



Starting Points: Positive Education Communities Conference held at Mount Barker High School from 9am – 4pm, 7 June, 2013.
Professional Practice Strand Workshop – Howard ‘Mac’ MacPherson

A conference to explore starting points for improving the mental health and wellbeing of your school, organisation or community using the ideas of Positive Psychology

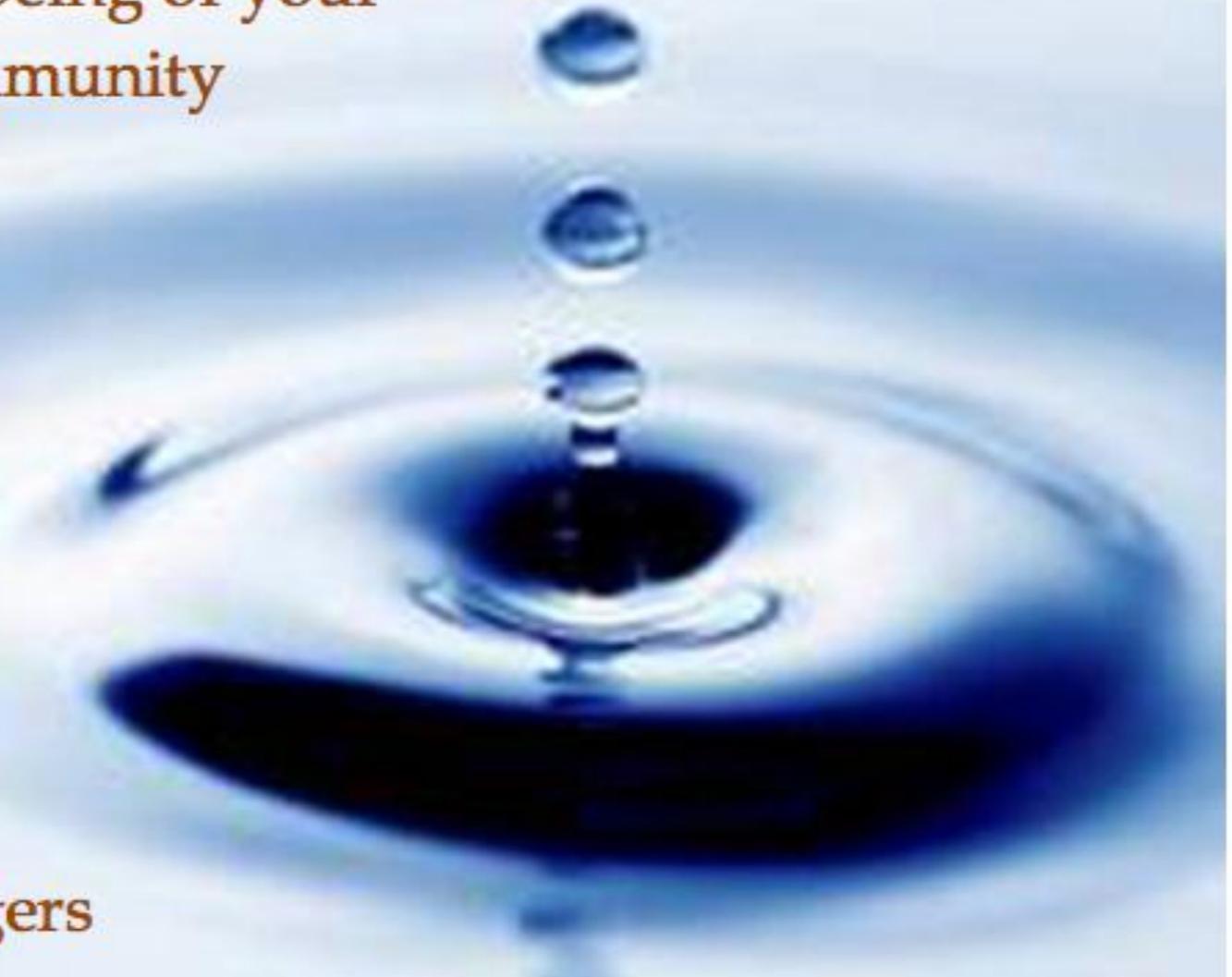
Relevant to:

Educators

Health Workers

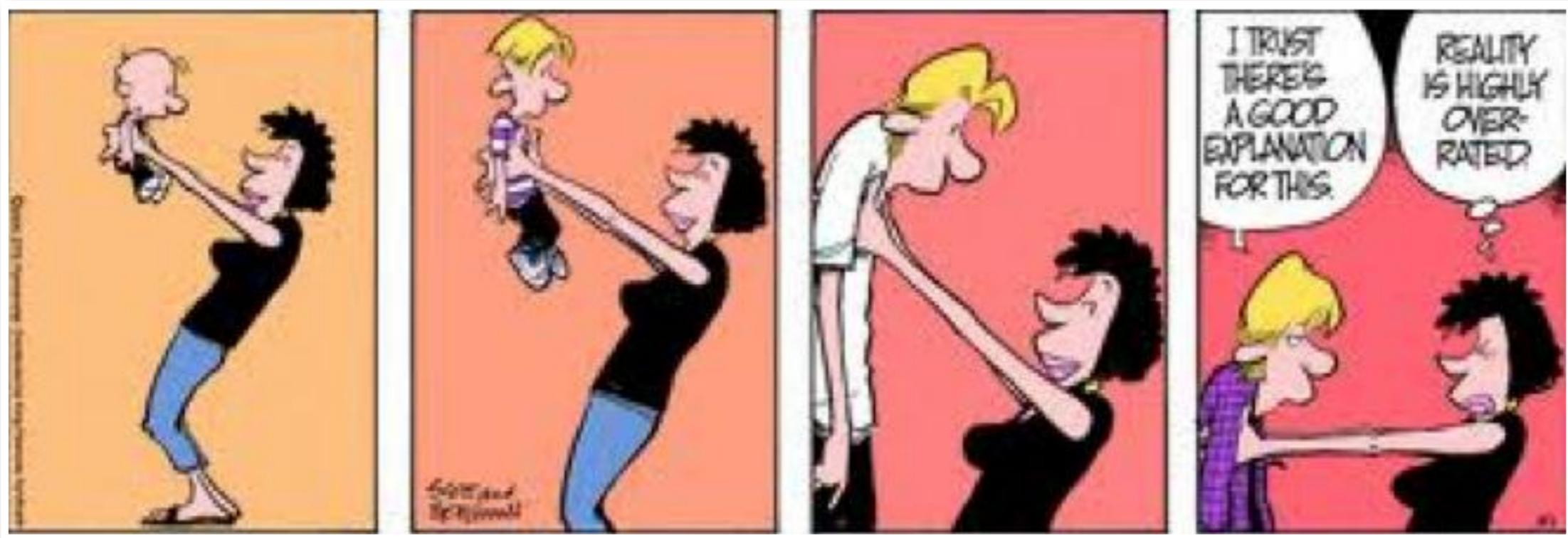
Youth Workers

Principals/Leaders/Managers





Q How do we support optimal well-being of children at all stages in our school?





Guiding questions

What are our goals in respect of delivering well-being programs in our school?

How can our school deliver even more effective well-being services to young people?

In what ways can we contribute to improving the mental health and resilience of our students?

Which school-based programs should we continue with? Cease? Source? Initiate? Create? (Whole school scope and audit*). * = support docs avail.





Thinking about EI

Work of Maslow, Gardner, Goleman and others explored (2007)

CASEL in Chicago USA and SEAL in UK examined (2008)

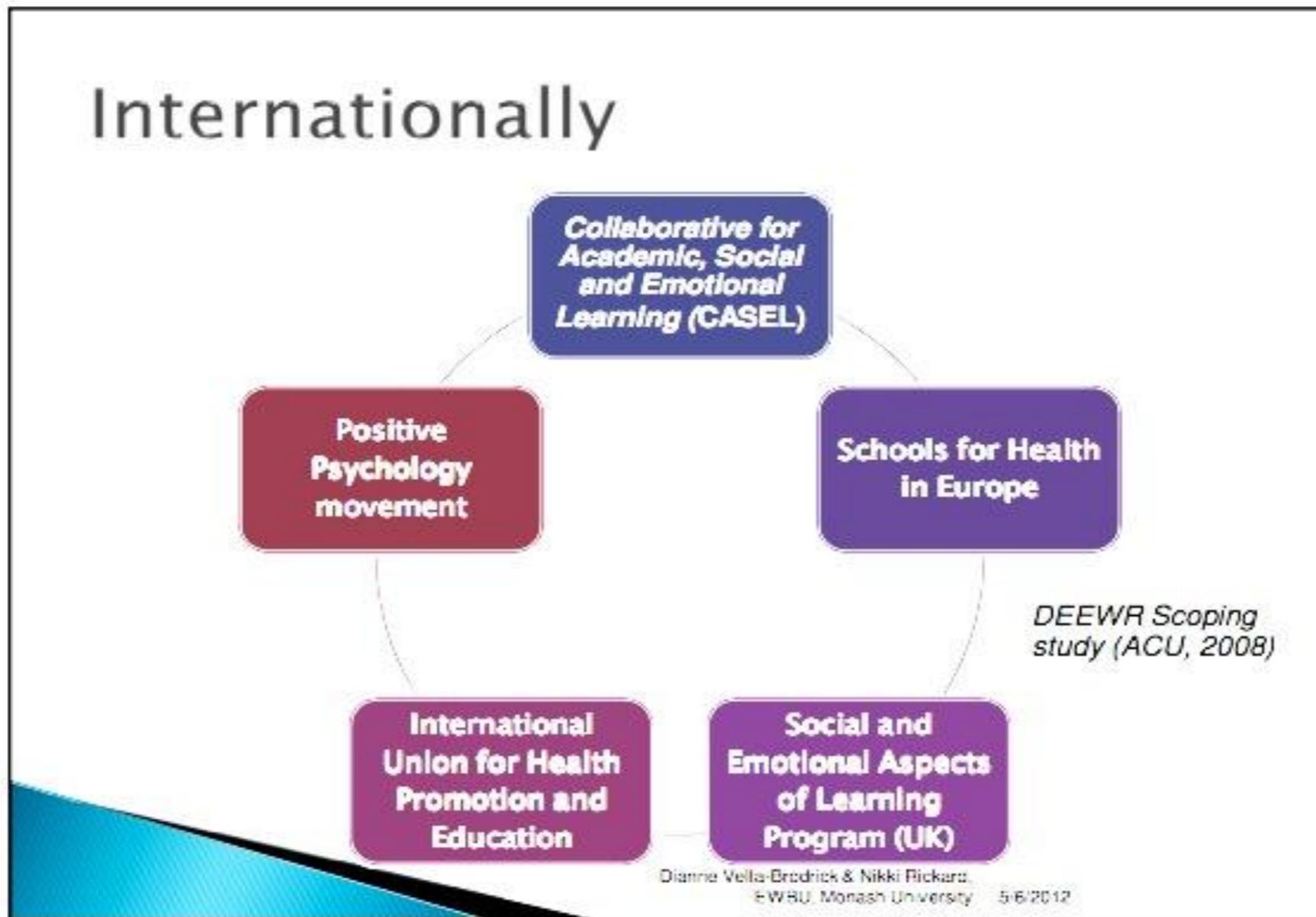
Staff sent to Geelong GS to work with Dr. Marty Seligman and U-Penn staff. Awareness of Positive Psychology raised (2009)

Daniel's Goleman's framework for emotional intelligence

- Personal Competence
- 1. Self-awareness
- 2. Self-management
- Social Competence
- 3. Social awareness
- 4. Relationship management



International scope – well-being





Australian scope – well-being

A wealth of student well-being programs



- ▶ There are many excellent school-based well-being programs.
- ▶ Programs are often complementary, or suited to particular needs.
- ▶ Many have been empirically evaluated and are evidence-based.
- ▶ Some great resources available to schools for comparing and selecting programs for their particular needs.

It is not our aim to “compare” programs or try to replace current evaluation research



Guiding principles

Research proves link between well-being and academic achievement

School-based approaches to enhancing well being essential

Engaging staff and students important

Building resilience and EQ capacity of our people crucial

Everyone has some responsibility for their own well-being and the well-being of others in our community



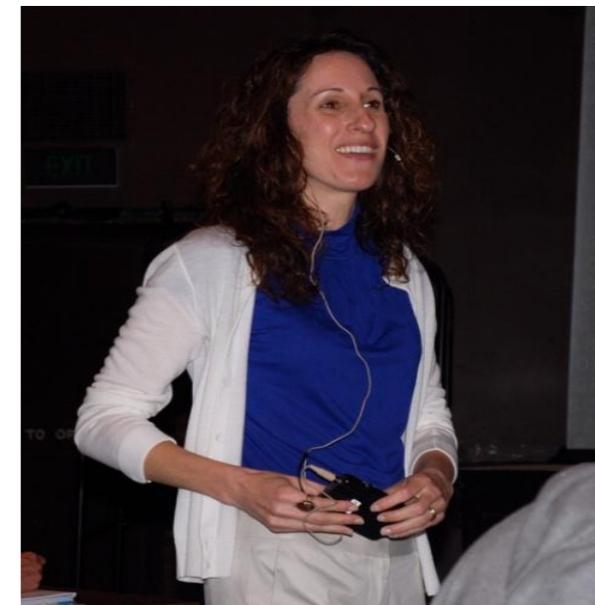


Evidence-based, valid programs explored further

Scientifically valid work of Peterson, Seligman, Park and Reivich, Kashdan, Diener, Ben-Shahar, Ryan & Deci, Dweck Fredrickson, Westwell ...

Character Strengths-based approaches adopted*.

Later Appreciative Inquiry* and Mindfulness* approaches also explored (and adopted)





“We need to find ways to show/ teach/ coach children how to label/ clarify/ articulate and be aware of their emotions and feelings.

Those who survive negative experiences can deal with and accept and label them - will prove to be more resilient next time.”

Todd Kashdan Ph D





scotch





Bringing Positive Education to Scotch 2009 – 2013.

Exposing Senior Executive to
Positive Traits, Individuals,
Institution concepts

Gaining support of Council of
Governors. Inclusion within
Strategic Plan (2010)

Including within Curricula and
Co-curricula programs (incl. on
timetable)

Forming Positive Education
Champions' Committee





Chief aims decided

to develop people of good character
to build student social and emotional capacity with strengths-based approaches through authentic experiences.
to support robust mental and physical health
to co-ordinate Positive Psychology interventions (Positive Education) approach





Making it real

Explicit subjects (PRP and PP)*

Strengths Gym (Mentor time)*

Strengths themed assemblies,
Chapel, publications, website,
youtube* ...

Staff training in approaches

Strengths resources library
established

Strengths themes extended to
physical environment*

See;

<http://vimeo.com/channels/439657>

<http://www.youtube.com/user/scotchadelaide>





IQ + EQ = success

Innovative programs/ideas encouraged:

Mind Lab*

Strengths Gym*

Service Through Strengths*

Strengths on camp*

Flourishing films*

Positive Psychology Coaching*

Mindfulness meditation sessions *

Serenity Garden & BTT*





PERMA adopted

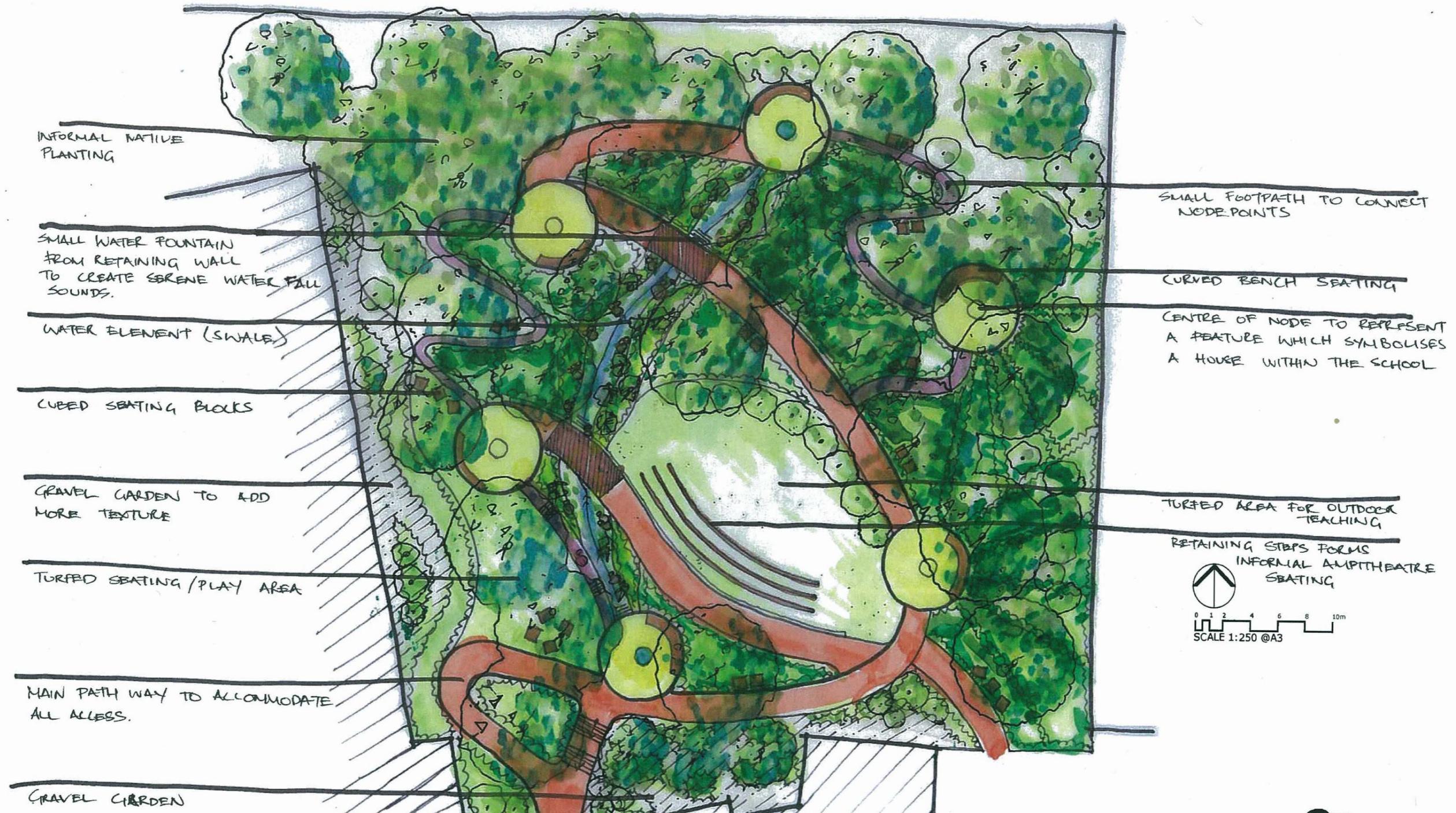
Agreed that PERMA* (Positive Emotions, Engagement, Relationships, Meaning and Achievement) be the official framework to which school adheres

New position of Coordinator of Positive Education* created to advance programs and appointee started in 2013





Serenity Garden - Swanbury Penglase Architects





Values & Strengths aligned

Continuing focus on alignment of strengths and values

Values Ed project – Service*

Leadership through Strengths*

Peer Mentoring (cross age)*

PLP innovations

Strengths circles and narratives*

AC connections GCs and CCPs

Sport programs and strengths*

Policy rewrites influenced e.g.

Responsible User Agreement* and

Positive Relationships Agreement*





Values / Strengths areas	
<p>Scotch Vision and Core Values statement</p>	<p><i>Vision</i> Inspiring Individuals, Embracing Community</p> <p><i>Core Values</i> The recognition of the worth of each person The acceptance and celebration of difference An ethic of care for our community Encouraging open participation The development of students who can achieve their potential and make a difference through their lives Fostering innovation and creativity Valuing our Scotch heritage</p>
<p>Values/Strengths incorporated in school policies / practices - examples</p>	<p>It is the aim of the College to make the language of virtues and strengths pervasive throughout our documentation of policy. It is also the aim of the College to infuse its teaching and learning practices with strengths-based approaches that closely align with our Core Values. For example, the new iteration of the MS <u>Behaviour</u> contract has been written in more positive language and makes specific mention of developing character strengths. The College publications such as <u>eNews</u> and Scotch Reports are also infused with references to strengths and values and each edition is based on a key character strength or virtue.</p>
<p>Values/strengths incorporated in teaching programs or co-curricular programs - examples</p>	<p>The College has adopted PERMA as its model of Positive Education and strengths-based approaches underpin this model.</p> <p>The aim of the College is to foster the use of positive education principles in all its teaching and co-curricular programs, particularly through a character strengths-based approach. For example, the library staff has created a collection of novels that explore particular strengths and shelved these in virtues clusters. Students are asked to identify on posters what strengths they have used to participate fully in the various Outdoor Education programs. The Rowing Squad and Pedal Prix Teams have begun to articulate what strengths students need to develop to bring to these activities.</p>



Values & Strengths contd.

<p>Developing student responsibility in local, national and global contexts – programs that involve students enacting values / strengths</p>	<p>Via the House system and the Student Leadership groups (JS,MS &SS) students participate in key service events throughout the year. For example;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• ALL students on Torrens Park campus construct birthing kits for distribution to third world villages• Years 6 – 9 students participate in the annual Walk-a-thon to raise funds to sponsor six children through World Vision• <u>volunteers</u> from all year levels and participate in restoring the natural environment by planting tube stock and clearing weeds in the <u>Brownhill Creek Recreation Park</u> in the “Dig Deep For Tomorrow” (a local environment sustainability initiative)
<p>Building student resilience and social skills</p>	<p>A fundamental expectation of our students is that they will develop their resiliency skills through actively participating a wide range of school-initiated activities The College also ensures student exposure to formal class-based resilience programs such as the Penn Resilience Program at Year 7, the Positive Psychology course at Year 9 and Strengths Stories in upper primary years</p> <p>Personal and social capability is developed via various programs. For example, Mind Lab in Year 6 and 7 teaches emotional intelligence skills through playing higher order thinking board games and the positive psychology course at Year 9 also focuses on how to use strengths when facing adversity including challenges via the robust Outdoor Education and Sport programs.</p>



Positive psychology influences all aspects of school offering where we focus on...

Values and Strengths, Resilience, Compassion, Hopefulness, Reflective practices, Self-control, Confidence, Kindness, Forgiveness, Appreciation of diversity, Contributing to society, Gratitude, Communicating effectively, Resolving conflict, Developing leadership skills, Working collaboratively, Dynamic thinking.





A final word...

“Not all that is measured counts, and not all that counts is measured”. Einstein

(Many surveys of students for feedback have been conducted but we did not establish baseline data nor control groups or controls in waiting via pre and post tests...). However, neither did GGS. This will be addressed by the CoPE from 2013.

Whilst we focus on strengths (an alternative to the disease model) we are very mindful of the ‘shadows’ of strengths that can be described as the absence of strengths or strengths in excess.