

RS PHILOSOPHY - HAHNIAN PRINCIPLES OF EDUCATION

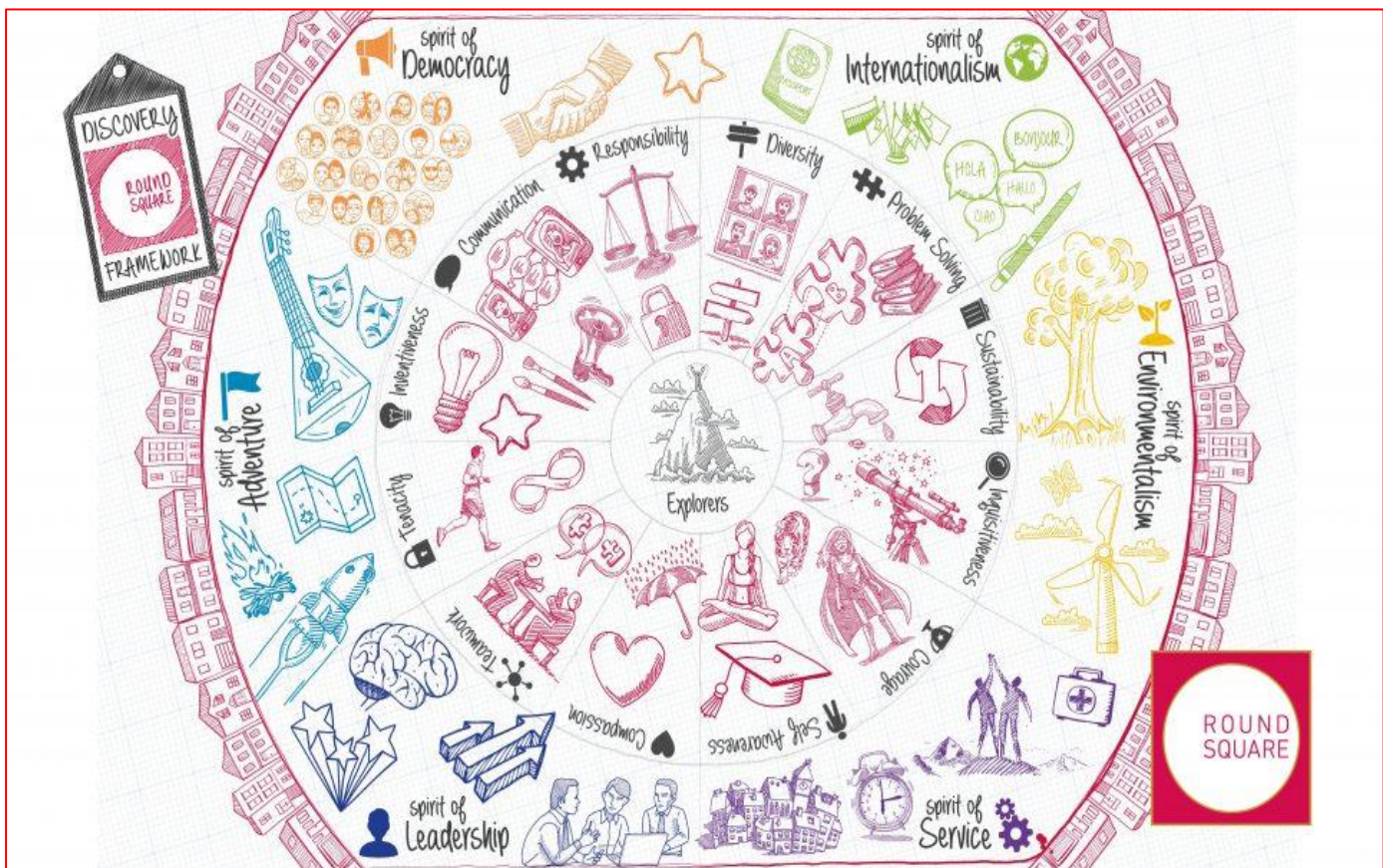
This document is based on Rachael Westgarth, Chief Executive, Round Square article posted: 06 August 2018 and the RS website.

"I see it as the foremost task of education to ensure the survival of these qualities: an enterprising curiosity, an undefeatable spirit, tenacity in pursuit, readiness for sensible self-denial, and above all, compassion" – Kurt Hahn.

Kurt Hahn, a German educator and a visionary in his time, is the inspiration behind Round Square philosophy. Regularly spoke of the need to educate for character and compassion above all else. In Germany in the 1920s, Hahn's views certainly weren't mainstream, but today character education and the acquisition of "soft skills" are widely acknowledged to be essential in the development of well-rounded, active and informed global citizens.

This is a sentiment echoed across the Round Square network of schools, whose shared belief in the benefits of a values-based, experiential approach to learning led to the creation of the

ROUND SQUARE DISCOVERY FRAMEWORK



It describes the spirit of a Round Square learner who develops and exhibits competencies and attitudes in relation to each of the six RS **IDEALS**: (Internationalism, Democracy, Environmentalism, Adventure, Leadership and Service).

1. Internationalism: *To seek out, discover and embrace the similarities and differences between cultures and nationalities in ways that promote meaningful and lasting understanding and respect.*

We promote international understanding through exposing students to ideas and concepts from different cultures and countries, by challenging them to understand and tackle real-world issues, and by connecting them with other students from all nationalities, who are welcomed into each Round Square school.

In defining and promoting a Spirit of Internationalism Round Square schools identify and develop – in a variety of settings – the attitudes, understandings and competencies developed by students through a wide range of activities including overseas student and teacher exchanges and participation in regional, global and international conferences.

A Spirit of Internationalism is found in those who seek to discover and embrace the similarities and differences between cultures and nationalities in ways that promote meaningful and lasting understanding and respect. It encompasses an appreciation for the increasing inter-connectedness of the world, our greater dependence on the global economy and interdependence as nations as a result of massively increased commerce and cultural exchange.

The growth of digital communication across geographical borders and the sharing of each other's cultures through travel and trade is understood. There is an appreciation that national differences are lessening and a blending of cultures, traditions and cultural exchange is on the increase.

A person living out a Spirit of Internationalism respects the need to preserve and celebrate national identity, cultures, traditions and heritage. Opportunities are sought to connect with those from different countries and cultures, exchanging points of view and ideas across borders and developing international and intercultural understanding. These inform an appreciation of how others might view or think about a shared event such as a trade agreement, a partnership or a cultural exchange.

A Spirit of Internationalism also includes an understanding of the tension between increased wealth creation in developing countries and a continuing gap between the world's poorest countries and the world's richest.

2. Democracy: *Round Square schools encourage their students to develop a Spirit of Democracy: a sense of equality, fairness, justice and a desire to do what is right for the greater good.*

Round Square schools promote freedom of thought and speech, and appropriate forums and channels of communication are set in place to encourage student voice and debate. We bring democratic principles into the classroom, engaging students as active participants in lessons, activities and discussion that explore and demonstrate both the values of democracy and the importance of participating in democratic processes.

In defining and promoting a Spirit of Democracy Round Square schools capture and disseminate attitudes, understandings and competencies for positive community engagement, and active, involved local and global citizenship.

A spirit of democracy embraces a sense of equality, fairness, justice and a desire to do what is right (for the greater good). Freedom of thought and speech are valued and appropriate forums and channels of communication are discovered and explored.

An understanding of the importance of active democratic participation and the power of collective decision-making is supported by a strong sense of self-discipline and personal responsibility. Respect for diversity, cultural difference and heritage lead to an outspoken passion for equality, tolerance and inclusion.

Knowledge of civil rights and the ability to understand how society works, on a small scale (such as a school, family or a sports club) and on a larger scale — in one's neighbourhood, city, nation and internationally, enables participation and action, and builds capacity to make a difference.

A person living out a spirit of democracy seeks to be well informed about her or his world and has an outward-looking disposition, engaging with the issues of the day, valuing the opportunity to be involved in making his or her society a better place, and expressing a sense of public duty. Understanding the needs of others and feeling empathy for them becomes a catalyst for action and prompts engagement in social service activity. A spirit of democracy also encompasses the development and application of appropriate social skills to interact respectfully with others in order to contribute as a positive and active member of the community.

3. Environmentalism: *Round Square schools encourage their students to develop a spirit of Environmentalism: understanding our place in the universe, the forces that shape our surroundings and the impact we have on those surroundings*

Students learn about the importance of tending to the future of the planet. They and their schools demonstrate an active interest in – and concern for – all-natural environments. Through defining and promoting a Spirit of Environmentalism, Round Square schools create opportunities both within and outside the curriculum for students to explore proven problems and to play a practical role in tackling environmental issues.

A spirit of environmentalism is about understanding mankind's place in the universe, the forces that shape our surroundings and the impact we have on those surroundings. A systems-based appreciation of the interdependence between human beings and the planet highlights the fine balance needed to make that relationship a healthy one.

In addition, mindfulness in connecting with the surrounding world underpins a peace and ease with natural cycles. This creates a connected appreciation for the beauty, complexity and fragility of the environment which often inspires creative expression – landscape painting, photography, poetry, creative writing.

A person living out a spirit of Environmentalism takes practical action in tackling issues of sustainability. They question and challenge any practices that impact negatively on the environment. They seek solutions and make suggestions as to how practices can be improved, and consideration of the environmental impact of every-day activity is second-nature. An active interest in, and concern for, all environments develops awareness and understanding known issues. This leads to a recognition of the importance of tending to the future of the planet, protecting and preserving threatened habitats and creating sustainable communities. Ultimately, through discovering a spirit of environmentalism, each young person accepts and prepares for their destiny to be a future guardian of human society and the global environment.

4. Adventure: *For Round Square a Spirit of Adventure is characterised by those who push themselves beyond their perceived limits, cross boundaries & discover that they are capable of more than they thought.*

Through defining and promoting a Spirit of Adventure, Round Square schools create a culture and environment in which students are encouraged to take risks and step outside their comfort zone. Understanding that adventure is defined by each individual according to personal limits, we encourage and celebrate challenge, courage and tenacity in all contexts.

For some this means physical challenge, and our schools offer a range of activities that engage students in exploring the great outdoors, both individually and in groups, in ways that promote personal growth and self-discovery. For others it might be public speaking, performance, a mental challenge or taking up a new hobby or skill, and a range of opportunities both within and outside the curriculum enable students to set and strive for personal goals.

A spirit of adventure is characterised by those who push themselves beyond their perceived limits, cross boundaries and discover that they are capable of more than they thought. It encompasses preparedness to take risks, face a challenge and persist against the odds and in the face of potential failure.

Willingness to rise to unusual, exciting or frightening experiences is evident, as is a compulsion to set and then stretch to reach a personal goal in any hobby or area of interest. Courage, discipline, tenacity and resilience are foundations on which ambition is built and personal development is achieved.

A person living out a spirit of adventure seeks out opportunities to stretch and push themselves beyond their own perceived abilities and the expectations of others. They are dynamic and driven, thriving on practical, experiential learning, and willing to tenaciously pursue their objective, overcoming setbacks and obstacles along the way.

An appreciation that adventure is a very personal experience, and will mean different things to different people, allows for supportive celebration of others' achievements in all aspects of life. As such, a readiness to embrace uncertainty, to explore and pioneer in any field is supported and encouraged.

5. Leadership: *For Round Square a Spirit of Leadership recognises that successful leaders are driven by a desire to be of service to others and to nurture, guide, develop and help them to improve and succeed.*

Students are offered opportunities to explore leadership concepts, identify role-models and develop and rehearse a range of leadership skills in a supportive environment both inside and beyond the classroom.

Student-led initiatives and activities are key features in our schools and our conference programmes are largely designed and managed by the students themselves.

Through defining and promoting a Spirit of Leadership, Round Square schools empower students to actively engage in developing strategy, solving problems and leading teams, ultimately understanding their potential to be current and future leaders, and the responsibility that comes with that role.

A spirit of leadership is found in those whose convictions are rooted in personal responsibility, kindness and justice. It recognises that successful leaders are driven by a desire to be of service to others and to nurture, guide, develop and help them to improve and succeed.

A range of leadership skills are marshalled and employed to influence and enlist the support of individuals, teams or communities in the achievement of a shared objective.

Strategic thinking and analysis of both the current situation and the objective enable the creation of a route map for achieving that objective. Self-belief and an ability to gather and process ideas, set direction, and create and share a vision that is exciting and dynamic inspires others to take action and to share ownership. The capacity to generate a sense of belonging in others leads to team members feeling valued for their contributions and taking pride in their efforts and achievements.

A person living out a spirit of leadership demonstrates personal literacy in understanding and employing both their own skills and abilities and those of their team to the greatest effect. Self-confidence, determination, motivation, intuitive decision-making, persuasion and negotiation and creative problem solving are all in evidence as is the ability to spot opportunities and take calculated risks. Self-awareness and emotional-literacy allow for confident tempering, analysis and expression of emotions both for the leader and those that they lead.

6. Service: *For Round Square a Spirit of Service celebrates personal development through practical experience that brings sustainable support & benefit to others.*

A key feature in Round Square schools is the expectation that all students will engage with local and wider communities through voluntary service activities. Through defining and promoting a Spirit of Service, Round Square schools promote responsible social action that is based on a deep understanding of challenges and issues faced by individuals and communities in need of support throughout the world.

In our schools we offer service programmes and projects, both individually and collaboratively, that engage large numbers of students and role-model positive, sustainable community partnership both locally and further afield. Round Square also offers International Service Projects that bring together students from member schools in different countries to work in truly intercultural teams in support of communities in need throughout the world.

A spirit of service celebrates personal development through practical experience bringing sustainable support and benefit to others. Keeness and ability to learn in real-world contexts delivers meaningful and lasting value to others as well as to the primary learner. An understanding and respect for cultural difference develops through shared experience and partnership.

Co-creation of knowledge is underpinned by a genuine desire to work collaboratively to the benefit of individuals, a neighbourhood, city, nation or internationally. Practical experience provokes an emotional and intellectual response, and periods of reflection develop personal literacy through mindful consideration of ability, motivation, beliefs, perceptions, goals and ambition.

A person living out a spirit of service considers the opportunity, in all aspects of everyday life, to provide for the needs of others and take social action. They seek to ensure that their impact, and the difference they make in the world, are positive. Socially-responsible decision-making infuses every area of life from employment and business to personal, financial and domestic decisions.

Knowledge of how wealth is created, earned, used and managed by individuals and organisations enables consideration of the ethical and social impacts of financial decisions. This develops understanding of how the right application, investment and donation of financial resource can positively impact an individual, community or wider society.

The framework connects the spirit of the RS IDEALS with twelve **DISCOVERIES** that students make on their learning journey:

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| 1. Inquisitiveness | 5. Inventiveness | 9. Appreciation for diversity |
| 2. Tenacity | 6. Ability to solve problems | 10. Commitment to sustainability |
| 3. Courage | 7. Self-awareness | 11. Communication |
| 4. Compassion | 8. Sense of responsibility | 12. Team-working skills. |

TEN EXPEDITIONARY LEARNING PRINCIPLES

These 10 principles, which seek to describe a caring, adventurous school culture and approach to learning, were drawn the ideas of Kurt Hahn and other education leaders for use in Expeditionary Learning Outward Bound (ELOB) schools.

- 1. The primacy of self-discovery:** Learning happens best with emotion, challenge and the requisite support. People discover their abilities, values, passions, and responsibilities in situations that offer adventure and the unexpected. In Expeditionary Learning schools, students undertake tasks that require perseverance, fitness, craftsmanship, imagination, self-discipline, and significant achievement. A teacher's primary task is to help students overcome their fears and discover they can do more than they think they can.
- 2. The having of wonderful ideas:** Teaching in Expeditionary Learning schools fosters [curiosity](#) about the world by creating learning situations that provide something important to think about, time to experiment, and time to make sense of what is observed.
- 3. The responsibility for learning:** Learning is both a personal process of discovery and a social activity. Everyone learns both individually and as part of a group. Every aspect of an Expeditionary Learning school encourages both children and adults to become increasingly responsible for directing their own personal and collective learning.
- 4. Empathy and caring:** Learning is fostered best in communities where students' and teachers' ideas are respected and where there is mutual trust. Learning groups are small in Expeditionary Learning schools, with a caring adult looking after the progress and acting as an advocate for each child. Older students mentor younger ones, and students feel physically and emotionally safe.
- 5. Success and failure:** All students need to be successful if they are to build the confidence and capacity to take risks and meet increasingly difficult challenges. But it is also important for students to learn from their failures, to persevere when things are hard, and to learn to turn disabilities into opportunities.
- 6. Collaboration and competition:** Individual development and group development are integrated so that the value of friendship, trust, and group action is clear. Students are encouraged to compete not against each other but with their own personal best and with rigorous standards of excellence.
- 7. Diversity and inclusion:** Both diversity and inclusion increase the richness of ideas, creative power, problem-solving ability, and respect for others. In Expeditionary Learning schools, students investigate and value their different histories and talents, as well as those of other communities' cultures. Schools' learning groups are heterogeneous.
- 8. The natural World:** A direct and respectful relationship with the natural world refreshes the human spirit and teaches the important ideas of recurring cycles and cause and effect. Students learn to become stewards of the earth and of future generations.
- 9. Solitude and reflection:** Students and teachers need time alone to explore their own thoughts, make their own connections, and create their own ideas. They also need time to exchange their reflections with others.
- 10. Service and compassion:** We are crew, not passengers. Students and teachers are strengthened by acts of consequential service to others, and one of an Expeditionary Learning school's primary function is to prepare students with the attitudes and skills to learn from and be of service to others.