

## **Sacred Heart College, PACE TALK**

### **Why tinker with the curriculum?**

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A lot has been written, and is being written, about 21<sup>st</sup> Century skills in education. Education policy is full of notions of a rapidly changing world that we will be unable to recognise in the future. The conundrum is how best we prepare our children for this rapidly changing world.

Globalization has allowed people to connect far easier, for ideas, products, technologies, values and a whole lot more to be shared widely and quickly. Communities were much more homogenous, but this is changing in many parts of the world with specific values and cultures meeting each other (with some people scrambling to protect their unique beliefs and practices).

On the economic front the global integration of economies has created complex intricate webs of trade, information, currencies, services, supply chains, capital markets, information technology grids, and technology platforms. This is all driven by economic competition among nations, the competition for industries and for high-skill, high-wage jobs has undoubtedly become more intense.

Thomas Piketty in *Capital in the Twenty-First Century* Thomas Piketty “What was the good of industrial development, what was the good of all the technological innovations, toil, and population movements if, after half a century of industrial growth, the condition of the masses was still just as miserable as before, and all law makers could do was prohibit factory labour by children under the age of eight?”

One of the key aims highlighted in education policy is to prepare pupils to become active, successful, and contributing members of society. “However, this is extremely difficult if we don’t know what the world will look like”. What is clear, in a technological society is that we always have to be changing.

What are some of the things that we should be doing?

<b>21<sup>st</sup> Century skills</b> – acronym KSAVE (knowledge, skills, attitudes, values and ethics).	
<b>Ways of thinking</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>✓ Creativity and innovation.</li><li>✓ Critical thinking, problem solving, decision-making.</li></ul>	<b>Tools for working</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>✓ Information literacy.</li><li>✓ Information and communication technology.</li></ul>
<b>Ways of working</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>✓ Communication.</li><li>✓ Collaboration (teamwork).</li></ul>	<b>Ways of living in the world</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>✓ Local and global citizenship.</li><li>✓ Life and career.</li><li>✓ Personal, social responsibility and cultural awareness and competence.</li></ul>

Our schools should be more pupil centred, fostering collaborative practice, related to real world issues and integrated with society.

### **1. Teaching has to be pupil centred**

“Lecturing is out and learning is in”. The days of teachers standing in front of classrooms talking and pupils sitting listening should be history. Children should be engaging with knowledge. Teachers act as facilitators for the pupils. Pupils gather information on their own, under the guidance of their teacher instead of just receiving information. Different learning styles ought to be encouraged, and pupils should have an enhanced sense of motivation and responsibility. The pupils should engage in many different types of hands-on activities and demonstrate learning in many different ways. Learning is about exploring, and not just the memorization of facts.

### **2. Education should be collaborative**

People collaborate across the globe, and people are expected to work with people from other cultures who have different values from their own. Pupils must learn how to collaborate with others.

Pupils should be working together to discover information, piece it together, and construct meaning in a dynamic way. In collaboration pupils learn how to recognize the different strengths and talents each person and how to use these strengths.

### **3. Learning should have context**

Pupil-centered means that pupils are encouraged to learn in different ways but that the teacher still provides guidance on the skills that need to be acquired. The teacher helps pupils to understand how the skills they are building can be applied in their lives.

### **4. Schools should be integrated with society**

In order to prepare pupils to become responsible citizens, we need to model what a responsible citizen is.

Schools will often work at accomplishing this by creating events for the school community, by encouraging pupils to join committees or take part in school projects, and by occasionally helping the community around them with activities such as food drives or neighborhood clean-ups.

With the powers of technology and the internet, pupils of today can do even more. Our community is no longer just the area of space located around the school, but reaches out and envelopes the world.

Education needs to help pupils take part in this global community and find ways of impacting more than just their neighborhood. This doesn't mean that they do not need to learn the value of helping others around them and protecting their immediate environment, but that they should also be learning about how they can help and protect a world further away from them, but also closer all the time.

## **Conclusion**

So where does this leave us. This is not a new conundrum. In the 1960s Hannah Arendt wrote that education cannot forgo authority or tradition, she argued that it takes place in a world that “is neither structured by authority nor held together by tradition”:

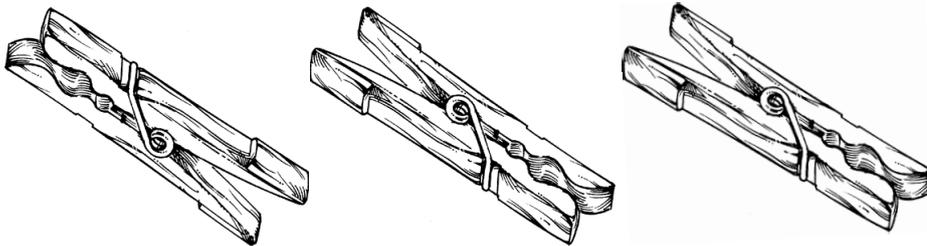
Education is the point at which we decide whether we love the world enough to assume responsibility for it and by the same token save it from that ruin which, except for renewal, except for the coming of the new and young, would be inevitable. And education, too, is where we decide whether we love our children enough not to expel them from our world and leave them to their own devices, nor to strike from their hands their chance of undertaking something new, something unforeseen by us, but to prepare them in advance for the task of renewing a common world (Arendt, 1961: 196).

## Appendix: The Clothes Peg

The clothes peg was patented in the United States of America in 1852. The following ideas show how problem solving and creativity can be fostered in the curriculum.

### The Clothes Peg (by Audrey Christophersen, 77 years)

Sing a song of clothes peg  
hanging on the line  
This ones for the left leg  
When the weather's fine.  
Somewhere in the laundry  
a sock's gone down the drain  
The old girl's in a hurry  
because it's going to rain.



1. Write your own poem on the clothes peg.
2. Write a story on 'My life as a peg'.
3. Investigate the strengths and weakness of three different peg designs.
4. Develop a list of 20 uses for a peg other than hanging the washing up.
5. Write a short history on the invention of the peg.
6. Invent ten ways of keeping washing on the washing line without using pegs.
7. Are pegs environmentally friendly? Find out.
8. Write a set of instructions on how to use a peg for self-defence.

9. Invent a game to play with clothes pegs.
10. Write ten messages to be printed on pegs to encourage water saving in the Western Cape.
11. Develop a set of designs for Christmas gift pegs.
12. Record a 30 second radio advertisement on your cell phone to sell a new peg (off course it has to be bigger, better, brighter).
13. Create a 30 second animation with pegs on your cell phone (you have 25 minutes, go!)
14. Develop a catchy slogan to promote the use of new peg that will help your washing dry more quickly.
15. In five minutes make two sketches of new design pegs.
16. Write a crime story where the detective uses a peg as the main clue to solve the crime.
17. Come up with 20 names for a pub with the word peg in it (e.g. The Peg and Pen).
18. Explain why supermarkets are selling less and less pegs nowadays. Your explanation must be very convincing.
19. You know the proverb: "The pen is mightier than the sword". Now develop a proverb for the peg.
20. How can pegs be used to make food taste better? Demonstrate your findings.
21. Write a book review on the new book '101 uses of the Clothes Peg'.
22. Write a joke which centres on the clothes peg.
23. Take 10 creative selfies featuring a clothes peg.

24. The Alternative Mom suggests using pegs to book mark; close party packs; fasten a bin liner; seal foods; make a spoon rest and so forth. Test out each one of these ideas.

25. Design a book cover for a new novel 'Horror at the Peg Factory'.