lessons

During weekly social dance lessons in Term 2, four classes of Year 4/5 students and their teachers came together for instruction in an assembly area outside the classrooms. The regular classroom teachers provided supervision while two dance instructors conducted the lesson. Michael had been actively bullying his peers in Term 1 and ceased by the beginning of Term 2. He moved from Group 4 to Group 2 (See Tables 3 & 4) because he behaved in an antisocial manner occasionally. The teacher/researcher noted that Michael was making an effort to perform in a mature manner when he had to be partnered with a girl. Most of the boys from the other Year 4/5 classes were making a fuss and rude remarks about getting 'girl germs'. They pulled their jumpers over their hands before they touched a girl's hand.

> Claire chose Michael each week as her partner because she thought he was a great dancer which she wrote in her reflection log (1.7.04). Michael smiled and concentrated during these lessons and was perceived to be enjoying himself. Both his peers and the other teachers, who observed dance classes, nominated him for the class dance medal at the end of Term 2 for his outstanding efforts. (Teacher/researcher's reflection, Term 2)

It is difficult to reconcile that Michael had a reputation from previous years for unrelenting bullying behaviour that had persisted since he started at the school in pre-primary. His reasons for stopping bullying, expressed in an interview, are questionable and do not reflect that he had empathy for his victim Damon. But his comments demonstrate the protective factor of friendships. Nathan was now Damon's friend and would now support him if Michael attempted to bully him. Another factor could have been that there were no peers in the class that wanted to engage in these behaviours so Michael would not have the peer support he had enjoyed in the past.

> I have stopped teasing Damon. I teased him because he had no friends. I stopped because he now has some friends. Nathan will stick up for him. I wouldn't like to be teased and I don't like getting into trouble ether. That is why I stopped. (Student interview, Michael, 8.11.04)

Denis, who had also engaged bullying behaviours, expressed a different viewpoint from Michael that revealed he had experienced the benefits of collaboration and enjoyed working with others and was taking some responsibility for his behaviour.

> I enjoyed group work because you get to do it together and not on your own. I learned to get along and take turns. I wasn't voted leaders and I wanted to be because I wanted a go. I would have to behave more and would have. (Student interview, Denis, 8.11.04)

The Critical Friend to the project was the associate principal. She attended the final parent meeting where there was a hundred percent parental attendance. She observed how respectful the students such as Denis and Michael behaved towards their parents and peers. An extract is included from a parent survey, which is representative of feedback from the parent session and is also referred to in the comments from the Critical Friend to the research below.

It was a pleasure to attend your parent session on Monday. There is a very special bond that has developed between you and the students and it is clear that the parents appreciate your work. (Critical Friend, 3.12. 04)

Even though I have had little contact with the school, I can see through filling in these surveys quite dramatic changes to Helen's ability to cope with different personalities, strengths and weaknesses. It is a skill I am pleased Helen is learning in the early years of her education. Thanks for your effort. (Helen's mother, November, 2004, Extract from Parent Survey 3)

The personal dispositions of students changed to reflect the pro-social values of the classroom which realigned student participation so students were able to participate in collaborative activities (as evidenced in the movement of student groups recorded in Table 3 & Table 4). It is evident that the number of students in Groups 2 and 4, who had antisocial tendencies, had decreased significantly by the end of the year. The Critical Friend to the project held the portfolio of student services and interviewed parents and students about a variety of issues. She wrote an unsolicited letter after reading the students' interview transcripts which endorsed the positive changes in students' behaviour in the research class.

Students have developed very sophisticated understandings of friends and how friendship groups work. Leadership skills have developed which has facilitated group work. Some students have developed a personal practical knowledge, which they have transferred to outside the classroom [playground and home] in order to use their developed skills to solve problems. All students are happy to be at school because it is a safe and supportive environment. When students are interviewed by the administration they are polite, assertive and honest which allows the problem to be sorted out rapidly. (Critical Friend, 7.12.04, Extract from letter)

The Critical Friend's comments were validated through the triangulation of data from the students, the teacher/researcher and the parents. Students had made significant positive changes in their attitudes and behaviour towards each other. In the concluding comments the theoretical and practical implications of the research are highlighted to reflect the significance of values education for teachers' praxis and how to scaffold peer collaboration through the explicit teaching of values education to promote mutual respect as a social norm for behaviour.

Conclusion

It is well established that values education does not stand alone as a separate entity or program, but is integral to a holistic approach to an ethical education and academic learning (Dewey, 1916; Lovat, Dally, Clement & Toomey, 2011; Lovat & Toomey, 2009). Collaborative learning is a pedagogy that is values-focussed and student-centred because students need to demonstrate mutual respect to learn to work together. The theoretical perspective of Vygotsky 's (1978) sociocultural theory and the notion of the ZPD to conceptualise whole-class scaffolding (Smit et al., 2013; Wood et al., 1976) is appropriate for research focused on the relational and collaborative nature of learning. Scaffolding the social and emotional aspects is integral to academic learning to promote students' self-confidence and facilitate collaboration (Elias, 2006). The role of the teacher is to mediate learning through appropriate whole-class scaffolding within the ZPD which has been illustrated in this paper. A 'collective' rather than individual approach was implemented to realign student

participation. The five Class Agreements and 'Y' charts established consistency in using a common and shared values language and made values explicit and concrete for students. Other sociocultural strategies including sociograms, the Daily Social Circle and Weekly Class Meetings contributed to developing mutual respect and empathy.

It is imperative when there is antisocial behaviour occurring that teachers intervene but it is often challenging to identify the best recourse (Sullivan, Johnson, Owens & Conway, 2014). Even though there are limitations to the generalisability of the findings of this small scale research the study provides an example of what teachers can do to address antisocial problems at a class level. In this study it is argued that antisocial behaviour is a social problem and the peer group in the research class had sufficient collective knowledge to resolve these issues. Writing self reflections after the weekly classroom meetings allowed time for students to think about the peer knowledge and values discourse generated. The "cumulative effect of many diagnostic and responsive actions over time" (Smit et al., 2013, p. 817) supported students to understand the impact of their behaviour and develop empathy for their peers. The teacher/researcher identified student leadership as an authentic catalyst to motivate students to change their behaviour and enjoy positive peer regard for being an effective and caring role model. It is argued that this approach is relevant to students' current needs and transfers some control to peers to create their own solutions to developing supportive relationships.

The findings for teachers suggest that teaching values explicitly, supported by targeted social and reflective practices, facilitates whole-class scaffolding of peer collaboration to develop mutual respect and positive relationships. The challenge remains to develop teacher expertise to understand the values that are communicated to students through classroom practices. However, it is through engaging in social practices described in this paper that teachers can develop their capability to scaffold collaboration based on the collective needs of the students in their classrooms. This research contributes to our understanding of operational values education in a primary classroom.

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