Steiner Education Australia

AUSTRALIAN STEINER CURRICULUM FRAMEWORK 2018

STEINER EDUCATIONAL & ACADEMIC FOUNDATIONS

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1. ABSTRACT

The purpose of this paper is to update the earlier Educational Foundations (SEA, 2011) document and expand the review of the indications which underpin the Steiner educational approach. Reference is made to the ACARA Shape papers and the Melbourne Goals but the focus shifts to an identification of the core characteristics of the Steiner educational approach and a more in-depth exploration and explication of key Steiner pedagogical indications.

As there are many introductory texts available that explain the Steiner educational approach, the intention of this paper is not to replicate these references but rather to appraise Steiner indications in relation to classic historical and contemporary educational perspectives. The review focuses on philosophical perspectives which underpin Steiner pedagogy and Steiner indications relating to educational psychology (how students learn), praxis (how the philosophical principles are put into practice in the classroom and school), teaching and research methodology and teachers’ professional learning. The indications are drawn from Steiner’s education texts and focus in particular on The Foundations of Human Experience (Steiner, 1919/1996) and A Modern Art of Education (Steiner, 1923/2004).
2. TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Abstract</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Table of Contents</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Introductory Overview</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.1 Core characteristics of Steiner Education</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.1.1 Guidelines identified by the International Forum of Waldorf</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.1.2 Guiding Principles of the Australian Steiner Curriculum</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. The Pedagogical Motif: Steiner’s Philosophy of Freedom</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.1 Steiner’s Life: A biographical preview</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.2 Thinking a new thought and enacting a free deed of love</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.3 The Use of Soul-Spiritual Terminology</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Steiner Curriculum and Research Methodology</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.1 The Steiner Art of Education</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.1.1 The Context of Steiner’s Ideas</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.1.2 Emotional Intelligence: Educating the Feelings</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.1.3 Soul Breathing: The Principle of Rhythmicity</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.1.4 The Teaching of Moral Values: Educating the Will</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.2 Steiner Teaching and Research Methodology</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.2.1 Goethean Phenomenology</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.2.2 Contemplative Inquiry</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.2.3 Participatory Action Research in the Steiner context</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Meeting the Changing Needs of Learners</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.1 Planning for the Educational Future</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.2 The Application of an Integral Lens</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.2.1 Rationale for Alignment of Wilber’s Quadrants with ASCF’s</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.3 Dialoguing with the OECD Learning Framework 2030</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.3.1 Rationale for Alignment of OECD Recommendations with ASCF’s</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.3.2 Learner Agency: Navigating through a complex, uncertain world</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.3.3 Need for a broad set of knowledge, skills, attitudes &amp; values in</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>action</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.3.4 Competencies to transform society and shape our future</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.3.5 Design Principles for moving toward an eco-systemic change</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Recommendations Arising Out of the Dialogical Review</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.1 What the Steiner Approach can offer the Discourse on Educational</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Futures</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.2 Implications of Dialogical Exchange for Steiner teachers</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Reference List</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Glossary</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## List of Figures

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Figure</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Essential Characteristics of Waldorf Steiner Education</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## List of Extracts

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Extract</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Steiner’s main epistemological claims</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Accreditation of the Australian Steiner Curriculum Framework by ACARA</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## List of Tables

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>The Steps of Zajonc’s (2009) Method and their alignment with Steiner’s Fourfold Model</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Application of Steiner’s Fourfold Model in different forms of Phenomenology</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Comparing Steiner’s and Eisner’s call for Teacher Research</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Pedagogical Values underpinning Waldorf Steiner Educational Approach</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Wilber’s (2000) AQAL Diagram</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Alignment of Wilber’s (2000) AQAL Diagram and Steiner Pedagogical Values (Gidley, 2009, 2016; SEA, 2011)</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Design plan for a dialogical exchange between Wilber’s (2000) AQAL lens, the Steiner pedagogies (Gidley, 2009, 2016; SEA, 2011) and OECD (2018) recommendations</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Kindred Fields of Research for Steiner Teachers and Educators</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>A Steiner response to the curriculum challenges identified in the OECD Learning Framework (2018, p.6)</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>A Steiner response to the curriculum challenges identified in the OECD Learning Framework (2018, pp.6-7)</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3. INTRODUCTORY OVERVIEW

The aim of Steiner’s *anthroposophy*,¹ on which Waldorf Steiner pedagogy is built, is to connect the spiritual in the human being with the spiritual in the world. Unlike the denominational schools and other forms of spiritual education, Steiner education grows out of an educational psychology and physiology that researches the relationship between the physical, soul and spiritual aspects of our being. Steiner expanded the conceptual framework of biological evolution to include a cultural and spiritual perspective and proposed that every human being recapitulates over the course of a lifetime, the stages of development through which humanity has evolved.

The Steiner school curriculum therefore unfolds against the expansive backdrop of the cultural and spiritual development of humanity and the gradual evolution of consciousness. Guided by this evolutionary perspective Steiner pedagogy pays attention to the influence of the spirit of the times and of place (the zeitgeist)² on the destiny of the individual. The life journey of students is understood from a holistic perspective: self-growth and the search for meaning flourishes within the context of caring relationships that encompass family, community, nations and the evolving global situation.

Steiner education is characterized by the creative nature of its educational approach which strives towards the integrated development of the soul faculties³ of thinking, feeling and willing. Founded and developed in Germany in the early 20th century by Rudolf Steiner (1861 – 1925), the first school opened in Stuttgart, Germany in 1919; in Kings Langley, Hertfordshire in the UK between1922 and 1925; and in Castlecrag, Sydney, Australia in 1957. There are currently over 1,200 Steiner schools worldwide and 2,000 Early Years Centres and Kindergartens in a total of 60 different countries.⁴ Steiner-Waldorf schools meet the policy requirements of the diverse educational authorities of their respective countries. Steiner education is state funded in most European countries as well as in Australia, New Zealand, Sweden and Holland. In the United Kingdom there are currently four state-funded Steiner Academies.⁵ The rest are privately funded but aspire to make their education available to as wide a community as possible. Several public-funded ‘charter’ schools in the United States follow Steiner pedagogical principles.

The holistic and spiritual principles underpinning the pedagogy provide a core unifying element that facilitates their interpretation in the unique contexts in which Steiner educational frameworks are researched and developed (ASCF, 2011). These key qualities of the Steiner curriculum are adapted on an ongoing basis in widely diverse settings. There are 60 independent Steiner schools in Australia and 11 schools in Victoria which offer a Steiner stream within government schools (Bak, 2014); 52 schools are members of either Steiner Education Australia (SEA) or the Federation of Rudolf Steiner Waldorf Schools in New Zealand.

¹ *Anthroposophy means (love of) wisdom of humanity (Anthro = human, Sophia = wisdom); also see glossary.
² See glossary.
³ Ibid.#2.
⁴ https://www.freundewaldorf.de/fileadmin/user_upload/images/Waldorf_World_List/Waldorf_World_List.pdf
⁵ http://www.steinerwaldorf.org/
3.1 Core Characteristics of the Steiner Approach

3.1.1 Guidelines identified by the International Forum of Waldorf Steiner Schools
At a meeting in November 2014 the members of the International Forum of Waldorf Steiner Schools (the Hague Circle), building on the characteristic features they passed in 2009, established further guidelines for Waldorf Steiner schools. They identified the “essential characteristics” of the Waldorf Steiner approach as detailed below.

Interconnectedness and individual identity
The Waldorf Steiner school movement forms an international network of autonomous schools which support each other on local, regional, national and international levels. The unique character of each Steiner school is moulded by its historical development, leading personalities and local context. These factors in turn influence the “creative and responsibly-minded way” in which schools implement the pedagogy, curriculum, art of education and teaching.

The Curriculum
The curriculum “is not an arbitrary part of Waldorf pedagogy but rather a constituent element.” Steiner indications and the Western values embedded in their content need to be interpreted in a way that maintains their pedagogical intention but meets the needs of local contexts and the policy guidelines of state education authorities.

The relationship between the teachers and pupils and their relationship to the world
As Steiner (1919/1996) indications place strong emphasis on the pedagogical relevance of forming meaningful relationships, teachers “bear a special responsibility” to honour the trust which students place in them, their environment and the world around them.

The artistic approach
The underlying intention of Waldorf Steiner education is for students to enkindle within themselves purpose and direction in their lives (Marie Steiner, 1923/1943) and an aspiration to support the flourishing development of humanity. The art of education serves this twofold aim by imbuing teaching with life and by supporting the integrated unfolding in students of their soul faculties of thinking, feeling and willing. For teachers to enact this pedagogical art they need to nurture their own artistic abilities, creatively apply artistic materials and teaching strategies in lessons, and cultivate an aesthetic classroom and school environment.

The forms: shaping the school and the lessons
School structures are informed by teachers’ and school leaders’ pedagogical understanding of human development (Steiner, 1919/1996) and the social mission of education (Steiner, 1919/1997). The classes are inclusive: they are co-educational and grouped according to age, rather than standardised.

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6 Pedagogical Section, Journal No.55, p.13.
7 In the section that follows I list the “essential characteristics” identified by the Hague Circle and summarise and supplement their review.
8 Ibid., p.14
9 Ibid.
10 Ibid., p.15
or ‘streamed’ ability. Ideally, in the Primary School teachers follow one class for seven years. The Main Lesson, the integrated teaching of a chosen topic for a block of two to four weeks, is timetabled for the first lesson of the day (if possible) and other subjects follow. The curriculum is all-inclusive and unfolds from Kindergarten to Year 12.

The teachers form a collegium or ‘College of Teachers’ and collaboratively share the pedagogical responsibility for the school. Teachers design and run their classes guided by their unique talents and competencies, relationship to their students, and their understanding of human development and the aims of Waldorf Steiner education. Faculty meetings provide a vessel that meets administrative as well as professional learning needs of the school and teachers. Together teachers form a living ‘professional learning community.’

Entrepreneurial Health and School Leadership
In managing the development of individual schools, school leaders guide and balance the growth process in a way that ensures entrepreneurial health so that the pedagogical initiative continues to thrive. All Waldorf Steiner schools are self-governed and not state-governed. The organisation, finances and administration of Waldorf Steiner schools follow Steiner’s pedagogical indications which are reviewed and implemented according to the mission of individual schools.

The School Community: Living Together
In their co-operative learning together educational leaders, administrators, teachers, parents, students and co-workers strive to understand and implement Steiner’s pedagogical indications and in this way create a vibrant learning community. Educational leaders and administrators in Waldorf Steiner schools develop meaningful forms of governance that are marked by human dignity and characterised by leadership styles that value safety and trust (Moller, 2012, 2014) and collegial caring and commitment (Wolf, 2010, p.92). These forms, Gidley (2013) observes, are aligned with emerging holarchical governance structures that resonate with Steiner’s (1894/1964) “ethical individualism.”

I consider collective individualism – or ethical individualism – to be an emergent 21st human faculty that has the capacity to integrate the autonomy of individualism, the familial relations that used to exist in pre-industrial organizations, and the new holarchical organizational structures that are needed to carry us into the complex, paradoxical and uncertain planetary future ahead. (Gidley, 2012, p.19).

3.1.2 Guiding Principles of the Australian Steiner Curriculum Framework
In the Education Foundations (SEA, 2011) the following guiding principles were identified:
- A global orientation and respect for multiculturalism, indigenous inclusion and Asian literacy;
- Foundational support for socio-emotional learning and the inclusion of all students;
- Encouragement of confidence and creativity;
- Deep knowledge strategies and the effective learning of literacy and numeracy skills;
- A values rich curriculum oriented towards moral growth, social consciousness and citizenship (p.12).

11 See glossary.
12 Ibid. #13.
13 Ibid. #13.
15 Ibid. #14
16 Adapted from Pedagogical Section, Journal No.55, p.17.
Figure 1: Essential Characteristics of Waldorf Steiner Education
4. THE PEDAGOGICAL MOTIF: STEINER’S PHILOSOPHY OF FREEDOM

4.1 Steiner’s life and times: A biographical overview

In his early career Steiner first edited a series of Goethe's scientific writings and went on, in 1890, to take up a position at the Schiller-Goethe Archives in Weimar where he worked for several years editing the entire collection of Goethe’s natural scientific writings. During this period Steiner (1882/1963, 1886/1988) published his doctoral dissertation as Wahrheit und Wissenschaft (Truth and Science), and then published the works of Schopenhauer in twelve volumes and the works of Jean Paul in eight volumes. He was invited, by Nietzsche’s sister, Elizabeth Forster Nietzsche, to organize the Nietzsche archive in Naumberg. Although Steiner (1895/1985) chose not to take up this position, he commemorated Nietzsche in the book Friedrich Nietzsche, Fighter for Freedom.

The joining of the Theosophical Society and his later leadership of it, played a further formative influence on Steiner’s early career. A defining moment arose for Steiner when he chose to break away from the society and to establish his own Anthroposophical Society. At this point Steiner (1923/2004) realized that he wished to work towards the “re-membering” of Western culture by the bringing together of the disciplines of science, art, religion and morality. The re-uniting of science and spirit in a new spiritual science became the leitmotif or design theme of his life’s work. For Steiner this meant applying the clarity of thinking characteristic of Western philosophy and scientific method to spiritual questions, in a way that was distinctly different from traditional mystic approaches.

Steiner developed the pedagogical basis of Steiner education in three phases which mirror the wider unfolding of anthroposophical principles in practical initiatives (Kiersch, 1978, 2006). The first educational initiative arose out of Steiner’s anthroposophical picture of human development (1902 to 1910) which builds on a soul-spiritual understanding of the human being; the second phase was characterized by a “renewal of the arts” which lasted from 1910 until the culmination in the building of the first Goetheanum; the final phase, which began with the publication of Steiner’s Riddles of the Soul in 1917, saw the application of anthroposophical principles in a widely diverse range of disciplines such as architecture, biodynamic agriculture, and anthroposophical medicine (Kiersch, 2006, p.15).

According to Lachman (2007), Steiner came to emulate his “hero and mentor Goethe:” Steiner was a universal man and a “creative thinker who was one of the last to apply his considerable mind and remarkable intuitive powers to the whole spectrum of human experience.”

4.2 Thinking a new thought and enacting a free deed of love

Robert McDermott, in Jonathan Stedall’s documentary film (2011) The Challenge of Rudolf Steiner, sums up Steiner’s (1894/1964) main premise in The Philosophy of Freedom as the ability to think a new thought and to enact a free deed. In this way McDermott emphasizes the link between a new thought and the question of free will. Behind the question of what it means to think a new thought, lies a deeper one: What is the source of a new idea?

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17 See glossary.
18 Ibid.#20
Today it is still relevant, given the strong emphasis placed on creativity as a competence required for the 21st Century (ACARA, 2011; OECD, 2018), to question the kind of creativity that is valued today and to ask whether the source of creativity is taken into consideration: Is creativity understood to be a re-ordering of the old? Is creativity linked with the idea that machines are cleverer and more innovative than human beings? Ray Kurzweil (1999) argues strongly that before the next century is over, human beings will no longer be the most intelligent or capable type of entity on the planet because once a computer achieves human intelligence it will necessarily roar past it. Steiner, as passionately, disagrees with him. Yet, despite these differences, Kurzweil (1999) and Steiner (1917/2012) both agree that “the primary political and philosophical issue of the next century will be the definition of who we are.”

In his endeavour to scientifically ground the claims of Theosophy in a spiritual science, Steiner (1894/1964) wished to retrieve “revelation” as a form of “observation.”

Just as in the body, eye and ear develop as organs of perception, as senses for bodily processes, so do humans develop in themselves soul and spiritual organs of perception through which the soul and spiritual worlds are opened to them. (Steiner, 1922/1971)

Steiner set out his epistemological claims in The Philosophy of Freedom and provided an ontological context for this philosophy in his later writings (Schickler, 2005). In his extensive lectures and writings Steiner (1999) re-imagined and grounded “revelation” as three super-sentient capacities: Imagination, Inspiration & Intuition.

Arguing against the main propositions of Kant’s (1781) moral philosophy as set out in the Critique of Reason, Steiner (1894/1964) claims that placing a moral code at the pinnacle of ethical striving would turn humans into automatons. Writing before the emergence of the qualitative research tradition, Steiner tried to alert his readers to the limitations of quantitative forms of measurement (which favour averages and generalizations) in the field of moral values. He therefore argues against the idea of an average action or a general attribute. What is most general, he observes, are the actions of a criminal. What is highest, is the way in which an idea can light up in an individual and inspire a deed of love. For Steiner, the source of the new thought is the universal world of ideas.

When Steiner uses the word universal he is not referring to a fixed world of Platonic forms. As his view of the nature of creation is that it is dynamic and ever-evolving, his epistemology and anthroposophy should not be seen to be a “metanarrative” or a predetermined system of truth (Haralambous, 2016). Steiner repetitively emphasizes that his “truth claims” need to be tested in ongoing research. Agamben (1999), a contemporary continental philosopher, in a re-reading of Plato and Aristotle’s ideas about the nature of potentiality, argues, as Steiner does, that we are co-creators who have a part to play in this dynamic and ever-changing, ever-evolving creation.

Steiner (1894/1964) claims that the concept (i.e. the thought or idea) and percept are joined together by the intuition in the one act of knowing. In Bortoft’s (1996, 2012) words, the concept or idea makes an appearance: We can read this conceptual aspect or idea, ur-phenomenon or design plan of a phenomenon in the world. Unlike a blueprint, this idea or concept is not fixed, but expresses a seed-like potentiality. Like Agamben (19999), Bortoft argues that there is no two-world divide and that we can therefore have confidence in our ability to know the world.

From Steiner’s (1894/1964) point of view his idea of intuition overcomes the problem of subjectivity that troubles idealism: we do not impose our own thought structure on the world (Kant, 1922/1971; Agamben, 1999).

20 See glossary and section 5.1.1 below.
1781). Similarly, he observes, what happens outside in the world is not separate from what happens within us. In this way the problem of objectivity that troubles empiricism is also overcome.

Refuting Freud’s (1916/1963) idea of the *Id*, the beast within, Steiner (1894/1964) proposes that it is possible for us to rise above our instincts. Our capacity to bring together our highest driving force (conceptual or *living thinking*) and our highest motive (moral intuition) enables us to enact a free deed.

The sum of ideas which are effective in us, the concrete content of our intuitions, constitutes what is individual in each of us. To let this content express itself in life is both the highest moral driving force and the highest motive a human being can have. We may call this point of view ethical individualism. (Steiner, 1894/1964)

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**Extract 1: Steiner’s main epistemological claims (Haralambous, 2016, p.42)**

**Perception**

The object of perception: the thing-in-itself or percept is given to us; ii) The idea of a pre-given world of pure perception is only accessible to us as an artificial or theoretical construct; without conceptual framing, our perceptions would pass us by in a disconnected and undifferentiated form. 

(iii) The percept is what approaches us spontaneously “through the senses or through the spirit, before it has been grasped by the actively elaborated concept” (Steiner, 1894/1964, p.108). The way we form the inner representation of the percept, which is actually a mental image or memory picture (formed when the object is no longer before us), is influenced by our subjective responses (p.77). 

iv) There are two kinds of percepts: we form both inner percepts (of internal objects like self-image, feelings) and outer percepts (of external objects like trees) (ibid., p.49).

**Conception**

(v) Thinking is the starting point (of the act of knowing), and not concepts and ideas which are first gained by means of thinking (p.40). Thinking lies beyond subject and object; it is not something purely subjective (p.43). In so far as we think, we are part of the all-one being that pervades everything (p.70). 

(vi) Concepts cannot be gained through observation; they are added to observation. The concept forms part of the given and is numerically identical (ibid., p.69). 

(vii) Human self-consciousness is the stage on which concept and observation become linked to one another. It is the mediator between thinking and observation (ibid., p.42).

**Intuition**

viii) Our cognition is able to become active within the given itself in a way that enables the content of the world to enter into our cognitive activity. 

(ix) It is Living Thinking or intuition that is able to become active within the given and which is thus able to play a bridging role that connects the percept with the related concept in the one act of knowing.
Despite the effort he invested in writing his *Philosophy of Freedom*, Steiner realized that the question of freedom cannot be settled by philosophical argument. If we want to be free, he emphasized, we must work through our own inner activity to overcome unconscious urges and habitual thinking. Steiner’s idea of moral intuition and his philosophy of ethical individualism therefore have profound educational implications. If moral intuition is not given to us, if it is a capacity that we need to develop ourselves, then self-development is crucial. For Steiner, this means *education*.

Essentially, there is no education other than self-education, whatever the level may be. [...]. Every education is self-education, and as teachers we can only provide the environment for children’s self-education. We have to provide the most favourable conditions where, through our agency, children can educate themselves according to their own destinies. This is the attitude that teachers should have toward children, and such an attitude can be developed only through an ever-growing awareness of this fact. (Steiner, (1923/1996)

In Steiner’s view the most effective way to grow the capacity of moral intuition is through artistic training which educates not only our thinking, but our senses, feelings and our will as well.

### 4.3 The use of *soul-spiritual* terminology

While he requests that we apply *scientific rigour* in our research, Steiner’s epistemology and ontology, as outlined in his writings and lectures intentionally set out to cross the boundaries of conventional science and research (Schickler, 2005). This *boundary crossing* calls up the question of language: how can we document and qualify a way of knowing that may be beyond the awareness and experience of many readers? In his review of *Contemplative Inquiry*, Zajonc (2009) raises this “thorny question of the language of contemplative experience” (p.98). He explains that while he tries “to avoid language that presupposes an explicit spiritual context for contemplative practice,” this intention becomes more difficult to fulfil when the exercises deepen and become more complex.

The mystical and spiritual traditions of all ages and cultures have developed comprehensive descriptive systems that allow them to communicate at least some aspects of meditative experience to those who share their cultures. Such languages have made extensive use of metaphor and a special vocabulary that contrasts the sensual and psychological with a transcendent domain of soul and spirit. (Zajonc, 2009, p.98) Zajonc goes on to say that “if you remain agnostic about the issue, I ask your indulgence and good will.” A similar request needs to be made in relation to this text. Steiner has developed a specific language that scaffolds his research into the complexities of soul-spiritual experience. Steiner teachers need to learn this language as the *ontological levels and bodies* (e.g. the subtle bodies of the fourfold model) provide a conceptual framework that supports further teacher research into an anthroposophical understanding of human development (Haralambous, 2016).
5. STEINER CURRICULUM and RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

5.1 The Steiner Art of Education

5.1.1 The Context of Steiner’s Ideas

Steiner’s (1923/2004) indications for the *art of education* are aligned with both classic and more recent voices that identify the significance of the *missing* perspectives in the educational discourse and those that emphasize the relevance of imagination and creativity in education (Egan, 2005; Eisner, 1994, 1998). In relation to what is missing, Steiner (1894/1964), in his strong arguments against the negative influence of the dominance of the scientific materialism\(^{21}\) of his time, can be seen to be an early postmodernist (Haralambous, 2016, pp. 7-8).\(^{22}\)

In a reaction against modernity, the counter tradition of postmodernity has emerged as a diverse grouping together of thinkers in various disciplines who are similar mainly in their extensive critique of the underlying assumptions of scientific materialism and the beliefs and mores of the society formed by modernism. (ibid.)

Lyotard, a leading postmodernist, applied the term “modern” to mean any science that made legitimacy claims and especially an “explicit appeal to some grand narrative, such as the dialectics of Spirit, the hermeneutics of meaning, the emancipation of the rational, or working subject, or the creation of wealth” (1984, p.xxiii). Cheek and Gough (2005) observe that postmodernism then “can be understood as the erosion of trust in such metanarratives across the various disciplines” (p.302).\(^{23}\)

Gare (2002) suggests that the postmodern tradition began in Germany at the end of the eighteenth century and the beginning of the nineteenth century. He names Herder, Goethe and Schelling as early and “preeminent” leaders of the movement. Gare notes that these thinkers developed their ideas as a more radical alternative to the idealist challenge which Kant, Fichte, and Hegel had already formulated in response to scientific materialism (ibid.).

Living and working in this context, in Germany, one hundred years later, Steiner was actively engaged in a transdisciplinary exploration (Brown, 2010) of these modernist and postmodernist ideas. Finding his thinking aligned with that of Goethe and Schelling in particular, he set about critiquing the idealism of Kant, Fichte and Hegel on the one hand, and naïve realism and positivist science on the other. He claimed in his *Philosophy of Freedom* (1894/1967) to have bridged the gap between realism and idealism. (Ginges, 2012; Haralambous, 2016, p.8)\(^{24}\)

As the qualitative research tradition has arisen as an offshoot of the postmodernist movement (Travers, 2006), Steiner’s *soul-spiritual* research agenda and indications for the *art of education* can be seen to be roughly aligned with this tradition (ibid.). In her research into Arts Education in Australia, Robyn Ewing (2010) points out that “it is understandable that the Arts find more affinity with qualitative research methodologies due to their ability to explore process and deal with the complexities and ambiguities inherent in the Arts” (p.16). Steiner would agree with this reflection and also with the qualification Ewing (2010) makes to her remark (above), when she observes that “the ‘weakness’ of qualitative methodologies is that they do not readily allow for generalising of research

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\(^{21}\) The term scientific materialism was first used by Alfred North Whitehead in 1925 to characterize the “master tradition of thought” (Gare, 2002) of modernity. Also see glossary.

\(^{22}\) For an argument of why Steiner’s anthroposophy should not be seen as a metanarrative, see Haralambous (2016).

\(^{23}\) See glossary for a review of the meaning of grand or meta-narratives.

\(^{24}\) Although Steiner valued this philosophical treatise above all his other work, it has not received widespread recognition outside Anthroposophical circles (Ginges, 2012; McDermott, 2011; Schickler, 2005).
findings across projects,” and that as “a balance, and, where appropriate, mixed method research should be employed” (p.16). The indications for the art of education which Steiner (1923/2004) offers grow out of his conviction that the renewal of education and culture is dependent on the “re-membering” or integration of the discipline areas of not only science and art, but of religion and morality as well. By extending the mixed methods research approach to include the latter two subject areas and the soul-spiritual aspects of human development, the Steiner education agenda pushes beyond the conventional boundaries of even mixed methods research. Steiner (1923/2004) claims that the truer and deeper aspects of human nature cannot be grasped by purely scientific modes of cognition. Science itself must become art if we want to understand the inner nature of the being of humanity.

5.1.2 Emotional Intelligence: Educating the Feelings

Many of the educators who focus on the relevance of the arts (Eisner, 1994, 1998), imagination (Egan, 2005, Robinson, 2010, 2011, 2015), and creativity (Allen, 2012; Craft, 2005; Starko, 2013) identify the link between these areas of research and emotional intelligence (Goleman, 1995; Goleman and Lucas, 2012) and resilience (Chemi, 2017). The Imagination in Education Research Group (IERG), in answer to the question: What is Imagination? propose that:

It is the ability to think of the possible, not just the actual; it is the source of invention, novelty, and flexibility in human thinking; it is not distinct from rationality but is rather a capacity that greatly enriches rational thinking; it is tied to our ability to form images in the mind, and image-forming commonly involves emotions.26

In reviewing teaching techniques that can be used to inspire wonder and awe, Kieran Egan (the founder of IERG), reflects that while in general the sense of awe is seen to be “the prime religious emotion,” awe “also finds many other kinds of expression” (2013, p.277):

It is a quality connected with love, and it is when our experience is infused with this emotion that we most understand what it means to have a love of life. It is what stimulates us sometimes to dance rather than to walk, to sing rather than to talk. And it is something we feel must be a central component of what we communicate to children in any educational program worthy of the name. (p.278)

It is this broader sense, of awe connected with love, that Steiner refers when he speaks of religious feeling (even though he uses the word religious):

We can say, therefore, that if we wish to reach a person in a living way and bring vital spirit to humankind, we must enter the artistic. And if we wish to bring the feeling spirit to a human being, we must go about this not only artistically, but also with a religious feeling, which alone can penetrate the reality of spirit. (Steiner, 1923/2004)

From a Steiner (1923/1996) perspective, love, when transformed through artistic experience and inner development, can become a cognitive force,27 one that can support us to penetrate through to a more profound understanding of the nature of human development (Zajonc, 2009). One of the main indications of the Steiner art of teaching is to educate the feelings of students by using multimodal artistic techniques (SEA, 2011) and by embedding an aesthetic approach in the teaching of all subjects.

25 Steiner refers in many lectures and education texts to the art of education. I have selected to reference the lecture cycle entitled A Modern Art of Education (1923/2004) as one that is indicative of his writings on this topic in general.

26 https://ierg.ca/about-us/a-brief-guide-to-imaginative-education/

27 See Section 6.3.4 (p.33) for a further review of this idea of love as cognitive force in relation to the co-working of brain and heart.
Our task is to find teaching methods that continually engage the whole human being. We would not succeed in this endeavour if we failed to concentrate on developing the human sense of art. By developing this sense, we lend strength to the future inclination of children to become interested in the world in ways that are appropriate to each individual’s total being. [...] It is not simply a matter of cultivating the artistic aspect; our teaching itself, in every subject, must be drawn from the artistic realm. Every method must be permeated by the artistic element. Education must become a true art. (Steiner, 1919/2000)

Steiner’s (1919/1996) indications for the art of education recommend educating the feelings of students by appealing to their senses and by saturating the delivery of content and teaching techniques with sense-rich experiences. Our sense awareness and our feelings are closely intertwined as reflected in the words sentience, sensitivity and ‘sense and sensibility’ (Jane Austen, 1811); our sensing and our emotions then, are “two sides of the same coin” (Blanning, 2012). We notice this interrelationship most readily at the polarities of extreme boredom and animated interest in the world. “Excessive boredom,” Steiner (1999) warns, “leads to illness.” The phrase “bored to death,” illustrates “an appropriate sense of this fact” (p.103). While boredom results in an inner constriction, a contraction of ourselves into our inner world, an enthusiastic response to the world around us is characterised by an expansive, outgoing mood of soul (Blanning, 2012).

Reminding ourselves that the sentient body is related to the element of air, we may not be surprised to find here, analogous to expansion and compression of air, a quality of relaxing and contracting e.g. in the way we breathe or in the tension and tonus of the muscles. When observing a person, it can be helpful to listen to a person’s breathing. Here we find an important psychosomatic indicator, e.g. snorting, laughing, sighing and so on. In fact, we then observe the interrelationship of depth and rhythm of the breath. The ‘how’ of breathing speaks a ‘soul-language’. (Bruell, 2012, p.39)

5.1.3 Soul Breathing: The Principle of Rhythmicity

Sympathy and antipathy, Steiner (1919/1996, 1999) reflects, are the core qualities of our emotional or “soul life.” In sympathy we are drawn towards an object, phenomenon or person which evokes sympathetic feelings is us. By contrast, feelings of antipathy are aroused when we find something unattractive and are repelled by it. In our emotional life, on some level, we swing constantly between these two poles (Steiner, 1999).

Steiner’s observations concerning the nature of polarities at work on physiological and psycho-spiritual levels is embedded in his pedagogy as a leading indication. Unlike the opposition between binaries which needs to be synthesized or overcome, polarities require harmonising which is brought about through complex and rhythmic articulation and dynamic alternation (Haralambous, 2016, p.217; Mathison, 2015, p.54). One way the principle of rhythmicity is expressed in Steiner education is through the idea of soul breathing: teachers need to be aware that antipathetic forces active in intellectual thinking (experienced as a breathing in) need to be harmonized with the influence of sympathy at work in imagination (experienced as a breathing out). Teachers orchestrate the rhythmic interplay of these forces through their choice of relevant learning activities on a moment-
by-moment, daily, weekly and yearly basis. The continuation of the same integrated subject content during the two to three weeks (or more) of the main lesson,\(^{31}\) for example, also enables teachers to build healthy rhythms into their teaching.

Steiner’s (1919/1996) indication that disciplined and strengthened motivation (what he describes as the intensification of sympathetic forces active in the will) supports us to be creative and imaginative, is substantiated by the findings of a worldwide research project carried out by Csikszentmihalyi (1990). The creative flow process, Csikszentmihalyi observes, is an “optimal experience” where the amplified sympathy that Steiner identifies is so strong that for the people who are involved in an activity “nothing else seems to matter; the experience itself is so enjoyable that people will do it even at great cost, for the sheer sake of doing it” (1990, p.4). In more recent research into creativity and the psychology of discovery, Csikszentmihalyi (2013) observes that creative persons are unanimous in the expression of their “love for what they do” (p.107). He also notes that they “know what needs to be done and are clear on their goals,” and that “action and awareness are merged” (ibid.).

Steiner teachers are guided by their understanding that love of the action (which is a form of heightened sympathy) promotes children’s learning. They recognize that their own vitality and interest in what they are teaching is not only conveyed to their class but is an influence that permeates the souls – and bodies – of their students.\(^{32}\) Teachers strive to balance students’ enthusiastic engagement with periods of reflective observation. They also aim to fill the will, their own and that of their students, with a sense of artistry so that their learning tasks can be revitalized through joyfulness.

5.1.4 The Teaching of Moral Values: Educating the Will

The level of motivation and will of students is more likely to be engaged and their memory strengthened if teachers awaken their lively interest. The more vivid the inner images (or mental pictures) which the teacher encourages students to create, the more readily students will be able to step into the imagined scenario and thus enrich their inner lives (Staley, 2017, pp.84-85). Rather than using memorisation strategies teachers can appeal to students’ willing and feeling through artistic experience which brings new joy every time a task is repeated (Steiner, 1919/1996). Teaching strategies aimed at strengthening the will of students include: well organized (and rhythmic) repetition; guiding students to undertake regular chores to develop good habits; supporting students to themselves identify tasks that need to be done so that they can commit to them and thereby strengthen their will out of their own impulses.\(^{33}\)

You cannot have the proper effect upon the child’s will when you tell the child just once what is right, but only when you allow the child to do something today, tomorrow and the next day. The proper action does not at all lie in reprimanding the child or giving the child rules of morality, but in guiding the child to something that you believe will awaken a feeling for what is right and allowing the child to repeat this. You must raise such deeds to habit. The more things remain as unconscious habit, the better it is for the development of feeling. The more the child becomes aware of the need to do deeds out of devotion to repetition, because they should and must be done, the more you elevate these to true will impulses. Thus, unconscious repetition cultivates feeling; fully conscious repetition cultivates the will impulse because through it the power of decision increases. (Steiner, 1919/1996, kl. 1223-1229)

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\(^{31}\) See Sections 3.1, 8.1 and glossary.

\(^{32}\) This claim has been more recently tested in research projects carried out by Chemi et al., 2017.

\(^{33}\) Steiner indications relating to how the education of the will provides a firm moral foundation are further reviewed in Section 6.3.1 below.
5.2 Steiner Teaching and Research Methodology

5.2.1 Goethean Phenomenology

Steiner teaching and research methodology is based on a form of Goethean Phenomenology which Steiner (1886/1988) aligned with the epistemological ideas that underpin The Philosophy of Freedom (1894/1964). Following Goethe’s guidelines for delicate empiricism (Bortoft, 1996, 2012), Steiner researchers (Hoffman, 1998, 2007; Holdrege, 2017; Seamon & Zajonc, 1998), have further developed the method. As outlined in the first Education Foundation Paper (SEA, 2011, p.32), the steps of the method underpin the content elaborations in the Australian Steiner Curriculum Framework (SEA, 2011).

Whereas many other educational approaches and text book styled strategies recommend that teachers begin a class with the definition of a new concept, Steiner teachers, when presenting new content, guide students to experience what is known as the phenomenological epoché or suspension of judgement (van Manen, 2014). This means that teachers support students to see the phenomenon with fresh eyes, as if seeing it for the first time, without conceptual labels which can block their perceptions (Bortoft, 1996/2012; Trotman, 2006). Teachers lead their students through a process of immersion in a selected experience and close, attentive observation of the phenomenon under review. In line with Goethe’s idea of exact sensorial imagination, teachers aim in this first step to help students to build trust in what they can learn through sense experience and embodied learning. 

Characterised by practice and rigour, Goethean style observation requires quiet attentiveness. Like traditional scientific-empirical methods objectivity and accuracy are highly prized; unlike them subjectivity is also valued [...]. Students are encouraged to develop sensual and emotional awareness as valid sources of knowledge and to pay attention to the connections and relations of the parts to the whole in the phenomena they are exploring. (SEA, 2011, p.41)

In the second stage, the process of observation moves into characterization of the subject. As identified in the content elaborations, usually “multimodal artistic activities” (SEA, 2011, p.33) are used to support students to know and understand the soul nature or unique qualities of the subject of the lesson. In the third stage, through students’ questions and those that are thoughtfully posed by teachers, the underlying conceptual aspects of the subject are discovered (Bruner, 1986, 1990), explored and further reviewed. “Often this stage is characterised by the ‘aha moment’ or ‘light-bulb flash’ that accompanies insightful learning” (SEA, 2011, p.32). Now the phenomenon, derived “from the Greek phaenesthai, meaning to flare up, to show itself,” (Trotman, 2006, p.246) can make an appearance and become conceptually visible as the idea that lives within it (Bortoft, 1996, 2012).

The three closely interrelated stages often overlap and all apply active learning principles (Simons, 1997, p.19). Goethean observation is recognized to be a form of inwardly active learning. Depending on the nature of the content, any of the stages can also entail outwardly active learning in the more traditional sense of immersion in experience through embodied and hands on learning.

In many instances students literally learn by using their hands: in arts and crafts lessons, when learning technological skills (woodwork, weaving, spinning, sewing, etc.), or when manipulating objects in natural science lessons (plants, rocks, insects, water, magnetic fields) and equipment (rulers, balances, test tubes, thermometers, telescopes). (SEA, 2011, p.41)

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34 See glossary for a review of the meaning of the epoché. Steiner teachers do not present the epoché to students as an idea, only as an experience.

35 See Sections 5.1.2, 5.1.3 and 5.1.4
These Steiner guidelines are supported by the more recent learning principles identified by Watkins, Carnell & Lodge (2007) who, in their appraisal of factors which influence effective and active learning in classrooms, point out that students “need the experience and the means to transform it in order to create knowledge” (p.71). They explain that “the role of reflection is crucial – indeed instead of the phrase ‘active learning’, it might be better to speak of ‘action-reflection learning’” (p.71). The phenomenological process supports the kind of active learning that has reflection embedded in each of the three steps.

Caine, Caine, McClintic & Klimek (2009), in their review of “brain/mind learning principles,” identify “three foundational categories of cognition” which are also aligned with the Steiner phenomenological method. They note that for optimal learning to take place learners need to be in a state “relaxed alertness.” Caine et al then observe that teachers need to orchestrate “immersion in complex experience.” Their guidelines here are of interest to Steiner teachers as they resonate with strategies listed in the multimodal artistic activities of the Australian Steiner Curriculum Framework (SEA, 2011). Like Watkins, Carnell & Lodge (2007), Caine et al discuss “active processing” and offer suggestions on how learners can most effectively integrate information which resonate with the Steiner focus on the integration of both content and the students’ faculties of head, heart and hands.

5.2.2 Contemplative Inquiry

In seeking to know and understand their students (AITSL, 2011) Steiner teachers practice a form of phenomenological research that is traditionally known as the ‘Child Study’ (Wiechert, 2014). Zajonc’s (2009) Contemplative Inquiry, as a form of phenomenology, can be productively applied in Child Studies (and in teaching and curriculum research in general).36 Following Steiner (1912/2012, 1919/1994), Zajonc (2009) uses a strategy called cognitive breathing.37 He argues that just as we do not only breathe in, or out, inevitably we use both modes on a cognitive level as well, we think in-and-out. Through our tendency to privilege the focused attention that characterizes the in-breath (the taking in of the world in the onlooker mode), we tend to leave the out-breath (the dreaming out into the world in the participatory mode) underdeveloped. Although this mode of open attention often passes us by as an unnoticed activity, it is a state of mind that is aligned with the flow experience described by Csikszentmihalyi (1990, 2013),38 and as such is one that characterizes children’s play and all forms of artistic and creative endeavour.

Table 1: The Steps of Zajonc’s Method and their alignment with Steiner’s Fourfold Model 39

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Steps of method</th>
<th>Object</th>
<th>Image</th>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Agency or Being</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Capacities</td>
<td>Discernment</td>
<td>Imagination</td>
<td>Inspiration</td>
<td>Intuition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bodies</td>
<td>Physical</td>
<td>Etheric (life)</td>
<td>Astral (emotion)</td>
<td>Ego (“I” or Self)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elements</td>
<td>Earth</td>
<td>Water</td>
<td>Air</td>
<td>Fire</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Levels</td>
<td>Mineral</td>
<td>Plant</td>
<td>Animal</td>
<td>Human</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sciences</td>
<td>Physics</td>
<td>Botany</td>
<td>Biology</td>
<td>Psychology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Type of Thinking</td>
<td>Causal reasoning</td>
<td>Correlational</td>
<td></td>
<td>Teleological</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

38 See Section 3.1.3
39 Sourced from Table 9 in Haralambous, 2016, p.67; See glossary for a review of terms (etheric, astral and ego).
Explanation of Table 1:
In describing the four steps of the method of Contemplative Inquiry, Zajonc (2009) uses the analogy of an artist who glances to and fro from the object in nature which she is painting to “the image on her canvas” (p.192). Through her activity the painting brings to expression “the being of the painting as it lives in her.” The object in nature, Zajonc suggests, has been created in a similar manner (pp.192-193; my use of emphasis). The steps are based on Steiner’s Fourfold Model. The table illustrates that the steps of Contemplative Inquiry method relate to various capacities, bodies, levels of being (or ontological categories), sciences and types of thinking. The names and structures of the “bodies” are drawn from both the Eastern (Taoist/Buddhist) and Western (hermetic) spiritual traditions. It is important that Steiner’s ontological models are used to research ways of mapping the structures which themselves are subject to evolutionary processes. Zajonc’s Contemplative Inquiry offers a meditative methodology that supports the emergence of new insights, rather than a recipe-like application of typologies (Haralambous, 2016, pp.66-68). When following Zajonc’s (2009) Contemplative Inquiry methods in their teaching, child studies and curriculum research, teachers can use the cognitive breathing device in each of the three stages of Goethean Phenomenology that are described in Section 5.3.1 above, and the second stage can be expanded into two steps (which focus in turn on life and emotion), as illustrated in Table 2 below:

Table 2: The Application of Steiner’s Fourfold Model in Different Forms of Phenomenology

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Contemplative Inquiry</th>
<th>Level of Inquiry</th>
<th>Phenomenology</th>
<th>Content Elaboration</th>
<th>Type of Thinking</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Object</td>
<td>Causal</td>
<td>Observation</td>
<td>Skills</td>
<td>Rational</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Image</td>
<td>Etheric (life)</td>
<td>Characterisation</td>
<td>Understanding</td>
<td>Correlational</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Activity</td>
<td>Astral (emotion)</td>
<td>Discovery</td>
<td>Knowledge</td>
<td>Teleological</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agency or Being</td>
<td>Ego (“I” or Self)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Explanation of Table 2:
When teachers guide students through the characterisation stage of Goethean Phenomenology they can, as a sub-stage of the second step, focus on image-making; they can also bear in mind the life and process aspects of the phenomenon under review. Teachers are able then, in the second sub-stage of this step to create multimodal artistic tasks that support students in their exploration of the sentient qualities and soul nature of the phenomenon. It is possible to direct this inquiry inwards as well – teachers can ask students (in an age-appropriate manner) to explore the feelings the subject content calls up for them.

5.2.3 Participatory Action Research in a Steiner Context
Steiner set in place structures and processes to support teachers to review and revitalize his curriculum indications on an ongoing basis (Haralambous, 2016; Rawson, Masters & Avison, 2013). He observes that the school should be a type of higher academy where teachers from different subject areas present and review their research. The sharing of the practical, lived experiences in the
classroom is a most valuable form of professional learning (Steiner, 1923/2004). It is interesting to note that Eisner (2002), describing features of “the kind of schools we need,” makes similar points.

**Table 3: Comparing Steiner and Eisner’s Call for Teacher Research**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Eisner: The Kind of Schools we Need</th>
<th>Steiner: A Modern Art of Education</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>“The kind of schools we need would provide time during the school day at least once a week for teachers to meet to discuss and share their work, their hopes, and their problems with their colleagues. It is the school, not the university, that is the real centre of teacher education (p.577).” “The kind of schools we need would provide opportunities for members of subject-matter departments to meet to share their work. It would recognize that different fields have different needs and that sharing with in fields is a way to promote coherence for students (p.578).” The kind of schools we need would use videotaped teaching episodes to refine teachers’ ability to take the practice of teaching apart - not in the negative sense, but as a way of enlarging our understanding of a complex and subtle process. No one denies that teaching is a subtle and complex art. At least it is an art when it is done well. To teach really well, it is necessary to reflect on the processes of one’s own teaching and on the teaching practices of others (Eisner, 2002, p.579).</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“These meetings are really a living “higher education,” since the college of teachers is a kind of permanent academy. [...] teachers’ every practical experience in school becomes part of their own education. Teachers will [...] educate themselves through their teaching, gaining a profound psychological insight into the practical side of education on the one hand, and on the other insights into the children’s qualities, characters, and temperaments. All the experiences and knowledge acquired from the teaching are pooled at these meetings. Thus, in spirit and soul, the college of teachers becomes a whole, in which each member knows what the others are doing, what experience has taught them, and what progress they have made as the result of their work in the classroom with the children. In effect, the college of teachers becomes a central organ from which the whole life of practical teaching flows, helping teachers to maintain their freshness and vitality. Perhaps the best effect of all is that the meetings enable teachers to maintain their inner vitality, instead of growing old in soul and spirit” (Steiner, 1923/2004, kl.2819-2827).</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Steiner’s indications for teacher research are remarkably contemporary in nature and can be seen to be aligned with the methodology of Participatory Action Research. Although Action Research was initially aligned with Marxist ideologies more recent researchers have widened the research lens to embrace spiritual approaches to research (Ferrer, 2002; Heron & Reason, 2008; Kemmis, 2008; Reason & Bradbury, 2008).

We live in a participatory world. There is a primordial givenness of being in which the human body-mind actively participates in a co-creative dance which gives rise to the reality we experience. (Reason & Bradbury, 2001/2006, p.8; cited in Haralambous, 2016, p.124) In the same way that Steiner teachers can merge and creatively apply guidelines for Goethean Phenomenology and Contemplative Inquiry in their Child Studies, these methodologies can provide supplementary support for their Participatory Action Research.  

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42 It is not possible in this document to review the way the Steinerian-Goethean forms of Phenomenology and Participatory Action Research need to be adapted to suit teaching strategies in the three main phases of schooling. A brief overview, in relation to moral education, is offered in Section 6.3.2 below. For a further review, see the Childhood Development Paper (SEA, 2011) which provides age-appropriate teaching strategies for the various stages.
6. MEETING THE CHANGING NEEDS OF LEARNERS

6.1 Planning the Educational Future

In the *Education Foundations Paper* (SEA, 2011) key aspects of the Steiner educational approach which meet the identified needs of the changing educational landscape (Gidley, 2016; OECD, 2018) were identified to include increased interest in: creativity, complexity, flexibility, vitality; spiritual awareness; holism and integrality; pluralism and multiculturalism; and humanism (SEA, 2011, p.12). These characteristic features, which support teachers to meet the changing needs of learners were shown in the Australian Steiner Curriculum Framework (ASCF) to be aligned with the values and orientation of the *Melbourne Goals* (2008) as outlined in the Australian National Curriculum and expressed in the keywords: *successful learners, creative and confident individuals, and active and informed citizens* (ACARA, 2010). In the *Education Foundations Paper* (SEA, 2011) it was argued that the *Melbourne Goals* can be further developed and effectively consolidated in the ASCF because the Steiner educational approach is an integrated one that is underpinned by the Pedagogies of Life, Love, Wisdom and Voice (Gidley, 2009; SEA, 2011).

Table 4: Pedagogical Values underpinning the Waldorf Steiner Educational Approach

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ACARA Guidelines</th>
<th>ASCF Guidelines</th>
<th>Pedagogical Values of Steiner Education</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>HANDS</td>
<td>LIFE and VITALITY</td>
<td>Pedagogy of Life</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TRANSLATING theory into practical application.</td>
<td>Interactive transformation of knowledge &amp; experience.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HEART</td>
<td>LOVE and WARMTH</td>
<td>Pedagogy of Love</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNDERSTANDING</td>
<td>UNDERSTANDING</td>
<td>Pedagogy of Love</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Confident and creative individuals</td>
<td>Confident and creative individuals</td>
<td>Warmth, care, relationships, community, sense of belonging, reverence, connectedness.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HEAD</td>
<td>LIGHT of WISDOM</td>
<td>Pedagogy of Wisdom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KNOWLEDGE</td>
<td>KNOWLEDGE</td>
<td>Multi-modal learning modes, multiple intelligences, versatility, creativity and complexity.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Successful learners</td>
<td>Powerful learners</td>
<td>Pedagogy of Voice and Language</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VALUES</td>
<td>MORAL CAPACITY</td>
<td>BALANCE and EMBODIED VOICE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ACTIVE and INFORMED CITIZENS</td>
<td>Ethically aware and socially active students</td>
<td>Students finding their own authentic voice, integration, balance through deep knowing.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Different subject areas of the Australian Steiner Curriculum Framework (ASCF) have been accredited by ACARA between 2011-2014 and in 2017. See Section 6.3.2 below for the lists.
6.2 The Application of an Integral Lens

As Steiner education is characterized by the integrated (SEA, 2011) and integral (Gidley, 2007, 2009, 2016) nature of its approach, it is appropriate to apply an integral lens when reviewing the way Steiner indications support teachers to meet the needs of the educational future (Gidley, 1997, 1998, 2002; Gidley and Hampson, 2002; Haralambous, 2010). The Integral thinker, Ken Wilber (2000) presents the “four quadrant” overview (known as the AQAL Diagram, p.67) as a way to synthesize and bring a broad array of theories into dialogue with each other through one framework. Table 5 below provides an adaptation of Wilber’s (2000) AQAL framework.

Table 5: Wilber’s (2000) AQAL Diagram

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subjective</th>
<th>Objective</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Upper Left-Hand Quadrant</td>
<td>Upper Right-Hand Quadrant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IT</td>
<td>ITS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Behavioural</td>
<td>Social</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inter-subjective</td>
<td>Inter-objective</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lower Left-Hand Quadrant</td>
<td>Lower Right-Hand Quadrant</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Discussion of Table 5:
Wilber (2000) recommends undertaking an “integral task” that takes “the positive aspects of both premodernity and modernity, discards the negative influences and coordinates and integrates research findings in all of the levels in all of the quadrants” (pp. 65-67). There is a strong alignment between Wilber’s four quadrants and Gidley’s (2009, 2016) pedagogical themes or values. In her recent writing Gidley (2016) aligns the four pedagogical themes with “evolutionary discourses” and “postformal pedagogies” and describes the them as follows: Theme 1: Conscious, compassionate spiritual development; Theme 2: Mobile, life-enhancing thinking; Theme 3: Complexification of thinking & culture; Theme 4: Linguistic and paradigmatic boundary-crossing (p.147)


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subjective</th>
<th>Objective</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>LIGHT of WISDOM</td>
<td>LIFE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Complexification of thinking &amp; culture</td>
<td>Mobile, life-enhancing thinking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LOVE</td>
<td>VOICE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conscious, compassionate spiritual growth</td>
<td>Linguistic &amp; paradigmatic boundary-crossing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WE</td>
<td>ITS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>INTERSUBJECTIVE</td>
<td>INTEROBJECTIVE</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
6.2.1 Rationale for Alignment of Wilber’s Quadrants and ASCF Pedagogical Values

**Pedagogy of Wisdom**

A focus on the learner and the fulfillment of individual potential offers a fitting example of the values Wilber (2000) associates with the subjective ‘I’ quadrant. From a Steiner perspective we argue that this goal is best realized when the greater whole of social advancement is taken into consideration. The individual finds meaning and fulfillment through the realization of goals that are aligned with the overall wellbeing of others and the flourishing development of humanity (Haralambous, 2016, pp. 76, 257). The pedagogy that underlies this perspective is that of wisdom which is defined as “the power of judging rightly and following the soundest course of action, based on knowledge, experience, understanding, etc.; good judgment; sagacity.”

Steiner points out that the true value of an ‘I’ perspective is not an egotistical one, it is wise to be able to see the big picture.

Wisdom is something which strongly opposes human egoism. Wisdom is something which always reckons with the course of universal events. [...] [A] wise man cannot judge egoistically; for if one learns from the world, and grows in understanding for the world, one allows one’s judgment to be corrected by the world; thus wisdom detaches us from narrow and limited vision and brings us into harmony with itself. (Steiner, 1915)

**Pedagogy of Love**

In the *intersubjective* quadrant the pedagogical value of love informs our need to live in harmony with each other. The striving of Steiner educators and teachers to enact a wise education that is based on an understanding of human development is motivated by pedagogical love (Gidley, 2009; Zajonc, 2009; Kresin-Price, 2013).

The first thing we gave teachers in the seminar was a basic knowledge of the human being. We hoped that, by contemplating the true nature of humanity, inner enthusiasm and love for education would grow within them. With such knowledge comes a spontaneous love for humanity that is the very best quality for the practice of education. Pedagogy is a love for humanity, resulting from knowing humanity, and only on this basis can it be established. (Steiner, 1923, kl.1173-1177)

**Pedagogy of Life**

Wilber (2000) notes that scientific research exemplifies the behaviourist values of the objective quadrant. From a Steiner perspective, scientific knowledge of human development, needs to embrace the living processes of nature and the human being.

Humanizing academic activity is our goal. We must work toward bringing the human being to the fore in so-called objective scholarship, which must be grounded in life and in human beings. (Steiner, 1920/2007, p.15)

In support of his goals to *humanize academic activity* and to *ground objective scholarship* Steiner developed the three-and-four-fold models of human development which provide ontological structures for different levels of our bodies and of being in the world. Steiner’s detailed indications for *body, soul and spirit* (or hands, heart and head), and his idea of the etheric (that addresses the missing discourse on *life and processes of change and metamorphosis*) provide a conceptual framework that can be applied and further explored in teacher research.

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44 https://www.collinsdictionary.com/dictionary/english/wisdom
45 Lecture 5: Freeing Volition, in *A Modern Art of Education*, Ilkley, Yorkshire.
46 See Section 5.2 above.
47 Ibid., #49.
Pedagogy of Voice

“The real aim of Waldorf schools,” Steiner (1923/2004) emphasizes, “is to raise free human beings who can direct their own lives” (p.191). For the other pedagogical values to be realized they need to be enacted by Steiner students when they leave school and work in the world. Placing the pedagogical value of voice in Wilber’s (2000) ‘Its’ quadrant suggests that the integration of the values of love, life and wisdom needs to be enacted in relation to the universe in the broadest sense. Our hope for the ecological future of our planet, and of the larger universe in which it is embedded, will be strengthened when we can trust that it will be directed by a new generation of young people who have a deep understanding of the processes of life, a caring love of people, plants and animal life, and a wise understanding of the forces at work – both physical and subtle – in the world at large.

6.3 Dialoguing with the OECD Learning Framework

As Steiner teachers and educators are committed to supporting students to find purpose and direction in their lives (Steiner, 1923/2004, p.191), they need to understand how best to meet the rapid forces of change at work in the world economy, environment and social sphere. The OECD Learning Framework 2030, which has been drawn up by government representatives, thought leaders, experts and educators from across the world, is helpful in this regard as it “offers a vision and some underpinning principles for the future of education systems” (OECD, 2018). Their focus is strongly aligned with that of Steiner education.

We are committed to helping every learner develop as a whole person, fulfil his or her potential and help shape a shared future built on the well-being of individuals, communities and the planet. (OECD, 2018, p.3)

To identify pertinent guidelines that Steiner educators can follow in relation to planning for the educational future, and to clarify recommendations which Steiner education can make in this regard, the aim of this section is to undertake a three-way dialogic exchange between Wilber’s AQAL lens, the four pedagogical values that underpin Steiner education and the OECD Learning Framework. Table 7 below (on the following page), adds recommendations outlined in the learning framework (OECD, 2018) to the dialogue between Wilber’s (2000) AQAL lens and the Steiner pedagogical values (SEA, 2011).

6.3.1 Rationale for Alignment of OECD Recommendations with ASCF Pedagogical Values

‘I’ Quadrant: As noted above, “learner-centred” educational approaches are aligned with Wilber’s (2000) ‘I’ or ‘subjective’ quadrant. The concern that students have sufficient agency in the world to “navigate a complex and uncertain world” reflects the broad learner-centred orientation expressed in the learning framework (OECD, 2018).

‘WE’ Quadrant: A concern with the transformation of culture and society is a defining attribute of Wilber’s ‘intersubjective’ quadrant.

‘IT’ Quadrant: The ‘objective’ quadrant is characterised by the field of science which encompasses academic striving to develop excellence in knowledge and skills in the traditional disciplines. The learning framework expands this latter domain to include “a broad set” of knowledge and skills, as well as “attitudes and values.” Attention is also paid to putting these “into action” (OECD, 2018). This

Lecture 12 on 17th August 1923 in Ilkley, Yorkshire: Educating toward inner freedom, in A Modern Art of Education.
expansion of the traditional academic lens resonates with Sternberg’s (2001) idea of triarchic intelligence (which emphasizes the interaction of cognition, affect and behaviour or actions), and with the Steiner threefold model of thinking, feeling and willing.

‘ITs’ Quadrant: The ‘inter-objective’ sphere is identified by Wilber (2000) as the field characterized by the application of ecological and systemic research. Through a Steiner lens the systemic viewpoint is widened to embrace the creative and dynamic nature of change in the living world which is not necessarily systemic or predictable.

Table 7: Design plan for a dialogical exchange between Wilber’s (2000) AQAL lens, the Steiner pedagogies (Gidley, 2009, 2016; SEA, 2011) and OECD (2018) recommendations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>I SUBJECTIVE</th>
<th>IT OBJECTIVE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>LEARNER AGENCY: Navigating through a complex uncertain world</td>
<td>Need for a broad set of KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS, ATTITUDES &amp; VALUES in action</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LIGHT of WISDOM</td>
<td>LIFE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Complexification of thinking &amp; culture</td>
<td>Mobile, life-enhancing thinking</td>
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<tr>
<td>LOVE</td>
<td>VOICE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conscious, compassionate spiritual growth</td>
<td>Linguistic &amp; paradigmatic boundary-crossing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COMPETENCIES to transform society and shape our future</td>
<td>DESIGN PRINCIPLES for moving toward an eco-systemic change</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WE INTERSUBJECTIVE</td>
<td>ITs INTEROBJECTIVE</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

6.3.2 Learner agency: Navigating through a complex, uncertain world

The Steiner educational goal which aims to support students to find “purpose and direction” in their lives (Marie Steiner, 1923/1943; Steiner, 1923/2004) is echoed in the OECD’s (2018) observation that “future-ready students need to exercise agency, in their own education and throughout life” (p.4).

Agency implies a sense of responsibility to participate in the world and, in so doing, to influence people, events and circumstances for the better. Agency requires the ability to frame a guiding purpose and identify actions to achieve a goal. (OECD, 2018, p.4)

For Steiner (1923/2004), the phrase “throughout life” and the concept of lifelong learning implies that students need to develop a capacity to “learn from life itself.” To “educate children for life,” teachers themselves need to “have a free, unbiased view of life.” Steiner notes that they should be “intimately connected with the life around them” (kl. 2748-2749/p.193).

The question of how to teach students in a way that enables them to grow a capacity for agency is understood in the Steiner context as an education of the feelings and the will. It is particularly with regard to this question of how to teach, monitor and assess the competencies identified as needed for the future, that Steiner education has a key contribution to make. The teaching strategies
that are directed towards this goal vary across the three main stages of schooling. Steiner (1922/2004) emphasizes that, as the young child is “entirely sense-organ,” they learn mainly through imitation. The foundations for moral growth are laid through the children’s experience of goodness in the world around them and through the way moral values are modelled for them by their parents, carers and teachers.

In the primary school, where the principle of beauty informs teaching methods, teachers guide the growth of students towards ethical awareness by educating their sentience through aesthetic modalities. Steiner (1923/2004) explains that during this stage, it continues to be detrimental and counterproductive to teach moral or values education in a direct manner. If students (in primary school) are told ‘the right or wrong way’ to act in a situation their actions will remain bound by this conviction which will continue to influence them below the level of their conscious awareness in later stages of their lives. Teachers should rather appeal to their life of feelings.

[W]e must never indoctrinate morality and religion into children dogmatically, but by working on their feeling and perception [...]. Children must learn to delight in goodness and to loathe evil, to love goodness and hate wickedness. In history lessons, the great historical figures and the impulses of various eras can be presented so that moral and religious sympathies and antipathies develop in the children. (ibid., kl.2693-26897/p.189)

It is only in the high school, where teachers are guided by the principle of truth that a more overt teaching, questioning and discussion of values, one that draws on the development of students’ rational and logical understanding, becomes appropriate and salutogenic.

The emphasis which the learning framework places on the wider set of mutually supportive relationships, and the value of communities and co-agency is strongly supported in Steiner school communities. Similarly, the means to achieve this educational goal is aligned with the Steiner approach. In Steiner schools teachers undertake “child studies” (Wiechert, 2014) so that they can:

[Personalize] the learning environment [in a way] that supports and motivates each student to nurture his or her passions, make connections between different learning experiences and opportunities, and design their own learning projects and processes in collaboration with others. (OECD, 2017, p.4)

While the second strategy mentioned in the framework, that of “building a solid foundation” for “literacy and numeracy” is again supported by the Steiner approach the methods for achieving this end are different due to the emphasis placed on age-appropriate learning. In relation to “digital literacy and data literacy” Steiner educators caution that these skills, like literacy and numeracy, and the overt teaching of values, need to be scaffolded. From a Steiner point of view “everything that underpins digital technology can be found in the ingenuity of the “unplugged” human being,” and this unplugged experience, it is proposed, is vital for young students if they are “to develop an uncluttered self-image as well as the most valuable form of efficacy – self efficacy.”

It is internationally accepted practice that Steiner Schools scaffold towards digital efficacy during the primary years. The formal integration of digital technologies in high school is strongly supported by this primary school experience. Following their uniquely human and

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49 Dogmatic methods are not favoured in the Steiner approach at any stage.
50 This is one of the “essential characteristics” described by the International Forum for Waldorf Steiner Education (2015). See Section 3.1.3.
51 See Section 5.2
-richly choreographed primary education, students enter high school and embrace digital technologies effectively, creatively and ethically. (Rushton, for SEA, June 2016)

Elements of the “richly choreographed primary education” that the Steiner approach offers include: narrative-based communication skills, the growth of creative competencies supported by multi-modal art and craft technologies, and “natural and real” rather than “virtual” experiences (ibid.).

Steiner researchers point out that the high value placed on digital technology in the primary school appears to be driven by concern for measures of academic success and the future employment potential of students. They question the educational worth of this political framing of digital learning and ask whether this motive truly serves the wellbeing of students (ibid.) because it runs against the grain of Steiner pedagogical principles. Furthermore, they argue, the skills on which the Steiner curriculum focuses are transferable to digital technology.

[Handwriting transfers to word processing, watercolour painting transfers to understanding colour-space in digital graphics manipulators. […]. […]. The reverse is not true […] digital skills do not transfer to handwriting, watercolour painting or living in a ‘real’ world. Furthermore, handwriting, for example, takes much longer and more effort to learn and can be undermined by the more entertaining keyboard skill.]

James’ (2017) recent research provides further support for the Steiner indication that learning by doing is more effective than learning by seeing. The findings indicate that practice in handwriting is needed for students to become effective readers. James explains that “handwriting serves to link visual processing with motor experience, facilitating subsequent letter recognition skills” (p.502).

6.3.3 Need for a broad set of knowledge, skills, attitudes and values in action

This section of the learning framework (OECD, 2017) focuses on an overview of different kinds of knowledge and skills. The inclusion of competencies facilitates a balance between curriculum approaches that prioritize the traditional subject areas and ones that favour the more learner-centred capabilities (Yates, 2017). For Steiner schools, the inclusion of the competencies-based “general capabilities” and “cross-curricular perspectives” as well as the traditional subject areas in the Australian National Curriculum (ACARA, 2011) has facilitated the possibility of alignment of this national curriculum with Steiner curriculum indications.

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Extract 2: Accreditation of the Australian Steiner Curriculum Framework by ACARA

The Australian Steiner Curriculum Framework was developed in response to the Federal Government’s proposal to create a mandatory Australian Curriculum for all schools. As Steiner education is internationally recognised, Steiner Education Australia was given the opportunity to put forward an alternate curriculum framework for recognition, in order to protect the integrity of Steiner education’s philosophy and pedagogy.

Phase 1 [Part A]: The following learning areas were recognized by the Australian Curriculum Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA) 2011-2014: English, History, Mathematics, Science and Geography. Phase 2: [Part B]: The following learning areas were recognized by ACARA in 2017: The Arts, Health and Physical Education and Technologies. Civics and Citizenship (Classes 7-10) and Economics and Business (Classes 5 & 6).

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53 ibid. #55
54 David Ludden.
From a Steiner point of view, an integrated and broad curriculum in the tradition of the liberal arts (van Houten, 1995/2003) necessarily includes the traditional subject disciplines as well as a wide range of practical, physical, technological and music-and-arts-inspired subjects. Steiner (1923/2004) emphasizes that these latter subjects are as important as the more academic ones and that this principle should be reflected in the planning of the timetable.

“Whatever children know,” Steiner asserts, “they know with their whole being” (ibid.). Expressed differently, but nevertheless strongly aligned, the concept of competency in the view of the learning framework (OECD, 2018) “implies more than just the acquisition of knowledge and skills; it involves the mobilisation of knowledge, skills, attitudes and values to meet complex demands” (p.5). This concept lies at the heart of the Steiner approach as a key way of enacting the pedagogical value of life.

In the Waldorf school, the children do not merely “have an idea” in their heads; they feel the idea, since it flows into their whole life of feeling. Their souls live in the sense of the idea, which is not merely a concept but becomes a shaped form. The whole complex of ideas eventually becomes the human form, and finally passes into their volition. Children learn to transform what they think into action. (Steiner, 1923/2004, kl.2678-2681)

The pedagogy of life promotes an understanding of the value of process and metamorphosis. Steiner’s reflections here indicate that competencies develop and unfold over time. The pedagogical principle of the will as a soul capacity that develops “seeds for the future” indicates that educating the will, from a Steiner perspective ensures that the OECD guideline for preparing students in the best possible manner to meet the future as change agents (2018, p.4) can be effectively attained. Steiner students are educated in a way that supports them to “have a positive impact on their surroundings, influence the future, understand others’ intentions, actions and feelings, and anticipate the short and long-term consequences of what they do” (OECD, 2018, p.4).

In their review, the OECD Learning Framework notes the importance, not only of disciplinary knowledge but of epistemic and procedural knowledge as well.

Procedural knowledge is acquired by understanding how something is done or made – the series of steps or actions taken to accomplish a goal. Some procedural knowledge is domain-specific, some transferable across domains. It typically develops through practical problem-solving, such as through design thinking and systems thinking. Students will need to apply their knowledge in unknown and evolving circumstances. (p.5)

In the same lecture (cited above), Steiner (1923/2004) also discusses procedural and epistemic knowledge (although he does not use these terms). Explaining the living connection which can be created “across domains” Steiner describes how the learning of new skill sets can gradually evolve (as the students grow) from play-based activities into handcrafts and then into technological or manual arts skills.

At the right age, which is relatively early, our children make their own toys and playthings. [...]. They carve toys from wood, and thus we bring an element of art into their play. To lead play gradually into the creation of artistic forms, and then to the practical work, as just described, is completely in keeping with the needs of human nature. [...]. Again, we lead from art as such into art as an aspect of industry. Children are shown how to make simple implements for use
in the house, and at the same time learn to use saws, knives, and other cabinetmaking and carpentry tools. [...] Thus, we stimulate all their instincts for the practical side of life. On the one hand, we develop a sense for practicality, and on the other, for the arts. [...] Our children are allowed great freedom, even in their practical work, and they are allowed to follow their own sense of discovery. Their souls create wonderful forms once they learn to observe certain things in people or in animals with a truly artistic feeling for nature. (kl. 2663-2675).

In a recent research project Zhou (2017) explores “how playfulness influences creative climate from a perspective of emotionality” (p.6). Zhou observes that playfulness is “one of the main psychological characteristics influencing creative climate.” Concurring with Steiner, Zhou notes that freedom is “embedded in the nature of playfulness” (ibid).

Experiences of both Ha-ha and Aha! increase insights in the creative problem-solving process. Being surprising, unconscious and unexpected, they especially require learning environments to provide enough freedom to express personal emotion, without any pressure of sharing ideas, to have communication with others. (Zhou, 2017, p.120)

Reinforcing the link between emotionality and a creativity, Steiner points out that it is not enough to merely include “practical skills and dexterity” (or competencies) in the curriculum, students need to “permeate their faculties of knowledge with feeling and volition” (kl.2687). From a Steiner perspective the way to educate emotions and volition is through art. The Steiner art of education entails more than the inclusion of arts subjects and the implementation of artistic strategies, every aspect of teaching and school life is infused with aesthetic elements.

All schoolwork is based primarily upon the element of art, we will also apply what I have described through the example of eurythmy58 to other areas of life and activity. We will not try to invent something for teaching but imbue the school with real life. And then, out of the school, life will grow within society. (1923/2004, kl. 2811-2815).

Steiner notes that even “scientific intellectuality must be allowed to move into the area of art. Science itself must become an art [...]” (kl.244-246). Steiner is speaking here about epistemic knowledge “or knowledge about the disciplines, such as knowing how to think like a mathematician, historian or scientist,” (OECD, 2017, p. 5) which the learning framework notes “will also be significant, enabling students to extend their disciplinary knowledge” (ibid.). Clearly there is strong alignment between the curriculum goals of the OECD learning framework and the Steiner approach. It is also important to note however that the Steiner context is enriched through the pedagogical value of life which supports the bridging of disciplines. Epistemic knowledge, in the Steiner approach means that there is an art to thinking like a scientist (Bortoft, 1996, 2012; Eisner, 2002) and that learning this art supports students to deepen their participation and understanding of the different nature of the various disciplines.

6.3.4 Competencies to transform society and shape our future

In response to the question of how best to support students to “navigate through uncertainty,” the learning framework recommends building on the OECD Key Competencies59 and the further “Transformative Competencies” that address the “growing need for young people to be innovative, responsible and aware,” namely “creating new value, reconciling tensions and dilemmas; and taking

58 See glossary.
59 The DeSeCo project: Definition and Selection of Competencies: https://www.oecd.org/pisa/35070367.pdf
responsibility” (OECD, 2017, p.5). In the section below, these transformative competencies are reviewed in turn.

Creating new value
The learning framework emphasizes the need for people “to think creatively” to ensure innovation which, it is noted, “springs not from individuals thinking and working alone, but through cooperation and collaboration with others to draw on existing knowledge to create new knowledge” (ibid.). The high value placed on the art of education in the Steiner approach ensures that students are given the opportunity to develop their creative capacities and the underpinning competencies of “adaptability, creativity, curiosity and open-mindedness” (ibid.). It is therefore intriguing, from a Steiner perspective, to notice that while the word “new” is repeated ten times in this fairly brief paragraph, the final observation only suggests drawing on existing knowledge “to create new knowledge.” The reader is left wondering whether existing knowledge is the only source of innovation. One of the main claims which Steiner (1894/1964) makes in his Philosophy of Freedom is that it is possible to “think a new thought” (McDermott, 2011). Steiner’s pedagogical indications are underpinned by this proposition which is expansively developed in his writings and lectures. By contrast, apart from the mention of the value of “cooperation and collaboration,” the source of inspiration and imagination is not clearly stated in the OECD Learning Framework and is therefore (from a Steiner point of view), not adequately addressed.

Reconciling tensions and dilemmas
Empathy, “the capacity to understand the needs and desires of others,” and the “need to think [and act] in a more integrated way,” are the competencies identified in the framework as necessary for students to develop if we are to overcome “inequities,” and “to reconcile diverse perspectives and interests, in local settings” which have “sometimes global implications” (OECD, 2018, p.5). The framework aligns integrated thinking and acting with “systems thinking,” and describes it as the capacity to “[take] into account the interconnections and inter-relations between contradictory or incompatible ideas, logics and positions, from both short- and long-term perspectives” (ibid.).

While the Steiner approach fully supports and endorses these recommendations, they are placed in a broader philosophical context which facilitates their implementation. The capacity to think and act in an integrated manner, which is greatly valued, is understood (as noted above) within the context of the art of education (rather than systems thinking). It is art that inspires creativity and thereby imbues the school with real life so that “out of the school, life will grow within society (op.cit.). Steiner (1923/2004) reflects that Waldorf education is “a matter of the universal human. Our aim is to educate human beings with broad, rich interests – not men and women who belong to a particular class, nation, or profession” (kl.2870/p.202). Empathy is also highly prized:

[T]he most important thing is to be bighearted. People should be able to participate with their hearts and souls in culture and society as a whole. This is what we attempt through the principles of education. First, we imbue our teachers—in a Waldorf school, the first thing has been to educate the teachers— and then the students through the teachers. The students are our great hope and goal; our purpose in every measure we adopt is that our students will carry its fruits into life in the right way. (kl. 2863-2867/pp.201-202)

Taking responsibility
The learning framework distinguishes the taking of responsibility as “the capacity to consider the future consequences of one’s actions, to evaluate risk and reward, and to accept accountability for the products of one’s work” (OECD, 2018, p.5). As taking responsibility is understood, through the lens
of the Steiner fourfold model, to fall under the direction of the self or ‘I’ organization which begins the process of maturation in the third stage of schooling (14 to 21 years), the Steiner approach supports the proposal that this third “transformative competency is a prerequisite of the other two” (OECD, 2018, p.6). Steiner (1923/2004) notes that if the foundation for moral growth has been well established in the early and middle years of schooling (in accordance with the principles of goodness and beauty, as noted above), then in adolescence, students should be treated as equals and “allowed to find their own feet” (kl. 2707/p.189). What the learning framework refers to as “moral and intellectual maturity” and the ability to “reflect upon and evaluate his or her actions in light of his or her experiences (2018, p.6), Steiner identifies as discernment:

The main thing is to enable young adults to find their place in the world with real confidence in their own powers of discernment. Thus, they will sense their real humanity, because their education has been completely human. [...]. Children of fourteen or fifteen who have been educated according to modern methods begin to be aware of a sense [...] [that] something seems to be missing in their being. There is no better heritage in the moral and religious sense than to raise children to regard the elements of morality and religion as an integral part of their being, so that they feel fully human because they are permeated with morality and warmed by religious feelings. (1923/2004, kl.2712-2718/p.190)

Sadly, statistics indicate that there are many adolescents who feel something missing in their lives and not many who are warmed by religious feelings. While Steiner teachers and educators avoid the dogmatic teaching of religion and morality, in their education of students’ feelings and volition, they strive, through the integration of subject content and teaching strategies, to build bridges between art, science, religion and morality (Steiner, 1923/2004). From a Steiner perspective, a fully human education is one that can inspire confidence and creativity in students because it undertakes ongoing research into the complexity of the interrelationships and co-working of body, soul and spirit (Haralambous, 2016; Rawson, Masters & Avison, 2013). Furthermore, Steiner’s (1894/1964) philosophical claim that it is possible to “think a new thought” (McDermott, 2011) provides a sound pedagogical foundation for students to have confidence in their ability to know and understand the world and to be creative makers of new knowledge.

**Transformative competency seen through the lens of neuroscience research**

Since Steiner’s time, rapid advances in neuroscience research have changed our understanding of the domain of body, soul and spirit which is explored through the lens of the brain. While the terms soul and spirit are not widely used in neuroscience research, Steiner’s characterisation of them, from the point of view of their domain of consciousness, cognition, emotions and motivation, remains current. Steiner (1919/1996; 1922/1971; 1999) notes that the sphere in which the soul is active is that of consciousness, emotions and feelings; and he indicates that spirit is active in the self or ‘I’ organization and in the sphere of the will, which provides the fire or motive force for self-regulation and direction of the other members of the fourfold model, and of the soul faculties of thinking, feeling and willing.

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60 See Section 5.2 and Tables 1 & 2
61 Steiner is referring here to soul-spiritual awareness and the experience of wonder, awe and reverence associated with this consciousness, rather than to the more traditional (and dogmatic) way in which the word religious is used.
62 In 2015, suicide was the leading cause of death of children between 5 and 17 years of age. [...] In 2015, suicide accounted for one-third of deaths (33.9%) among people 15-24 years of age, and over a quarter of deaths (27.7%) among those 25-34 years of age.” In August 2016 youth suicide figures reached a 10 year high. https://headspace.org.au/news/new-abs-figures-youth-suicide/
63 See Lectures 1 & 5 for example.
64 See Section 5
Niles’ (2006) recommendations, which apply a neuroscience perspective, echo Steiner’s indications for the teaching of spirituality in the classroom. Given the “meaning-making” nature of spirituality, Niles recommends that students should be given time for reflection and open dialogue on spiritual questions. If teachers create a playful, exploratory and respectful environment and use “spiritually sensitive” teaching strategies then these dialogues have the potential to open up “opportunities for depth of knowledge rooted in self-awareness and personal application” (p.459).

While Niles (2006) considers that there is “very little doubt from the research perspective that the brain can and does become “spiritually activated,” he thinks that questions about the origins of the activity and ways to interpret the experiences should be left to the expertise of theologians, sociologists, and philosophers (p.459). Hall, Curtin & Rutherford (2014) disagree with this attitude because the explicit intention of their research is to bring learning perspectives from sociocultural theory and neuroscience together. They argue against the “ascendancy of neuroscience” which “may result in the marginalization of sociocultural science.” Much would then be lost, they argue, because the latter “has enormous explanatory power for understanding and promoting learning, and for understanding how learning is afforded and constrained.” Similarly, Scalise & Felde (2017) argue that the power of three learning sciences, namely neuroscience, cognitive psychology and educational research “are better than one” (p.4). In view of their striving to create connections between disciplines, Steiner teacher researchers can greatly benefit from the exploration of these bridge-building and boundary-crossing research initiatives. In response to these researchers, a Steiner perspective (Haralambous, 2016) suggests that adding and integrating, through dialogic exchange (Bahktin, 1981, 2004), even more disciplines would be better and more powerful. Table 8 below lists research disciplines that expand the domain of neuroscience research and inform Steiner educational research into the physiology and psychology of body, soul and spirit in relation to learning theory and teaching methods.

Table 8: Kindred fields of research for Steiner teachers and educators

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Field of Research</th>
<th>Researchers &amp; Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Transpersonal Psychology</td>
<td>Cortright, 2010; Ferrer, 2002; Ferrer &amp; Puente, 2013;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Petitmengin-Peugeot, 2007</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anthroposophical Counselling and Psychology</td>
<td>Bento, Knighton, Nelson, Tresemer, 2015; Dekkers, 2015;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Lievegoed, 1993, 2005</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goethean Phenomenology</td>
<td>Amrine, 2013; Amrine, Zucker &amp; Wheeler, 2012; Bortoft, 1996,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Haralambous, 2010; Haralambous &amp; Nielsen, 2014; Nielsen,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Fitzgerald &amp; Fettes, 2010</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Integral Education</td>
<td>Esbjörn-Hargens, Reams &amp; Gunnlaugson, 2010; Gidley, 2010;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>McDerrmott, 2011; Montuori &amp; Donnelly, 2013; Tarnas, 1991</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evolution of Consciousness</td>
<td>Gebser, 1985; Gidley, 2007a, 2007b; Wilber, 2000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quantum physics</td>
<td>Bohm, 1980; Zajonc, 1993</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Citing “advances in developmental neuroscience,” the learning framework notes that: [A] second burst of brain plasticity takes place during adolescence, and that the brain regions and systems that are especially plastic are those implicated in the development of self-regulation. Adolescence can now be seen as a time not just of vulnerability but of opportunity for developing a sense of responsibility. (OECD, 2018, p.6)

With neuroscience research findings in mind Chilton Pearce (2002) describes three characteristics of adolescence:

A poignant and passionate idealism arises in early puberty, followed by an equally passionate expectation in the mid-teens that “something tremendous is supposed to happen” and finally by the teenager’s boundless, exuberant belief in “the hidden greatness within me.” (p.53)

Noting that a teenager “often gestures toward his or her heart when speaking of these three sensibilities,” Chilton Pearce points out that the second burst of brain plasticity which takes place during adolescence (OECD, 2018, p.6) is associated with the heart. Referring to research findings of the HeartMath Institute Chilton Pearce observes that “the brain is the heart’s modus operandi, or means, for transcendent experience, and nature intends this highest stage to be ready to unfold fully at twenty-one” (p.54).

Opening to this mature developmental sequence is the adolescent’s great expectation. We might think the intelligence of the heart is present all the time and permeates all being, but the heart’s latent capacity for deep universal intelligence must, like the brain, be provided with models for its full growth and development. If no nurturing or modelling is given, the powers of the heart can’t unfold – they will be dormant for life. (2002, p.54)

6.3.4 Design principles for moving toward an eco-systemic change

In the last section of the learning framework (OECD, 2018) the focus shifts to the question of how to implement the pedagogical recommendations in a way that is practically do-able and sustainable in terms of curriculum planning, development and evaluation. The recognition, noted in the Learning Framework that “the transformative competencies are complex,” and that “each competency is intricately inter-related with the others” (p.6) is again strongly aligned with Steiner’s (1919/1996, 1922/1971, 1923/2004) reiterated reminders that his indications relating to the three bodily systems, the three faculties of thinking, feeling and willing, and the four “bodies” are complex in their close interrelationships and that they should not be researched separately because of their intricate co-working (Haralambous, 2016, pp.106, 254).

As we have seen, the observation in the Learning Framework that the transformative competencies are “developmental in nature, and thus learnable,” (p.6) also forms a foundational principle of Steiner education’s pedagogical value of life and is one of the main guidelines for Steiner’s age-appropriate indications.66

65 Findings of HeartMath researchers indicate that “communication between the heart and brain [...] is a dynamic, ongoing, two-way dialogue, with each organ continuously influencing the other’s function. the heart communicates [...] to the brain in four major ways: neurologically (through the transmission of nerve impulses), biochemically (via hormones and neurotransmitters), biophysically (through pressure waves) and energetically (through electromagnetic field interactions). Communication along all these conduits significantly affects the brain’s activity. [...] messages the heart sends to the brain also can affect performance. https://www.heartmath.org/research/science-of-the-heart/heart-brain-communication/

66 See Section 6.3.3 (p.28).
The OECD Learning Framework 2030 therefore encapsulates a complex concept: the mobilisation of knowledge, skills, attitudes and values through a process of reflection, anticipation and action, in order to develop the inter-related competencies needed to engage with the world. (2018, p.6)

This process of reflection, anticipation and action is well recognized in the discourses of participatory action research and teacher reflexivity. It is also one that Steiner (1923/2004) recommended teachers follow.67

In response to the observation in the learning framework that “anticipation mobilises cognitive skills, such as analytical or critical thinking, to foresee what may be needed in the future or how actions taken today might have consequences for the future” (OECD, 2018, p.6), a Steiner perspective refers back to the role of educating volition (Steiner, 1923/2004) in planting “seeds for the future” (Steiner, 1919/1996). Scharmer (2009) interprets and expands Steiner’s indications on the seed nature of the will in ‘Theory U’ which presents the idea that it is possible to “envision the future as it emerges” (Scharmer & Kauffer, 2013).

In reply to the emphasis the Learning Framework places on taking “a critical stance when deciding, choosing and acting, by stepping back from what is known or assumed and looking at a situation from other, different perspectives” (2018, p.6), the Steiner approach affirms the relevance of critical reflexivity for the process of self-growth and self-transformation.68 Both anticipation as a way of presencing or envisioning the future (Scharmer & Kauffer, 2013) and critical reflection (Steiner, 1923/2004) are embedded in Steiner teaching and research methodology which is based on a form of Goethean phenomenology69 and Contemplative Inquiry (Zajonc, 2009).70

As part of the initiative to “ensure that the new learning framework is actionable,” the “transformative competencies and other key concepts” have been translated “into a set of specific constructs (e.g. creativity, critical thinking, responsibility, resilience, collaboration) so that teachers and school leaders can better incorporate them into curricula” (p.6).71 The OECD Education 2030 stakeholders note that “curriculum change assumes that education is an ecosystem with many stakeholders” and that they have therefore, in their work across different countries “identified five common challenges” (ibid.). In Table 9 below these challenges are quoted in a list-format and a relevant Steiner response is outlined below each item.

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68 Steiner offers many exercises for “inner work” that are based on critical reflection and seeing oneself from other perspectives. See, e.g. the ‘ruchshau’ or exercise for the backwards review of the day (Haralambous, 2016, p.250; Steiner, 2004).


70 For a review of Steiner teacher research methodology see Haralambous, 2016.

71 The constructs are currently under review and are attached to the Learning Framework in their Annex 2.
Table 9: A Steiner response to the curriculum challenges identified in the OECD Learning Framework (2018, p.6)

1. Confronted with the needs and requests of parents, universities and employers, schools are dealing with curriculum overload. As a result, students often lack sufficient time to master key disciplinary concepts or, in the interests of a balanced life, to nurture friendships, to sleep and to exercise. It is time to shift the focus of our students from “more hours for learning” to “quality learning time.”

Steiner indications for a balanced life, sleep and exercise and for nurturing friendships are embedded in pedagogy of life and love respectively and are reinforced in recent neuroscience research (Scalise and Felde, 2017). While the Commonwealth (Gonski) Review strives to achieve “educational excellence in Australian schools,” (DET, 2018) quality learning time, is regularly undermined by the strong emphasis placed on more hours for learning, and the excessive demands made on teachers’ and students’ time made by curriculum and professional accreditation requirements and the NAPLAN testing regime (SEA, 2018).

2. Curricula reforms suffer from time lags between recognition, decision making, implementation and impact. The gap between the intent of the curriculum and learning outcome is generally too wide.

This challenge is exacerbated in Steiner schools by the lack of follow through of the Australian National Curriculum (ACARA, 2011) in various states which requires lengthy processes of renegotiation of curriculum alignments with the accredited Australian Steiner Curriculum Framework (ASCF, 2011). In addition to this point, a further issue needs resolution. Alternative curricula have been recognised but the central question remains: how different is different? What is the nature of an alternative curriculum? By very definition an alternative curriculum is different in staging, methodology and epistemology, yet this difference and its unique alternative nature is undermined by the need to comply within a standardisation and instrumental educational model.

3. Content must be of high quality if students are to engage in learning and acquire deeper understanding.

While the Steiner approach values high quality of content, choice of content is informed by an ongoing process of curriculum research and child study (Wiechert, 2014), as well as by the need to meet state and federal accreditation requirements.

4. Curricula should ensure equity while innovating; all students, not just a select few, must benefit from social, economic and technological changes.

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As inclusivity underlies the four pedagogical values it is important that Steiner teachers implement equity. The regular practice of child studies ensures that Steiner teachers work to meet the individual learning needs of their students. This is particularly pertinent given the Steiner age-appropriate learning indications. If these intentions are misinterpreted – if it is assumed that all children should meet the age markers – then the true value of the indications of the pedagogy could be misapplied. “Steiner Education Australia is committed to providing an inclusive learning environment for all students in Steiner schools. An inclusive learning environment is one where:
- all students have equitable access to the Australian Steiner Curriculum Framework;
- the curriculum is modified as required to ensure equitable access;
- the curriculum meets the diverse social, cultural and educational needs of the students in Steiner classrooms;
- Student diversity is valued;
- The spiritual nature and developmental stages of all students are respected” (Donnelly, 2017).

5. Careful planning and alignment is critically important for effective implementation of reforms.

The process of curriculum planning, development and review which Steiner teachers and educators undertake on an ongoing basis (Haralambous, 2016; Rawson, Masters and Avison, 2013) is impeded by the current overload of accreditation requirements and testing demands that draw teachers’ attention away from quality teaching and curriculum research.73

Table 10: A Steiner response to the curriculum challenges identified in the OECD Learning Framework (2018, pp.6-7)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Concept, content and topic design</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Student agency.</strong> The curriculum should be designed around students to motivate them and recognise their prior knowledge, skills, attitudes and values.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The age-appropriate indications which are based on Steiner’s insight into child development are intended to meet the learning needs of students as they grow and develop. The aim of the Child Study (Wiechert, 2014),74 a form of teacher research practised by Steiner teachers, is to identify the learning needs of individual students and of the whole class group. Teachers then design and adapt curriculum content and teaching strategies (and assessment) in accordance with the findings.

**Rigour.** Topics should be challenging and enable deep thinking and reflection.

73 ibid. #76
74 See glossary and Section 5.2. For a more detailed review see Gemell, Snaith & Haralambous (2014).
Steiner’s pedagogical indications in the kindergarten and primary school which focus on strengthening students’ volition and motivation and educating their feelings through aesthetic modalities provide a firm foundation for them to manage challenging curriculum content in the high school. The phenomenological teaching methods encourage the development of rigour, independence of thought and depth of reflection.

**Focus.** A relatively small number of topics should be introduced in each grade to ensure the depth and quality of students’ learning. Topics may overlap in order to reinforce key concepts.

Steiner’s pedagogical indications for the curriculum are reviewed on an ongoing basis. The indications are comprehensive with thematic repetitions which unfold from Kindergarten to Year 12 in an integrated way. Quality is favoured above quantity of content.

**Coherence.** Topics should be sequenced to reflect the logic of the academic discipline or disciplines on which they draw, enabling progression from basic to more advanced concepts through stages and age levels.

The principle of coherence which informs the aesthetic integration of whole and parts of the curriculum is a key characteristic of the Steiner (1923/2004) art of education. The phenomenological teaching strategies are introduced in a staged manner that evolves in complexity as the students grow through the phases of development.

**Alignment.** The curriculum should be well-aligned with teaching and assessment practices. While the technologies to assess many of the desired outcomes do not yet exist, different assessment practices might be needed for different purposes. New assessment methods should be developed that value student outcomes and actions that cannot always be measured.

The NAPLAN test regime is at odds with the Steiner approach. It would be preferable from a Steiner perspective if teachers could collaborate in the design of the tests (Wilson, 2018). As noted above, the Child Study (Wiechert, 2014) practices support teachers to understand the complexities of an individual student’s development (Gemell et al., 2014). Teachers are therefore able to design assessment strategies that meet both individual and class needs.

**Transferability.** Higher priority should be given to knowledge, skills, attitudes and values that can be learned in one context and transferred to others.

The pedagogical value of life aims to educate students “for life” in a way that enables them to meet a variety of challenges with confidence, creativity and resilience.

**Choice.** Students should be offered a diverse range of topic and project options, and the opportunity to suggest their own topics and projects, with the support to make well-informed choices.

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75 ibid. #74
76 See Section 6.3.3
The four pedagogical values support Steiner teachers to honour and respect students’ voices: to listen to them, to care for their active involvement in learning activities, and to pay wise, lively and loving attention to their learning preferences. In the final year of schooling this caring relationship and pathway of learning is brought to fullness in the Year 12 project which is an individual unit of study based on each student’s choice of an area of interest (from a wide range of subject areas). The project includes a created artefact, a substantial written critical review, and a display which supports an oral presentation to a public audience.

**Process Design**

**Teacher agency.** Teachers should be empowered to use their professional knowledge, skills and expertise to deliver the curriculum effectively.

Steiner (1923/2004) indications are clear in this regard as noted in the review. [77]

**Authenticity.** Learners should be able to link their learning experiences to the real world and have a sense of purpose in their learning. This requires interdisciplinary and collaborative learning alongside mastery of discipline-based knowledge.

Linking learning experiences to the real world is a key Steiner indication. [78]

**Inter-relation.** Learners should be given opportunities to discover how a topic or concept can link and connect to other topics or concepts within and across disciplines, and with real life outside of school.

The ASCF is a carefully designed and integrated curriculum with many thematic reiterations on a more advanced level.

**Flexibility.** The concept of "curriculum" should be developed from "predetermined and static" to "adaptable and dynamic". Schools and teachers should be able to update and align the curriculum to reflect evolving societal requirements as well as individual learning needs.

The intention of the ASCF is that it is an ongoing research project (Haralambous, 2016; Rawson, Masters and Avison, 2013). It is important that Steiner teachers act on this intention, otherwise Steiner indications run the risk of being applied as dogma. Steiner curriculum indications are meant to be researched and then applied as a form of creative improvisation or emergent teaching (Crowell and Reid-Marr, 2013; Sawyer, 2004).

**Engagement.** Teachers, students and other relevant stakeholders should be involved early in the development of the curriculum, to ensure their ownership for implementation.

It was Steiner’s (1923/2004) intention that curriculum research be undertaken as a collegial activity. [79] His ideas about the school community (including teachers, parents, students, co-workers and other stakeholders) working and studying together follow the Educational Futures model of an emergent *holarchy* that is characterised by collegial caring and commitment (Gidley, 2013; Wolf, 2010, p.77). This form of *collective individualism* is aligned with Steiner’s *ethical individualism* (Gidley, 2013).

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[77] For example see Section 5.2
[78] See Section 6.3.3
[79] Adapted from Pedagogical Section, Journal No.55, p.17.
7. RECOMMENDATIONS ARISING FROM THE DIALOGICAL REVIEW

7.1 What the Steiner Approach can offer the Discourse on Educational Futures

Many of the recommendations and transformative competencies identified by the OECD (2018) are aligned with the Steiner (1919/1996, 1923/2004) educational approach. One pertinent difference is that whereas the recommendations and competencies which are reviewed in the OECD’s (2018) Learning Framework are not tied to one set of pedagogical principles and can therefore placed “on top of” miscellaneous educational approaches, Steiner’s educational indications are grounded in an integrated pedagogy. This means that particularly in relation to the question of how to apply the recommendations and how to embed the transformative competencies Steiner curriculum research has much to offer. The Steiner educational approach places strong emphasis on the importance of the art of education. Teaching as an art applies to all subject areas, to epistemic as well as to procedural knowledge. For teachers to enact this pedagogical art they need to strive to understand human development, nurture their own artistic abilities, creatively apply artistic materials and teaching strategies in lessons, and cultivate an aesthetic classroom and school environment.

Biesta (2007) argues that if we wish to “understand the way in which research outcomes may affect educational practice,” then “we need to turn to epistemological questions” (p.11). From a Steiner perspective, imagination as a capacity is inadequately theorized in the conceptual framework that informs the epistemological basis of the scientific method. This theoretical gap has a run-on effect that unfavourably colours educational research. As Biesta (2007) points out, evidence-based research has a causal and technological character that is misplaced in schools because “education is at heart a moral practice more than a technological enterprise” (p.10). Steiner’s ontological structures (e.g. the three-and-fourfold models) provide a helpful conceptual framework that, in moving beyond the causal and technological level, have the potential to facilitate greater depth of teacher research (Haralambous, 2016). Agreeing with Biesta (2007) that the “what works” agenda of evidence-based practice does not work (p.10), Steiner teachers and educators find it regrettable that educational policy continues to be driven by guidelines that privilege quantitative measures and evidence-based research (AITSL, 2012, 2014).

Furthermore, from a Steiner perspective, a design anomaly hampers the effectiveness of the Australian National Curriculum (ACARA, 2010). With reference to the “framing” and “shaping” papers for the Australian national curricula, Gough (2010) observes that the idea that “the knowledges, understandings and affects on which these disciplines focus emerge through educational processes” is missing (p.48). “The framing papers,” Gough reflects, “seem more like cargo manifests – packing lists that prescribe the contents of shipping containers that will be unpacked by schools across the nation” (ibid.). A further related concern (Haralambous, 2011) is hidden in the tension between the detail (Yates, 2017) and the weightiness of these framing papers for the subjects, and the corresponding thinness of the theoretical underpinnings for the “general capabilities” (ACARA, 2010) which are the identified vehicle for the delivery of the goals of the Melbourne Declaration (MCEETYA, 2008). It seems that the pedagogical design of “the cargo” is problematical: “consigned together within the vessel of the Australian Curriculum,” these “two contrasting philosophical cargoes jostle with each other for focal attention” (Haralambous, 2011, p.2).
The Melbourne Goals (MCEETYA, 2008), on the one hand, which are forward-looking and aligned with OECD (2018) recommendations and neuroscience research findings that emphasize the value of transformative competencies, and on the other hand, the strong stress placed on subject content, the high level of detail in the descriptors, standardized review processes and NAPLAN testing procedures, have conflicting rationales and work at cross purposes against each other (Yates, 2017). Principles of learning based on neuroscience research (Caine et al., 2009; Scalise and Felde, 2017) emphasize that a stressful classroom environment impedes learning. Educational research findings (Lingard, Martino, Rezai-Rashti & Sellar, 2016; Lingard, Thompson & Sellar, 2016) also indicate that the NAPLAN testing regime is not achieving improved educational outcomes. Rather than promoting classrooms where students can focus on “relaxed alertness, immersion in complex learning and active processing” (Caine et al., 2009), test-based assessment strategies are stressful for both students and teachers (Rice, Dulfer, Polesol, & O’Hanlon, 2016). Furthermore, the implementation of these tests consumes a large portion of educational funding that could be more beneficially directed towards teachers’ professional learning and art enrichment programmes (SEA, 2018). The recommendations and transformative competencies outlined in the OECD (2018) Learning Framework, from a Steiner educational perspective, can only be effectively applied in an educational context where principles informing the art of education are recognized, further researched and deeply valued.

7.2 Implications of Dialogic Exchange for Steiner teachers

It is imperative that Steiner teachers and educators engage actively in the current educational discourse and ensure that Steiner’s (1919/1996, 1923/2004) indications still apply in our fast-paced world where rapid processes of change dominate the economic, political and socio-cultural contexts of education. Given the strong alignment between Steiner’s (1919/1996, 1923/2004) educational indications and the recommendations and transformative competencies outlined in the OECD (2018) Learning Framework, and with new research in neuroscience, creativity and imaginative education, there is much that Steiner teachers and educators can learn from these findings in relation to their understanding of students and how they learn (AITSL, 2014), their application of creative strategies, and their shared collegial curriculum research.

Steiner teachers and educators need to know how to translate from one language to another – from the idiom in which Steiner’s original indications are expressed – to the terminology used in current education-related neuroscience research and the educational discourse in general. Expertise in these acts of translation will greatly facilitate the wider understanding of the Steiner educational approach and will be of benefit to parents, students, newcomers in Steiner school communities. In view of the fast-paced nature of change Steiner teachers and educators need to be able to test Steiner’s (1919/1996, 1923/2004) educational indications relating to age-appropriate learning in the current context to ensure that they continue to be inclusive, fair and equitable and that diversity is valued in a practical and authentic way (Donnelly, 2017). Ongoing curriculum research needs to safeguard respect for the soul-spiritual nature and developmental stages of all students (Donnelly, 2017).

8. REFERENCE LIST


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http://www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/Home

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STEINER EDUCATIONAL AND ACADEMIC FOUNDATIONS 2018


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Janesick, V.J. (2015). Contemplative Qualitative Inquiry: Practising the Zen of Research. Walnut Creek, California: Left Coast Press, Inc.


81 In referencing Steiner’s writings I have treated his work as a classic and listed first the initial date of publication and then the more recent date. This APA referencing method will assist Steiner scholars to locate the reference within the chronological development of the larger body of work. Following Schieren’s guidelines (2011) I also provide the GA number (in the collected works) and information about the place and date of the lectures where possible.


Steiner Education Australia (2018). *Public submission made to the Review to Achieve Educational Excellence in Australian Schools*. Sydney: SEA.
9. GLOSSARY

**Anthroposophy**: The name Steiner gave to his philosophy based on the etymology of the neologism – ‘anthropos’ meaning humanity, and ‘sophia’ meaning wisdom. His philosophy thus aimed to contribute towards the wisdom of humanity.

**Bothmer gymnastics**: In 1921, in response to a request from Steiner, Bothmer developed a series of gymnastic exercises that are “true to human movement” and the “different stages of development.”

**Appearance**: Following Derrida (1976), Bortoft (1996, 2012) italicizes the latter part of the word to indicate that he is referring to the conceptual content that informs the design of a phenomenon and which “shows itself” and makes an appearance. Derrida (1976) coined the term difference as a play on the two meanings of the French word which mean both “to defer” and “difference.”

**Astral body**: The emotional part of the Self. “The third member of the human body is called the sentient or astral body. It is the vehicle of pain and pleasure, of impulse, craving, passion, and so on [...]. These things may all be included in the term sentient feeling, or sensation. The plant has no sensation. [...] Humankind, therefore, has a sentient body in common with the animal kingdom only, and this sentient body is the vehicle of sensation or of sentient life” (Steiner, 1907/1996, pp.8-9).

**Authentic voice**: The capacity for students to practice speaking and to value silence. As a “transformative competency” (OECD, 2018), authentic voice means: the ability to deal with “novelty, change, diversity and ambiguity;” to “think for themselves and work with others;” and to “come to moral maturity and self-fulfilment” (p.6). “In summary, an authentic pedagogical voice may balance the inauthenticity of “voice”-mail, “chat”-rooms and “talking” computers. Educators carry a developmental—even evolutionary—responsibility through our choice of words, our tone of voice, the timing of our silences, our authentic presence and how well we enable children to express theirs” (Gidley, 2009, p.551).

**Body, Soul, Spirit**: “By body is here meant that through which the things in the environment of a human being reveal themselves. [...]. By the word soul is signified that by which one links the things of one’s own being, through which one experiences pleasure or displeasure, desire or aversion, joy and sorrow in connection with them. By spirit is meant what becomes manifest in one when, as Goethe expressed it, one looks at things as a ‘so to speak divine being.’ In this sense a human being consists of body, soul and spirit” (Steiner, 1922/1972, pp.4-5).

Wilson (1964) explains that “Spirit, Soul and Mind are not precise equivalents in English of the German Geist and Seele. Perhaps because we use the concept of mind to include all our experiences through thinking, the concepts of spirit and soul have practically dropped out of everyday use, whereas in German there is no distinct equivalent for "mind" and the concepts "spirit" (Geist) and "soul" (Seele) are consequently broader in scope” (Wilson, 1964, kl.190).

**Child Study**: The practice in Steiner schools where a team of teachers meet to review the progress and challenges of a particular student; they share observations, insights and possible strategies. The team often includes therapists, teachers, parents and the school doctor.

**Cognition**: “The mental action or process of acquiring knowledge and understanding through thought, experience, and the senses.”

http://www.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/english/cognition
College of Teachers: Originally intended to be the whole body of teachers and the main governance structure or “heart” of the school. Steiner interpreted “organizational” structures as living organisms rather than as “mechanical” systems (Steiner, 1922/1947).

Epoché: The systematic technique of ‘phenomenological reduction’ or ‘suspension’ involves the ‘bracketing’ of conceptual assumptions and the suspension of judgments and beliefs about the external world, in order to make it possible to examine phenomena as they originally appear to consciousness.

Epistemology: “Theory of knowledge especially with regard to its methods, validity, and scope, and the distinction between justified belief and opinion.” https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/epistemology

Etheric: The second ontological structure (‘body’) or level in Steiner’s Fourfold Model. The etheric or “life-filled spirit-form” cannot be seen with the normal senses but can be perceived by the “higher senses” (Imagination, Inspiration and Intuition) when they have been developed. The etheric is an independent entity that “calls forth into life” physical materials and forces and that “preserves the physical body from dissolution” (Steiner, 1922/1971). “The human etheric body differs from that of plants and animals through being organized to serve the purposes of the thinking human being” (ibid.). “By the word body is meant whatever gives a being shape or form” (ibid.).

Eurythmy: an expressive art of movement created by Rudolf Steiner and Marie von Sivers that visually represents the sounds and rhythms of speech and the tones and rhythms of music. It is a performance art that is also used for educational and curative purposes.

Evolution of consciousness: The view that humanity has evolved through various cultural periods that are characterised by different types of consciousness. Steiner noted that: “The grandeur of Darwinian thought is not disputed, but it does not explain the integral evolution of man... So it is with all purely physical explanations, which do not recognize the spiritual essence of a human’s being” (Steiner, 1928/1978).

Freedom: The translation of the word “freedom” is not an exact equivalent of the German word “freiheit.” Although there is some correspondence amongst the range of meanings of “freedom” and “freiheit”, Steiner generally uses it in the sense of a “freedom of style” or “freedom of expression” that indicates an inner overcoming of outer adversity. “This inner conquest is the theme of the book, and it is in this sense that I believe the title: The Philosophy of Freedom would be understood today” (Wilson, 1964).

Humanist: Interest in the study, philosophy, or practice that focuses on human values and concerns.

Intuition: “The faculty and process of grasping concepts, in particular the immediate apprehension of a thought without reasoning” (Wilson, 1964). “Intuition is for thinking what observation is for the percept” (Steiner, 1894/1964).

Hermetic: “Of or relating to the mystical and alchemical writings or teachings arising in the first three centuries a.d. and attributed to Hermes Trismegistus.” https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/hermetic

Main Lesson: The same lesson topic is taught daily for at least three weeks usually as the first lesson of the day. Different subject/discipline areas are integrated into the themes and topics, e.g. mathematics includes biographies of mathematicians. Rhythm is an important concept is the pedagogy (Schoorel, 2004) and developing aesthetic sensitivity to “in-and-out breathing rhythms” (in line with cognitive breathing) in lesson structure and change of activities is part of the teaching methodology.
**Meditation**: Steiner provides details of many exercises to support the opening of vision or higher forms of cognition. He claims that consciousness can reach levels of concentration in its content which are inconceivable for the waking state, which reveal to experience levels of being hidden from the ordinary senses (Schickler, 2005, p.142).

**Mental picture or Vorstellung**: See “Representation.”

**Metanarrative**: “An overarching account or interpretation of events and circumstances that provides a pattern or structure for people’s beliefs and gives meaning to their experiences: ‘traditional religions provide stories that deliver a metanarrative about how we should live our lives.’”

https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/metanarrative

**Nimitta**: A representation or after-image in the mind.

**Numerically identical**: “The concept as such is not one of a series of perfect replicas; it is numerically identical in all the individual minds that think it; the concept of a triangle which my head grasps is the same as the concept that my neighbour’s head grasps; the naïve man believes himself to be the creator of his own concepts. The one uniform concept of ‘triangle’ does not become a multiplicity because it is thought by many persons. For the thinking of the many is in itself a unity” (Steiner, 1894/1964; Barfield, 1988).

**Ontology**: The branch of metaphysics dealing with the nature of being.

https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/ontology

**Pedagogy**: is the art and science of teaching. The term generally refers to strategies of instruction, or a style of instruction; the “method and practice of teaching, especially as an academic subject or theoretical concept.” http://oxforddictionaries.com

**Percept**: The content of the object perceived devoid of any conceptual element (Wilson, 1964).

**Perception**: “The process of perceiving” (Wilson, 1964; my italics) rather than the product.

**Phenomenological methodology**: A philosophical teaching method that draws on the “lived experience” (van Manen, 2007) of students; in Steiner schools teachers use a form of Goethean observation to guide the students to observe a phenomenon both objectively through close attention to the physical properties of the object or phenomenon (size, number, measurement) and subjectively by dreaming into the soul qualities (gesture, colour, shape, tone, relational aspects); a further stage integrates these observations and tries to discern the underlying conceptual content.

**Rhythmicity (Principle of rhythm and balance in teaching)**: **Soul breathing**: an important principle of the art of Steiner teaching. Through breathing the threefold aspects of the physical body become interrelated. Breathing, as part of the rhythmical system, has its own functions but also connects with the metabolism via the blood circulation (through which food is absorbed from the external world) and with the nervous system (Steiner, 1919/1996, kl.506-508). When we breathe in we put pressure on the cerebrospinal fluid of the brain which then “springs back into the body” when we exhale. In this way we transfer the rhythm of our breathing to the brain and nervous system (kl.505-511).

**Representation**: “The mental picture which the thinker forms to represent the concept in an individual way is referred to (in Steiner, 1894/1964) as a “representation” (Wilson, 1964).

**Scientific Materialism**: “Scientific materialism is [...] a developing tradition of inquiry, aiming to provide not only a coherent understanding of the physical, biological, and social worlds, but also the foundations for ethics and political philosophy, and to define the ultimate goals for society, civilization, and humanity” (Gare, 2002, kl. 616-617).

**Soul**: The emotional and sentient parts of the self. In Anthroposophy the Soul is associated with the astral body. It is the translator of the spiritual power of the “I-organization” to the sensory organization (Tresemer, in Bento et al., 2015, kl. 415-417). Also see: Body, Soul and Spirit.
Soul-spiritual: A general term that integrates soul qualities (emotional and sentient) with spiritual ones (relating to thinking, agency and the higher self).

Spirit: Steiner relates spirit to thinking. See Body, Soul and Spirit.

Sentient body: See Astral body and Soul.

Soul-breathing: See Rhythmicity.

Streaming: The practice of putting schoolchildren in groups of the same age and ability to be taught together.

Theosophy, Theosophical society: “Any of a number of philosophies maintaining that a knowledge of God may be achieved through spiritual ecstasy, direct intuition, or special individual relations.” The Theosophical Society was formed in 1875 by Helena Blavatsky and Henry Steel Olcott (1832–1907). [https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/theosophy](https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/theosophy)

The Will: The Soul Faculty of the Will in Steiner philosophy (1894/1964) refers to the full range of motivational behaviours from drives, instincts and desires to more refined moral impulses. Steiner education proposes that the three Soul faculties of thinking, feeling and willing need to be integrated. It is particularly important for will forces to influence and enliven thinking and for thinking to refine will impulses. The feeling faculty is understood to play a harmonising and mediating function. Steiner teachers aim to awaken children’s thinking so that they learn to think for themselves instead of reproducing factual content. Broadly speaking “the Will” can also be understood to refer to the physical aspect of development because Steiner education suggests that the Will as a psychological function is associated physiologically with the metabolic-limb system. As skills learning inevitably uses the limb system, in this way “the Will” is also related to skills learning and to physical activities. The use of the word ‘behavioural’ does not have the meaning that is applied in behavioural psychology.

Voice: “The voice is authentic when it is embodied; the orientation in general strives to help students to establish their own relationship with knowledge content and to bring this to expression through their own ‘bodily’ or vocal expression. The emphasis is also placed on “voice” – as speech is understood to be an essential part of the arts-based training and a way in which language and “the Word” can be brought to life” (ASCF, 2011). Also see: “Authentic voice.”

Vorstellung: See “Representation.”

Waldorf: The first Steiner school was started for the children of the employees of the Waldorf–Astoria cigarette factory and the name has been retained in many Steiner schools particularly in Germany and Europe. Steiner schools are sometimes referred to as Steiner-Waldorf schools.

Zeitgeist: The defining spirit or mood of a particular period of history as shown by the ideas and beliefs of the time.