

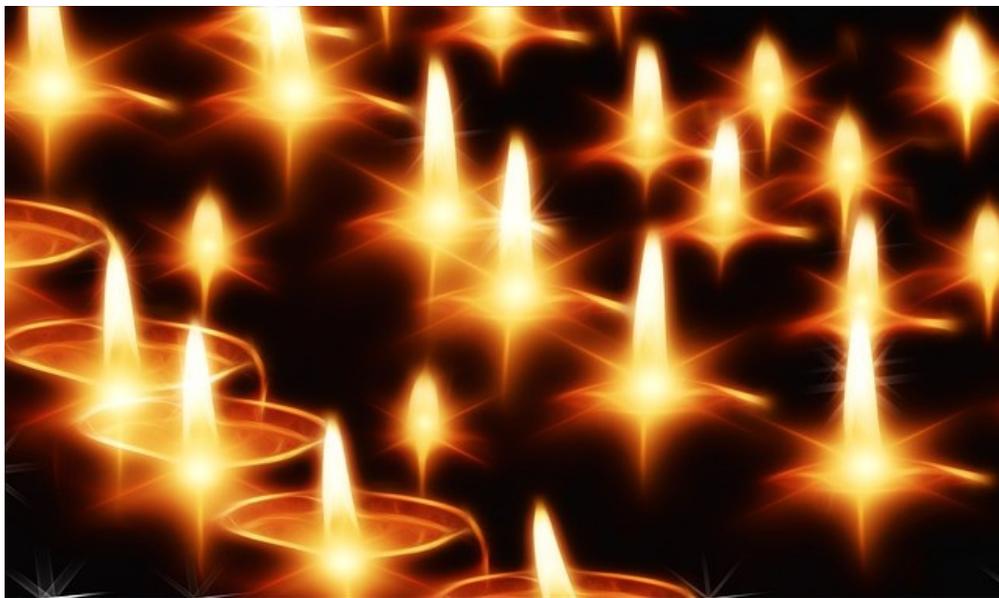


Valuing ourselves, each other and our world

The Inner Curriculum

Teachers' Notes for Primary Schools and Early Years Settings

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Dr Neil & Jane Hawkes

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Message from Neil Hawkes

Jane and I hope these notes will support you as you introduce an Inner Curriculum into your school. Ideally, you will have attended one of our training sessions on the Inner Curriculum. If not then please read our book, *The Inner Curriculum*, which will support your understanding of the concept. Please be creative and imaginative in the way you use these practical ideas. You know what will work with your pupils. Remember to keep it simple; engage your pupils in being active agents in the process of encouraging them to explore their inner worlds. Keep parents on board too, so that they can support this work at home and also help to maintain their own stable internal worlds. We believe this work has enormous potential to support mental wellbeing, resilience and the joy of learning in your school.

Most importantly, please remember that it is the quality of your own modelling of this work that will have the greatest impact on your pupils so please walk the talk and make the Inner Curriculum a part of your own daily practice.

Your school's aim is to identify the elements for each year group that make up an Inner Curriculum for your school, as an integral part of being a Values-based School. Please ask for clarification and support if you need it, as Jane and I are here to support you. It is important that all staff, governors and parents understand the basic principles guiding your Inner Curriculum. Remember to think and be POSITIVE and that good relationships are paramount.



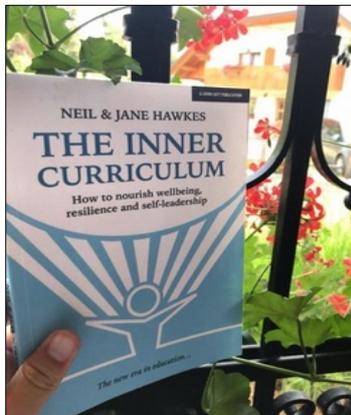
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The Inner Curriculum (IC) – From Theory into Practice

Traditionally schools have a curriculum (knowledge, skills and concepts) that is taught to children. We believe that something crucially important is missing in education, if children are going to be fully educated and able to flourish in the complex world of the 21st century and beyond.

What is missing is a comprehensive curriculum that acknowledges and works with the character traits, dispositions and the complex nature of a child's personality. This new insightful curriculum we call, The Inner Curriculum, because it invites the student to understand and shape their internal world for the happiness of themselves and the benefit of society. It nurtures a holistic competence so needed in the 21st Century, which Neil has called Personal Holistic Competence (PHC). This overarching competence gives us the confidence to navigate successfully our increasingly complex world. We believe that an equal focus on The Inner Curriculum will bring tremendous benefits, in the form of improved mental wellbeing and resilience for individuals, better outcomes for schools and a more harmonious society.



The consequence of this new exciting educational paradigm will be that people will be happier, more pro-social in their behaviour; taking the lid off their potential and contributing more productively and sustainably to the future needs of society. In our view, not having an Inner Curriculum is not an option if humanity is to survive and flourish. Let's look at our working definition of The Inner Curriculum, which at first sight may contain ideas and concepts that are unfamiliar to you. For a more detailed, comprehensive account please see our book, The Inner Curriculum (2018), published by John Catt Educational.

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What is the Inner Curriculum?

The Inner Curriculum teaches us how to be conscious about and in harmonious control of our internal world of thoughts, feelings and emotions, enabling us to respond appropriately and altruistically to others without hurting them or damaging our own sense of self. Indeed it supports the development of a strong and secure sense of self, which develops the disposition of self-leadership, which sustains wellbeing.

We define self (see below) as the innate essence of human consciousness, the 'you' who is observing, a healing energy that creates the space for the nurturing of wisdom. When we experience self-energy we are accessing our authentic nature. We argue passionately that a core objective of education should be to nurture self-energy, in the context of thinking about and applying human values such as empathy, courage, resilience, altruism, peace, generosity and justice. Such dispositions (virtues) are often evident when there is a natural disaster or major catastrophe, but sadly these are not universally seen during normal life. We think that VbE schools and others, which care deeply about the character development of people, bring such traits into consciousness.'

The Inner Curriculum evolves in a calm and purposeful environment, one that allows the authentic self to flourish. When our self-energy is leading our internal world then we, and others, have the potential to experience wellbeing and release our innate creativity and connectedness. Self-energy is contagious as it makes it safe for this quality to emerge in others. As humanity shares this simple yet profound wisdom, we hope that it will produce leaders with the a new, empathic ethical intelligence, which will solve the complex problems we face in our world.'

What is the self?

In our book, The Inner Curriculum we use the concept Self, which is drawn from the Internal Family Systems' theory of psychotherapy. We hope the following explanation of the term will help you to understand how we are using this hugely important concept, which encapsulates what it means to be the best person that you can be.

'Self, in a psychological sense, may be understood as your perfect and pure essence, the repository of your innate virtues. Some traditions and cultures describe this aspect of us as soul or spirit.

Self is untouched by the less than perfect parts of you, which you have acquired whilst living in the world. Self is filled with wisdom and when accessed is a constant source of healing and wellbeing. Its total absence of disturbance makes this your still point - a deep enriching experience of peace.

When you pause, are inwardly reflective, you can take a journey to let the healing energy of your Self, calm and nurture your internal world. This process brings boundless benefits, enabling you to live your life fuelled by the nourishing power of Self-energy. Self-energy is our highest state of consciousness, fuelled by values such as clarity, creativity, calmness, compassion, courage and connection, which is what our complex and parts driven world yearns to embrace. If we live our lives with this life-enhancing energy then we can experience peace, harmony and sustainability.'

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The Inner Curriculum Content

From definition to implementation:

The Inner Curriculum draws for its content on four domains of information: interpersonal neurobiology, psychotherapy, education and the wisdom of humanity. From these four domains we have evolved five learning pathways, which together create a body of knowledge and experiences, which nurture resilience, wellbeing and pro-social characteristics.

We thought it would be helpful if we expressed these pathways through the acronym - PAUSE.

We have chosen PAUSE, because we believe that in order to be the best people we can be, we need to regularly pause in our busy and complex lives, take our attention inward to sense the state of our internal world (busy, distressed, disengaged, content, overwhelmed); check what activity (thoughts, emotions and sensations) is taking place and what regulation, if any, we need to action. Pausing helps us to be conscious about our internal world so that we can deliberately make adjustments to maintain a sense of internal equilibrium. We are then empowered, in an atmosphere of internal calmness, to clarify and shape our thoughts, so that we can speak and act from our authentic self.



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Introducing PAUSE and its five learning pathways

PAUSE - "Pause to be"

- P: peace
- A: attention
- U: understanding
- S: Self-leadership
- E: Energy

Each pathway has a learning objective and content:

Peace:

Learning objective: Knowing our brain and how this knowledge can help us to be peaceful.

1. Learning about the human brain: its main parts and functions.
2. Learning from the insights from inter-personal neurobiology.
3. Understanding the importance of breath and breathing efficiently.
4. Knowing how to pause to be; take PAUSE breaks; watch glitter bottles; experience mindfulness; reflection; silent sitting; visualisation.
5. Being introduced to relaxation techniques: massage; yoga; power naps.
6. Knowing the importance of sleep, exercise and diet.
7. Taking time to be in and experience nature.
8. Having space to be peaceful.

Attention:

Learning objective: Learning from psychotherapy about how to support mental wellbeing.

1. Learning how to pay attention to our internal world of thoughts, feelings and emotions and the impact it has on the way we experience the external world and ourselves.
2. Learning how the basic aspects of The Internal Family System (IFS) help us to be aware of and in control of our internal world.
3. Using aspects of Transactional Analysis (TA) and other theories to maintain a healthy internal world.



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Understanding:

Learning objective: Understanding the wisdom of Humanity

1. Learning about ancient and modern wisdom that expands our understanding of others, the world and ourselves.
2. Considering insights about what it is to be human, drawn from religious and non-religious texts, culture, history, philosophy, literature: including story, myths, fables and legends.
3. Experiencing film and video, which nurtures understanding about what it means to be human.

Self-leadership (agency)

Learning objective: To use good educational practices, which nurture an inner curriculum that encourages Self-leadership.

1. Learning about research-based educational practices e.g. developing a positive growth mindset; using Philosophy for Children (P4C).
2. Developing pedagogy that are focussed on an understanding of child development, how children best learn and how we resource their learning.
3. Focusing on holistic education i.e. that each person finds identity, meaning, and purpose in life and develops pro-social behaviour, through connections to the community, to the natural world, and to human values such as compassion and peace.
4. Developing a learning environment, ethos, ethical vocabulary and culture based on the insights and practices of Values-based Education (VbE)
5. Understanding child development, the stages of learning and how these should be resourced.
6. Learning how to empower pupils to be responsible for their learning and self-management.



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Energy

Learning objective: to nourish Emotional Resilience and Wellbeing

1. Creating opportunities to use self-energy to develop a healthy and positive relationship with oneself and others: understanding that this is the key to wellbeing.
2. Having opportunities to develop resilience through first-hand experiential learning with others.
3. Creating a school and classroom learning experience that enables pupils to grow as confident, self-led, empathic, compassionate people who are able to flourish and contribute for the good of society and our world.



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Example of a PAUSE lesson

Notes for teachers:

From Neil's experience teaching your pupils to PAUSE, a specific form of reflection, will enable them to become naturally self-regulated, more resilient and be able to maintain their own wellbeing. PAUSE invites pupils to be more aware of their internal world of thoughts, feelings and emotions and to take control of them.

These notes will help you teach the pupils to PAUSE. Please adapt them for the age and stage of your pupils. We suggest you have some visuals to help explain the distinct parts of PAUSE. These notes are designed to support you in your understanding of The Inner Curriculum. They will be best understood if you have received training in The Inner Curriculum and/or read our book with that title.

We suggest that your pupils have regular PAUSE sessions so that the process becomes a habit. Please remember that this means for you too! Invite the pupils to practise PAUSE at other appropriate times in the day – at school and at home. Link this teaching with giving the pupils an understanding of the parts and functions of their brains.

By implementing PAUSE your school will create an Inner Curriculum.

Introducing the power of PAUSE to your pupils

The pupils are sitting silently, with straight backs, hands in their laps...

You say (please remember to adapt the language to suit the age and stage of your pupils):

- "Do you ever think thoughts like these?"
- "Why did I do that?" "I wish I hadn't said that."
- "I feel rubbish and I can't help losing it."
- "I often feel very angry and then hurt someone."
- " I wish I could always feel happy."

Most people have had similar thoughts and feelings and wonder how they can be happier. People often think that they will be happier by distracting themselves by keeping busy, trying fresh activities or meeting new people. Sadly this often doesn't help us to feel any happier and we continue our search to feel good inside.

But! There is a way to help you keep your inner smile, that happy feeling that makes you like being you and helps you to get on with other people. You may find the idea a bit weird or strange at first because it may be new to you. However, be patient because so many people have found that what I am going to tell you about has had wonderful effects on their lives. Would you like to find out more? I think that the best way for you to understand what this is all about is to share an activity that I'm going to invite you to practise at least once a day. I think it will help you remember the activity if I ask

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you to remember and think about a word: the word is PAUSE. Do you know what this word means? It means to stop doing something for a short time. I am using capital letters for PAUSE because each letter stands for something different that I am going to ask you to think about. When I have finished explaining what PAUSE means, I will then invite you to PAUSE and to share a few special moments with me.

Introducing PAUSE

Here goes:

The word PAUSE will remind you to make time in your busy day to stop, be still, close your eyes and check out what you are thinking about and how you are feeling. This is called taking a PAUSE break. Taking daily PAUSE breaks gives you the chance to think about what you are thinking and feeling. By doing this you will be able to decide if they are helping you to enjoy your day or not.

Next you can decide which thoughts you would like to think about. If you chose happy thoughts you will be amazed how good you will feel. Sometimes you may find this is difficult to do. If you do find it difficult to have happy thoughts then be kind to yourself and perhaps have a chat with someone, whom you feel safe with, about how you are feeling. The more you practice PAUSE the more you will find it to be a very special tool to help you to be happy.

You see, each letter in the word PAUSE reminds us of five life-enhancing, energy-giving powers that build your resilience, which is your ability to bounce back when you feel something has gone wrong. PAUSE will also help you to have a feeling of wellbeing, which is when you feel good about your life.

Explaining PAUSE

Let's look together at the letters of PAUSE and what energy powers they represent.

- P stands for Peace. I expect you know that when you feel peaceful you experience a deep feeling of being calm and safe. Now, when you need a top-up to feel peaceful, stop what you are doing and PAUSE. This means being still, closing your eyes and breathing deeply for at least ten slow breaths. You will find that by breathing deeply you will slow down busy thoughts; you will gradually feel calm and peaceful, able to control your thinking and behaviour. This activity is called giving you a PAUSE break.
- A stands for Attention. You will know that people are sometimes asked to stand to attention, so that they can be still. Your teacher may say, "Please give me your attention" so that she knows you are listening. You can also think of attention as you being more aware about how you are thinking and feeling. By giving attention, you will know how your thoughts, feelings and emotions (strong feelings) are affecting your happiness. You may be feeling sad, angry, joyful, disgusted or fearful. Being aware of the emotions that you feel is the first step to helping you to be in control of them. During a PAUSE break you can check out what you are feeling and if necessary calm yourself down. Remember always to accept how you're feeling

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and in whatever way you can let the emotion know you are curious about it; that you want to know what has happened for this emotion to be present. If you can, send the feeling your love.

- U stands for understanding, being able to say, "Yes, I've got it! I understand." The more you learn about yourself and the world around you, the more your understanding of yourself and others will increase. Think that what you learn in school is a very special gift, as it gives you the knowledge and skills that will help you throughout your life. Grow your understanding a little bit every day, which will help you to make wise choices. In a PAUSE break use the wisdom method of making wise decisions, allowing your inner wisdom to support your thinking: stop, breathe, think and then take some action. This power helps you to make wise decisions and deepen your understanding of others.
- S stands for Self-leadership. You are unique: there is no one who is exactly like you in the world. Each of us may look and behave differently but we all share something in common: we are all human beings, with our shared loving, healing, creative, curious, courageous, real self. This is the you, which wants and enjoys getting to know others. It isn't those parts of you who when they act up make your life difficult. When you take a PAUSE, you will get to know your real self: the wonderful YOU and gain the power of self-leadership. Self-leadership means that YOU are able to make good choices about how you live your life; based on the knowledge you have about the real you.
- E stands for Energy, the gentle, yet powerful, helping energy that you feel when you PAUSE and allow your calm, compassionate and curious self to guide your thoughts. This positive healing power creates in us a feeling of wellbeing and happiness. During a PAUSE you will become aware of this energy power, which helps you to be in charge of your thoughts and feelings for the good of you and others.
- You will discover that the more you practise PAUSE, the more you will understand that it is your own personal energy power tool that will support your wellbeing each day of your life.

An illustrated PAUSE activity

Let's now take a PAUSE: what I call PAUSE to be...

Pausing to be uses the powers of Peace and Attention, the first and second powers of PAUSE. Pausing to be helps us have access to the other three powers contained in the letters U, S and E: standing for Understanding, Self and Energy.

- In a moment of silence let us sit very still, close our eyes and feel relaxed. We can practise feeling peaceful by sitting comfortably, with straight backs, hands in our laps and with our eyes closed.
- Now be aware of your breathing and silently concentrate on taking deeper breaths. As you breathe in slowly count to five and do the same as you breathe out. With each breath let

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your body become more and more relaxed. With each out breath, breathe out any worry...with each in breath feel yourself breathing in quietness and calm...

- Now take your attention let's use the power of our second letter, which is A. A, you remember, stands for attention, giving our attention to how we are feeling inside. In the next few moments as you are sitting calmly, give your attention to the thoughts you are having and how you are feeling today, without judging them or letting them overwhelm you.
- Next let us use our imagination to help us to feel calm full of peace. We are going to go on a walk to a special place in a beautiful wood.
- Keeping your eyes closed use your imagination to see yourself on a walk in a beautiful field. You have permission to be on this short walk, as you have been brought to it by some of your family. You are allowed to explore the field. You walk across it see a shallow pond with ducks swimming on it. Beautiful butterflies are in the air. The sun is shining and there are a few white clouds floating in the sky. As you walk across the field you see a friend of yours coming towards you with a big grin. Your friend is carrying a small box and says to you that in it is an amazing coloured rock, which is a special gift for you. On it is written the name of the value that is your own special value. You are excited and when the box is opened you take your gift and read the name of the value written on it. "Yes! Thank you", you say to your friend. "This IS my favourite value." You then say cheerio to your friend and hurry back to your family to show them the gift you have been given.
- Now slowly and in your own time return your attention to me...

Teacher brings the PAUSE session to a conclusion with general discussion.

- Share with a partner what the value was that you were given. How did it make you feel etc.

Another illustrated PAUSE activity

Here is another example of a visualisation activity that we recommend and which pupils enjoy (further details on pages 88-91 in our book, The Inner Curriculum). You may like to have a picture of a star projected on a screen. In the early stages of visualisation some pupils may find it difficult to visualise.

The Wisdom Star Visualisation

(Remember to adapt the words for the age and stage of your pupils)

- Sitting comfortably and with dignity, close your eyes and give your attention to your breathing... Focus on your breathing... As you breathe out feel the sensation of your breath leaving your body.
- If your mind wanders and thinks of other things,



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which is quite normal, and has other thoughts then gently return the focus of your attention to your breath. As you become aware of your wandering mind and refocus on your breath you are developing the skill of awareness.

- For the next minute focus on your breathing with an awareness of peacefulness... (In the early stages of practicing this exercise some find it helpful to focus if they say 'in' and 'out' in their minds as they breathe.)
- ... now visualise a beautiful, radiant shining star... As you breathe deeply your star appears to be brighter and full of energy. Now breathe normally and see your star's colours and its shape...
- You can see that your shining star has lots of pulsating star-like points emerging from its core... what you are seeing is your values wisdom star... which contains many values, which are nourishing gifts to support you in your life. Your star is accessible to you whenever you need one of its gifts...
- ... now take a moment to sense what value would help you on your life's journey today... see the value pulsating calmly towards you on a beam of light, and the essence of you feeling its presence...merge yourself in this value, feeling it's sublime qualities...
- ... which value did you chose? Name your value and sense by naming it the powerful energy that it gives to you...
- For the next few moments take the time and space to experience your star's gift as energising sensations that will support you today and into the future...
- Now gently, and in your own time, return your attention to the awareness of this room and the people within it.

We hope the Wisdom Star will provide lots of opportunities for discussion, journaling and enable your pupils to use values to help them self-regulate their behaviour.

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Inner Curriculum activities

We describe many activities that support the Inner Curriculum in our book called "The Inner Curriculum", on pages 117-131.

Below are a number of activities that currently support an Inner Curriculum, which are used by the Central Bedfordshire Values Group of schools:

Values-based activities

- Values embedded in the culture of the school e.g. calmness, manners, safety, conscious listening culture, clear routines for behaviour management – the way we deal with incidents/ consistency.
- Whole school approach to VbE – using same terminology.
- Interventions that include teaching social skills through social stories.
- Assemblies – calm, purposeful and positive.
- Batting it back! (Way to develop awareness of others). "How are you?" "Very well thank you." "How are you?"
- Recruitment of staff who are good role models and understand the importance of values.
- Values teaching – experiential.
- Relationships policy.
- Quality displays.

Wellbeing activities

- Theraplay. Lego play. Music theraplay.
- Priority on the care and wellbeing of staff – dedicated staff members.
- Silver Seal pastoral sessions (modelling, role-play, talking and reflecting).
- Pastoral interventions.
- Learning to verbalise feelings, managing feelings.
- (SMILE) 1:1 intervention groups

Mindful/Reflective activities

- Silent sitting/reflection time – focus on breathing
- Chime bars in each classroom for brain breaks and giving time to settle.
- Regular individual dialogue and deep listening to pupils.
- Knowledge of the brain – what happens in the brain when we learn?
- Mindfulness – yoga, sitting like a frog. Listening to mindful stories, cosmic kids yoga.
- Sunshine circles.
- Circle/reflection/talk times - regular 5 minutes morning and afternoon.

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Resilience and other activities

- Occasions, such as World Values Day/ Pupil Values Days to deepen thinking about values.
- Olly and the Super Powers.
- Shield of resilience – focus on what children do to build resilience. Explicitly teaching about resilience.
- Learning – 5 stages, linked to emotions (receive it, risk it, return it, refine it, redefine it).
- Casey the Caterpillar – cuddle toy to share your thoughts and concerns.
- Feelings flowers.
- Spiritual garden.
- Links to PSHE curriculum.
- Lunchtime groups – structured cooperative play.
- Forest schools



Please contact us if you require any further support. We would also appreciate your feedback, especially knowing what effects PAUSE has on both the behaviour of your pupils and their work in the classroom.

When you have a draft then please send Neil a copy of your Inner Curriculum and photos that may illustrate it.

With warm wishes

Neil & Jane

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