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Education



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Living Values Education Distance

## Criteria for LVE Model Schools

For Principals and Teachers Everywhere



Material and activities in this LVE Values booklet are adapted from *LVE Criteria for a Living Values School* and Peter William's, *The Kuwait American School Experience*.

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**Living Values Education** is coordinated by the Association for Living Values Education International, a non-profit, non-sectarian association of educators from around the world.

**LVE was part of the global movement** for a culture of peace in the framework of the United Nations *Decade for a Culture of Peace and Non-Violence for the Children of the World*.



### Implementation Criteria for LVE Model Schools

For whole schools who wish to become Living Values Education Program (LVE) Model Schools, the following criteria are outlined to help them adhere to the model. After all, if one is to measure the effects of a program, the program needs to be implemented in the manner intended.

Hence, we offer the following guidelines for schools to implement LVE most effectively, with maximum benefit to students, teachers and the school community. Those schools who wish to measure the effects of LVE should adhere to this model.

### Willingness

The school staff is pleased to be chosen as a LVE implementation site and wish to be involved in this values-education program.

## Training and Follow-up

The entire school staff would be involved in an initial three-day LVE Educator Training, including administrators, teachers, teacher aides, support staff and secretaries. Bus drivers, cafeteria workers and janitorial staff should receive at least one day of training, but optimally would be involved in the entire training. The training is designed to help the members of the school community become more aware of their own values, to explore the concept and tools for creating a values-based atmosphere, and become familiar with the constructs of and methods of facilitating LVE.

Several follow-up visits by LVE trainers should be scheduled the first year to see what is going well, and help with any difficulties with implementation and any needed skill-building. Three follow-ups should be held the second and third years of the project, including additional training as appropriate.

It is optimal to involve parents. It is helpful to invite a few key parents to the LVE Educator Training should the school staff be willing to do so. If the school community wishes to provide LVE parent group sessions or workshops for parents, and is willing to allocate parent trainers or counselors for this purpose, a short additional training will be given.

Teachers and support staff new to the school in subsequent years will need to undergo LVE Educator Training.

## Communication

One (or two) professional staff member(s) at the school site must be appointed to coordinate LVE activities at the school site. They shall serve as a communication liaison person for LVE personnel or researchers, if the latter are involved.

## Teaching Living Values Activities

All students are to receive two or three structured Living Values Activities lessons each week at the school site.

**Students from three-to seven-years** old are to receive three structured Living Values Activities (LVA) lessons a week from the *Living Values Activities for Children Ages 3–7* book. The 60 minutes needed to do these three lessons are usually incorporated into language arts and/or art time.

**Students from eight- to twelve-years** old in primary schools are to receive three structured LVA lessons a week from the *Living Values Activities for Children Ages 8–14* book during the first four months of implementation. The 90 minutes needed to do these three lessons are usually incorporated into language arts, social studies, moral education and/or art time, as appropriate. The cooperation lessons have even been incorporated into physical education time. After the first four months of the program, teachers are asked to do at least two structured LVA lessons a week from LVAC 8-14. Usually by this time the students have “bought into” the values and it is easy to integrate it throughout the regular curriculum. Teachers may wish to simply bring up values concepts into the regular curriculum or add more of their own activities.

**Middle school students from eleven- to fourteen-years** old are to receive 90 minutes of LVE time each week for the structured LVA lessons during the first four months of implementation. While most schools teach the lessons from the *Living Values Activities for Children Ages 8–14* book, sometimes the staff elects using the *Living Values Activities for Young Adults* book for eighth grade students. When using the LVAC 8–14 book, please do three lessons in the allotted 90 minutes. When using the LVA Young Adults book, two lessons will usually take the full 90 minutes. Teachers have included the lessons into language arts, history, social studies and art time slots when a dedicated period for character or moral education is not available.



It is suggested that the staff meet to decide which subject area will take up the LVA lessons for which value during the year. After the first four months of the program, please continue with at least one structured LVA lesson a week from LVAYA. Usually by this time the students have “bought into” the values and it is easy to integrate it throughout the regular curriculum.

Students in secondary school are to receive two structured LVA lessons a week from the *Living Values Activities for Young Adults* book. Each unit also contains suggestions for activities in different subject areas. It is expected that the students will receive **at least 80%** of the LVA lessons with each value being taught. The LVE curriculum does encourage educators to add in stories and wisdom from their own culture. Our internal research does show that those educators who do 80% or more of the LV Activities, and who spend 90 minutes a week on values education achieve greater buy-in from the students. This is critical for maximum effectiveness.

Quietly Being Exercises for children three- to seven-years old and Relaxation/Focusing Exercises for students eight-years old and above are introduced in the Peace, Respect and Love Units. Educators are to continue to have the students do these exercises during **all** the values units. As part of the LVA lessons, older students are asked to create their own Relaxation/Focusing Exercises. It is optimal for the students to receive a Relaxation/Focusing exercise daily.

## Integrating LVE into the Curriculum and School Culture

All teachers and students are to be involved with LVE; *the entire school is asked to focus on the same value at a time.*

It is important for educators to bring the value of focus into other curriculum areas, as appropriate. For example, values can easily be

focused on and incorporated into literature, art, music and drama. But opportunities to look at the value of focus can also arise in physical education, social studies, history, economics, etc.

School assemblies on the value of focus are recommended each month to allow students to share their songs, poems, skits/dramas, insights, projects, and artistic and intellectual creations.

Projects to help others can spring out of the LVA lessons. These class service projects can continue throughout the year.

When conflicts arise, when there are challenging circumstances, or local events or world news impacts the students or school, it is natural and helpful to facilitate a discussion or problem solve with students, viewing the situation through the perspective of values.

## Which Values?

During the first year of implementation, each school is asked to initially teach the Peace Unit and then the Respect Unit. Each of these values units will require seven to eight weeks if students using LVAC 3–7 and LVAC 8–14 do three lessons a week and the students with LVAYA do two lessons a week. The school may wish to allow some lesson time for students to practice for a school assembly.

The LVA books contain a suggested order of sequence for each age level. However, the educators at each school, after doing the units of Peace and Respect, may choose their own sequence of values. They will be able to do all the values units in two school years. At the beginning of the second year of implementation, it is recommended that schools do several lessons from the Peace Values Unit in order to re-visit their concept of a peaceful world, and review the conflict resolution lessons.

In the third and fourth year of implementation, repeat the process. As the students are older and have explored the values, they will

process the lessons and values differently the second time, and hopeful explore and develop the values more deeply.

*Peace, Love and Caring, Respect,  
Honesty, Humility, Happiness,  
Tolerance, Cooperation, Responsibility,  
Simplicity and Caring for the Earth and  
her Oceans, Freedom, Unity, plus....*



Below is a list of the numbers of lessons in each values unit. This will help each school to plan the number of values they will be able to do in the school year.

	<u>3-7</u>	<u>8-14</u>	<u>Young Adults</u>
Peace	22	24	15
Respect	22	21	14
Love	17	17	13
Tolerance	9	18	14
Happiness	15	16	15
Responsibility	12	15	15
Cooperation	17	16	12
Humility	8	9	11
Honesty	6	11	9
Simplicity	7	11	8
Freedom	–	11	11
Unity	5	8	7
<b><i>Total Lessons</i></b>	<b><i>140</i></b>	<b><i>177</i></b>	<b><i>144</i></b>

# The Kuwait American School Story



## Part 1

- How and why was a Living Values-based school created?
- After 18 years, what three key principles did we learn along the way?
- What are some of the evidences indicating the benefits of Living Values Education?
- What preparations did the Founding Principal have to put in place?

### *Overview*

The K-12 Kuwait American School was founded on the Living Values Education Program in 1999. After 19 continuous years of implementing Living Values Education, its vision and mission continues to 'Build Minds, Characters and Futures' within an international context of 'Learning without Borders'.

### *How did it all begin?*

In 1999, Kuwait had suffered from an invasion and the

Founder's vision, Mrs Wajeeha Al-Habib, was to help heal the peacelessness in the hearts and minds of adults and children in Kuwait by creating a values-based school. She witnessed that children of all ages had become traumatized

and, even though many said her vision would not work - her determination - with Living Values Education and a team of like minded educators made it possible.

Ask any parent what they wish for their child and most will say 'Peace and Happiness' and ask any parent what value or quality they would like their child to carry with them all of their lives and most will say 'Honesty'. It was with this understanding that Living Values Education set the foundation for the school with hope, trust and a secure vision with values at its heart. The school believed that in every child there was a seed waiting to bloom. The metaphor of a star and a diamond helps to illustrate this practical vision with the star representing the child's innate gifts and skills and the diamond representing all their values that shine from the heart.

In addition to delivering a Council for International Schools accredited and rigorous academic curriculum, the Living Values Education Program with its vision, creativity, clarity, guidance and practicalities has enabled the school to identify and nurture three key principles.

**What three key principles did the school learn along the way?**

1. *The Loving Presence of the Educator in a Values- Based Atmosphere who models and lives their values with Kindness*

The presence of the educator who modeled and lived their values with kindness was a key message. Whilst accepting that we are all working on how to live our most positive values, we discovered that the children were modeling themselves on us and learning to appreciate that a values- based atmosphere based on love, values, respect, understanding and safety generated a positive energy and willingness to learn with trust in their ability, clarity, safety and kindness.

2. *The Importance of Enabling a Community of Trust and a Family of Learners, especially with parents, in the promotion of well-being, care and high quality learning for their children*

Parents were surveyed as to what made the school a place where they could send their child 'to learn', 'to belong' and 'to be' themselves. Their top 5 responses were: A place where you feel welcomed, a place to feel at ease with yourself, a place to know yourself, a place to feel part of a family and a place to feel loved, valued, respected, understood and safe. It is interesting to note that no parent mentioned academics.

3. *The Nurturing and Education of the Healing Strength of Living Values Education for all through the Education of the Heart*

What began in 1999 with some hurt and violence amongst some traumatized students soon, with the help of Living Values Education, turned into laughter, joy, happiness and learning in both the head and heart. In 2007, the school carried out a survey with the senior students with regard to their reflections, wishes and hopes. There were many positive responses including the ability to make ethical choices, yet, one response was unexpected. The students felt that blame and shame was still too much in evidence and affecting their lives. When the school asked what the school was doing to cause blame and shame, the students responded that it wasn't the school causing blame and shame, but adults of the world who, they felt, need to stop blaming and shaming others and must start forgiving, forgetting, trusting and moving on.

We began to wonder – could Living Values Education truly help to build a better world? The students said 'Yes'.

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### Some of the evidences indicating the benefits of Living Values Education

- The school has grown to be a family – a community of learners.
- There is a powerful values-based learning atmosphere.

- There is a strong feeling of welcome, joy and acceptance.
- The students express their values using their own moral compass.
- The students became ambassadors of how to live their values.
- There are very few referrals for physical violence.
- Peace Time and Mindfulness is widely practiced.
- The academic standards are higher.
- The school's assemblies provide an essential focus for the Living Value of the Month led by students and staff.
- Lead assemblies, once per month, are in Arabic and English to help assure relevance in cultural context.
- Living Values Education lessons are supported by unique Etiquette, Public Speaking and Life Skills programs that are 'taught' each week.
- Values-based learning is being incorporated, where applicable, into the Middle and High School years.
- For educators, it's a great place to come to work each day to give of your best with a result that teaching is enjoyable. Staff retention levels are very high, and
- For everyone, the school is a happy and hard workplace to be.



A recent visitor from the Ministry of Youth commented: 'Why are these students so happy and learning so well? We responded: *'It's a Living Values School'*.

## What did I have to do as a leader of a brand new school based on Living Values?

### *For Personal Preparation*

- Take the best of my knowledge, skills and experience that I had learnt within the context I had been a professional for 30 years and start again.
- Listen, watch and ask.
- Adapt to a new cultural interpretation of values with a universal values heart.
- Remember that I was a guest in another country to learn and to share.
- Set the vision, not by imposition, but by invitation to join the mission.
- Nurture from the root and wait for the flower to bloom with patience.
- Go slowly with no quick fixes expected.

### *For School Preparation*

- Place the desired value(s) ahead of all that the school was seeking to achieve in all areas of teaching, learning and administration followed by the subject matter and the how to deliver it.

- Assure that the legal curriculum guidelines and expectations were met.
- To train all educators with regard to Living Values Education at the start of each academic year.
- To set transparent strategic short, medium and long term plans – leading the school from the original concept of a K-5 living values- based school to a K-12 fully accredited living values-based school.
- To see the very best in every child, of all ages, and to envision them better than they believe themselves to be.
- To lead Living Values assemblies each week with exemplars of how the staff and students may wish to take part and take the lead.
- Appreciate that the goodness of Living Values genuinely attracts the right people to its presence.
- Communicate widely with parents including the facilitation of workshops.

*To Raise the School's and Living Values Education profile*

- Attend the Education for All conference in Cairo to share the benefits of Living Values Education, and afterwards, at the invitation of UNESCO, to co- address all Arab Ministers of Education in Beirut.
- Inform, by Ministerial invitation, all 800 Kuwait State Schools about the benefits of the Living

### Values Education Program.

- Apply and gain approval for the school to be an approved Ministry of Education Living Values Training School.
- Offer regular In Service Training Living Values workshops and seminars in Kuwait to interested schools, Universities and NGO's.
- Take 'Living Values' into the community by way of values-based theatrical productions, for example, The Little Prince and Jonathan Seagull.
- Train, facilitate, listen and learn in neighboring countries eg Saudi Arabia, Oman, Dubai, Egypt.

### *Safety for All*

- Working in a conflict zone – assure the physical safety for all both within and outside school with protocols securely in place.
- Reminding myself that some colleagues had witnessed and were affected by the traumas of economic challenges and war.....and continue to be affected to this day.
- Securely inform a safe learning and empowering growth environment for all with no 'put downs' for colleagues who were navigating this approach for the first time.
- To firmly establish and maintain a positive atmosphere of love, care and kindness with an occasional lawful reminder!

### *To Value, Nurture and Train the Educator*

- Employ and build a team of like-minded values-based educators.
- Appreciate the staff 100% with unswerving commitment to their welfare and responsibility.
- Trust my colleagues 100% knowing that no-one was perfect especially myself.
- Fully nurture and actively support the warm hearted and caring educator.
- Empower and encourage best practices and sharing the same.
- To invite and train educators to be Living Values Trainers/ Facilitators. *(This carried significant benefit for the students and the school's growth.)* ***When things became challenging***
- Learn to manage criticism from 'traditional assessors' where their given remit was not to assess soft skills.
- Be calm in times of paradox, multiple expectations and be prepared to step right outside of your comfort zone.
- Be prepared to embrace change, the unexpected and unpredictability.
- Have unswerving faith, sometimes against all odds, that this form of learning is successful.
- To gently guide and nurture everyone.
- Accept and show my own vulnerability.
- Learn to take 'time out' for the self.

*Keep nurturing the seed with servant leadership*

- To emerge and develop servant leadership with kindness and resilience.
- Support the Living Values root and take care of the many shoots!
- Lead and fill the gaps when things are forgotten. You only have to do it once with no criticism given.
- To keep the vision alive and 'clean' with regular trainings and 'reminders' at the start of each academic year, especially for new to school teachers.
- Nourish, understand and appreciate that people are affected by the respect we share with them regardless of gender, faith or nationality.
- Be open to adopting other values-based approaches that awaken and nurture values.
- To be always available with 'no door' to my office area.

*Above all:*

- Be the Example and be the Model.
- Create a Loving Presence.
- Enable a Community of Trust
- Nurture the Healing strength of Living Values Education
- Educate from the Heart.
- Know myself and how I live my values.
- Always plan for succession.
- Be thankful.

The journey was supported by many practical steps that support the three principles. They can be introduced according to local circumstance and preference.

## **Part 2**

- *What are some of the Practical Steps that the school took that each carried their own equality of contribution to the process?*

*Consider choosing one or two to focus on from the 25 exemplars below. Take your time. Living Values cannot be rushed or 'done' overnight. Be patient and take rest from time to time. The KAS model took 10 years to embed and we are still learning and adapting.*

### **1. Inviting everyone to contribute to the Values and Vision**

***Key Message:** Living Values is not a 'top down' model.  
It's an empowering model for all from the root.*

Inviting everyone to visualize what the school should look and feel like, in words and images, assisted in exploring ways in which everyone can reflect on how their own practice, gifts and talents can add to the vision.

Key to the success of this approach is that the vision is not 'top down' but an equality of contribution towards one agreed vision to which teachers, leaders, management and the whole school community can play their part. It is essential that the process is nurtured and natural 'from the root' and not forced or controlled 'from above'. Force or control is a dictate and can wound the spirit of the educator.



Nurturing invites in and allows each one of us to bring our emotional and spiritual self to our role and profession.

***Suggestion:** Invite everyone, in a group setting, to share and record what values are important to them in education. Trust and value all responses. This is the shared vision.*

## 2. Creating the Atmosphere

***Key Message:** Keep positive – no matter what!*

Positive atmospheres invite LVRUS – love, values, respect, understanding and security to the learner and educator. Laws apply yet the law making within a positive atmosphere is to be lawful to oneself and the cultural norms in which one lives and learns. The love in positive atmospheres is to give love, respect, regard and bring one's naturalness in the situation. Positive atmospheres uplift independence in learning, assure love for learning and assure success that is sustainable over time. Positive atmospheres nurture well-being as well as academic growth.

***Suggestion:** Personally welcome everyone, with a smile and a kind word, at the start of the school day – colleagues as they enter the building and students as they enter the gate.*

### 3. Character Education with the depth of Living Values Education

***Key Message:** The education of character and living values is the foundation*

This lies at the heart of a Living Values School. It is for everyone. Using the Living Values Education materials, it is practiced each day and touches the heart of the child and educator by:

- Inviting their presence, their voice, their experience and contribution
- Honoring cultural roots, traditions and goodness
- Understanding their circumstances and lifestyle
- Inviting the knowing heart to bring to fruition a positive difference
- Giving permission to help co-create a better world.

The essence of Living Values is to invite and to work with or alongside others with shared values from the heart. It is certainly not a program to be 'filled into others' rather than a 'drawing out' of what is already there.

***Suggestion:** Explore, experience and express the Living Values materials every day. Most of all - Enjoy the journey!*

#### 4. Celebrating Good Practice in the Classroom and Around School

***Key Message:** Catch everyone doing things right and appreciate.*

Celebrating the good practice that is already there builds appreciative trust and capacity for growth to which each school will rightly find its own way to acknowledge according to their own conventions and protocols.

An 'easy does it' and 'gentle steps' approach – leading by example, celebrating our current strengths, catching everyone 'doing things right' and celebrating the many steps along the way, I believe, helps to build and uplift the spirit and values-based application of learning. For example, gently instilling the application of appreciative inquiry with 'no put downs' yet 'raising the bar' to become even better at doing your best.

***Suggestion:** Enter classes and offer a specifically focused positive affirmation.*

#### 5. The important role of Assemblies

***Key Message:** Living Values assemblies create a sense of family and modeled unity. Cultural stories and 'mother tongue assemblies' are a regular feature.*

Living Values-based assemblies are a very positive way to create of a sense of family, togetherness and modeled unity.

They help the school to envision and maintain its values and how to live them in a practical way.

The 12 key Living Values Education materials, as explored, experienced and expressed in the classroom and around school form the basis all assemblies. The key elements in most assemblies include: stillness, a song, story, play and reflection. Parents are regularly invited to attend.

The importance of sharing stories and cultural values in the mother tongue of the children, followed by an English interpretation, is often used to add towards the making of a unity of values for all. These values are illustrated and displayed around the school at the children's eye level.

***Suggestion:** Place children's work and posters around the school highlighting the values(s) of the month with a message.*

## 6. Etiquette and Social Acceptability

***Key Message:** Learn to look after yourself and to be a lovely person to know in whatever culture, circumstance or context you find yourself.*

### ***Etiquette***

Taught as a foundation lesson alongside Living Values Education, Etiquette instills principles of common courtesy and consideration for others with regard to comfort, respect, taste, feeling and privacy. In a nutshell: 'Do to others what you would like to have happen to you'.

Examples of the 30 step program include: How to greet one another, Introductions in a number of contexts, How to say 'please' and 'thank you', How to answer a phone, How to open and close a conversation, Table Manners, Personal Hygiene and Public Speaking.

### *Public Speaking*

Public Speaking is an art that requires training and confidence building to be fully prepared for whatever values-based context the student will find themselves in the future.

Avenues to explore, experience and express include:

- Show and Tell – bringing an item or book from home to share.
- Interviews – teacher to student, student to student, student to guest speaker.
- Front of Camera – preparing a speech and speaking to the camera.
- Role Play – confidence in acting.
- Open Sharing, etc.

Adding value to voice and confidence in presenting the message can be 'measured', over time, using a number of indicators:

- Has confidence
- Shows enthusiasm toward public speaking
- Speaks clearly. Uses inflection in tone

- Speaks slowly, annunciating every word
- Has a stable body posture.
- Is respectful of all – no matter what!

In an age where the loss of dialogue in favor of texting or messaging is becoming more prevalent, perhaps the enhancement of public speaking programs are a way to help empower students with the entrepreneurial and communication skills necessary to be successful where it really matters.

***Suggestion:** Consider inviting the children to create their own 'Etiquette Code of Conduct' – one for school and one for home – and talk about it to the camera with a voice full of values.*

## 7. Your Voice is the first Musical Instrument

***Key Message:** The voice is the first musical instrument. The voice reflects the sound of the human soul where tonality and inflection carries the values between the words.*

Our voice helps to uplift the values-based spirit of learning:

- To instruct, explore, inspire and connect
- To soften, to focus, to strengthen and to relax
- To call, to resonate with our own true self and to touch the soul
- To celebrate our message.
- No need to **shout!**



Music, in all its forms, is also the alchemy of sound that touches the heart and soul in us all. Music shifts consciousness with a 'felt shift' that is forgotten in its presence.

for example:

- Music played at lower beats enhances creativity
- Music played at 60 beats per minute is ideal for learning Mathematics
- Softly played music reduces stress and soothes the tired mind
- Rousing music creates a feeling of action and pride
- Music brings harmony with the self and others. Music helps to soften the resistance to move on.

*Suggestion: Let the music of your voice mean more than the words that are spoken.*

## 8. *Your Presence is a Living Art Form*

*Key Message: Our very presence is a living Art Form.  
How we 'carry' ourselves in on show all the time.*

The comfort and security that we, as educators, give to a child is priceless.

Whether we are silent, use sound and silence or sound – our presence is on show all the time. We are each a living Art form of how we live our values.

Our altruism cannot be hidden. At its best it is warm-heartedness.

*Suggestion: Your presence is a Living Art form that speaks through presence and silence. Live well and be kind to yourself. It shows and is felt.*

## 9. Stilling Techniques, 'Time for Me' and the Benefits of Silence

*Key Message: Remember to be a 'Human Being' - not just a 'Human Doing'.*

Stilling, silence and 'time for me' are great friends to us all and take us away from the hurried world of 'doing' to help reflect, consider the direction we wish to take and most importantly, book an appointment with our self!

According to UNESCO's – Learning: The Treasure Within – there are four components: Learning to Know, Learning to Do, Learning to Belong and Learning to Be.

Almost 20 years after the report was published, the Head of UNESCO shared: 'We have become very good at knowing and doing, but we have forgotten how to belong with one another in peace and harmony and simply be a 'human being' rather than a 'human doing'.

This is where the part of stilling, silence and 'time for me' enables each of us to access and reflect on our inner world and values in our own unique way.

*Suggestion: Make 'stilling' time an approved practice from which everyone can benefit.*

## 10. Create and Aim - Imagine Achievement in Life

*Key Message: Do we each have an aim in life?*

Many children, of all ages, don't have an aim in life. Sports people and Olympic stars imagine achievement in their life and make it happen. They visualize their success. In these terms, as you hold the vision, that is what you receive.

To help in the process, consider the stages of learning as researched by Richard Barrett.

- A baby aged 0 to 2 years needs love, comfort and basic needs
- A child aged 3 to 11 years needs to feel loved, valued, respected, understood and safe
- A young adult ages 11 to 15 years needs to be recognized for their achievements
- A young adult aged 15 to 18 years seeks purpose
- A young adult aged 18 to 35 years seeks security, employment and succession
- A mature adult ages 35 to 45 years seeks meaning to life, and
- A retired person returns to wishing to feel loved, valued, respected, understood and secure.

Putting it simply, whatever your age or age of the children, visualize and ignite the spirit within and wait for the flower to bloom in its own time. Lock the spirit within to fixed learning with a fixed time frame and the flower may bloom or it may fade away.

***Suggestion:*** Take time out to create your aim then set out to make it happen.

## 11. Peace Time

***Key Message:*** Give everyone in school the permission to slow down the hurried mind and do 'nothing'.

Peace time is observed around 10am each working day with the playing of soft instrumental music across the full schools' sound system. This Peace Time lasts for no longer than 2 minutes genuinely adding to the school day and learning about themselves rather than 'taking away teaching and learning time'.

Additional Peace Time activities include: silence generated by switching off the lights, playing soft instrumental music, gently stretching exercises, visualization, storytelling with reflective pauses and Tai Chi.

***Suggestion:*** Give yourself an invitation to enjoy this 2 minute practice each day. It helps to re-charge, re-focus and keep stress away.

## 12. Contemplation, Meditation and Creative Visualisation

***Key Message:*** Open doors to more than a 'one way' values approach through guided contemplation, meditation and creative visualization.

### ***Guided Contemplation***

Guided contemplation is taking the children on a picture journey in their mind's eye. Every journey is different and every journey is just as it should be! No judgment is involved – just acceptance.

### *Meditation*

Often defined as 'Mindfulness', meditation takes children to a safe, still and peaceful place. It helps to heal the wounded spirit and re-charge the batteries. Its benefits include: clarity, calm, happiness and sense of purpose.

### *Creative Visualisation*

Creative visualisation is taking children on an inner journey – carefully guiding them through their thoughts – in a gentle and non prescribed way. For example: What would the journey of a drop of water inside of a plant look like? After the visualization, talk about the journey. Accept all answers as correct. Invite the students to do a story board with 4, 6 or 8 pictures, a poem, or a creative story about the 'journey of a drop of water'. Enable the children, not yourself, to display them.

Relax Kids stories are particularly effective in bringing children into values-based 'guided contemplative and creative visualization spaces'.

The results include: increased self respect, increased attentiveness, a safe place to be quiet, better social interaction, more kindness, more original and creative work especially with art and writing, and better standardized and non verbal test scores.

Intuitive teachers just know when reflection is required and when doing is the order of the day. It's what professional teachers all over the world instinctively know what to do and how to do it. It is their gift to humanity.

***Suggestion:*** Keep thinking 'out of the box'. Relax and 'Be' yourself. Your children and colleagues will love you even more for it and will enjoy joining in!

### 13. Journaling

**Key Message:** *Journaling adds depth to learning a life of values.*

Journaling is personal writing with time to do it. Journaling slows down the 'hurried child' away from tests and assessments into a celebration of their own thinking. It gives time to consider the 'big' and 'little' things in life and brings focus to learning. The contemplative quality of journaling awakens imagination, integrity and an 'inner conversation' that are sometimes denied.

Amongst other benefits, journaling as a regular practice:

- Invites children to reflect on their inner world with ways to show it on the outside.
- Helps them understand that we all think and 'see things' differently.
- Brings an awareness that behind every action in themselves and another person is a reservoir of previous experiences that shapes their lives and the lives in others,

**Suggestion:** *Consider this approach to help focus and take the hurried child away from distractions and over used social media.*

### 14. Story Telling

**Key Message:** *We all have a story to tell. This process helps us to appreciate and to listen.*



Story Telling is the gateway to the vivid imagination of the inner world with a voice, the presence of one another and mountains of imagination. Stories take children onto a journey into a world of fact, fantasy and fun. Some stories are best read out, some are best changed to culture and context, and some are best read with children's full participation in costume.

Story Tellers use a range of voice pitches, speed and modulation to capture the audience with a sense of wonder and, in doing so, touch an inner chord of truth in the child.

Story Telling is also about telling events in our lives that we would like to share with others. One's presence and attentiveness to listen rather than hear adds to the true meaning of storytelling.

***Suggestion:** Encourage parents to read a story to their child/children every night. Listen, too, to the life stories of children. 'Once upon a time' could take on a whole new meaning!*

## 15. Drama and Psychodrama

***Key Message:** Some children and adults are locked into one way of thinking. Drama and Psychodrama awakens us to the traditional and 'hidden' mysteries in our lives.*

### ***Drama***

Through drama, releasing expression, touching emotion and firing the imagination ignites the values-based heart in us all. How often do parents come and watch and photograph their children on stage during national festivities and special productions that retell events of long ago and celebrate the nation's identity. Acting out plays of stories, enchantment,

fairy tales, myths, legends and religious occasions also bring a pride to the spirit of giving.

### *Psychodrama*

Psychodrama heals and shows mastery of its effect through the giving of a message. For example, inviting the children, usually in assembly, to witness a journey of good over bad with good humor.

Imagine the scene where 2 actors are acting out good v not so good eating habits. One actor eats healthy food and another actor eats only junk food. The children laugh when they see the two characters. Afterwards, they are asked which is better – healthy eating or unhealthy eating? Without exception, they always choose the healthy food, whilst being honest enough to admit that they do both!

***Suggestion:** Create a stage and let the children take the lead.*

## 16. Kelso's Choices

***Key Message:** Empower children to make their own values-based choices*

Kelso's Choices Resolution program is a complementary and successful tool to help very young to aged 9 children to manage their own conflicts and problems with the assistance of a puppet frog who brings problem solving choices. The program helps the students to identify the difference between 'big' problems like getting hurt, feeling

scared, being bullied and the importance of telling a trusted adult straight away – and 'small' problems.

Bright posters are posted around the school with 2 key messages:

- a. If you have a big problem – tell an adult you trust.
- b. If you have a small problem – try 2 of Kelso’s choices namely:
  - talk it out
  - share and take turns
  - ignore it
  - walk away
  - tell them to stop
  - apologise
  - make a deal
  - wait and cool off
  - go to another game.

***Suggestion:*** In assemblies, make it OK to tell about ‘big problems’ – and to work out your own ‘little ones’. Consider inviting the older children to co-lead the assembly.

## 17. Philosophy and Working with Words and Quotations

### *i. Philosophy*

***Key Message:*** Philosophy is for all.  
*It’s root meaning, in Greek, is: ‘Love of Wisdom’.*

Pondering the awe, wonder and paradoxes of life captivates the imagination and inner world of children. Lipman's pioneering Philosophy for Children (P4C) uses stories to bring children to the point of choice – choice in the decision making and knowing which choice is the right one for them.

Equally, some paradoxes are unanswerable creating space for creativity, future possibilities and imagination to flourish. For example: Is life a stage on which we all play our part? What is infinity? If you go through a black hole, what is on the other side? Is there such a thing as enchantment? Are fairy stories real?

Philosophy invites in the twists, turns and never ending story.

***Suggestion:** In very young children, there is an innocence and an unbridled voice of simplistic wisdom. Ask them the hardest questions. They will, for sure, give you the answer!*

## ii. *Working with Quotations and Words*

***Key Message:** Ancient Wisdom and Quotations carry many messages for Modern Times.*

Quotations abound and each carries a different message to the receiver. Inviting students to discover and discuss quotations is a lively way to articulate points of view, respect others point of view and build both respect and self-respect.

Only 600 out of 6000 languages are secure and strengthen the call for upholding the meanings, traditions and values of individual languages.

The emergence of bi-lingualism of values creates structured spaces to discuss points of common interest, appreciates differences, enhances the well-being of individuals and society and generates a constant flow of affirmative messages. Assemblies using multiple languages helps to keep these traditions alive. For example: What does peace mean to you?

***Suggestion:** Seek an Ancient Wisdom quote and bring its meaning into your life. It may be, or may not be, the same interpretation as your best friend!*

## 18. Linking Art with Literature and Healing

***Key Message:** Art invites the heart to express where words cannot. Art has no borders. It's a silent alchemy.*

### ***Art and Literature***

Imagine a Grade 1/ Year 1 Art Class of bright eyed children sitting in a circle listening to the story of the Princess and the Pea. You will recall that to be a pure-hearted Princess, the girl had to know if a pea was underneath 20 mattresses that she was resting on. Imagine the story being shared to the children with the 'formal objectives' of the lesson being to draw lines in different thicknesses, forms and expressions.

Imagine now the student's face as they drew 20 lines of their own choosing to represent the mattresses with a picture of the princess on the top and the pea on the bottom! All learning objectives were met in a fun way with a story to share with mums and dads when the children went home.

### *Art offers a Healing Property*

Children affected by trauma or war have a yearning to express their feelings where words are not enough. For example: students from one war affected land drew pictures for students in another war affected land. The pictures offered peace and hope, and were exhibited in both lands. They drew a silent knowing from all those who witnessed their images – not one of conflict – but only hope and peace.

Other ways of joint activities between two countries include:

- a. Starting a picture in one country and asking students in a twin school to complete it.
- b. Writing a story between two nations/ two cultures.
- c. Take part in a Joint Sustainable Futures project.

***Suggestion:** Appreciate Art and the numerous perspectives that invites the artist in each one of us to explore, experience and express.  
Love and appreciate your own living your values Art form.*

## **19. Nature and Outdoor Education**

***Key Message:** We are part of Nature. It's our Mother Earth home.*

Children feel natural and at ease in the outdoors. Just watch them play. They learn more about themselves and personality in the outdoors than the protected four walls of the classroom. Children are drawn to nature and nature helps them to identify who they are.

For example: Beach sculpture excites children. Imagine collecting natural items on a beach and creating collage or mural on sand. Working in teams, each child will contribute in a different perspective. Sharing, caring and contributing to the picture is a team effort. It's enjoyed and then swept away by the tide.

Now imagine two egotistical youngsters who were put together for an orienteering course.

One could read a map and not a compass and the other could use a compass but not read a map. Without co-operation, they would not have succeeded in the task.

They learnt to put egos to one side and co-operate. They learnt humility. Similarly, two non communicative children were put into a two man canoe to paddle downstream. If you paddle on one side only, the boat goes around in circles! Communicate and the canoe goes in a straight line. The children learnt to communicate.

Mother nature is stronger than we are as humans and sometimes we forget to honor it. Working in, about and for nature has never been as vital as it is today.

***Suggestion:** Play and learn more outside in nature.*

## 20. Parenting

***Key Message:** Parenting doesn't come with a handbook for each child. Every parent is unique each with their own personality and gifts.*

**Parents are the child's first and foremost educators.**

**The gift of parenting and parenting 'in loco parentis' carries many challenges for the self. They include:**

- i. To know yourself – who you are.
- ii. To make sense of the world in our own minds before sharing with our children.
- iii. To appreciate that children are a reflection of the moral education they receive at home and from the example of others,
- iv. To take time to listen and be a positive mirror for children.

When parents are asked: 'If, like a product, children come with a guarantee, what basic characteristics would they always possess?

The parents replied: Love, Peace, Respect, Goodness, Joy and Happiness

Then asked: 'What has no expiry date in humans?' The replies included laughter, love and happiness.

***Suggestion:** Once in a while, invite parents into class to share in their children's learning – maybe read a story or two – or take their child to their workplace.*

## **21. Assessment**



***Key Message:*** *Nurture the value of soft skill indicators along the way and not just the end result*

Subject based assessment, in its many forms, has an important part to play. 'Hard' diagnostic, formative and summative evidence helps us to guide children to academic success. However, you cannot 'measure' values-based education though it is possible to consider indicators that inform and support the inner world of values. For example, UNESCO's Early Childhood Education website offers indicators for: 'Educating the Whole Child – social, spiritual, physical, intellectual, cultural and emotional dimensions', 'Valuing the unique combination of each and every child and each and every adult', and 'Keep the best interests of the child incorporated in all that we do', amongst many others.

***Suggestion:*** *Design your own collaboratively created 'in class' values-based indicators and enable the children to aim for and self assess their progress.*

## 22. Mentoring and Peer Research

***Key Message:*** *Keep learning and sharing with humility, love and respect.*

### ***Mentoring***

Mentoring lifts learning and professionalism. It reduces stress caused by 'sticky box' judgment. It is active learning and review in constant progress with a trusted friend. It is natural leadership and self leadership in action.

With a trusted colleague, consider:

- a. What makes a good lesson?
- b. What makes a good values-based lesson?
- c. What can management do to help you achieve your goals?
- d. Measure the success of the goals and report.
- e. Ask what objectives are required to help lift the spirit and standard of learning.

### *Peer Research*

Peer Research and the dissemination of findings and recommendations to others encourage the sharing of best practice and raising of standards. This form of appreciative inquiry links up two educators to view the best of a given 'single focus' practice in each other's classroom. It's effectiveness is measured by its simplicity, clarity and transferability of good practice that is essential in the busy lives of teachers.

It empowers:

- a. Task orientation to attain the best for all the students and the educator.
- b. Trust between mentor and mentee.
- c. Truth to recognize strengths and, with humility and in confidence, to recognize short comings on both sides.
- d. Time to reflect on the task.
- e. Teamwork to achieve well-being for all.
- f. The re-affirmation that the aim of all learning is, firstly, education of the child and not just education of the subject.

***Suggestion:** Start small and keep it do-able and simple. For example: How do you do Peace Time?*

### **23. Keeping your Heart and Mind open to Signposts, Possibilities and Creativity**

***Key Message:** Keep searching for new and wise ways of learning and teaching.*

*Keep your heart and mind open*

Keeping your heart and mind open to signposts and possibilities inspires passion to continue to understand learning and life's mysteries.

For example:

- a. Research into DNA and how positive energy can make you 'glow'
- b. Research into the resonance of consciousness especially the tonality of the voice.
- c. Research into the Benefits of Positive Thinking
- d. Be mindful that 5 minutes of positive thinking can boost positive energy for 5 hours whilst 5 minutes of negative energy can deplete energy for 5 hours.

***Suggestion:** Add current research and action research to your medium term teaching and learning strategies.*

### ***b. Simply Be Creative***

***Key Message:*** *Be open the brightness of creativity above the glass ceiling we sometimes place on ourselves and others.*

Simply giving space to explore and be creative invites in many possibilities.

For example:

- ☐ Express how friendship is lived under the sea.
- ☐ Create a 'Kindness Club' with coupons of kindness to give away.
- ☐ Design a blanket of love then sleep on it.
- ☐ Invite grandparents to share 'The Good Old Days'
- ☐ Make a book of tender language
- ☐ Show understanding and compassion for all life forms and traditions.
- ☐ Create a Dream Board and an Action Board side by side.
- ☐ Choose your own.

***Suggestion:*** *Create expressions of kindness, compassion and creativity every day.*

## **24. Nurturing the Educator – Trust your Intuition**

***Key Message:*** *Look after your most precious gift – yourself.*

*a. A Day at the Beach – a special moment*

Imagine offering educators the opportunity to spend a day at the beach side to enjoy a day's training and some relaxation. Imagine now the theme: 'Discovering your Inner Beauty'. After the exploratory session, the staff were invited to walk alone on the beach or with a trusted friend – to paddle in the warm water, make sculptures or write a value in the sand.

Now imagine the reality with educators from the school writing their favorite value on the sand. After 2 hours alone – they all chose the same value written in their own language. And the value?

It was love. Was this co-incidence or natural?

Whatever the source, it was natural, heart-felt and left a deep impression.

Love attracts itself to its own attention and we are drawn to what we love. It was and still echoes as a powerful moment.

Outdoor Education is not just a subject but an avenue to explore the soul of the land and part of the spirit within ourselves.

***Suggestion:** Take time out for you each day to 'connect' with nature.*

*b. Bringing your own gifts and sharing them.*

***Key Message:** We are each unique with a gift that no-one else can give away.*

We each have a noble gift to bring to humanity. It could be a long held dream, something original, something creative, something practical, a story or maybe something 'forgotten' until now.

The secret of developing and nurturing your own gift is love – for in love there is no hardness, doubt or resistance – just a big heart. Sharing of gifts means that you are not defined by others but by yourself for your uniqueness and originality that dwells within the blueprint of your soul. The giving of your gift, in many ways, is a gift to yourself.

When the values-based atmosphere is right and your intuition is 'in tune' with your receptors – the possibilities emerge. There is space within each one of us that is waiting to be heard.

***Suggestion:*** *Trust your intuition.*

## 25. Nurturing and Valuing Ourselves

***Key Message:*** *Love yourself. Be Kind to yourself. Take Care of yourself.*

It was Aristotle who stated:

*'Knowing yourself is the beginning of all wisdom'.*

It was Democritus who stated:

*'The world is a theatrical stage and life is a rite of passage through*

Perhaps remembering and knowing who we are with a gift to give and role to play is the first step.

It's called nurturing the natural nature of ourselves – and to take care of our most precious gift – ourselves, our character, our values and our chosen destiny – with love.

***Suggestion:** Choose a value or set of values that are close to your heart. Give yourself a positive affirmation each day. Live your life by those values and be the model.*

## **End Piece**

### **Giving a Voice to All and Creating Partnerships**

Every individual has much to share wherever they are in our one world. The school population of 600+ represents 33 nationalities who speak with one language – the language of values. All regions of the world, and in this context, the Arab world has much wisdom, stories and secrets to share with the wider world.

Partnerships with like-minded groups both in Kuwait and around the world who are in tune with their hearts and values-based education are proving to be a way forward. Through partnerships and understanding, we re-affirm that the key skills of listening, sharing, acceptance, tolerance and simply ‘doing what is right’ are becoming more and more essential.

At the Kuwait American School, in a world that is often too dominated by external show and excessive social media, the students are learning about ‘Quiet Power’, the importance of stillness, creativity out of silence and the value of being a ‘human being’.

As the journey continues - we have much to learn - about ourselves.

### **Appreciation to Living Values Education -**

The school is very grateful to the Living Values Education program for its vision, clarity, guidance and practicalities.

It's a great invitational model to explore, experience and express. Living Values Education invites in learning without borders and learning from the heart. The school is a safe place to learn and to be; and will, for sure, continue to grow from the root.

### **The Last Words from a student ....**

Many of the graduating students from Grade 12 who have benefited from the school's Living Values Education program for 19+ years – from their early childhood days to young maturity – are now entering the world as global citizens.

Rawan Koujah speaks on their behalf during her High Honors Graduation acceptance speech. Rawan is now studying Medicine at the University of Dublin.

### ***An excerpt from her Acceptance Speech***

With doors opening of various beginnings - rich with fascinating opportunities - we are gathered here to celebrate the end of one chapter and the beginning of a new one with pure independence, responsibility and courage.

Our school has the dream of influencing and awakening the utmost capabilities of a person's positive powers and to educate and enlighten its students and staff through its core base: living values. The vision is to graduate you all - not only with high academic knowledge - but of high moral standards that depends on a person's ethics, values, goodness and attitude towards life itself.



For us all, the process was not easy to carry out. Expecting responses to these teachings required patience and a strong source of belief. Sometimes we did not understand for in the end we are human.

As time went by, we began to unravel the secrets behind such values: respect, tolerance, honesty and other values. The walls around us were disassembling - slowly fading away - creating a family of our own; a family of students and teachers. What others called school, we called family. And travelling deep into the family, lied our class; a family within a family.

Many of you may ponder as to what makes our bond so special? No, our relationships were not flawless. As a class we had our ups and downs. However, with faith and determination, and acceptance, we managed to overcome various obstacles. When our paths seemed to diverge, the paths always managed to meet again. We traveled together, as a pack, never leaving a person behind, constantly encouraging the next step to be taken. When others feared, the rest would assure. When some fell, the rest lifted. Together we grew. Together we flourished. We saw through the flaws of each and every classmate and discovered the beauty within. We had many unforgettable moments.

However, now ends this phase and begins a journey to test our endurance and individuality. A journey built on the foundation of our childhood, our values and time together. Now, we stand before various paths, at the end of an

intersection. Soon we will part our ways, choosing the path which suits our individual interest. However, none will be forgotten, for each one of us here will travel, holding onto a piece of the soul of the others.

*Peter Williams  
Founding Principal  
Kuwait American School  
March 2018*

Note: Peter Williams, past President of ALIVE - Association for Living Values International is highly supportive of any school seeking to become a Living Values Model School and providing assistance to that objective. Peter can be contacted through *communications@livingvalues.net*

FOR INFORMATION ON HOW TO BRING  
LIVING VALUES TO YOUR SCHOOL PLEASE  
SEE OUR DOCUMENT -

"Overview to LVE Model Schools"



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# The Living Values Vision

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*Living Values Education (LVE) is a way of conceptualizing education that promotes the development of values-based learning communities and places the search for meaning and purpose at the heart of education.*

*LVE emphasizes the worth and integrity of each person involved in the provision of education, in the home, school and community. In quality education, LVE supports the overall development of the individual and a culture of positive values in each society and throughout the world, believing that education is a purposeful activity designed to help humanity flourish.*



iving Values<sup>™</sup>  
Education