



## **How does outdoor education develop character and spirituality in an all-boys school?**

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## **ABSTRACT**

This dissertation will investigate the role outdoor education plays to develop character and spirituality in an all-boys school. Many independent all-boys' schools in Australia use outdoor education as a mechanism to develop character as part of a holistic curriculum. Outdoor education is far from a series of disjointed activities completed in an outdoor environment, it has the opportunity to integrate and develop character and spirituality in adolescents. This study asks, how does outdoor education develop character and spirituality in an all-boys school? Adopting the neo-Aristotelian theoretical framework of character education, developed by the Jubilee Centre, the dissertation investigates the application of character and spirituality in an outdoor education program at an all-boys school (n=1100) in Adelaide, established in 1867. This dissertation highlights and critiques the frameworks for character, spirituality and outdoor education from the literature, analyses how character and spirituality may be integrated within an outdoor education program and evaluates the opportunities to integrate character and spirituality in an all-boys school. A systematic literature review and document analysis was undertaken. Documents analysed included the Research School's outdoor educational programs from years 3 to 9. The results of the analysis highlight how outdoor educational experiences are out of balance within the development of different character virtues, as they are dominated by the performance virtues, whilst overlooking the intellectual, moral and civic virtues. Following the analysis, the dissertation provides for three recommendations. Firstly, a comprehensive audit of all the activities in the outdoor education programs, to identify the character and spirituality developments. Secondly, further debate with senior leadership regarding the more comprehensive integration between school values, culture and outdoor education. Finally, an ongoing recommendation of staff development and learning to ensure the alignment of these theories within teaching practices.

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## List of Abbreviations

Intercol	The inter-collegiate competition
Jubilee Centre	The Jubilee Centre for Character and Virtue
OE	Outdoor education
Program	As part of the Research School's year 9 curriculum, the students must partake in a compulsory 35-day outdoor educational extend stay in rural South Australia
Research School	An Adelaide inner-city, leading all-boys school
Rival School	Another leading all-boys school in Adelaide

## List of Definitions

- Character** This dissertation will be adopting the definition as defined by the Jubilee Centre for Character and Virtues which indicates that character education is to help build upon student’s character and virtue, so that individuals can enter and flourish within society.
- Outdoor Education** This dissertation will be adopting the definition of outdoor education as discussed in Potter and Dymont (2016) which highlights the “focus of the role of nature, risk, adventure, skill development and social/ interpersonal development” for education (Potter & Dymont, 2016, 148).
- Spirituality** This dissertation will be adopting the definition as discussed in Benson, Roehlkepartain, and Rude (2003), which highlights that:  
Spiritual development is the process of growing the intrinsic human capacity for self- transcendence, in which the self is embedded in something greater than the self, including the sacred. It is the developmental “engine” that propels the search for connectedness, meaning, purpose and contribution. It is shaped both within and outside of religious traditions, belief and practices. (Benson et al., 2003, 205)

# Chapter One Introduction

## 1.1 Introduction

Kurt Hahn advocates that there is more to all of us than we know, that if we could be made to see it, then perhaps for the rest of our lives we would strive for that greatness and would be unwilling to settle for anything less (UWC, 2020). The concept of being a good character is a tale as old as time, however it is arguably as significant and relevant as ever (Gr num, 2015; Walker et al., 2015). This is shown in the recent negative media coverage surrounding the 2020 student lead scavenger hunt by the Sydney Shore School boys (Hunter, 2020). The hunt asked students to partake in pranks that went beyond acceptable behaviour. The hunt required students to find and spit on a homeless man, partake in illegal alcohol/drug activities and perform acts of sexual assault and indecency. This well-known all-boys school, along with many others helps illustrate the dangers of not fostering and developing good character traits within students. This example shows what happens when a school culture strongly encourages academics, elitism, sport and competition (Hickey & Mooney, 2018; Leslie, 2011; Weaver-Hightower, 2003).

This dissertation will investigate the role of outdoor education (“**OE**”) within the context of the development of character and spirituality in an all-boys school in Adelaide (the “**Research School**”). The role of OE has been a vexed issue in the history of education (Kennedy & Russell, 2020). However, it has been intrinsically linked with the development of character over the last 150 years in independent schools (Freeman, 2011; Lugg, 2004). The role of OE within schooling has received an equal number of advocates and critics in the literature. In many independent all-boys’ schools in the Australian context OE is claimed to be a key vehicle to be able to develop character, independence, perseverance, resilience and a greater sense of knowledge and understanding of individual identity (Beames et al., 2018; Weaver-Hightower, 2010). This dissertation will investigate systematically the role that OE plays within the context of contemporary all-boys schooling. In order to do this it will investigate the historical origins of the role of OE, the integration with existing character and

spirituality at the Research School and then make a number of recommendations to improve the integration of the existing Program with the contemporary literature.

*The overall goal of this dissertation is to investigate how outdoor education develops character and spirituality in an all-boys school.*

## **1.2 Culture and Context of the Research School**

In examining the Research School's current character development, the question must be asked, what does it currently mean to graduate as a man from the Research School? To answer this, consideration must be given to their very rich and proud history. As this history has without a doubt fundamentally shaped the college and their character development (Gibbs, 1984).

### *Today's Context*

The Research School is a member of the Association of Independence Schools of South Australia, with 1100 boys and 127 staff. The distribution of socio-educational advantage highlights that 67% of students fit within the top quarter, with only 1% of students fitting within the bottom quarter. The Research School has an ICSEA value of 1148 (ACARA, 2020). This data reveals that the parents of the Research School tend to come from more advantaged and privileged backgrounds. The Research School identifies as being a leading private all-boys school within South Australia. The Research School notes that their purpose is to help each boy grow into a confident and resilient man; by discovering, nurturing and developing their unique qualities (PAC, 2020). The Research School's beliefs are discussed in the below table (Prospectus, 2018). Over time the school motto has changed and the current official school motto is "Fac Fortia Et Patere" which roughly translates to "do brave deeds and endure" (PAC, 2020). However, the unofficial slogan is "work hard, be kind" (PAC, 2020). As a year 12 graduate, the Research School promotes that students will achieve academic excellence, but they will also be kind, compassionate and they will take pride in contributing within their community (PAC, 2020).

**Table 1**

*The Research School's Beliefs* (Prospectus, 2018)

---

The Research School's beliefs
Men who know who they are, work hard and value their roles and contributions.
And at the same time, to develop men with kindness, who care and support others.
Men with empathy, humility and a respect for diversity, spirituality and the beliefs of others.
Men who form strong networks and enduring relationships.
Men with a sense of duty, honour and integrity. Men with courage and emotional strength.
Men with a good sense of humour, confidence and self-reliance. Men with purpose and a capacity to contribute to a better world.

---

### *Religion*

The Research School was founded in the middle of the Victorian age in the town of Adelaide, South Australia. South Australia has a unique history as it was colonised by British free settlers (Gibbs, 1984). The social values and attitudes are very pro-British and loyal to the Crown. As these settlers had all opted to leave England and seek a new opportunity, they brought their culture and traditions with them. Meanwhile in England, the Wesleyan Methodist movement is growing. They are cementing themselves as a faith not just a radical movement (considered radical as they broke away from the Church of England). The movement is attracting worshippers who believed and preached in hardworking, diligence and non-frugal activities (Gibbs, 1984). For this reason, this faith is credited as being the faith for improvers and the Methodist education reflects these notions.

It is no surprise then, that Wesleyan Methodists are one of the first religions to arrive in South Australia (Gibbs, 1984). They needed to send their children to a school which would reflect their Methodist values. In 1867, the Research School is founded and becomes the first Methodist school in South Australia (Gibbs, 1984). Later in 1977, with the Basis of Union, the Methodist Church along with two other denominations

merge together and form the Uniting Church in Australia (Uniting Church in Australia, 2020). The Research School proudly affiliates itself as a member of the Uniting Church of Australia (PAC, 2020). The Research School notes that they offer a strong foundation of Christian beliefs, values and spiritual growth through their pastoral care program (Prospectus, 2018).

### *A Royal Connection*

In 1867, a member of the Royal family lands in Adelaide, as part of his Highnesses Royal tour attends the foundation ceremony of the Research School. A historic moment for the Research School. Although the movement is growing, the Wesleyan Methodists Church still endure heavy restrictions from the Church of England back home (Gibbs, 1984). It was the first time a member of the Royal family had acknowledged and performed such a service for this faith. The ceremony took less than an hour, however it lays the foundational roots of a very proud college. A college that would adopt his Royal Highnesses name to reflect this monumental occasion. Overtime other members of the Royal Family visit which helps cement this proud connection. This includes attendance by the Duchess of York who watches a very important inter-collegiate football match (Gibbs, 1984).

### *Leadership*

A unique part of their history is the powerful influence and extensive time-periods that the Principals have held at the Research School. This is demonstrated in the below table. Most of the earlier Principals were hand selected from England, again reinforcing the strong connection to the British Empire (Gibbs, 1984). Principal C is credited as the founding figure of this college, as he not only increases enrolments but also arguably puts the college on the path to becoming a leading school. Principal C's teaching pedagogy has shaped the Research School to this day. His teaching style, like many in that time period, aligns with a strict traditional structure of Muscular Christianity (MacAloon, 2006); he preached that young men were of the "age for effort" (Gibbs, 1984, 120). Successful young men needed to be masculine, they needed to be physically

active, fit, brave, hardworking and strong, all whilst showing loyalty to God. This attitude is reflected by a student in the Research School’s Chronicle in 1885:

...It should also be remembered that physical vigour adds to a man’s character and renders him, too, a much more useful member of society. Moreover, a little recreation gives rest to the mental faculties, and enables one to return to work with a clear head, renewed energy... (Chronicle, 1885; Gibbs, 120)

**Table 2**

*Principal Time Periods* (Gibbs, 1984 & 2008)

Principal	Time Period
Principal A	1869 - 1 Year
Principal B	1870-1875 – 5 Years
Principal C	1876-1915 – <b>39</b> Years
Principal D	1915-1930 – <b>15</b> years
Principal E	1930-1948 – <b>18</b> years
Principal F	1948-1969 – <b>21</b> years
Principal G	1970–1987 – <b>17</b> years
Principal H	1988–1999 – 11 years
Principal I	2000–2004 – 4 years
Principal J	2014- current – 6 years

### *Sport*

With Muscular Christianity a theme in the history, it is of no surprise that sport is arguably one of the most important components of the colleges culture and identity (Chronicle). Successful past students, who later went on to become South Australian and Australian cricket players, became shining examples of successful Victorian manliness (Gibbs, 1984). They are examples of what good and proper men who had achieved success looked like. This attitude is reflected in the 1899 prize night with the host commenting that these Australian cricket players should be immortalised by the college as: “were they not...now among the best-known men, not merely in Australia but in the world” (Gibbs, 1984, 123). The rivalry at the inter-collegiate (“**intercol**”) with the other leading all-boys school in Adelaide ( the “**Rival School**”) is the highlight



of the calendar year for many current students, parents and old boys of the Research School (Chronicle). This rivalry traces back to the inception of the college as the different religions and being located geographically next door emphasised this competition (Gibbs, 1984, 15). Students say that to win at intercol is the pinnacle and highlight of the season. This attitude is evident within all Chronicles:

The great victory at the football match against the Rival School, was enthusiastically hailed by many old boys... Another from Northam West Australia, humorously averred that the whole town was flying red and white (Chronicle, 1890, 3); and

It was the most important game of the year and we weren't going to let the worst happen again. We went out there and were down at the end of the first quarter, but an excellent two quarters after that had us up by three or four goals at half time. Then the worst happened, the Rival School came back...(Chronicle, 1997, 38 ).

### *Old Boys*

The Old Collegians' Association established by Principal C in 1878 is one of the leading organisations of its kind in the world (PAOCA, 2020). The purpose of the Association is to act as the custodians of the traditions of the Research School whilst assisting present and future students (PAOCA, 2020). This connection to the alumni is very important to the Research School. Principal C's leadership strongly encouraged the alumni to play a fundamental role in shaping the direction of the college. On reviewing the early additions of the Chronicles, it is apparent that the college is actively following the success and achievements of the past students. The chronicles are bursting with these updates and often invite past students to reflect, comment upon and reminisce on the '*good old days*' (Chronicle). This creates the clear attitude that the college is a lifelong experience and that your education experience does not simply end when you graduate. On graduation you join the ranks of many successful men before you. In a way, the boys never leave the college (Gibbs, 1984). With the Methodist background, the college continues to attract certain types of parents. These parents tend to come

from family run, working class and commercial backgrounds. Gibbs argues that the students at the Research School come from families of Adelaide's better homes (Gibbs, 1984). Over time the boys start sending their sons, and then their sons, and now there is a prominent father-son legacy (Gibbs, 1984).

### *World War I & II*

Involvement during both World War I and II shapes the Research School. As students learn German as part of their education, they are strongly encouraged to join the fight and enlist in the cause (Gibbs, 1984). During battle they pay constant tribute to the fallen soldiers through dedications in college assemblies and pages of tributes in the Chronicles. This is evident in the Fallen in Battle and Military Distinctions in the Chronicle's during both wars (Chronicle, 1914-18 & 1939-45). A student receives the Victorian Cross medal for his military contribution during World War II. This is Australia's highest military award and is given to a soldier who acts with great bravery and vigour in the face of defeat (Gibbs, 1984). This student becomes infamous at the Research School and is later held up to others as someone who exemplifies all the good character traits of the college. It becomes a folklore legend of the Research School that soldiers are overheard singing their school anthem as they embarked into battle (Gibbs, 1984). In these moments of fear, the bond that they had with their college, united and brought them comfort. Gibbs (1984) suggests that in some way the battlefield was an extension of the football field. In 2010 the hall is renamed ANZAC hall, in honour of those old boys who contributed and passed in order to help Australia win the war (PAC, 2020).

### **1.3 The Research Problem**

As part of the Research School's year 9 curriculum, the students must partake in a 35-day extended stay in rural South Australia (the "**Program**"). This experience is packed with different OE activities that provide for experiential learning in an integrated curriculum (these are showed in Figure 1 below). The overall commentary on the Program is very positive. Students, parents, educators and senior leadership all stress the success and changes they see in the students by completing the Program (Chronicle

2008-2020). This dissertation is therefore not asking for commentary on the success of the Program, it is investigating how outdoor education can integrate and develop character and spirituality.

## **1.4 Gap in the Research**

There is extensive research regarding the three main concepts of character, spirituality and OE. There is a clear gap in the research though, that connects character and spirituality developments within a long OE experience as seen in the Present Study. This dissertation will seek to fill that research gap by:

- Identifying and comparing the applicable literature;
- Drawing parallels between character and spirituality within OE;
- Comparing OE outcomes to a character education and spirituality framework; and
- Investigating how OE can integrate and develop character and spirituality.

## **1.5 The Present Study**

My time at the Program also taught me a lot about myself and my peers and how anything is possible if you approach it in a positive attitude. (Chronicle, 2017, 46)

This dissertation will examine both character and spiritual developments in relation to the Program. The three below figures provide an overview of the activities offered, the outcomes currently achieved and the overall personal developments made by the students (Parent Information Booklet, 2019).

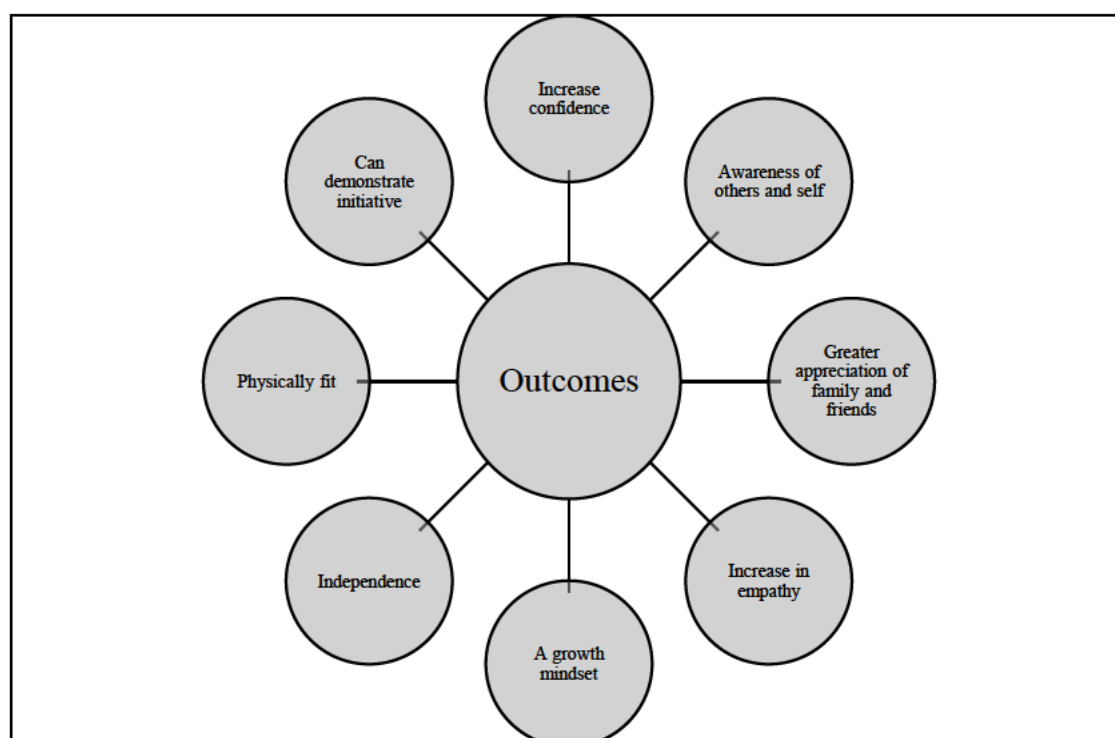
**Figure 1**

*Outline of Activities Offered in the Program (Parent Information Booklet, 2019)*

Physical Activities	Expeditions	Leisure Activities	Reflections	Community Experience	Day to Day Activities
<input type="checkbox"/> Cycle tour <input type="checkbox"/> Morning fitness <input type="checkbox"/> Distance running <input type="checkbox"/> Fitness tests <input type="checkbox"/> Sport (Dodgeball, Basketball, Soccer etc.) <input type="checkbox"/> Fitness games (capture the flag, & Olympics) <input type="checkbox"/> Yoga	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hiking</li> <li>• Navigation</li> <li>• Orienteering</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Kayaking</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sailing</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Snorkelling</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Surfing</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Bike handling</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chill out time</li> <li>• Journal writing</li> <li>• Letter writing</li> </ul>	<input type="checkbox"/> Craftsman projects <input type="checkbox"/> Building environmental bike paths <input type="checkbox"/> Community projects <input type="checkbox"/> Volunteering at local museum <input type="checkbox"/> Beach and habitat research <input type="checkbox"/> Ocean research <input type="checkbox"/> Farm work <input type="checkbox"/> Volunteer options	<input type="checkbox"/> Baking <input type="checkbox"/> Cooking <input type="checkbox"/> Cleaning <input type="checkbox"/> Budget management <input type="checkbox"/> Laundry <input type="checkbox"/> Healthy eating <input type="checkbox"/> Leadership skills <input type="checkbox"/> Teamwork skills

**Figure 2**

*Outcomes of the Program (Parent Information Booklet, 2019)*



**Figure 3**

*Personal Developments by Students (Parent Information Booklet, 2019)*



The Research School adopts the following teaching pedagogies within the Program:

- Place-based education (location of the experience);
- Learning structure (flexibility of the experience);
- Community immersion (community rich experience);
- Applied learning (alternative school location experience); and
- Transition learning (the experience gained from change) (Parent Information Booklet, 2019, 2).

At the conclusion of the Program the boys undertake a solo expedition into the wilderness. They spend one-night solo camping and reflecting about all they gained during the Program. During this solo time students are asked to reflect about their experiences and what they have learnt with a 1000-word essay on the topic: what type of man do you want to become? (Parent Information Booklet, 2019).

## **1.6 Research Questions**

This study will examine the following questions:

- Research Question 1: What are the frameworks for character, spirituality and OE?
- Research Question 2: How is character and spirituality integrated in OE?
- Research Question 3: What are the opportunities to integrate character and spirituality in the Research School's OE Program?

## **1.7 Objectives**

Following the above research questions, the objectives of this dissertation include:

- To critique frameworks for character, spirituality and OE from the literature;
- To analyse how character and spirituality may be integrated in OE; and
- To evaluate the opportunities to integrate character and spirituality in the Research School's Program.

## **1.8 Dissertation Significance**

The significance of this dissertation is as follows:

- it will advance the development of the integration of character education and spiritual development in an OE program at an all-boys school in an existing neo-Aristotelian character education framework at the Research School;
- the outcome will address challenges faced by the Research School to align the core values of the school more comprehensively with activities undertaken in OE;
- it will enhance links between and across the character education framework adopted by the school and existing activities in OE; and
- it will raise areas for future integration of OE into the character education program from a whole school perspective.

This investigation is important as it will provide a new body of knowledge for the Research School, as they have never conducted research into the character and

spirituality outcomes within their OE programs before. As the Research School has requested this investigation this adds another layer to the dissertation significance. This dissertation may have real life implications. This research can help guide frameworks, applications and outcomes within OE programs.

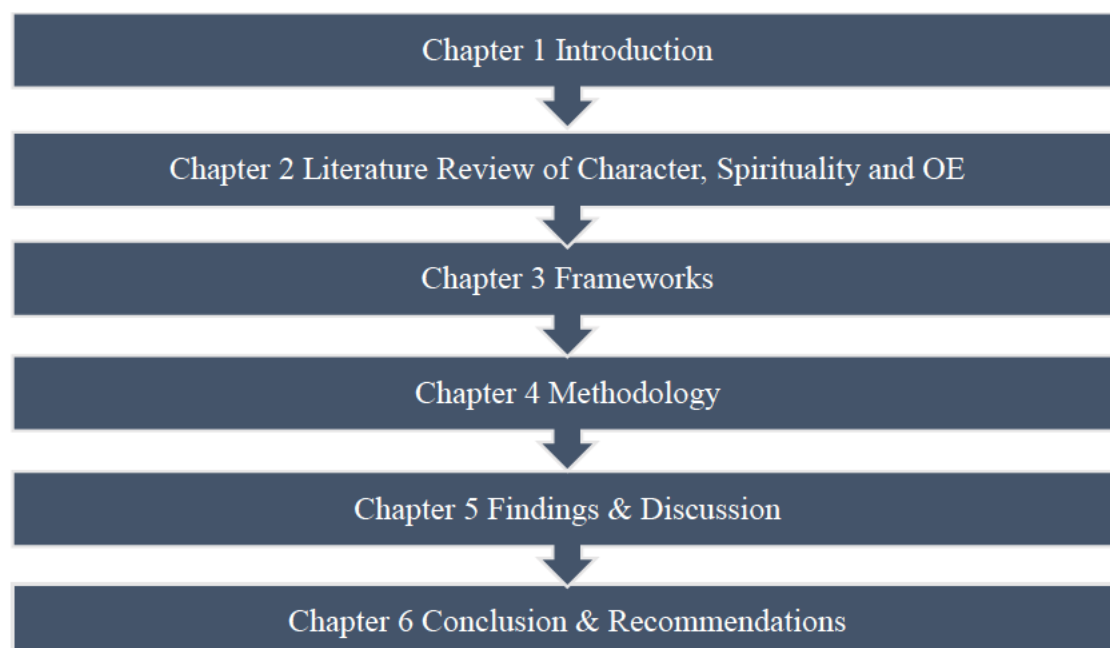
## 1.9 Summary

This dissertation will investigate and test the hypothesis that character and spirituality can be integrated within OE. Then will outline the opportunities to integrate character and spirituality within the Research School's OE Program.

This chapter has established the background of this dissertation. It has explained the contextual background of the Research School, presented the research problem and objectives. Going forward the below two figures indicate the outline of the dissertation and the chapters to which answer the research questions.

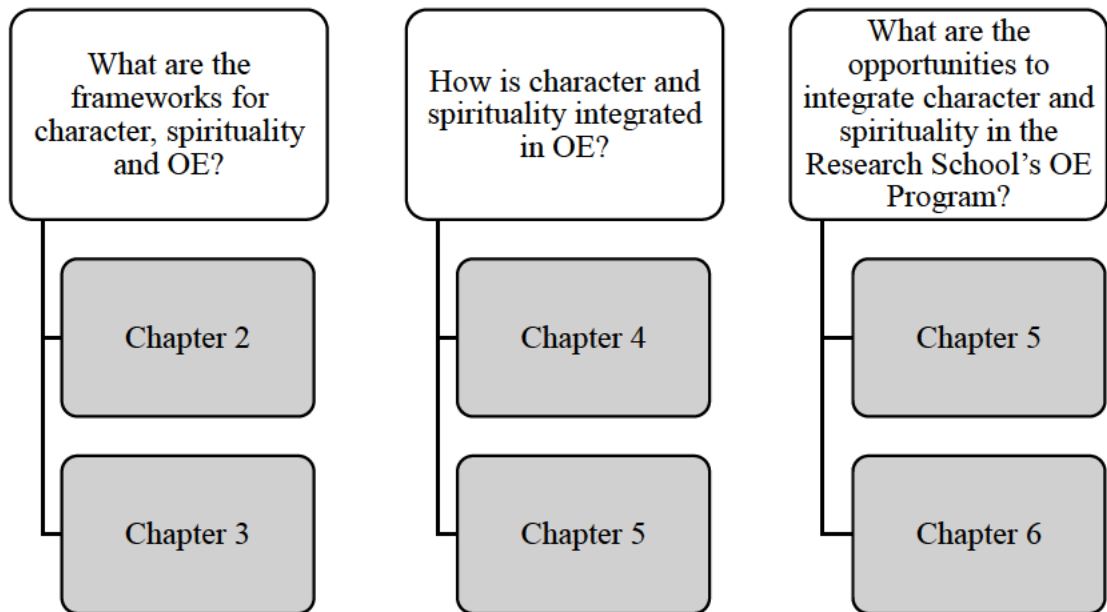
### Figure 4

*Outline of the Dissertation*



**Figure 5**

*Outline of how the Dissertation Will Answer the Research Questions*





# Chapter Two Literature Review

## 2.1 Introduction

The purpose of this literature review is to establish and critique the current knowledge on character, OE and spirituality. By understanding the literature and frameworks behind these concepts, we can help investigate how they are being integrated within the Program. We can also evaluate the other opportunities, as discussed in the literature, that could help strengthen the character and spirituality developments within the OE Program at the Research School.

## 2.2 Masculinity

Piaget suggests the formal operational stage (ages twelve and up) is a critical moment in development for any young adolescent (Aviles et al., 2006; Salavera et al., 2017). At this stage boys, are on the brink of manhood; they have mastered the basic skills and emotions and are now starting to develop lateral/abstract thinking and build upon advance reasoning (Farrell, 2016; Fischer, 1980; Salavera et al., 2017). This time is filled with developmental changes:

- physical, puberty and hormonal changes, as they are growing into men;
- psychological and emotional changes, as they are developing different relationships; and
- self-identity and self-understanding, as they are establishing who they want to be.

It is during this stage that boys are starting to not only reflect about what it means to be a man, but also they are starting to act on this notion (de Souza, 2016; Engebretson, 2006; Larson & Brown, 2007). It is an old educational understanding that schools are salient agents of gender socialisation and children are active agents in reproducing gender norms (Thorne, 1993). It is within education that children form and challenge their understanding of world views (Rosen & Nofziger, 2019). When all of these changes are happening within a male dominated context, it can make for an interesting developmental environment (Hickey & Mooney, 2018).

Society places very rigid and high expectations on men, they are expected to be strong, masculine, invincible and brave (Baker et al., 2016; Rosen & Nofziger, 2019). The Rosen study reveals that there is high correlation between boys who do not exhibit these dominant masculine and appropriate gender presentations and bullying. This bullying often includes violence and homophobic slurs. This argument can be paired with the debate about the success of single sex schools. Hickey and Mooney (2018) highlight this and comment that all-boys' schools often credit themselves for being at the forefront of contemporary masculine education. However, all-boys' schools have to regularly fend off criticism about fostering these environments that are filled with gendered hegemony, toxic masculinity and bullying. These two studies reveal the importance of creating school environments and cultures that can quickly identify and then disrupt environments that promote hypermasculinity. These studies also reveal the difficulties in identifying these environments, as they are often bubbling under the surface and outside the control of educators (Hickey & Mooney 2018; Rosen & Nofziger, 2019).

### **2.3 Character Education**

“Try not to become a man of success but a man of value” (Albert Einstein).

#### *International Developments*

Character education, both a current buzzword and an umbrella term, is weaved throughout educational literature. Character is not a new concept. Throughout time it has had many different definitions and interpretations. However, in the late 20<sup>th</sup> century to early 21<sup>st</sup> century there seems to be a clear trend of refocusing on Aristotle and his virtue ethics (Curren, 2016; Davidson, 2014; Kristjánsson, 2013, 2016). The current character literature suggests that it is as relevant as ever, as Jeynes (2019) demonstrates the powerful connection between character and academic success and overall student emotional wellbeing. This study reveals that building character can lead to heightened emotions of love, acceptance and compassion, notably all positive benefits.

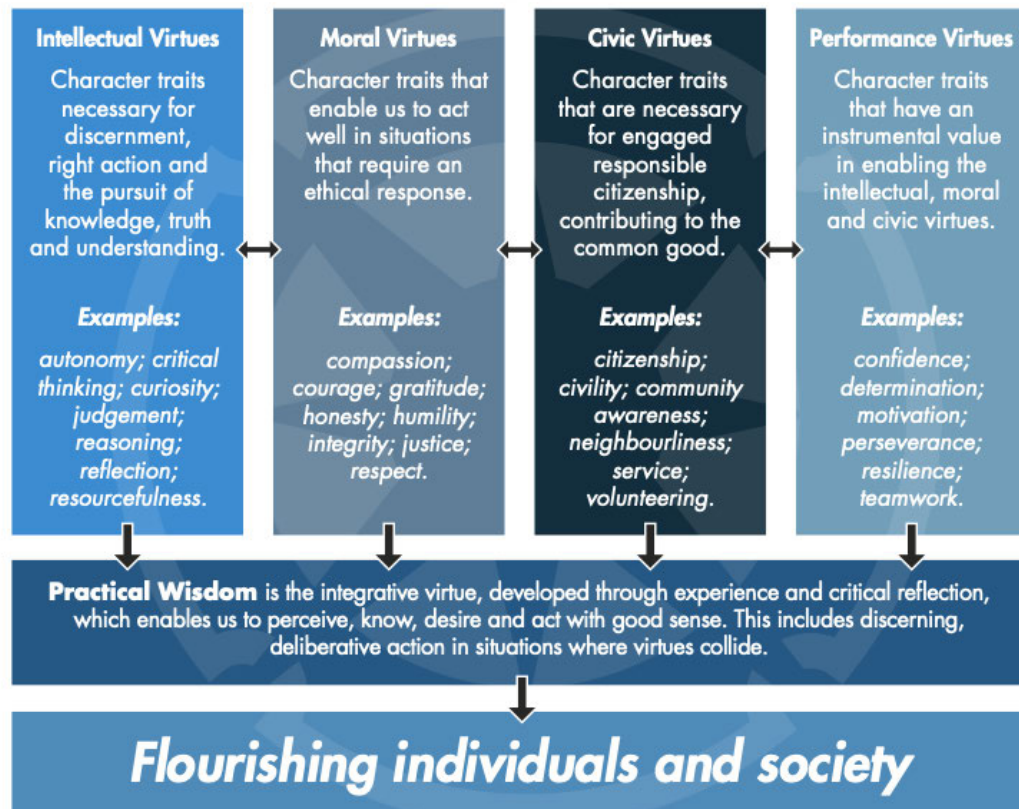
### *Character Education in the United Kingdom*

Over the past couple of decades, the United Kingdom (“UK”) has established an emphasis on exploring character development within education. This stems from Prime Minister David Cameron’s response to the London Riots which occurred in 2011 (Allen & Bull, 2018; Arthur & Harrison, 2012; Arthur et al., 2015). The Jubilee Centre for Character and Virtue (the “**Jubilee Centre**”), which was founded in 2012 as a response to those riots, is the current leading voice for character (Jubilee Centre, 2017, 2019). The Jubilee Centre suggests that character education has two guiding principles. Firstly, the aim of character education is to help build upon student’s character and virtue so that individuals can enter and flourish within society and secondly, although character education can be influenced by many factors, schools and educators can play a fundamental role within this development (Arthur, 2011a). The Jubilee Centre framework is evident below in Figure 6. The Jubilee Centre suggests that by building upon these virtues within education (as seen in Figure 6), we can help students become autonomous, active and reflective within society and become better ethical decision makers. The UK has a very structured approach to character, as it is offered as either a stand-alone subject or it is spiralled within other curriculum subjects (Jubilee Centre, 2017, 2019). The UK Department of Education publishes certain character development benchmarks that educators must adhere too, within their Ofsted inspections (2019).

**Figure 6**

*The Jubilee Centre Framework of Character Education (Jubilee Centre, 2017)*

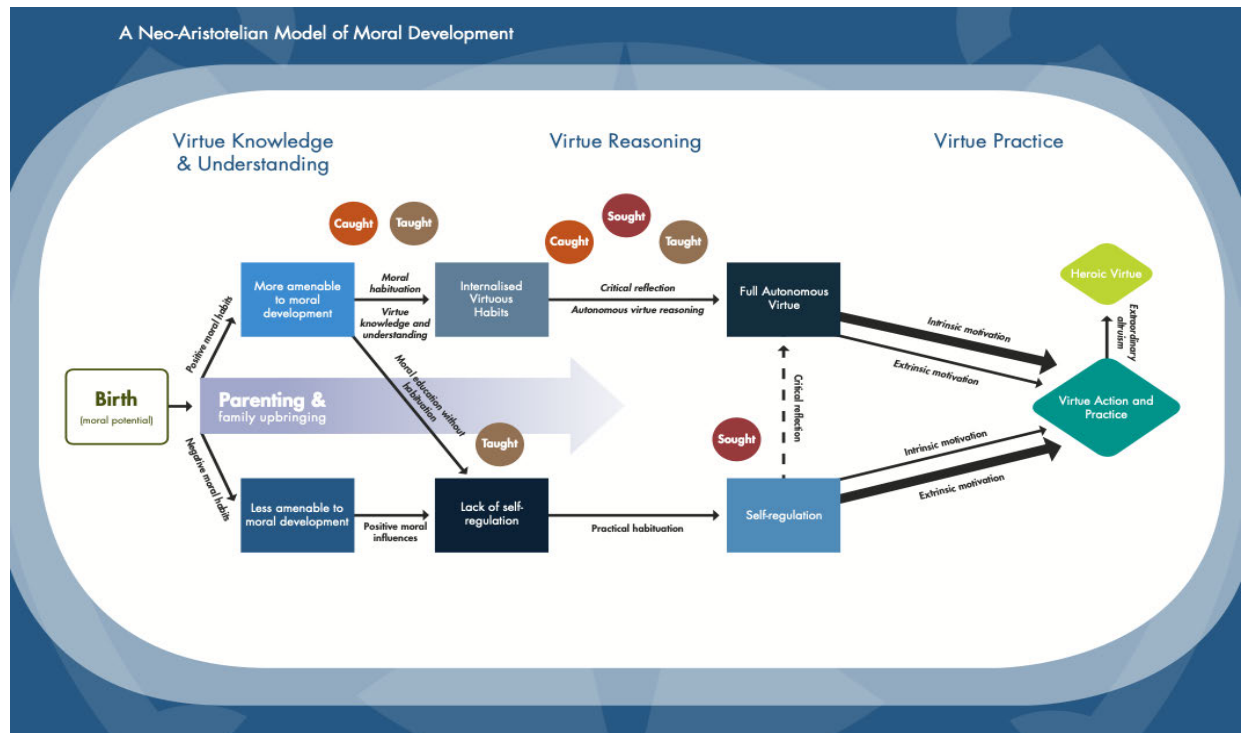
## THE BUILDING BLOCKS OF CHARACTER



How do we embed the above virtues into education? The Jubilee Centre and other well-known authors within this field suggest that these virtues can be caught, taught and sought within education (Jubilee Centre, 2017). This concept is shown in the below figure.

**Figure 7**

*A Neo-Aristotelian Model of Moral Development (Jubilee Centre, 2017)*



With regards to catching character, Peterson (2020), Hill (2013) and Lickona (1996) all highlight the importance of fostering positive and healthy character virtues within the school's community. To catch positive character, we want to ensure the school communities are promoting culture, values and ethos, that all reflect positive development. This school community needs to be successfully championed by the leaders and the educators of the school (Berkowitz et al., 2017). By immersing students within an environment that promotes positive character virtues, students can catch all the virtues surrounding them (Jubilee Centre, 2017, 2019). For this to occur, educators must exemplify good character and act in a way that models their expectations. Through acting as role models and mentoring (Berkowitz et al., 2017). This argument highlights the importance of the relationship between educators and students (Hough, 2011; Lovat & Dally, 2018; Peterson, 2020; See & Arthur, 2011). The literature stresses that this relationship must be one of respect and understanding (Peterson, 2020).

With regards to teaching character, Aristotle suggests in his teaching of Nicomachean Ethics, that virtues are certain characteristics, dispositions or personality traits (Arthur, 2013). They can therefore be taught, developed or trained through practice (Carr, 2006).

The Jubilee Centre suggests this practice is achieved through direct education in and out of the classroom (2017). Once students have been taught character virtues and after these skills are developed, the Jubilee Centre argues that students over-time will actively seek out and pursue them on their own (Jubilee Centre, 2017). Literature cements that seeking these opportunities and developments occurs with the virtue reasoning and virtue practice stages (as demonstrated in the Figure 7) (2017).

### *Character Education in the United States of America*

Unlike the Jubilee Centre in the UK, character education in the United States of America (“**America**”) does not have a centralised framework. The focus diverges between the different States, however, they mostly pivot around correcting and/or improving youth behaviour (Lickona, 2018; McGrath, 2018). What is evident from the literature is that America’s understanding of character education involves both character education and civic socialisation (Berkowitz, 2012; Power, 2014; Thomas, 2004). McGrath recognises this and offers a prototype for going forward in developing character in America. He argues that character education in America needs to be unified, improved and quickly added within the curriculum. He offers seven central features for a successful program within an American high school. These include that the program offered is:

- school based;
- structured;
- addresses positive psychological attributes;
- addresses identity;
- addresses moral growth;
- addresses holistic growth; and
- addresses the development of practical wisdom (McGrath, 2018).

Lickona advances upon McGrath’s argument and adds an 8th element of self-control. However, he does criticise McGrath’s argument as he suggests that McGrath’s prototype does not offer the historical perspective of civic socialisation, patriotism and nationalism understanding and that the literature suggests it is an important element of character within America (Lickona, 2018). Marvin et al. (2020) suggest that character

education in America is an attempt to promote civic education, through developing virtues, moral values and moral agency (Berkowitz, 2011; Duckworth & Meindl, 2018; Lickona, 1996).

Berkowitz and Bustamante (2013) and (2017) use another framework called the PRIMED approach to foster and develop character within America. This framework is different to McGrath's and credits the below for developing character:

- **P:** Prioritises character;
- **R:** Positive role models/ relationships;
- **I:** Using intrinsic motivation for values;
- **M:** Modelling character by adults in the schools;
- **E:** Relies heavily on the pedagogy of empowerment; and
- **D:** Developmentally appropriate programs.

The literature highlights the significance of the **(E)** element in the American context (2013, 2017). Berkowitz et al. (2008) argue that by helping students realise they are empowered through education, they can make their own civic and moral choices. This argument also suggests that children need to be socialized to be effective and responsible citizens. By empowering and socialising students, America can build and enhance democratic societies (Berkowitz & Hoppe, 2009). Ettekal et al. (2018) uses the PRIMED model to analyse American character in a current sporting program. This study explored the power of the **(R)** and **(M)** elements of modelling character. This study argues the importance of collaborative relationships with all external and internal parties, including educators, parents, coaches and the program facilitators (Holtzapple et al., 2011). They suggest for positive character and action to occur, change needs to happen at the 'top' and then flow down to the 'bottom'. It also again, highlights the importance of students seeing examples of good character traits within adults (2018).

Duckworth et al. (2007) ask the question "*Why do some individuals accomplish more than others of equal intelligence?*". They answered with the term grit. Grit is a common theme within the America literature (Credé et al., 2017; Morawski, 2018). Duckworth defines grit as the perseverance, determination and passion for long-term goals. Pryiomka (2018) also argues the close connection between grit and character education, establishing that grit is the "*must have*" character value that we should teach our

students within American schooling. As a result of prioritising the teaching of grit, other positive character values will develop. There is an element of teaching students how to deal with resilience within grit, as students need to learn how to quickly and positively adopt to changes (Perkins-Gough, 2013). Following this, the United States Department of Education and the Character Education Partnership (ED GOV, 2020) have now referenced grit amongst the crucial strengths of character within American schooling (Pryiomka, 2018). Although grit is a must have of character value in American schooling, it is difficult to teach and measure (Jerome & Kisby, 2020; Tough, 2012).

### *Character: The Soul and Spirit*

Plato argues that there are three fundamental concepts for moral development. These include reason, soul/ appetite and the spirit. Unlike Aristotle, Plato assigns a significant component of character to the person's soul/ appetite and spirit. Bill Plotkin, a depth psychologist and wilderness guide, describes soul not as a thing but as an essence that gives you meaning. He notes that humans are most fulfilled when they discover their true place in life, in other words, their true calling or vocation (Plotkin, 2010). This is arguably their soul. Whereas spirit is the journey or movement towards that discovery and towards the soul (Plater, 2017; Plotkin, 2010). Plater (2017) reinforces Bill Plotkin notions about the difference between soul and spirit. Plato believes training the soul and spirit is achieved through the role of repetitive physical education, movement and methodical exercise (Plato, Republic; Arthur, 2013).

Kotsonis (2020) and (2019) suggests that it was Plato, not Aristotle, that first developed the concept of intellectual virtues. Plato's idea suggests that learning is not the direct transfer of knowledge but the process of learning that knowledge. In other words, intellectual virtues are built through the process of problem solving. Kotsonis indicates that we should adopt the Plato approach to train our students to be active truth seekers. Plato's approach will involve the use of extensive methodical exercise to help develop student's intellectual virtues, good reasoning and conscientiousness, which will drive developments within their soul and spirit. His argument highlights that by using Plato's approach of character we can add the '*mystical*' element to the rigid moral virtues as seen in the above Aristotelian models. This would include introducing the ethical



understanding of the soul and spirit. As he argues these constructs contribute and help define our character, and therefore, should also be discussed within the character frameworks (Gonzalez, 2015; Kotsonis, 2020).

### *Character Education in Australia*

The *Melbourne Declaration* (2008) notes that the goal for educators is to help students become successful learners, confident and creative individuals, and active and informed citizens. Students should develop certain values and attributes; including honesty, resilience, empathy and respect for others. The recent *Alice Spring (Mparntwe) Education Declaration* (2019) reinforces this, and again, highlights that students need to learn how act with moral and ethical integrity (Beatty & Campbell-Evans, 2020). These concepts are reflected in the Australian curriculum, which teaches the three inter-related elements of ethical understanding, which includes the exploring values, rights and responsibilities, understanding ethical concepts and issues and reasoning in decision-making and actions (Australian Curriculum, 2020). Bleazby (2020) argues that the Australian national curriculum, as outlined in the Ethical Understanding General Capability, is the appropriate balance of character education. As it integrates moral education within the existing standalone subject curriculums. Using a Deweyan analysis, she argues that this approach avoids both the pitfalls of the character arguments (that of being indoctrinated and that of promoting moral subjectivism). She argues that Australia's integrated approach increases student's inquiry skills, as it helps students recognise certain moral habits, issues and problems, all within a balanced curriculum (2020).

Lovat and Dally (2018) highlight the positive benefits of character education for students but comment that Australia's approach to character education highlights the great divide between private (independent; religious) and public (government) schools. Private schools will usually offer some sort of detailed pastoral care program which will encompass character, religion values and education. On the alternative, the public sector has received significant resistance from increasing, adopting or implementing these pastoral care programs. Resistance from administration, government policy makers, teacher unions and from the private sector themselves, who argue that these

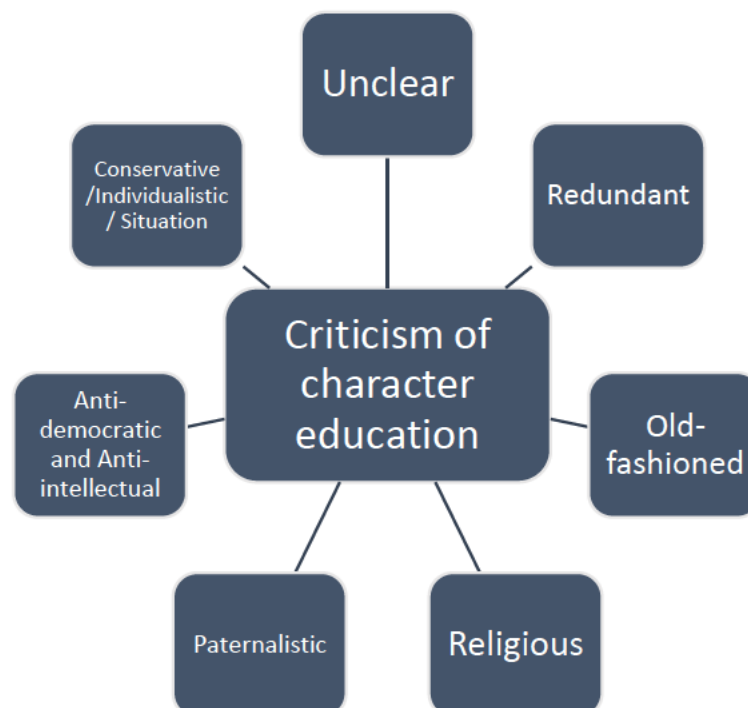
programs are encroaching on the point of difference between the two sectors (Lovat & Dally, 2018).

### *Criticism of Character Education*

Kristjánsson (2013) highlights that Aristotle’s virtue ethics is now the “moral theory of choice” (2013, 274) within the education community. Peterson (2020) reinforces this idea and notes that by adopting the Aristotelian-inspired approach to understanding character, we can avoid the criticism that character education is too individualised and that it does not connect the individual to the political community (i.e. the wider community). However, there are some criticism to character discussion. The below figure highlights the myths of virtue education as discussed in Kristjánsson (2013) (although, notably, Kristjánsson attempts to debunk them all).

**Figure 8**

*Criticism of Character Education as discussed by Kristjánsson (Kristjánsson, 2013)*



## 2.4 Spirituality

Over the last two decades the world has seen an exponential rise in discussion within spirituality in young adolescents. This is evident within academic literature and pop culture, with the rise of wellness, mindfulness and the phenomenon of the ‘complete holistic human’ (Elliott et al., 2019; Emmett, 2008; Hyland, 2017). As this is happening, it is also evident that there is declining adherence to Christian faith (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2017). With this rise and fall, spirituality in young adolescents is an evolving beast. Put simply, spirituality is starting to go beyond traditional Religion and faith and is becoming a social science and expression for young adolescents (de Souza, 2016; Elliott et al., 2019).

### *Spirituality Definition*

A common theme within the literature is the difficulty in defining and evaluating spirituality within education. Dr Rebecca Nye actually warns against trying to define it within one definition, she argues that in doing so, is a disservice to the width and depth of the impact and expression of spirituality (Nye, 1999, p.58). So then, how do we define spirituality? At a starting point, most literature refers to Peter Benson and Eugene Roehlkepartain’s constructed working definition, which highlights:

Spiritual development is the process of growing the intrinsic human capacity for self- transcendence, in which the self is embedded in something greater than the self, including the sacred. It is the developmental “engine” that propels the search for connectedness, meaning, purpose and contribution. It is shaped both within and outside of religious traditions, belief and practices. (Benson et al., 2003, 205).

This definition, along with many others (de Souza, 2016; Elliott et al., 2019; Lingley, 2016; Yust, 2016), touches on the difference of contemporary and traditional spirituality definitions. De Souza confirms that contemporary perspectives of spirituality go beyond ‘*god-related*’ concepts and that they encapsulate both religion,

being faith-based traditions and also the essence of human experience and human connectedness (de Souza, 2014, 2016, 2017).

### *Flourishing and/or Theology*

There is still an active element of religion and faith-based traditions associated within spirituality, although the definitions highlight an emerging difference between spirituality and religion. Historically spirituality, derives from religion and the Church (Plater, 2017). Students who are members of a faith denomination have stronger connections to the ‘*spirit of life*’ in comparison to those who are not members (Arthur, 2011b; Toby, Kendra, & Deborah, 2016). Although this dissertation will not provide commentary on Christian theology, most academic scholars agree that at its basic, God is recognised as a holy, pure and righteous figure (McCall, 2017). This figure helps and guides the believer to undertake a personal journey of self-discovery (Emmett, 2008). The journey of faith helps people better themselves and the world surrounding them (McCall, 2017). By understanding the suffering of Christ, it will draw us into the inner life of the Trinity and thus into a state of spiritual awareness, which will help develop our well-being and faith (McCall, 2017). The eco-theological perspective highlights and combines the relationship between God, the Earth and humanity. This perspective highlights that by understanding and applying religious frameworks within the outdoor environment, we can foster environmental action and develop spiritual understanding (Arthur, 2019; Miriam & Rosemary, 2016).

### *Frameworks*

There are many frameworks used for spiritual development. Although all frameworks use different terminology, it is clear that there are emerging themes and trends presented in all. The key themes have been shown in the table below. The literature suggests that Benson and Roehlkepartain’s definition is a good starting point (2003), as Emmett (2008), Brandes (2018) and Singleton et al. (2004) have all expanded and commented on their advancements (Benson & Roehlkepartain, 2003, 2006).

**Table 3**

*Spiritual Frameworks* (influenced by Benson and Roehlkepartain, 2003, 2006)

Benson & Roehlkepartain 2003 , 2006	Emmett 2008	Singleton et al., 2004	Brandes 2018
Connecting and Belonging			
- Individualism, independence and relational aspect.	Being enlightened or becoming a better person.	Relationship to religion	Identity
Becoming aware of or awakened to self and life	Understanding yourself and understanding the mystical dimension	Expression to spirituality	Purpose Belonging Integrity
- Meaning, identity and life purpose.	(transcendent other, divine God or Spirit).		
Developing a way of Living		Coherence Eclecticism	Sense of worth Capacity to care
- Values, beliefs and culture of society.	Understanding your place in society.	Saliency Influence Anthropology Authority Medium Development	Reflectiveness

### *Theory into Practice*

Brandes (2018), Singleton et al. (2004) and Yust (2016) all suggest that educators need to understand and go beyond the frameworks, by nurturing spiritual development within young adolescents. In order to achieve this, programs need a wide range of tools and diverse techniques (Yust, 2016). One of the common techniques scattered throughout the literature was the concept of spiritual exploration. This is the process of allowing time for students to pause, reflect, develop and meditate as part of their spiritual self-journey. Further, Brandes (2018) indicates that for positive spiritual development to occur, young adolescents need a healthy community, create genuine emotional relationships, connect to educative experiences, interact with the narrative and create an intentional environment targeted at increasing spiritual understanding. Brandes strongly argues that these elements, particularly in a camp situation, must be included in a spiritual developmental program (2018).

A recent international study conducted in Iran shows that educators have a great ability of teaching spiritual concepts and allowing for spiritual development when they themselves have a greater understanding of their own spirituality, worldviews, beliefs and ethics (Nasrollahi et al., 2020). The study indicates that spiritually rich educators will more likely achieve success as they understand and can apply spiritual concepts. This knowledge will guide them in their teaching (2020). Whilst another study conducted in Australia recommends the importance of increasing spiritual pedagogy techniques with educators as there is a new educational focus upon producing this complete holistic student (Robinson, 2019).

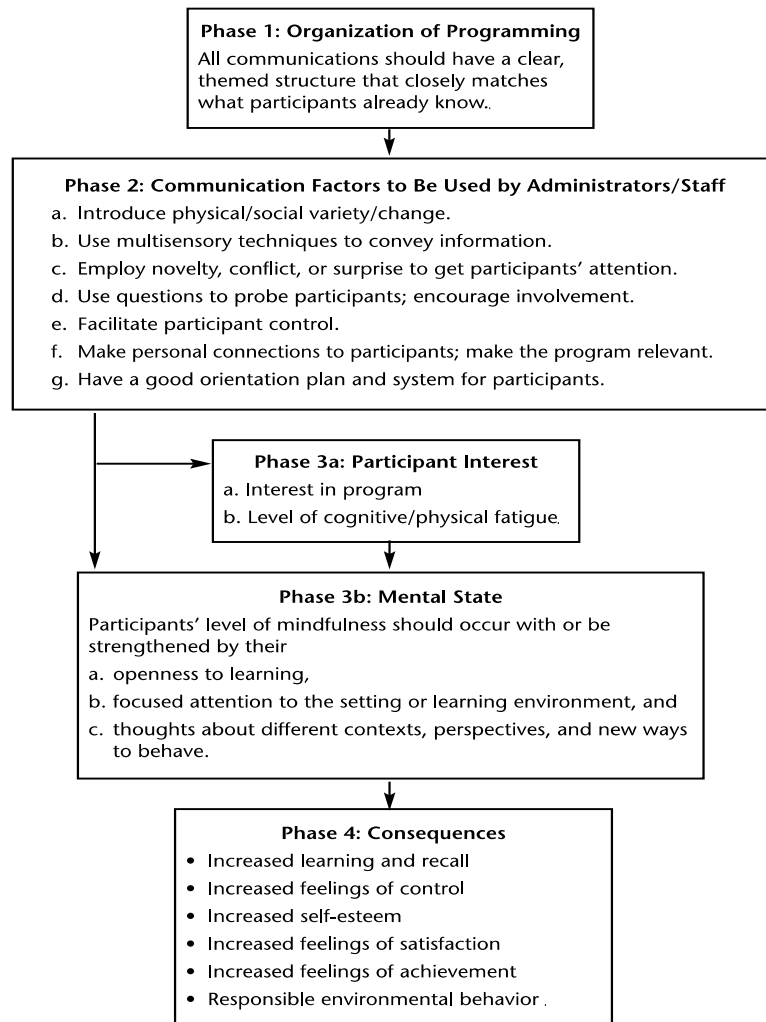
Albrecht et al. (2012) suggest that educators should actively embody and practice mindfulness within their own lives before feeling comfortable and confident to teach students. All these studies demonstrate how hard it must be to ensure students are developing spirituality, as it places a significant emphasis on educators being highly spiritual beings and practising what they preach. Interestingly, Albrecht et al. (2012) did go on to suggest that a whole school approach to mindfulness could be very useful in adopting mindfulness strategies within the classrooms.

### *Mindfulness, Well-being & Wellness*

The spirituality literature is bursting with concepts within well-being, wellness and mindfulness (Emmett, 2008; de Souza, 2016, 2018). Mindfulness is now considered a main stream approach for spirituality within educational practises (Albrecht, 2019). Williams and Kabat-Zinn (2013) indicate that the modern understanding of mindfulness involves both concepts of traditional Buddhist faith and modern therapeutic applications. The Buddhist teaching shows that through certain training of our minds we can start to process the past, present and future constructs in the present moment (Albrecht et al., 2012). Thich Nhat Hanh (2009) describes mindfulness as the heart of Buddha's teachings and involves attention to the present moment and accepting without judgement reaction. Langer (1989) associates mindfulness with great learning. She defines mindfulness as actively processing information that is surrounding you and being present and involved in the moment. Modernising all these old teachings has, in effect, created an extension of mindfulness concepts within the 21 century (Albrecht, 2019). This extension has been heavily debated within the history of mindfulness teaching, however, most (some reluctantly) welcome and encourage this new extension (Hyland, 2017). Frauman (2011) offers a model for using mindfulness within an OE experience, as demonstrated below. This model has striking similarities to most other OE frameworks (discussed later in this chapter). It includes four distinct phases that a mindful learner should accomplish, with very similar consequences as discussed in the above OE frameworks.

**Figure 9**

*A Demonstration of Mindfulness within OE (Frauman, 2011)*



Mindfulness concepts when intertwine within different pedagogical approaches, have many beneficial and positive benefits (Burke, 2009; Hyland, 2015). An American study has demonstrated the use of mindfulness techniques in fostering inner knowing, emotional resilience and competence, moral and spiritual vision, focus and awareness (Schoeberlein et al., 2009). The techniques used within this study include breath meditation, walking meditation and mindful movement. The literature suggest that mindfulness is overwhelmingly wellness oriented (Albrecht, 2019). Mackey (2000) highlights that many scholars often interchange the terminology between health, wellness and well-being, but whatever term, the literature within education has been increasingly identifying these concepts as relevant and significant within spirituality



(Albrecht, 2019). This is arguably due to high level of stress the 21<sup>st</sup> century student faces (Albrecht et al., 2012). Or the fact that students live in constant flux of rapidly changing political and social times, with the ability to be constantly be connected to the world in which they live, however, they are arguably as unconnected and as lost as ever (de Souza, 2016, 2017; Yust, 2016).

Markula (2003) argues “*only critical self-reflection can result in a change in one’s condition*”. Another common theme is the use of goal setting, motivation and manifestation within students to achieve this spiritual exploration and it is sometimes referred as ‘*spiritual awakening*’. A real emphasis in the literature is placed on this development (Roehlkepartain, 2006; Yust, 2016)

### *Religion and Values Education*

Interestingly, Yust (2016) whilst examining three qualitative research studies suggests that spiritual development is actually better incorporated within the curriculum. This idea is also supported by Pandya (2017) who suggests that educators are in favour of including spirituality within the curriculum. This argument highlights that by adding it to the curriculum, educators will be able to ensure a practical application and it can be included within subjects of resilience, self-worth, letting go, sublimation and rationalisation and could be delivered through a similar experiential learning based models (as demonstrated in OE) (Bentley & Buchanan, 2015). Australia’s independent and/or religious schools usually include prayer and spirituality as part of their educational aims and pastoral care programs (McCall, 2020). Most faith based schools offer some sort of compulsory religious and values education (Hyde, 2013; McGrath, 2020). In particular the Catholic education has a systematic approach to religious education within their curricula (McGrath, 2020). It is interesting to note that England has incorporated spiritual development within their core curriculum for all schools, both private and public (de Souza, 2016) Office for Standards in Education, 1994; School Curriculum and Assessment Authority, 1995).

## 2.5 Outdoor Education

“The wilderness holds answers to questions they have not yet learned to ask”(Nancy Wynne Newhall).

### *Introduction*

Character education within OE for students is not a new concept, however, these programs over past the 20<sup>th</sup> century have mirrored and evolved with the changing times (Freeman & Seaman, 2020). The origins of OE stem from Muscular Christianity with a real focus on preparing young men for battle (by increasing battle ready fitness, techniques and strategies) (MacAloon, 2006). This mentality is demonstrated in Kurt Hahn’s first Outwound Bound Program (Freeman & Seaman, 2019). This is reflected in the Outwound Bound motto ‘*to serve, to strive and not to yield*’ (Martin et al., 2016). From the 1960’s OE slightly shifted away from this theme and towards a personal growth mentality. By completing ‘tough’ adventure exercises, students embark on a personal character journey and develop certain character traits along the way (Brookes, 2003a; Freeman, 2011). Potter and Dymont (2016) offer a historical construction of OE as being the ‘*focus on the role of nature, risk, adventure, skill development and social/interpersonal development*’ for education. The 21<sup>st</sup> century literature adds to the historical construction and highlights sustainability, environmentalism, mindfulness and spirituality (Freeman & Seaman, 2020; Potter & Dymont, 2016).

### *The Founder of Outdoor Education – Kurt Hahn*

A literature review of OE would be incomplete without starting with the significant influence of Kurt Hahn (Quay, 2012). Kurt Hahn’s theory of experiential learning, as demonstrated in his Outward-Bound Program’s and flagship Salem Schools and Gordonstoun, highlight his idea of all-round education including the experiences gained by the individual completing physical and demanding OE activities and challenges (Freeman & Seaman, 2020). He argued that physical OE activities outside the classroom would directly help students develop related strategies for inside the classroom. Learning these strategies directly assist students later in their life. By

completing this experience, win or fail, individual or in a team, students will gain confidence, resilience, grit, determination and respect. These are all integral elements of his 10 '*expeditionary learning principles*', as demonstrated below in Table 4 and Figure 10 (Brand et al., 2012). These lessons act as a guiding pathway and allow students to take the lesson learnt and apply them to many different situations (Brookes, 2003b). Hahn goes onto to describe the six illnesses which deplete character and should be avoided. The illnesses are called the '*declines of modern youth*', which are also demonstrated in Table 4 below (Brand et al., 2012).

Literature highlights that OE activities include a wide range of challenging, demanding and often masculine activities. This includes running, hiking, orienteering, seamanship, craftsmanship, athletics and certain farm activities (Chalmers & Dancer, 2008; Kennedy & Russell, 2020; Quay, 2012). These founding principles are evident in many OE programs around Australia today, the pivotal example is the Geelong Grammar School year 9 Timbertop campus. This is a compulsory year-long OE program. The Program is surrounded by the Victorian mountain range and as a result, the campus is very isolated. Students complete both an OE and a traditional curriculum. Students are encouraged to embrace the isolation, remoteness and outdoors within their education (GGS, 2020).

**Table 4**

*Hahn's Principles (Brand et al., 2012)*

Six Declines of Modern Youth	4 Antidotes for the Decline Holistic Self-Care	Ten Expeditionary Learning Principles
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Not moving the body enough</li><li>• Watching instead of participating</li><li>• Lack of interest and craftsmanship</li><li>• Overreliance on stimulants and depressants</li><li>• Spiritual deterioration</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Fitness training</li><li>• Expeditions</li><li>• Projects to refine craft and other manual skills</li><li>• Rescue or life-saving techniques involving long, challenging, endurance tasks</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The importance of self-discovery</li><li>• Generating wonderful ideas</li><li>• A responsibility for one's own learning</li><li>• Empathy and caring</li><li>• Success and failure</li><li>• Collaboration and competition</li><li>• Diversity and inclusiveness</li><li>• Experiencing the natural world</li><li>• Engaging in solitude and reflection</li><li>• Service and compassion toward others</li></ul>

**Figure 10**

*Outward Bound's Philosophy as identified by Outward Bound International (Outward Bound International, 2020)*



### *Scope and sequence*

The clear starting point for Kurt Hahn's experiential learning is the proper planning of OE programs (Cosgriff, 2000; Sutherland et al., 2016; Thomas, 2019; Williams & Wainwright, 2016). Williams explains that experiential learning is also known as the plan, do, review, process of OE teaching (2016). Therefore, the first stage should include the administration and the planning of the overall program. All experiential learning activities should be identified, discussed and mapped against the outcomes. The pre-planning stage is arguably the most important, as Cosgriff (2000) strongly emphasises the importance of educators understanding and planning the appropriate structure of sequences for the activities. Thomas (2019) relies on Cosgriff in his argument and further advances that activities should clearly show connections between the OE curriculum, learning content and the knowledge and skills being taught to and gained by the students.

OE activities should be developed as a logical sequence of events. Students should slowly advance upon basic skills to more complex and challenging activities, as the program continues (Thomas, 2019). For example, students will learn communication, then trust, then problem solving in an advanced sequence order. Sutherland notes that when the sequence does not logically flow or does not increase in difficulty, students will start to disengage with the entire process (2016). This will potentially undo all the positive benefits gained by the student completing the experiential learning (Sutherland et al., 2016). This argument reinforces the notion that educators must create and trust the sequence of events (Thomas, 2019; Williams & Wainwright, 2016).

### *Reflection*

At the completion of each sequenced step, students must be able to stop and systematically reflect upon all those individual and shared learning experiences (Thomas, 2019). Cosgriff notes that this reflection period is called debriefing (2000), whilst Williams and Wainwright argues that it is called reviewing (2016). They both reference that programs should involve time for students to think, reflect, review and debrief with others on what they have just processed, learnt, felt, overcome, achieved or failed. This reflection helps students embed those feelings or character traits and

allows for utilisation in future situations (Thomas, 2019). For example, the determination and vigour demonstrated by a student on the climbing wall, could be later used to help handle anxious and stressful situations (Cosgriff, 2000; Williams & Wainwright, 2016). Potter and Dymont (2016) emphasise the importance of using the tool of self-reflection within a journal. This process allows students to reflect on their personal gain, without judgement or fear. This process also avoids the stresses that come with the pressures of to-do lists, screens and technology, the instant communication, gratification and reward.

### *OE Activities*

OE activities should work to encourage active student participation, both individually and within a group setting. Activities should be balanced and include physical or hands-on work, however, they should not be too demanding or physical. In fact, Thomas (2019) suggests that activities should include all general life skills and not just be intensive, adventure and adrenaline activities. Thomas (2019) and Williams and Wainwright (2016) all emphasise that students should have a high level of autonomy in their selection of the activities, as they suggest that students respond better to challenges that are self-selected. Again, they also encourage group work and group participation as a fundamental part of the sequence.

The group dynamic and OE setting can also assist students in understanding what it means to be an active member of a democratic society (Thomas, 2018). The students are often expected to clean, cook and make decisions as a collective group. Students are therefore held accountable for their choices and actions, as they directly experience the consequences of those actions. Students also have the opportunity to develop skills in which they can utilise later in life (Thomas, 2019). Students can make new friends and strengthen relationships as they go through the experience together (McLeod & Allen-Craig, 2007).

### *Outdoor environment*

A strong emphasis for an OE program is often the program location. This emphasis is often paired with an argument for the importance of the isolation and remoteness (Williams & Wainwright, 2016). Freeman and Seaman (2020) argue that OE programs often happen in grand locations or spiritual places and programs lean into that as a mechanism for this experiential education. They go on to comment that the outdoors is seen as a spiritual place. By removing the student from the familiar and comfortable setting it allows for the students to be fully immersed within the experience, and as a result, they grow and develop by challenging themselves. However, Williams and Wainwright (2016) offer an alternative view and suggest that OE should start within school grounds and should not solely rely on camp-grounds. Highlighting the power in connecting OE with the schoolground, home and family (Williams & Wainwright, 2016).

### *The importance of the educator*

A common theme touched on in all frameworks is the importance of the expertise and skills of the educator. They must be able to facilitate all of these adventure-based programs, whilst creating positive development environments, and help guide the students on their journey to self-discovery (Thomas, 2018). OE literature stresses that educators are there to facilitate the learning not to dictate or direct the experience. As all educators and individual schools are different, this becomes very difficult. For example, some schools will send educators that may not have a background in OE pedagogy, and on the other end of the scale, some schools may hire OE and recreational staff. In addition, these educators should have specific skills in risk management, first-aid, fire safety and lifesaving (Sutherland et al., 2016). Additionally it is evidently important that educators must know and understand all students involved. Chang et al. (2017) add that this understanding must include student's cultural background.

Allen-Craig et al. (2020) note that OE roles, given their nature, often attract and are dominated by males. They stress the importance of breaking down this gendered stereotype within OE. In their discussion, they showcase that only seeing females teaching cooking or cleaning, whilst the males are seen teaching advanced skills such

as the rope courses, will only reinforce gendered stereotypes. In their discussion they highlight the importance of breaking away from “the add females and stir recipe” (2020, 132).

### *Positive outcomes of OE Programs*

Overall, most studies within the literature indicate positive benefits of OE experiences, including: increasing student independence, self-efficiency, self-understanding, problem solving, assertiveness, emotional stability, motivation, drive and leadership; all whilst enhancing physical, psychosocial and mental wellbeing (Davidson, 2001; Hattie et al., 1997; Langer, 1989; McLeod & Allen-Craig, 2007). Thomas (2019) conducted an Australian study that collected qualitative data from two schools completing a 28-day school camp. The data used a combination of elements from the above-mentioned frameworks and made the below findings. Students were actively engaged with the programs when they had a good understanding of the experiential learning. When students could understand and explain what they were learning from the activity at hand, they were more engaged with the experiential learning. Students could quickly recognise when they were succeeding, failing and working together in the experience. Students were easily able to comment upon the power of community and why they were working collaboratively in teams and groups. Overall, Thomas commented that students were encouraged to take responsibility, think differently about making mistakes, reflect on their learning and use their new skills to problem solve (2019).

### *Criticisms to OE*

When asked about his time at Gordonstoun School, Prince Charles famously said it was absolute hell and a prison sentence (Gutierrez, 2017). His comments highlight that these programs are not for everyone, and some even argue that OE favours more athletic or physically strong students (Brookes, 2003a). Hahn’s theory has been criticised for being forced and militaristic (Freeman, 2011).



A 2010 study conducted by Weaver-Hightower highlights the potential dangers of OE programs (2010). She explores the dangers of fostering toxic or dominant masculine environments within young boys, illustrated through the common negative phrase '*boys will be boys*'. Over the last couple of decades, females have outperformed males in the academic curriculum, and she notes that OE programs have been used as an approach to attempt to bridge this gap (Eate et al., 2017; Weaver-Hightower, 2003). The concern with this approach is that OE programs constantly re-entrench traditional and hegemonic masculinities. If boys are taught that to be a man means escaping into the wilderness to deepen their masculine traits, negative stereotypes can continue to fluctuate. The dangers would be that these programs could teach boys to reject any traditionally feminist traits and foster toxic ideals. She also comments that escaping into the wilderness does not make better men (Kennedy & Russell, 2020). In Weaver's qualitative study, she observed constant encouraging of gendered behaviours and commented upon the difficulty in developing, organising and monitoring an OE program that captures all gendered aspects (2010). In her argument, she identifies that gendered activities are seen all over OE, illustrated by men doing rope courses and females doing oatmeal facials. In other words, boys doing traditionally masculine activities and females doing more feminine activities. She also notes that OE programs foster toxic masculinity, encourage competition, increase pressure and increase negative emotion within students. Weaver's study suggests that OE programs should challenge gendered stereotypes by encouraging students to identify and challenge gendered norms that they see within themselves (2010). Whilst encouraging an understanding for the importance of outdoors.

Brookes comments that character traits are not increased with OE experiences and that one experience does not necessarily change or fundamentally alter the students overall character (Brookes, 2003b). Brookes also notes that it is very easy for educators to label a pointless exercise as '*character building*'. This argument highlights how difficult it can be to measure how much character the students have gained in that one experience or whether a lifelong impact has been established within overall character. Williams and Wainwright (2016) also comment on this by highlighting that OE programs are often optional programs, with the feeling of a one-off experience in the student's education. As a result, OE programs are often used in education to 'tick-the box' of the holistic /whole student approach and then move on, to the academic curriculum (2016).

## *21<sup>st</sup> Century OE – Technology & Sustainability*

The 21<sup>st</sup> century on OE literature revolves around technology, sustainability, wellbeing and mindfulness. Cross, Sanchez, and Kennedy (2019) note the importance of OE to connect students to the environment that they will one day inhabit. As the future resides in the youth, through connecting and understanding the power of nature, they can help develop ideas within preservation, sustainability and environmentalism. Williams and Wainwright also raise this argument, by highlighting that nature is our friend and that we should learn to treat it with respect and kindness (Martin, 1999). An effective OE program should encourage students to wonder, imagine, explore and reconnect with the environment. Therefore OE programs should be entrenched with ethical environmental understanding and actions (Martin, 1999; Williams & Wainwright, 2015).

Miner (2012) notes the ‘*no pain no gain*’ approach of removing certain technology to enhance the OE experience. Although this is not a new argument, he stresses the importance in this social media age. The OE experience is better if students are encouraged to turn off their electronic devices and embrace the struggle of the outside elements (Miner, 2012). Cross (2019) and Brand et al. (2012) both suggest that by removing technology, programs can directly help students with their social and cognitive development and, therefore, influence their overall well-being.

## **2.6 Summary**

This chapter has discussed and critiqued the literature of character, spirituality and OE. The next chapter will discuss the frameworks used for this dissertation, to analyse how character and spirituality are integrated within the OE Program at the Research School.

# Chapter Three Frameworks

## 3.1 Introduction

The literature review provides commentary on many different frameworks in which researches can use to analyse and discuss theoretical applications. This chapter will provide a brief outline of which frameworks will be selected for the document analysis. This chapter will also outline the rationale behind choosing these frameworks. Please note further explanation of the methodology of this dissertation is found at Chapter Four.

## 3.2 Frameworks

### *Character Education*

For character education, the use of the Jubilee Centre framework (Figure 6 and 7) will be appropriate as it provides a clear structure that will help highlight measurable outcomes of character development (Jubilee Centre, 2017; Kristjánsson, 2016; Peterson, 2020). We can use the defined four virtues, of intellectual, moral, civic and performance virtues, to investigate the integration of character and spirituality within an OE Program. We can use this framework to explore when character and spirituality are integrated within OE, and if they are not, we can use this framework as a guide to make further recommendations.

The neo-Aristotelian framework (Figure 6) helps provide clear definitions and examples of the different characteristics associated with each of the four different virtues. For example, the characteristic of reflection is within intellectual virtues and compassion is found within moral virtues etc. We can use these examples to investigate if the virtues are being embedded into the student's everyday life. Within this framework, the practical wisdom stage is the application of these values, it is the acting or doing stage of the decision-making process (Figure 6). In other words, it is at this stage that students have already had time to process the information, through critical reflection, thinking and perceiving and are now acting upon those values (Jubilee

Centre, 2017). This investigation will then ask if the virtues as demonstrated within the Program are reflective of the Research School's character.

The neo-Aristotelian Model of Moral Development (Figure 7) highlights the caught, taught and sought model (Jubilee Centre, 2017). Using this model, we can investigate and comment upon whether the character and spirituality developments are being embedded within the OE Program and the school culture. This model traces the virtues from knowledge and understanding, through to virtue action and practice (Figure 7). Unfortunately, as we are using the Jubilee Centre framework, the discussion of Plato's advancements within soul and spirit will be limited. Although these concepts fit nicely within the research question for the Research School, it is hard to investigate developments within the soul and spirit (Kotsonis, 2019, 2020).

### *Spirituality*

The application and interpretation of the Brandes (2018) framework is beneficial for the spiritual development, as it advances upon traditional frameworks and concepts within the literature. Brandes framework assists in the investigation as it provides information on elements of a religious camp. Although a religious camp is different, the elements, outcomes and teaching strategies of the framework will be directly transferable and comparable to the OE Program offered by the Research School. This framework is demonstrated below at Figure 11 and explained within Table 5. The application of this framework will allow the researcher to investigate the below seven elements of spirituality within the OE program.

**Figure 11**

*A Demonstration of Brandes Framework (Brandes, 2018)*



Brandes framework highlights seven different elements of spirituality (2018). They outline the individual traits, relationships and capabilities that help individuals develop their faith. All these skills are the ‘*building blocks*’ to help equip students in finding their faith (2018). Faith she argues, is the ongoing process of the spiritual journey (2018). This journey involves reflection, critical thinking and creativity, in order to make and re-make meaning in our lives (2018). By using the seven elements, as aspects that influence a student’s faith and spiritual development, we can investigate if the spiritual development is being integrated within the OE program. These seven elements are discussed in detail in the table below. This includes the positive and negative developments. To successfully integrate spirituality within the OE experience, we want to aim for the positive developments and avoid the negative developments.

**Table 5***Discussion of the Different Spiritual Elements as discussed in Brandes (Brandes, 2018)*

7 Elements of Spirituality	Discussion	Positive Development	Negative Development
Identity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Self-understanding</li> <li>• Shapes faith</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ‘Groundedness’ – the sense we know who we are and feel grounded in that sense</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ambiguity</li> </ul>
Purpose	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Self-understanding</li> <li>• A need for meaning</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Vocation - a purpose that both resonates with you and the wider society</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Idleness</li> <li>• Despair</li> </ul>
Belonging	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Self-understanding – to be yourself</li> <li>• Being heard</li> <li>• Being understood</li> <li>• Connection with others</li> <li>• Desire</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Acceptance from others</li> <li>• Acceptance of our true selves</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rejected from others</li> </ul>
Sense of worth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To see the inherent value of self, others and creation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Abundance</li> <li>• ‘Enoughness’ – the state of being enough</li> <li>• Awe</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Shame</li> </ul>
Capacity to care	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Genuinely relate to self and others</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Love – both being loved and loving others</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Narcissism</li> <li>• Apathy</li> <li>• Hate</li> </ul>
Reflectiveness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Critical thinking and creativity</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Integration in the meaning of our lives</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fragmentation</li> </ul>
Integrity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wholeness</li> <li>• Authenticity</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Self-acceptance</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Self-rejection</li> </ul>

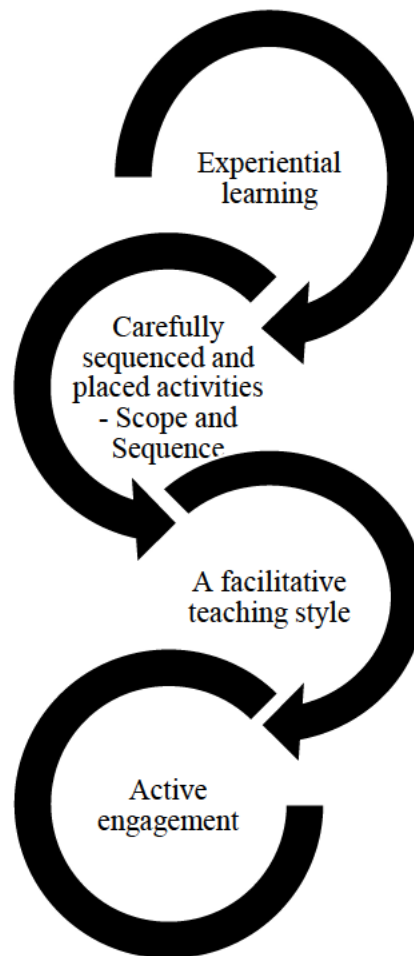
It is important to note this study is relatively recent and has not been cited in many other academic sources. Therefore, in order to ensure strong academic validity, it will be deemed appropriate and beneficial to also rely upon older frameworks and definitions as discussed in Benson and Roehlkepartain (Benson et al., 2003). These frameworks will also allow for discussions of religion as an element of spirituality.

### *Outdoor education*

The Thomas study is beneficial to interpret, analyse and discuss the main overarching themes of OE (2019). Thomas' study amalgamates the four key papers on teaching and learning pedagogies within OE in Australia. (Blenkinsop et al., 2016; Cosgriff, 2000; Sutherland et al., 2016; Williams & Wainwright, 2016). In doing this, he arguably highlights the main frameworks within OE pedagogies that need to be demonstrated in order for experiential learning to be beneficial for students. Using this framework, will therefore help the researcher in discussing the OE theories that the Research School utilises within their OE practices. To ensure the validity of this source, it will be appropriate to refer to the older literature as discussed within this framework. This will naturally flow as Thomas builds upon the four key papers. The four different elements of OE are inter related and interwoven together, this is demonstrated in the Outward Bound philosophy in Figure 10 and 12 (Brand et al., 2012).

**Figure 12**

*A Demonstration of the Framework discussed in the Thomas Study (Thomas, 2019)*



### **3.3 Summary**

These frameworks will form the theoretical elements that will be used to interpret and analyse the data that will be collated from the document analysis. This will aid in our evaluation of the integration of character and spirituality within an OE program. Details of the research method used to conduct this dissertation will be discussed in the next chapter.



# Chapter Four Methodology

## 4.1 Introduction

Due to the nature of this dissertation, a two-step qualitative research approach was deemed appropriate for the research design. The first step was an in-depth systematic qualitative literature review of the three main concepts of character, spirituality and OE. The next step was a comprehensive document analysis of the documents that were provided by the Research School. This chapter outlines in detail the two-step research process, the rationale behind choosing this methodology, how the data was selected and collected and any ethical implications of the dissertation. The study did not involve the collection of quantitative data, including questionnaires or interviews (Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

## 4.2 Systematic Literature Review

The first step completed was an in-depth qualitative systematic literature review of character, spirituality and OE. Qualitative research is rich research, as it enables us to gain a deeper understanding of the emerging themes within the literature (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). Qualitative research provides information in an inductive style by highlighting the meaning behind or perspective within a topic. It allows us to examine the meaning behind different words. Qualitative research uses open ended questions and allows for emerging discussions to be presented and discussed (Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

A literature review is beneficial as it helps integrate leading author discussions, allows for criticism to be highlighted and discussed, allows researchers to build links between related topics and it helps identify central issues within the field of research (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). Creswell highlights that a qualitative literature review allows for the researcher to conduct an exploratory research study. The literature helps guide the researcher in building an understanding based on academic sources (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). This literature review attempts to integrate multiple views, from multiple sources and builds links between character, spirituality and school values,

gained from completing an OE experience. Please see below at Figure 13 the literature research process map.

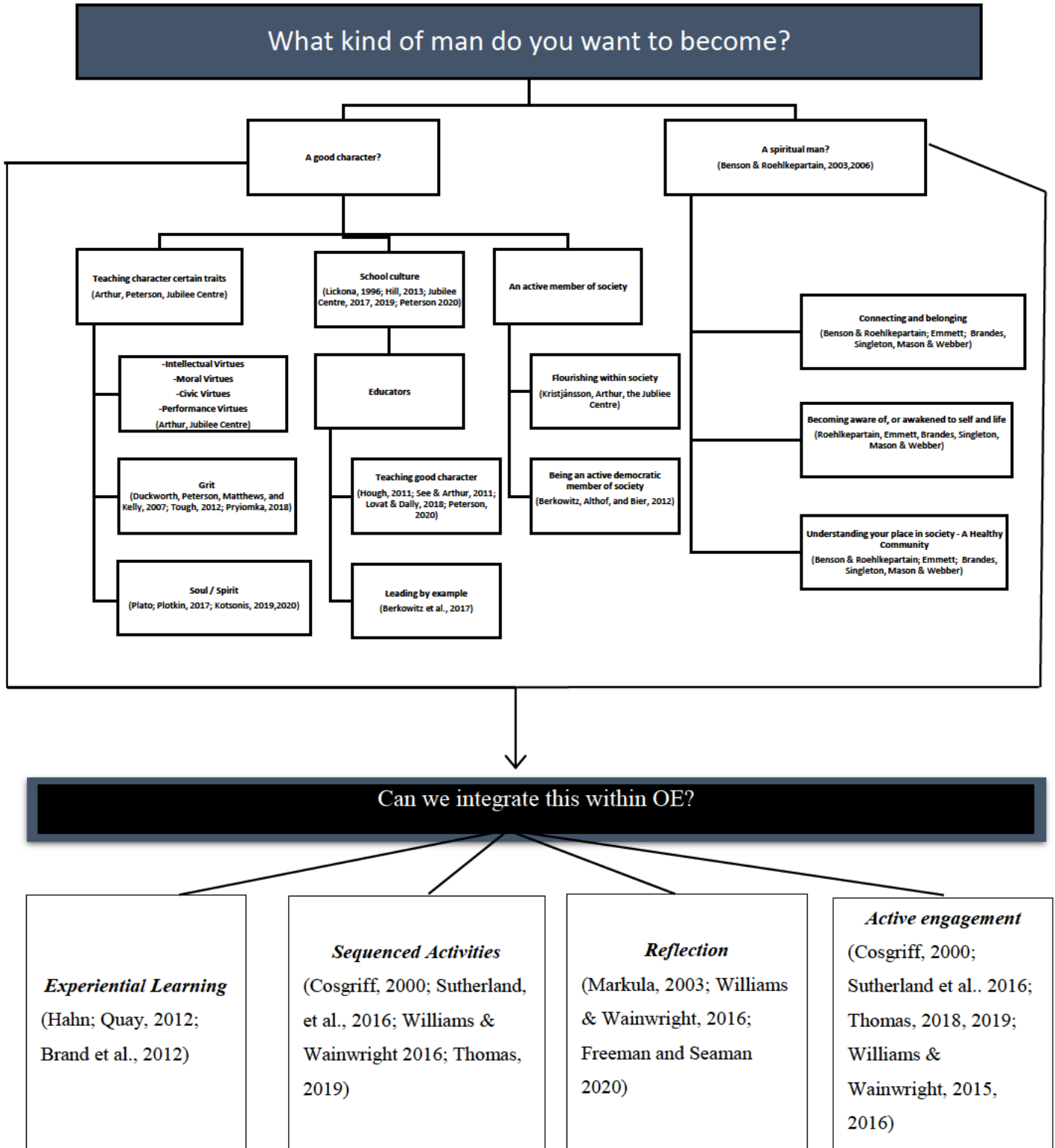
By examining all the current and relevant research studies within the literature, we can establish the current and existing field of commentary from academic sources. In doing so we can highlight if there is a gap in the research. We can then seek to fill that gap (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). The literature within character, spirituality and OE is extensive and includes both strong theories and conceptual frameworks. With this dissertation it was not a question of locating the literature, as that was arguably endless, it was ensuring that the literature chosen for this discussion was relevant and significant to the research questions. Completing the literature review revealed that the research could aid in integrating character and spirituality within OE.

The literature review helped in allowing the researcher to understand the educational practices and the inquiry modes of a scholar educator. Understanding this helped the researcher, as it guides educational practice, which helps determine outcomes, which then circles back to guiding theory. In other words, helping theory develop practice, subsequently helps practice develop theory. The literature guides the next stage of the research process as it helps provide direction, by providing the framework for the research questions and hypothesis to follow. The literature forms a platform to launch into the next stage of the research process: the document analysis (Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

As this dissertation examines a particular school, extensive research surrounding the literature and data of the Research School was considered. The literature material produced by the Research School consisted of marketing materials published from the perspective of the Research School students and alumni. Although the material is inherently biased, it formed a fundamental phase of the research that helped assisted in building the literature review and completing the document analysis.

**Figure 13**

*A Map of the Literature Review*



### **4.3 Document Analysis**

The second step completed was an analysis of the documents provided to the researcher from the Research School. The documents are listed at Appendix A, it includes the outlines of the OE programs from year 3-9 and student reflections within the Chronicles. A document analysis is a systematic procedure for reviewing and evaluating documents (Bowen, 2009). Documents are considered social facts (Atkinson & Coffey, 1997). They include a wide range of sources and involve an interpretation of written text and visual pictures. By completing the document analysis, we can gain an understanding and determine meaning from the data that is presented. The document analysis will greatly assist in the corroboration and identification across multiple evidence sources (Bowen, 2009).

As OE programs build upon experiences, it was deemed appropriate to review all previous camps leading up to the year 9 camp (Thomas, 2019). In broadening the documents to be collected and reviewed, we could use the data from previous documents and see how they influence the year 9 Program. This method was crucial in helping assist the understanding of the data presented in the documents, especially in the OE context (Thomas, 2019).

To reduce the chance of personal bias, multiple sources and the research design were implemented (Bowen, 2009, 2). The document analysis allowed the researcher the ability to make direct comparisons between the literature's frameworks and that of the current OE programs. By understanding the outcomes and challenges of character and spirituality we could comment upon how these concepts are integrated within an OE experience. This allowed the researcher to discuss the integration and the benefits of character and spirituality within the OE Program. It also allowed the researcher to identify when character and spirituality were not integrated, and then opportunities to better integrate it. Conducting the research design in the two-step approach meant the researcher could use the literature to help understand major concepts, and therefore, offer suggestions to integrate character and spirituality within an OE experience. All whilst ensuring these advancements aligned with the college's values.

## **4.4 Rationale**

The approach best suited for the research questions and objectives of this dissertation was to follow a two-step qualitative approach. Conducting and using the approach ensured that the data could rely upon multiple sources of evidence when identifying, corroborating and discussing themes within both the academic literature and the documents as provided by the Research School. Using multiple sources allowed for the triangulation of data from different sources and helped establish the credibility of the evidence (Bowen, 2009). Also, as the Research School provided their OE documents for review, it seemed natural to elect the document analysis methodology.

The two-step approach reduces the potential for personal bias, as the data comes from, and is reinforced, by multiple sources. However, it is important to note that there is always the potential for personal bias to influence any research dissertation. As the researcher is conducting the document analysis, they are the ones drawing the connections and as all researchers have preconceived notions regarding topics in which they are researching, it is very easy for personal ideas to assist in building those connections (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). A different researcher may reach a different conclusion (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). In structuring the research design in the two-step approach, it will attempt to reduce any personal biases. As the literature is used to guide the researcher whilst conducting the document analysis, the evidence will speak for itself, whilst trying to reduce the voice of the researcher (Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

## **4.5 Data Collection**

Using the three databases from University of Adelaide, ERIC and Google Scholar, the researcher explored peer reviewed articles written within the last decade. As some of the literature refers to older definitions and concepts, the research time period was widened to ensure that all relevant data was collected. The key searches, as identified below, were used in these databases;

- character development/ education;
- spiritual/ spirituality;

- mindfulness;
- camp;
- outdoor education;
- masculinity;
- identity; and
- all-boys education.

Within the advanced search functions, the researcher narrowed the sub-folder to find ‘education’ articles. The researcher used the program EndNote to download the articles and attempted to create a database of journal articles related to the concepts. Within that database the researcher would group them into multiple sub-categories, this included UK and USA character, OE and spirituality. Running parallel to the EndNote program the researcher created a working table. It was in this table, that the researcher collated the main themes and headings from each article, the year of the study, the type of the study and any potential bias. By identifying the five main themes in the articles, the data could start to highlight the current position and themes within the literature. It was this information that would be used to guide the literature review, as topics, definitions or interpretations that would emerge in multiple sources, would be noted and discussed.

This dissertation favours data from peer reviewed articles as the main evidence, as this evidence would ensure that the source had been highly cited by other well-known academic authors. Journal articles that have been peer reviewed are, arguably, more reliable and valid (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). Most of the sources within this dissertation are located in the below journal articles;

- Journal of Character Education;
- Journal of Adventure Education and Outdoor Learning;
- Australian Journal of Outdoor Education; and
- Physical Education and Sport Pedagogy.

## **4.6 Philosophical worldview**

As the research often examined personal experiences and often reflections on developing character or spirituality within an OE experience; the data relied upon

research that used a methodology of either a natural inquiry, a narrative inquiry or an ethnography research design (or a mixture of them all) (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). A naturalistic inquiry relies heavily on the views of the participants who are involved within the study, the questions asked are usually broad and general to ensure that participants can construct their own interpretations when answering and discussing. Narrative research invites participants to reflect or share a story about their own lives in a narrative form. Ethnography research design studies the shared patterns of a shared sub-cultural group, for example, the patterns of students completing the camp (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). The researcher drew from the three research designs to adopt a constructivism approach for this dissertation (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). This allowed for the researcher to examine the data from the camps in experiences, discussions, reflections and journals, both from individual and team experiences, whilst examining character and spirituality. By adopting this constructivism approach, students were able to construct their own understanding of their experience (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). This includes both positive and negative experiences gained from students by completing OE experiences.

#### **4.7 Ethical considerations**

In accordance with ethical approval, and to protect the interest of the Research School, all information regarding the identity of the Research School has been removed from this dissertation. In adherence to Australian privacy legislation, no information of students, educators or employees were disclosed or identified whilst conducting the document analysis. As this is a systemic literature review and a document analysis, there was no ethical approval sought for this dissertation. This resulted in no interviews or questionnaires being asked with the staff who run the different OE programs and the students who undertake the programs. As this insight would greatly assist the data collected, a further study would be highly recommended and encouraged.

#### **4.8 Limitations**

Whilst the researcher endeavoured to select relevant and credible data, not all information could be selected and, therefore, not all data could be included or chosen

for these discussions on character, spirituality and OE. As this research study is in relation to a particular Research School, the research and discussion will not be applicable for all schools. Adding to this point of difference is that this research is in relation to an all-boys school, which is another distinguishing factor to most other schools. This will therefore place a limitation on the discussion, outcome and recommendations of this dissertation.

As the frameworks chosen to help interpret the documents are relatively recent, this may influence or limit the credibility of the analysis conducted. The OE and spiritual frameworks have not been highly cited but have both been peer reviewed. They were chosen as they are highly relatable to the OE Program and can draw strong connections from the literature. As some of the documents are sensitive and confidential, including personal essays, they were not provided for review for this dissertation. This dissertation will also not add any consideration from the OE experiences from the senior years (being year 10-12), as these years are elective. Missing this data may limit the discussion within this dissertation. Collecting this data would add another layer of credibility within this dissertation, therefore, a further study would be recommended, this further study is discussed in Chapter Six.

## **4.9 Summary**

The above chapter outlines the research design of this dissertation. The next chapter will outline the findings and discussions.



# Chapter Five Findings & Discussion

## 5.1 Introduction

No one can give your son self-confidence, resilience or independence. These are skills he can develop by pushing his limits. It is when he overcomes obstacles that he will develop these character traits. (Parent Information Booklet, 2019, 3)

This chapter will outline the findings and discussion of the dissertation. The Research School offers an impressive OE experience for students but misses a beneficial opportunity to integrate both character and spirituality within their OE Program. When analysing the Program through the Jubilee Centre framework, we can identify that the Program is dominated by performance virtues, whilst the remaining virtues of intellectual, moral and civic virtues are overlooked and out of balance (Jubilee Centre, 2017). The lack of spirituality framework and limited definition is noticeable within the documents.

It is important to note that as most OE educators adopt a very situational and facilitative style pedagogy, this adds a difficulty in analysing and discussing the written material (Dyment & Potter, 2014). Everything discussed in this chapter may already be achieved in some unwritten and informal way during the Program.

## 5.2 OE & Character virtues

### *Experiential Learning*

Although they may not wish to admit it, everyone was challenged by at least one aspect of the stay. (Chronicle, 2011, 59)

Students are given ample opportunities to learn through OE experiences within the Program. Students have the chance to be individually challenged, pushed out of their comfort zone, take risks, lead, work collaboratively in a team environment and thrive

and succeed individually (Parent Information Booklet, 2019; Thomas, 2019). The physical activities extensively dominate the 35-day Program. This comes as no surprise, as the Program credits Kurt Hahn's pedagogical approach as the founding philosopher (Parent Information Booklet, 2019, 1). The Research School also places a strong emphasis on competing and succeeding in sport (Chronicle). The sport activities offered within the Program are all physically demanding. They include an increased staggered morning run, fitness tests, fitness games, beach fitness and sport, falling within performance virtues (Figure 6) (Jubilee Centre, 2017; Thomas, 2019). The Program does offer some activities that are not so physically demanding, these include fitness yoga and beach walks, however, these only start in the second part of the Program. They do not occur regularly (Parent Information Booklet, 2020). The literature informs us that sport is useful in establishing the ten expeditionary learning principles (Table 4) (Brand et al., 2012), however, there are so many other techniques that could be relied upon to support and encourage the development of performance virtues (Jubilee Centre, 2017; Thomas, 2019). As the sports are physically demanding they would all favour students with greater sporting abilities (Brookes, 2003a).

### *The Morning Run*

When students arrive at the Program, they are daunted by the notion of running 11km on the beach...After three weeks of training they are ready for the challenge and so many succeed far greater than they ever imagined. (Chronicle, 2012, 62)

Completing an 11km run would be a challenging achievement for many adults let alone for year 9 boys. The Program stresses that the run is not a competition, but an individual challenge or goal to improve fitness and capabilities (Parent Information Booklet, 2019). The Program notes that many students are stressed and anxious about completing the run, but on the day of performance, students are physically and mentally ready to compete. By analysing the morning run with the Jubilee Centre framework, the following performance virtues can be gained: personal confidence, determination, motivation, perseverance and resilience. These performance values are integrated within the Program (Jubilee Centre, 2017). These virtues are then being reinforced

through the practical action of achievement on the day. That is if they finish the race. If they do not finish, other performance values, such as failure may be embedded into the students (Jubilee Centre, 2017). Reviewing the Program, it becomes apparent that the 11km run is the showcase of the 35-day experience (Parent Information Booklet, 2019). After an examination of the Research School's history and culture, it comes as no surprise of the emphasis placed on developing men to perform in sports (Chronicle; Gibbs, 1984, 2008).

### *The Physical Expeditions*

This year more and more students are taking the added challenge of fasting during this period, only increases the difficulty and enhancing the outcome achieved.(Chronicle, 2016, 60)

The students are expected to undergo two major expeditions within the Program. The cycle expedition which starts the Program and includes 4 days of a 45km bike ride. The hiking expedition concludes the Program and involves an 11km hike with a paired camping night and then a solo camping night (Parent Information Booklet, 2019). These expeditions would be especially challenging for students at the start, who are not used to long periods of physical and mental conditioning (Thomas, 2019). Students within these challenges are expected to demonstrate and learn the virtues of independence, leadership and teamwork, all whilst developing their outdoor and navigational skill set (Jubilee Centre, 2017). Like the run, these expeditions are high in performance virtues and additionally also help develop their intellectual virtues. These are the character traits necessary for right actions and the pursuit of knowledge developed within the outdoor and navigational activity (Figure 6). The examples of intellectual virtues include judgement, reasoning and critical thinking, which are all traits that will be needed for a successful hiking expedition paired with another student. However, the intellectual values do seem to get lost within the physical demands of the challenge and the performance virtues (Parent Information Booklet, 2019). Take for example the additional fasting element (see quote above), this quote strips away the intellectual virtues by suggesting that the boys need to constantly assert dominance through challenging themselves (Hickey & Mooney, 2018; Kennedy & Russell, 2020). This

quote suggests that the expedition is reinforcing resilience and determination, the performance values, rather than resourcefulness and reasoning, the intellectual virtues (Jubilee Centre, 2017). These virtues are then being reinforced through the completion of these activities (Jubilee Centre, 2017).

### *Healthy Life Choices*

There is a greater focus on healthy life skills, with the introduction of fitness testing, which is aimed at tracking individual's personal improvement. (Chronicle, 2016, 59)

The health and well-being program places a clear emphasis on physical activities as helpful strategies in understanding the importance of making healthy life decisions (Parent Information Booklet, 2019, 18). This program involves aspects of fitness, food, nutrition, personal hygiene, personal safety and cleaning (2019). The strategy highlights that completing activities with strong physical and mental conditioning within performance virtues will help students in understanding healthy life-skills and will ultimately drive general well-being (2019). When compared to the literature, this interpretation and application is narrow and limited (Albrecht, 2019; Brandes, 2018). The Program's approach could include a deeper understanding and discussion of a holistic lifestyle and general well-being and wellness. The Program could use spirituality techniques, as discussed in the literature, to help guide students with their mindfulness and wellness practises (Frauman, 2011; Miriam & Rosemary, 2016). These techniques could include stillness activities (closing the mind and appreciating the stillness), breath meditation, walking meditation, manifesting, restorative yoga, Pilates and goal setting (and many more) (de Souza, 2014; Elliott et al., 2019; Engebretson, 2006). All these practices would better help integrate character and spirituality within the Program (Brandes, 2018; McCall, 2020). There is more to a holistic lifestyle than running enormous lengths on a beach, completing a gruelling expedition, eating healthy and fasting during expeditions (Benson et al., 2003).

### *Reflection Time*

Time away from the normal support structures allows our boys to reflect on the important things in their lives – their family and friends. (Chronicle, 2012, 62)

Although the reflection activity list is the smallest in the Program (Figure 1), the ‘chillout time’ provides for a large percent of the daily activities. The allocated 45 minutes per day allows students to communicate with their parents through letter writing and reflect about their experiences through journal writing (Parent Information Booklet, 2019). This concept is highly supported by the literature (Markula, 2003; Thomas, 2019). Reflection allows students the opportunity to pause, reflect, write and have time to develop their thoughts, identity and personality (Cosgriff, 2000). The design of this process is very beneficial, as students can use this allocated time to reflect about the character virtues in which they have been experiencing throughout the Program (Williams & Wainwright, 2016). This process does place a strong emphasis on educators ensuring that students are not abusing the chillout time, for example mucking around with other students (Sutherland et al., 2016). The fact that the Program has journal checks is reassuring, as it suggests that the educators take this process very seriously (Thomas, 2019).

In 2015, the Program introduced the student lead conference which is conducted 5 days after the completion of the Program. This is an interview between teachers, students and parents. This is a great opportunity to integrate the reflection process within OE and will significantly impact on the integration of spiritual developments within OE (Yust, 2016). The ongoing revisitation and reflection will help students transfer and embed these virtues within their everyday life (Jubilee Centre, 2017).

So far in this discussion the development of character virtues within OE, has strongly favoured the development of performance virtues. The boys are, therefore, more likely to reflect upon their development of these performance values (Jubilee Centre, 2017).

### *Active Community*

Many boys had never faced an environment where they had to cook, clean, shop and manage time all for themselves. ( Chronicle, 2011, 59)

The literature highlights the powerful element of the group dynamic within OE (Thomas, 2019). This is reflected in the Program as the boys are expected to become active citizens in a miniature democratic society. During the Program student are responsible for the day-to-day activities of the community and are expected to cook healthy foods, clean, budget, shop and do their own laundry (Parent Information Booklet, 2019). The above quote highlights that these ‘working chores’ are often the first-time the boys experience anything like this, as they are usually cared for by their primary care-givers (mostly their mothers) (Emilsen & Koch, 2010). By allowing the boys to step into these roles it will help integrate and develop civic virtues (Figure 6) (Jubilee Centre, 2017). The examples of civic virtues include citizenship, community and awareness. This virtue will also attempt to help break gendered stereotypes and increase personal responsibility and accountability within the boys (Thomas, 2019; Jubilee Centre, 2017; Weaver-Hightower, 2010).

‘Leadership’ is the common term that comes from the document analysis within this sub-category (Parent Information Booklet, 2019). The Program reiterates that a leader within this community is a great steppingstone for showcasing leadership skills for future roles within senior school (i.e. year captain/head boy). Leadership is not mentioned within Figure 6, however, it would be captured by both civic and performance virtues (Jubilee Centre, 2017). Although leadership is an important skill, the focus of the Program could be expanded to include the other elements of civic virtues, including citizenship, civility and volunteering (Parent Information Booklet, 2019).

### *Community Involvement*

During the Program the students complete a few volunteering experiences (Parent Information Booklet, 2019). This provides students an opportunity to be exposed with community involvement and help those who are disadvantaged. This exposure may be

some of the first times that these boys see how the less fortunate live. This conclusion can be reached as the School ICSEA value indicates that students at the school come from significantly advantaged and privileged backgrounds (ACARA, 2020). Community involvement activities are rotated throughout the Program. Each Program has one overall building project to help the physical amenities of the community in which the Program is located. For example, the 2012 students completed building a chicken pen for their community (Chronicle, 2012, 63). In building the chicken pen, the students had to complete labour and physically intensive activities, including digging trenches. These projects are again, physical, hard and hands-on (Jubilee Centre, 2017). The other community projects include volunteering at a local museum, which involves physical maintenance tasks and environmental projects, with an emphasis on sustainability and conservation (Williams & Wainwright, 2015).

The community involvement activities help integrate character, as these activities develop moral and civic virtues (Figure 6) (Jubilee Centre, 2017). These activities will help develop empathy, gratitude, compassion, justice, awareness and volunteering. The Program's main motto is learning to care for "others before self", however in this discussion we have suggested that sport is the main focus (Parent Information Booklet, 1). Interestingly, no Chronicle quote could be found from the last decade, that added real depth to the analysis of the completion of the community involvement, other than saying the boys had completed it (Chronicle). This fact is evident in itself that the community involvement could be extended and expanded to include more disenfranchised social groups. However, limited volunteering options may be due to the rural nature of the location and the difficulties in locating them.

Reference to the Aboriginal and Indigenous Peoples is very limited within the Program (Parent Information Booklet, 2019). This is an interesting point to note, as the Program is named after the Narungga language. This is clearly a wasted opportunity to integrate developments both in character and spirituality within OE. The place-based education and the community immersion of OE should include activities, discussions and stories about different Aboriginal cultures and languages. This would help integrate both character and spirituality within OE.

### *Scope and sequence*

The plan stage of the Program (as seen both in Figure 2 and 3) is excellent. The Research School has clearly spent extensive time developing beneficial aims of the Program (Parent Information Booklet, 2019). These aims all point towards some sort of positive character development (Jubilee Centre, 2017). The Program outlines that the objectives include an increase in leadership, social skills and self-management organisational and affective skills. The do and review stage of the process appears very strong in OE understanding (Cosgriff, 2000; Sutherland et al., 2016; Thomas 2019; Williams & Wainwright, 2015, 2016). This makes sense as all the educators have exemplary backgrounds in OE education (Parent Information Booklet, 2019). The documents reveal a clear experiential learning scope and sequence through the Program (Thomas, 2019). This is demonstrated in the table below, as the years go on the programs offered to the students increase in difficulty, responsibility and accountability (Research School Outdoor Education Programs).



**Table 6***Outline of the OE Programs at the Research School*

Year	OE Aims	Method	Outcomes
Year 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Well-being</li> <li>• Group development</li> <li>• Teamwork skills</li> <li>• Strengthened relationship with peers and educators</li> <li>• Greater understanding of Australia's fauna</li> <li>• Develop an awareness of hazards and risks, understanding safety precautions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Capture the flag</li> <li>• Soft drink bottle design</li> <li>• Olympics</li> <li>• Visits and lessons in Australian animals</li> <li>• Obstacle course</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Well-being: identity, active living and interactions</li> <li>• Combination of transferable skills promoting physical, intellectual, emotional and social development. That all help contribute to long term healthy living, understanding cultural significance of outdoor activities for individuals and communities</li> </ul>
Year 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Well-being</li> <li>• Strengthened relationship with peers</li> <li>• Develop a greater understanding of the ocean environment including its flora, fauna and ocean risk</li> <li>• Understanding and application of ocean safety practises</li> <li>• Start to identify their own personal strengths so that they can contribute to a</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Beach activities including body boarding and beach games</li> <li>• Wildlife experiences</li> <li>• South Australian Whale Centre</li> <li>• Group work solving brain teasers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Same as year 3</li> </ul>

Year	OE Aims	Method	Outcomes
	group work scenario		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Begin to develop resilience</li> <li>• Increase understanding of Australian Aboriginal culture</li> </ul>		
Year 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Father son weekend</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Father and son activities</li> <li>• Quiz night</li> <li>• Movies</li> <li>• Canoeing</li> <li>• Indoor rock climbing</li> <li>• Fishing</li> <li>• Games</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Working with fathers to solve mental and physical challenges</li> <li>• Strengthening the relationship between father and son</li> </ul>
Year 6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop transferable skills that promote physical, intellectual, emotional and social development</li> <li>• Engage with units of enquiry from other subjects</li> <li>• Consider different and alternative ideas from other students</li> <li>• Increase communication abilities</li> <li>• Understand the importance of intellectual, physical and emotional balance</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Canoeing</li> <li>• Campout</li> <li>• Star gazing</li> <li>• Water orienteering, water cycles and water watch</li> <li>• Fishing</li> <li>• Escape from camp activity</li> <li>• Indoor bouldering</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Intellectual performers</li> <li>• Understanding the importance of active and balanced lifestyle</li> <li>• Holistic learners</li> <li>• Intercultural awareness and communication</li> </ul>

Year	OE Aims	Method	Outcomes
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Give thoughtful consideration of their learning experience</li> <li>• Increase environmental and sustainability concepts</li> <li>• Discover their personal strengths and areas for improvement to become more resilient and independent individuals</li> </ul>		
Year 7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Same as year</li> <li>• See the areas of interaction between as relevant to outdoor education and contributing to a holistic learning</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• One-night kayaking expedition</li> <li>• Orienteering</li> <li>• Mission impossible</li> <li>• Indoor bouldering</li> <li>• Fishing</li> <li>• Climbing</li> <li>• Project, which involves leadership, teamwork and develops a sense of pride in participating in community service</li> <li>• Kayaking basic skills</li> <li>• Games night</li> <li>• Web of life</li> <li>• Camping</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Same as year 6</li> <li>• Over the last three years they should have achieved, knowledge, critical thinking and reflection skills, a sense of responsibility, interpersonal and self-motivational skills</li> <li>• Leadership</li> <li>• Develops a sense of pride in participating in community service</li> <li>• Development of the Research School man</li> </ul>

Year	OE Aims	Method	Outcomes
Year 8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Same as year 7</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Canoe skills</li> <li>• Communal Cooking</li> <li>• Cleaning</li> <li>• Camp fire and stories</li> <li>• Games</li> <li>• Same as year 7</li> <li>• Two-night kayaking expedition</li> <li>• Adventure high ropes course</li> <li>• Campfire and games</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Same as year 7</li> </ul>
Year 9 – outlined above in Chapter 1 Year 10-12 – OE not compulsory			

As indicated in the figures and tables above, the OE programs at the Research School are carefully planned, mapped and sequenced. The team of educators at the Research School should be credited for their clear sequential plan of OE activities from year 3-12. However, what this table does reveal is arguably a disconnect between the aims and the activities between column 1 and column 2. As it is not clear how that exact aim is achieved through that exact activity (Thomas, 2019). For example, if we look at year 3, it does not indicate how capture the flag increases well-being or group development (Table 6). Interestingly the idea of the Research School’s ‘Man’ who encompasses all the ideals of the Research School is only introduced in year 5 (Table 6).

### *Professional Practice for Outdoor Education*

This element is hard to discuss and comment on from the document analysis. However, the staff profiles indicate that all educators involved within the Program are excellent within their respective field (Parent Information Booklet, 2019). They all demonstrate outstanding OE vocations, pedagogies and can help facilitate or foster an environment of positive OE experiential learning for students (Thomas, 2019). On review, it is clear that they all have a passion or the ‘calling’ for OE and for using the outdoors as a

medium for positive changes within young adolescents (Sutherland et al., 2016). What else is clear from the staff profiles of the Program, is they all understand the importance and utilise the style of ‘facilitate’ teaching (Thomas, 2019). All educators allow for students to facilitate their own learning during the Program, as they allow students to make individual decisions, experience the active community, take managed risks and let them learn from those experiences, win or fail. Notably, none of the OE educators or the Program offers any commentary on character education. The OE professionals should be trained and educated within one of the frameworks that promotes character development (Jubilee Centre, 2017). If the OE educators could integrate the application and understanding of the different virtues within the Program, it would only go from strength to strength (Jeynes, 2019).

It is interesting to note that the staffing matrix of the Program strongly favours the males (Weaver-Hightower, 2010). The females of the Program include only one OE educator and three working camp Nanna’s (Parent Information Booklet, 2019). It is important to note this, as the literature suggests in order to avoid both gendered stereotypes and activities within OE, young males need to observe and collaborate with females in all aspects of life, not just in the role as mother or carer (Kennedy & Russell, 2020). However, it is difficult in hiring excellent OE staff as traditionally these roles attract more male candidates.

### *Active Engagement*

The year’s highlight for me is the Program. I have never done anything quite like it before, and it’s an experience I doubt I’ll ever forget. (Chronicle, 2016, 51 )

It is hard to comment upon the level of engagement from the students without asking from the source. The overall commentary from the documents all indicate a very positive experience (Parent Information Booklet, 2019). The literature stresses that students need to show a strong level of active engagement and participation for all the experiential lessons/ virtues to be learnt and embedded (Thomas, 2019). Students who can understand and explain why they are completing a certain task, will be better placed

to learn from it (Thomas, 2019). From all the positive quotes, we can conclude that the students show active participation within the Program (Parent Information Booklet, 2019).

### **5.3 OE & Spirituality**

We are completely in awe of the Research School's holistic program and all the good it does for both parents and children. (Parent Information Booklet, 2019, 36)

We understand from the literature that spirituality means different things to different people. The literature suggests that spirituality it is an evolving beast that brings massive concepts into the fold, including holisticness, wellness and mindfulness (de Souza, 2016; Elliott et al., 2019). The term spiritual/ spirituality is only mentioned twice in the 46-page outline of the Program (Parent Information Booklet, 2019). Firstly, under the purpose section, as it is identified within the list of overall objectives of the Program. Secondly, it is mentioned as a safety precaution, as the natural environment may present certain spiritual challenges for students that they will need to overcome (Miriam & Rosemary, 2016). The Program does use terms of holistic, well-being and mindfulness (Emmett, 2008; de Souza , 2017). It is interesting that spirituality is integrated within the Program as a key objective, without a substantial definition, framework or interpretation of spirituality developments (Parent Information Booklet, 2019). The only element that is discussed within the documents is the overall outcomes, these outcomes do suggest that students achieve some sort of spiritual development (Parent Information Booklet, 2019; Research School OE Programs).

#### *Identity & Integrity*

Greater developments in his self-expression and greater understanding of himself, his strengths and his weaknesses. (Parent Information Booklet, 2019, 36)

The Research School OE department credits three common streams as part of their well-being approach, these include identity, active living and interactions (Research School OE Programs). This definition is incredibly limited when you compare it to that as discussed in the literature and what is demonstrated within Brandes (Benson & Roehlkepartain, 2003, 2006; Brandes, 2018; Emmett, 2008; Singleton et al, 2004). The Brandes framework suggests that identity is the development of self-understanding and helps shape faith (2018). It helps students become grounded in who they are and who they want to be (Brandes, 2018). The term ‘identity’ and ‘faith’ are not mentioned throughout outline of the Program (Parent Information Booklet, 2019). There are terms that fall within the realm of identity, these include self-fulfilment, self-confidence, selflessness, self-worth, self-belief, self-motivation and self-sufficiency. These are all positive developments of self-identity and may shape faith (Brandes, 2018). All these elements will help develop ‘groundedness’ which is the positive element of identity (Table 5).

Brandes suggests that the experience and the isolation of the camp itself will help develop identity (2018). This is highly supported by the literature and demonstrated within the Program (Singleton et al, 2004). Students are removed from their familiarity and comfort of their high school and family homes. Instead, for 35-days they explore the wilderness, ocean, outdoors and rural communities, which may positively shape their identity and faith (Brandes, 2018; Freeman & Seaman, 2020; McCall, 2020). It will provide students an opportunity to fully emerge themselves with the outdoors, having no technology or social media, no instant communication and in a completely different surrounding. This isolation will allow the students the opportunity to stop, think and reflect about who they want to be (Williams & Wainwright, 2016). Therefore, if done properly, this activity can also help guide and shape faith (Brandes, 2018).

Brandes highlights that to help develop identity students need to allow for connections with their past, present and future (2018). The reflection activities and the final essay are amazing opportunities to integrate spirituality within OE, as the students are invited to critically analyse their sense of self (Parent Information Booklet, 2019). These activities are both heavily supported by the literature, as reflection is important for embedding any type of change (Markula, 2003). The activity of journaling occurs from a very young age within the OE programs (Research School OE Programs). It is not

apparent if it is the same journal over the years. Presenting the older journals to the students within the Programs could be a great way to weave together, past, present and future (Brandes, 2018). Having students write a letter to their year 12 graduating selves or a gratitude letter, will also be beneficial in pairing the past, present and future. These activities could really advance upon the development and integration within identity and faith, within OE (Brandes, 2018; McCall, 2020).

The Program outlines that integrity is one of the character traits that falls under their leadership goal (Parent Information Booklet, 2019). Again, Brandes' discussion is much wider and highlights that integrity is vitally important for helping develop elements of authenticity and wholeness within a person (2018). Brandes argues that integrity is accepting who you are completely including all faults. These concepts are much wider than leadership (2018).

### *Purpose & Belonging*

His self-esteem is significantly improved, and he feels worthy and valued.  
(Parent Information Booklet, 2009, 36)

Brandes suggests that purpose helps install a sense of value in oneself, through increasing self-understanding (2018). Brandes calls this a vocation, it is a purpose and a need that resonates with you and others within society (2018). Your personal vocation has an active element of community understanding, as community helps shape this purpose and need (2018). With the above quote, the documents indicate that the Program is successfully installing a strong understanding of value and purpose within the boys (Parent Information Booklet, 2019). The group experience and the reflection time can also allow students time to start thinking about their purpose and vocation (Thomas, 2019).

Brandes argues that the belonging element is very important within the camp setting (2018). These OE camps are often a once in a lifetime experience and are often the first-time students are removed from their families for an extended amount of time (Parent Information Booklet, 2019). By removing students from their comfort zone, we can



help students break free from the traditional bounds of society (Williams & Wainwright, 2016). Free from these constraints, students can learn new things about themselves, make new friends and form different relationships (Brandes, 2018). The use of the active community, the dorm rooms and the daily leadership debriefing, are all beneficial techniques in creating an environment of belonging (Thomas, 2019). The Program has clear protocols for dealing with homesickness and loneliness, clear signs that the OE educators are trying to install a sense of belonging within the Program (Parent Information Booklet, 2019).

A religious camp, as discussed in Brandes, is a great opportunity to use faith-based techniques within religion to help develop a student's faith, purpose and assist them in discovering their vocation (Brandes, 2018; McCall, 2017, 2020). There are strong pastoral care programs within the literature that can be used to help develop a sense of belonging, by allowing students to connect with something greater than themselves (Benson & Roehlkepartain, 2003, 2006; Brandes, 2018; McCall, 2020; Emmett, 2008; Singleton et al., 2004). The Program could integrate faith, vocation and spiritual discussions with career paths, decision making, discussions of academic pressure, societal norms and the role of religion. The boys could really be encouraged to think and discuss their place in society. They could also start to have conversations regarding toxic masculinity, competition and how they treat females (Rosen & Nofziger, 2019).

### *Sense of Worth & Capacity to Care*

The boys don't realise at this stage in life what it has actually taught them and the men they are going to be. (Parent Information Booklet, 2019, 36)

Sense of worth highlights the ability to see the inherent value in oneself, in others and in creation (Brandes 2018). Brandes argues that the expeditions would be beneficial in establishing abundance, the positive development, and avoiding shame, the negative development (2018). The Program suggests that the expeditions are demanding and physical (Parent Information Booklet, 2019). Notably, Brandes expeditions have an eco-theology focus (Miriam & Rosemary, 2016), this can be seen in the below extract:

“Wow God made this and I get to enjoy it with these people that are great and amazing that I love”(Brandes, 2018, 197).

This perspective is clearly missing from the expeditions within the Program (Parent Information Booklet, 2019). The expeditions could be used as a mechanism to channel an eco-theology connection and focus on the soul, spirit and the call to the Divine. The call to the Divine highlights both a deep awareness and increasing connection with oneself and something that is greater (McCall, 2020). The fact that the boys are being encouraged to fast with food and increase the physical and challenging aspects of the expeditions may take away from all the positive developments that may occur within spirituality, as it becomes purely strength and challenged based (Parent Information Booklet, 2019).

“Others before self” is identified as the motto of the Program (Parent Information Booklet, 2019,1). The community involvement and the environmental programs that are offered within the Program are very beneficial in integrating the capacity to care within the Program. Brandes element of capacity to care highlights that the aim is to establish an environment that students feel loved and that they can love others (2018). The Program outcomes are beneficial as they highlight that students return with an increase in their love, connection and care with their family and friends (2018). The document analysis establishes that the motto “others before self” is, arguably, not the pivotal focus of the Program (Parent Information Booklet, 2019). This conclusion is reached as the discussion from the students in the yearbook focuses on the physical activities and OE expeditions (Chronicle).

One strong theme of all OE programs offered within the OE camps is that they all have a strong focus on sustainability and environmentalism (Research School OE Programs). All programs suggest “Act Local, Reduce, Reuse, Recycle, Think Global”. As suggested by the literature, this is very beneficial in integrating the capacity to care within the Program; as students can start to think about their ability to care for making positive changes to the environment through recycling and sustainability (Martin, 1999).

## 5.4 Flourishing within society

In analysing the practical wisdom stage of the Jubilee Centre framework, in this stage we can ask what type of person is being shaped by the completion of these OE activities within the Program (2017). As determined above, the Program is dominated by the completion of performance virtues, such as physically and demanding sports and solo expeditions. It follows then that the type of men being shaped would be men that are focussed on being brave, physically fit and strong (Parent Information Booklet, 2019). The Research School did not provide the personal essays for review, it is therefore hard to comment on the virtues and values that are being embedded within the students. However, from the document analysis we can guess, that the essays would be scattered with terms of bravery, fitness and strength, as the students have just spent the last 35-days being surrounded and reinforced by these notions, virtues and values (Jubilee Centre, 2017).

When applying the neo-Aristotelian Model of Moral Development, we can identify that the students are catching positive virtues from the Program. From the overall environment and the educators who are all promoting hard work, goal setting and resilience through their OE teaching pedagogy (Parent Information Booklet, 2019). The students are being taught these virtues through completing the OE activities (Brand et al., 2012). However, there is no commentary on how students, after the completion of the Program, can actively seek out these virtues. The Program is strong in the ‘caught’ and ‘taught’ concepts, however discussion on the third element of ‘sought’ is limited. The ‘sought’ element asks the question, how can these students actively go out and seek these opportunities that promote these character values (that they have just caught and taught)? (Jubilee Centre, 2017, 2019). This question is not answered within the documents (Parent Information Booklet, 2019).

The values of the Research School are illustrated through the strong emphasis placed on winning Intercol, which requires speed, fitness and strong football skills (Gibbs, 1984). It could be argued that the students are being taught the above mentioned beneficial character virtues through the OE experience, however, they are catching conflicting virtues through the school values and culture (Jubilee Centre, 2017). This suggestion highlights the performance virtue of ‘*win at all costs*’, which is

demonstrated within the competitive and sport dominated history of the Research School (Chronicle). This argument highlights a real disconnect between the values that have been embedded by the OE experience and the overall values of the school (Jubilee Centre, 2017).

## **5.5 Summary of finding**

As evident in this finding, both character and spirituality can be integrated and developed within OE programs. The overall findings do highlight a disconnect between the aims of character and spiritual development and the actual activities performed within the OE Program. This disconnect highlights how the aims of the OE experience are different to the overarching values and culture of the Research School. The lack of discussion, definitions and frameworks surrounding character and spirituality, even though they are both recognised as achievements of the Program, mean that some elements of character and spirituality are integrated and achieved within the Program haphazardly. This disconnect highlights a real missed opportunity for the Research School. This will be further discussed in the recommendations of next chapter.

## **Chapter Six Conclusion & Recommendations**

### **6.1 Conclusion**

Focused on achieving excellence in all he does, the Research School's Man is also a kind and compassionate individual who takes pride in contributing to his community. He is grounded, humble and someone who will give a good account of himself in his life after school. (Chronicle, 2017, 46)

This dissertation has considered and critiqued the frameworks used for character, spirituality and OE experiences. It has been analysed to show that character and spirituality can be integrated within an OE Program at an all-boys school. This chapter will cover the opportunities to integrate character and spirituality in the Research School's OE Program.

The Research School should be credited for their comprehensive OE Program. It is a great OE opportunity for year 9 students to develop within many different personal areas, as seen in Figure 2 and 3 above (Parent Information Booklet, 2019; Thomas, 2019). However, as outlined in Chapter Five, the Program is lacking within its integration of both character and spirituality developments (Brandes, 2018; Jubilee Centre, 2017; Thomas, 2019). The dominance of performance virtues, means that the other three virtues, being the intellectual, moral and civic virtues, are overlooked and out of balance. The limited definition and framework of spirituality makes it difficult to investigate the integration between spirituality and OE.

With a few changes it could go from a good to an excellent Program, which beneficially integrates both character and spirituality developments within OE. The Research School has ample opportunity to integrate these developments into its programs as they have a strong and clear understanding in applicable OE frameworks and a team of passionate OE educators (Parent Information Booklet, 2019). The recommendations summarised below highlight areas of future integration of character and spirituality that will enhance the OE programs.

## **6.2 Recommendation One**

A comprehensive audit should be conducted within the Program to evaluate and identify the character and spiritually developments. This recommendation is made as often OE experiences are not written or formalised within documents (Thomas; 2019). If the audit reveals that the Program already contains some character and spiritual developments, identifying and mapping them out will only help strengthen the Program (Jubilee Centre, 2017). Once an audit is completed, a definition and framework should be selected for both character and spirituality (Benson & Roehlkepartain, 2003 & 2006). By accepting a definition, this will assist the OE educators as it will open a discussion about how each activity within the Program is targeting and developing a particular virtue or development (Jubilee Centre, 2017). Activities should be created that help develop all four different virtues within character and will remove the focus on performance, balancing out the other virtues (Jubilee Centre, 2017). In doing this activity, the OE educators can highlight which virtues are being progressed into practice and how it's being embedded into their everyday lives (Jubilee Centre, 2017). In other words, as shown in Chapter Five, how can they connect column 1, 2 and 3 within Table 6, or the activities as shown in Figure 1 with the outcomes in Figure 2 (Chapter One).

## **6.3 Recommendation Two**

Further discussion should be actively encouraged within senior leadership regarding the more comprehensive integration between school values, culture and the OE experience. There is a genuine opportunity for the Research School to have a discussion surrounding the school values and culture and how these ideals can be used as a mechanism to shape their OE programs at the Research School. The Research School's 'Man' (the man who encompasses all their beliefs and values) is used throughout the materials, however, it is only mentioned for the first time in the year 5 OE documents and it has no real clarity or definition. An opportunity for the Research School would be to open a discussion and map out what they believe is the 'Research School Man' and how it can be achieved through this OE Program. The Research School has a vibrant history, this history should be included and reflected within the Program (Gibbs, 1984). In a way it is a wasted opportunity to not include this within the Program. This

presents a great opportunity to connect the modern generation with the historical virtues achieved in the past (Brandes, 2018). Having an ‘old boy’ come and discuss what it means to be a Research School’s Man in today’s society, would be an important opportunity to embed these values from the Jubilee Centre (Jubilee Centre, 2017).

### **6.4 Recommendation Three**

We know from the literature that using spirituality techniques can significantly help develop many positive benefits within students (Engebretson, 2006; Schoeberlein et al., 2009). A proper analysis and then application of spirituality within the Program is highly recommended (McCall, 2020). The Program could increase the faith based and religious aspect, through using activities within gratitude, grit and stillness. These activities could significantly help integrate both character and spirituality achievements within the Program (McCall, 2020). McCall highlights the powerful use of the techniques of mediation, relaxation and physical stillness which can all be used to increase spiritual awareness (2020). These techniques are powerful as they can shape faith and resilience within students, as it assists students in bringing these ideas to the forefront of their mind and in doing so can connect them with something greater than themselves (McCall, 2020). Therefore, an ongoing recommendation is that OE staff continually develop and learn about character and spirituality to ensure the alignment of these theories within their teaching practices.

### **6.5 Questions or Future Research**

The next stage of the study would be to seek ethical approval and gather information from the students, educators and parents of students who are involved with the Program itself. This information would add a layer of credibility and significance to this dissertation. The discussion around the questions below, would add significantly to this new body of knowledge and would help develop practices for OE at the Research School:

- What virtues do you gain from the experience?
- To what degree do you think you have grown as a result?

- What type of man do you want to become?
- What activities helped develop your intellectual virtues and how are you pursuing and upholding the truth?
- What activities helped develop your moral virtues and how are you making ethical decisions?
- What activities helped develop your civic virtues and how are you an engaged responsible citizen?
- How are you using the character virtues learnt within the OE Program in everyday life?

## **6.6 Overview**

If you look at the Program from an OE perspective, it is a great opportunity for students to further develop through OE (Thomas, 2019). However, with how popular character and spirituality techniques are in modern society (as discussed in the literature) and how the terms are creeping into the overall outline of the Program, both character and spirituality can be better integrated within the Program (de Souza, 2016; Elliott et al., 2019; Lingley, 2016; Yust, 2016). The above three recommendations highlight how the Research School has the opportunity to further integrate the powerful developments within character and spirituality into their programs. These recommendations will help assist the Program in highlighting to their students, Kurt Hahn's provocation, that there is more to you than you know.



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# Appendix A

## Document list

PAC Chronicle, 1900-2020

PAC Prospectus, 2018

Year 3, Introduction to Outdoor Education, 2020

Year 4, Outdoor Education Coastal Ecology, 2020

Year 5, Father and Son Weekend, 2020

Year 6, Outdoor Education Eco-Adventure, 2020

Year 7, Community Perspective Program, 2020

Year 8, Outdoor Education Program, Adventure Perspective, 2020

Year 9, Parent Information Booklet, 2019