



The Distinctive Church School

Vision and Values

Introduction

You are the light of the world. A city on a hill cannot be hidden. Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house.
Matthew 5:14-15

It is important to recognise as a school, where your uniqueness lies and how far the Christian vision and principles underpin the foundation of the life and work of your school.

Every Church of England School has the Ethos Statement below as part of its statutory Instrument of Government. This is the statement from which all other documents flow, including the school's vision statement.

“Recognising its historic foundation, the school will preserve and develop its religious character in accordance with the principles of the Church of England and in partnership with the Church at parish and diocesan level. The school aims to serve its community by providing an education of the highest quality within the context of Christian belief and practice. It encourages an understanding of the meaning and significance of faith and promotes Christian values through the experience it offers to all its pupils.”

Dr Rowan Williams, the former Archbishop of Canterbury, featured in an introductory video on the Christian Values for Schools website, explaining that the ethos of church schools runs deep:

“A Christian school is one in which the atmosphere has that kind of openness about it, that sense that people are worth spending time with, that people need time to grow, need loving attention. The Christian Gospel says that every person has a unique task to do, with God, and for God, whether they know it or not.
“It doesn't necessarily mean that everyone involved has to share the same theology or philosophy. It doesn't mean that everyone knows that they have this relationship with God, and is consciously working at it. But a Christian school is one in which the entire atmosphere is pervaded by the conviction that there is something mysterious, and potentially wonderful, in everybody.”

Vision Rooted in Christian Teaching

Who are we? Why are we here?

School's vision

'The school's Christian vision and associated Christian values. The school's vision should be specific to the school's particular context and foundation. It should also have regard to the Church of England Vision for Education and/or Methodist principles as well as any diocesan vision for education.'
SIAMS schedule page 19

When writing a Vision Statement a key source for any church school should be the Christian dimension. This section explores the Church of England vision for education and highlights examples from schools who have rooted their vision in key biblical teachings.

Theological underpinning and the Church of England vision for education

The Church of England holds a profound commitment to ensuring that all people have the opportunity to flourish and realise their God-given potential. We believe that education is important because God calls us to grow into His image with 'ever-increasing glory' (2 Corinthians 3:18). Far more than simply conditioning people to be efficient units of economic production and consumption, education is a route to liberation and justice.

The transformational experience of education can be found in both formal and informal learning settings, and challenges each of us to develop throughout our lives.

Theological Underpinning	Educational Out-working
All humankind is made in the image of God (Genesis 1:26-27)	Education must explore and develop the myriad talents and qualities of every person. Education must challenge individuals and society to recognise talents in new and unconventional ways. Education must enable people to flourish without being limited by their socio-economic background.
"I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full" (John 10:10)	Education must equip people with the skills to maximise their engagement with the world around them. Education must develop spiritual, emotional and personal growth.
Every person is an individual and also part of a community (1 Corinthians 12:12-27)	Education must build relationships between people. Education must emphasise an individual's value in the context of the interdependent nature of humanity.
All people are called to transform the world (Genesis 1:26-31 and Micah 6:8)	Education must challenge orthodoxies and perceptions in society. Education must equip all people to be agents of change in their society.

'In Christian terms, education is intended to draw out the full human potential of each child of God' The Gospel and Educational Values, John Pritchard

Church of England Vision for Education: Deeply Christian, Serving the Common Good

The Church of England vision for education is deeply Christian, with Jesus' promise of 'life in all its fullness' at its heart.

In line with the Church of England's role as the established Church, the vision is for the common good of the whole community.

Educating for wisdom, knowledge and skills: enabling discipline, confidence and delight in seeking wisdom and knowledge, and developing talents in all areas of life.

Educating for hope and aspiration: enabling healing, repair and renewal, coping wisely when things go wrong, opening horizons and guiding people into ways of fulfilling them.

Educating for community and living well together: a core focus on relationships, participation in communities and the qualities of character that enable people to flourish together.

Educating for dignity and respect: the basic principle of respect for the value and preciousness of each person, treating each person as a unique individual of inherent worth.

Good education must promote life in all its fullness.'

"If the Vision for Education fails to make and sustain meaningful connections between a school's ethos and its outcomes, it will become nothing more than a deeply eloquent and well-meaning piece of writing..."

Communicating our Christian Vision and Values

Christian values – how then shall we live?

It is important to involve the whole school community in establishing core Christian values that drive what you do. Each school community is unique and therefore there is not a set model for how to do this or which values would be your core values. The Christian values for Schools [website](#) is an excellent resource to support conversations about your core Christian values and their Christian underpinning, though it does not purport to be the definitive list of Christian values. What is key is that your values are the outworking of your vision and distinctively Christian.



Aberford VC Primary School

Leaders have developed a Christian vision that reflects its local context.
SIAMS 2018

If the vision and associated values drive what we do:

How do we live out our vision? For example:

Can we exemplify how we live it out day by day?

In what ways has the school's Christian vision been lived out in your classroom this week?

Where is the vision in our curriculum content? Where is the vision in our extracurricular content?

Where is the vision in our environment?

Where is the vision in our Social Action?

Where is the vision in our _____ policy?

Where is the vision in our spending? Recruitment?



Fangfoss VA Primary School



Fangfoss VA Primary School

Leaders, including governors, explain how biblical teaching roots the school's vision giving it coherence, relevance and sustainability. SIAMS 2018

Christian Vision – examples from our schools

Aims and Vision of St Francis of Assisi Church of England Primary School

St Francis of Assisi Voluntary Aided Church of England Primary School is part of the Church of England and maintained by Stockton Borough Council. We work in close harmony with St Francis of Assisi Parish Church and York Diocese.

Our Vision and Aims focus on **LIGHT** as we,
“Live, love and learn together in the light of Christ”
and link with the Church of England’s national vision for ‘Education for life in all its fullness’.

We demonstrate this through:

Love of all

- We love our neighbours; showing friendship towards all. We show dignity and respect towards the beliefs of others and the environment.
- We value everyone as unique individuals and celebrate the diverse nature of our community and the wider world.

“Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It does not dishonour others, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs.”

(1 Corinthians 13:4-5)

Ignite the light of Christ around all our children

- We ignite a passion for learning and curiosity to foster life-long learning through providing an excellent broad and balanced education to motivate pupils of all abilities.
- We build opportunities to develop wisdom, knowledge and skills including within local and global communities.

“In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven.”

(Matthew 5:16)

God at the centre of everything we do

- We are committed to daily acts of worship and connecting the Christian Values to the whole curriculum and to individuals’ personal spiritual journey.
- We encourage pupils to serve others within and outside our school community.



**“In everything you do, put God first, and he will direct you and crown your efforts with success.”
(Proverbs 3:6)**

Hope and Happiness

- We create a safe and secure Christian environment where all may achieve their full potential and feel a sense of pride in their own achievements and the achievements of others.
- We have high hopes and encourage all pupils to aspire to greater heights.
- We foster the confidence for pupils to be determined and persevere in a safe and secure environment.
- We develop and maintain a positive and fulfilling partnership between children, parents, teachers and all others working within and alongside the school.
- We are content and appreciate what we have, and understand how our lives may differ from others.

**“I can do all things through him who strengthens me.”
(Philippians 4:13)**

Truth

- We encourage honesty and truthfulness across our school community.
- We pursue the truth and develop a sense of purpose throughout our school journey.

**“Let us not love with words or speech but with actions and in truth.”
(1 John 3:18)**

Saxton VC Primary Academy



Individual Colours, Together a Rainbow

Our Vision and Values

Our Christian vision is that:

Everyone who spends time learning and growing at Saxton, becomes a successful individual with the **courage**, **compassion** and **creativity** to make a difference in the future. We are **respectful** of God's world, working together to create a loving and caring **community**.

Our Values:

Courage

We believe that with God's help and the encouragement of our families, friends and teachers that we can all be courageous, facing challenges and standing up for what is right.

Isaiah 41:14 For I am the Lord your God who takes hold of your right hand and says to you, 'Do not fear; I will help you.'

Compassion

At Saxton school we show compassion by helping people so they feel cared for, just as God cares for us.

2 Corinthians 1:3-4

Praise be to God who comforts us in all our troubles, so that we can comfort those in any trouble with the comfort we ourselves receive from God

Creativity

We value all of our unique talents and use them creatively for our own enjoyment, to give pleasure to others and to make a difference in the world.

1 Peter 4:10 You are like servants who are responsible for using God's gifts, so be good servants and use your gifts to serve each other.

Respect

God has created a beautiful world and we respect his creation by being kind to each other and by looking after the environment.

Matthew 7:12

So in everything, do to others what you would have them do to you

Community

We enjoy being members of a community, building friendships, supporting each other and working together to make the world a better place.

1 John 4:11-12

Dear friends, since God so loved us, we also ought to love one another

Wilberfoss VC Primary School

Our entire school community have had the opportunity to reflect on what our school offers to all of the children that attend here. Together, we have created our own unique vision.

At Wilberfoss School, we will all strive to:

Believe in ourselves, dare to try new things and persevere in a bid to reach our full potential

'Let us run with perseverance the race that lies before us. Let us keep our eyes fixed on Jesus, on whom our faith depends from beginning to end.' Hebrews 12.1-2

Live well together by valuing friendship and respecting ourselves and one another

'Encourage one another and build each other up' 1 Thessalonians 5.11

Grow good people who can make a difference in school, the wider community and the world

'Serve one another in love.' Galatians 5.13

Show thankfulness for what we have and show generosity of heart and mind

'Always give thanks for everything to God the Father' Ephesians 5.20

Provide a curriculum that ensures that all children have the opportunity to **achieve** and shine

'Let your light shine so that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven' Matthew 5:16



St. Martin's CE VA Primary School, Fangfoss

St. Martin's CE VA Primary School Vision Statement

At St. Martin's CE VA Primary School, we aim to develop our pupils so that they are prepared for life's events and challenges along their journey into adulthood; this includes supporting them to develop spiritually, academically, physically and socially. This happens in a caring and loving environment based firmly on Christian values, and in particular the values of Compassion, Trust, Responsibility and Creativity (these values were chosen democratically by our families, our governors, and our staff.) We aim to use the model of Christ in helping us to create "a little bit of Heaven on Earth for everyone."

*"Teach a child to choose the right path, and when he is older, he will remain upon it."
Proverbs 22:6 (The Living Bible)*

We will:

- Ensure that Every Child of God Matters, and recognise that that all people in our community are precious to God
- Help each pupil to develop their own values and beliefs, whilst respecting the religious and moral values of others, including those of different faiths, or none
- Provide a happy, secure, stimulating and purposeful environment
- Provide a high quality education for all pupils, encouraging them to develop a love for learning; this will be done through highly effective teaching, across an exciting and appropriate curriculum, preparing them for life in the 21st Century and beyond
- Challenge pupils to be responsible citizens who care for their environment, and make a positive contribution to their communities
- Encourage pupils to become confident individuals, who are happy, healthy and enjoy a challenge
- Listen to and work co-operatively with our families, our church, and our community of Fangfoss and its surroundings

Compassion	Christians believe that their attitudes and actions must reflect the kindness, mercy and compassion of Jesus and the love of God for everyone
Trust	Trust is the basis of all stable relationships, including a person's relationship with God. It is rooted in truth, and will grow through consistent experiences of reliability and integrity. God's commitment to humanity is seen in his willingness to trust ordinary people with the carrying out of his purposes through history
Responsibility	The Bible teaches that life is a gift from God and it is our responsibility to use our talents and abilities in the best way we can
Creativity	Seen from a Christian perspective all of life is a gift, entrusted by a loving creator God to humankind for a purpose. This purpose is glimpsed as the creative spirit within each person that learns to value



Resources

Reading

Church of England Vision for Education

<https://www.churchofengland.org/more/education-and-schools/vision-education>

Grove Education Series: eD12 *The Gospel and Educational Values: The Church of England's Contribution*. John Pritchard

Grove Education Series: eD21 *Christian Values for Church Schools, Making Them Count*. Neville Norcross

More than Caring and Sharing John Cox KM Publishing

Practical resources

www.christianvalues4schools.org.uk

Living Values, Shahne Vickery <http://www.imaginer.co.uk/jumping-fish-publications/>

Home School Values, Shahne Vickery and Carolyn Wright
<http://www.imaginer.co.uk/home-school-values/>

Values in Action, Shane Vickery <http://www.imaginer.co.uk/values-in-action/>

