

The Samworth Church Academy

VISION STATEMENT

Our vision is to create a distinctively Christian and values driven environment that provides the best start to the 70 or more great years our students should enjoy when they leave our school. Our students should have the opportunity to live life in all its fullness and be good citizens wherever they may be.

The distinctive features of The Samworth Church Academy are:

- our Christian values;
- our specialism in Business and Enterprise;
- our emphasis on learning outside the Academy building, including the outward bound approach;
- our respect and responsibility for the environment as a critical resource for all our futures;
- our intention to develop a close partnership with Gordonstoun School in Scotland (an innovative independent school) and to work within the Round Square organisation as a Global Member.

1. Within this Academy people come first. Everyone will be valued, respected, treated with dignity and encouraged to have a say in how their Academy is run. The Academy will provide a welcoming and inclusive environment for students of all faiths or none, serving all in the community and is committed to promoting mental and physical wellbeing for all students and staff.

All our people – students, staff, parents, governors, original sponsors and members of the wider community who engage with the Academy - are entitled to expect that their hopes and aspirations will be acknowledged as important. They will be encouraged to contribute both to their own development and to that of the Academy by full participation in the life of the Academy. Equally, the Academy will endeavour to participate fully in the life of the community, to encourage all members of the community to live well together and to serve our community wherever possible.

Learning thrives when a true partnership exists between students, staff and parents. These three groups will be encouraged to work together, whilst recognising that each group makes a different and distinctive contribution to the partnership.

All our people will contribute to continuous improvement at all levels. The capacity for our accurate self-evaluation will depend on the confidence we have in each other and everyone's confidence to identify weaknesses and suggest remedies. Consequently, within the Academy people will always come first and their opinions and suggestions will be taken seriously and respected.

The Academy will establish a range of mechanisms through which the voices of students, parents and other stakeholders can help shape the Academy's development.

All will find a welcome and be treated with equal respect and dignity. We believe that everyone has more within and expect that all will be able to find, develop and exploit their unique talents and personal qualities. We will actively search for ways to monitor and promote mental and physical wellbeing and will ensure relevant training, programmes and activities are provided for students and staff in order to support this.

2. The Academy aims to prepare students for 70 or more great years after they leave us and to live a happy and rewarding life. The Academy will be distinctively Christian in ethos and outlook, giving opportunities for students to encounter Christianity as a living faith and promoting forgiveness, positivity, empathy, tolerance and mutual respect. There will be no place for bullying and other forms of unfair discrimination.

The Academy will provide a fully rounded, holistic education for all learners, developing independent thinkers ready to be responsible members of the many communities they will join during their lives. This holistic approach to education will be based on *Hahnian philosophy**. All those who learn through the Academy should enjoy the experience, recognising it as a stage in their development.

The Academy will be distinctively Christian. Students will be presented with Christian spiritual and moral values, emphasising five key values in particular**, and will learn about the life and teachings of Jesus as they encounter Christianity as a living faith. They will be encouraged to link these values with human aspiration and need throughout their time at the Academy. As well as being open minded to other faith and world views, through prayer and reflection students will be offered a Christian experience and outlook on personal, local and world events.

All our people will help to establish an atmosphere that is lively, positive, welcoming, clean, colourful and stimulating. It will allow for active learning as well as for quiet study, personal reflection and spiritual contemplation.

The curriculum will maximise the development of core skills for life, including literacy, communication, numeracy, ICT, personal and social development for safe, happy and healthy lives, economic awareness, teamwork, problem-solving, critical thinking and leadership. Community service will be an integral part of academy life and enterprise opportunities will include social enterprise alongside business enterprise. All students will be encouraged to give up a portion of their own time to a wide range of volunteering opportunities. The far-reaching potential of Business and Enterprise to engage, motivate and extend learners will also contribute to their economic, personal and social wellbeing.

The curriculum will promote human relations which respect the needs, rights and beliefs of others. It will seek to develop empathy, awareness and tolerance of individual, personal and cultural differences and celebrate their distinctive contributions to our cultural heritage. Bullying behaviour and other forms of intimidation will have no place in school life. We will establish a pervasive climate in which expressions of prejudice and unfair discrimination are routinely challenged by all our people and the dignity of each and every individual is protected.

The pastoral support systems will be designed to remove barriers to effective learning. The formal, timetabled curriculum will open minds and the 'hidden curriculum' – everything else our students learn – will open hearts by encouraging respect, positivity and forgiveness.

Service to others will be encouraged and students will be expected to help one another from the point of entry, for example through 'buddying', peer mentoring and student champion schemes. They will be able to demonstrate maturity and exercise responsibility no matter what their age or stage of development.

3. The Academy will raise people's hopes and aspirations and open up the possibilities of what they can become. The individual search for vocation or a 'calling' will be actively encouraged. Our positive, 'can-do' culture will nurture self-confidence and self-esteem. Our students will learn through successes and setbacks on their journey of self-discovery.

A liberating education will allow our students to expand and redefine their potential throughout life, opening up new possibilities of what they can become and allowing them to change rather than accept their circumstances.

This will require a personalised route to learning which may be unique to each student. The Academy will search out each student's talents and provide the stimuli for them to excel. We will show that every ordinary student is capable of extraordinary achievement as we attempt to 'find the child', what makes them 'tick' and discover their unique talents and abilities

The Academy will provide an effective bridge from primary to secondary education. The Academy will develop strong partnerships with primary schools and make extensive use of the best practice from the primary stage to plan and to deliver the Year 7 experience. This will ensure that the dip in achievement that often characterises Year 7 is eliminated and students' horizons are constantly extended.

The curriculum will be matched to each student's needs, encouraging an individual sense of purpose and direction. It will ensure students gain the wisdom, knowledge and skills across a broad range of subjects before they specialise at GCSE and also which is required for 70 or more great years after they leave the Academy. A personal, possibly unique route means curricula will be driven by what is right for the student rather than for the convenience of the Academy. Each individual pathway will include a curriculum that is challenging and enables pupils to maximise their potential. The Key Stage 4 curriculum will enable students to consider their preferred vocation and explore alternative routes through a range of pathways. The Academy will offer a broad range of recognised qualifications and new forms of accreditation. The broad range of qualifications and life skills acquired by students will exceed what has been traditionally available in secondary schools in the UK.

A programme of intervention for underachievers will steer every Key Stage 4 student to secure a minimum full Level 1 qualification. The proportion achieving a full Level 2 qualification by age 16 will exceed the national average.

For 16-19 year olds we will seek to extend the range of choices rather than to duplicate alternative local provision. We will maintain our specialism in Business and Enterprise providing a wide range of opportunities through both certificated courses and other activities to develop this to the highest levels.

By the end of their post-16 studies at age 17, 18 or 19, all students will be expected to secure a minimum full Level 2 qualification. Whatever their chosen next stage, the Academy will equip them with the key skills necessary, either for higher education, employment or further vocational training.

The Academy will promote **curiosity** through active, problem-solving and problem-posing learning. Students will learn by doing and discovering, working out their own solutions, both individually and together.

Learners will be challenged, promoting **courage** and speculation. In making progress they may experience failure as well as success. Through skilful teaching, they will learn to welcome such setbacks and achievements as opportunities for self-discovery.

By developing **confidence** and self-esteem, the Academy will enable students to gain greater control of their own lives and learning.

4. Quality, a business and enterprise culture and outstanding leadership and service at all levels will be central to Academy life.

Progress is not measured by quantity but by quality. Quality will be seamlessly evident in every aspect of the Academy and its life. Students, staff and parents will be supported by high quality buildings, a high-quality environment, high quality staff and high quality ideas.

Through innovative design and imaginative use of digital technologies, the Academy building will provide an inspiring learning environment particularly for business and enterprise. Our teachers will be knowledgeable about the world of work, able to make the most of partnerships with industry, commerce and social enterprise.

The Academy's activities will include opportunities for practical learning about industry and commerce, the products of which will also generate income to be reinvested in the Academy's work. Graduates of the Academy will be well prepared for life's challenges and will be attractive to local employers as well as to further and higher education providers.

The Academy will deliver an explicit 'Business and Enterprise' character to inspire and motivate. In addition to developing business skills, the Academy will demonstrate commitment to achieving an enterprise-based environment and developing an enterprising approach to teaching and learning.

For Samworth Church Academy, having a Business and Enterprise specialism will mean building partnerships with local businesses to help broaden the school curriculum in business and enterprise and developing the business culture within the school to support students to progress into employment, training and further and higher education.

Working closely with other schools, colleges, businesses and the wider community we will share good practice, resources and expertise and provide a focus for life-long learning throughout the community using the facilities of the Academy as well as those in other establishments.

All teaching and non-teaching staff will have the opportunity to develop business skills by gaining appropriate qualifications as part of CPD.

Business and Enterprise projects will be an integral part of the curriculum. These may include setting up 'trading' companies to provide opportunities for links with Business & Enterprise schools in the UK and Europe. This would provide opportunities for language skills development in a business context, as well as broadening the social and political understanding of students.

Our students will have opportunities to practice enterprise and to develop the imagination and skills of the entrepreneur. All our people, from the Principal and governors to newly qualified teachers, support staff and students will find opportunities to demonstrate creative leadership. Anyone who exercises excellent leadership will find this celebrated.

Our aspiration will be to enhance this aspect of the work of the Academy through the future development of a Business and Enterprise Centre and by promoting the presence of business incubator and start-up units within the Academy grounds. Not only will these units benefit from having students keen to practise workplace skills, but teachers will also benefit having entrepreneurs keen to describe the challenges and opportunities of the business world. The close proximity of the educational and the business worlds is expected to generate additional synergy to the further benefit of both.

- 5. As part of our innovative approach to teaching we will encourage students to challenge themselves and to provide service and leadership to others, embracing the outward bound approach and the Round Square IDEALS. We will create conditions for enjoyable learning and aim for the highest standards.**

The Academy will invest heavily in staff development, with a large proportion of this coming from our own highly talented staff team. The Academy will foster a reputation as a pioneering and innovative school. We will initiate many developments, undertaking research and evaluating it.

Faith and spiritual discovery will be part of Academy life and will help students to make personal decisions about their life, relationships and work. Service to the community and enabling positive personal change will be a continual Christian challenge shared by students, staff and Governors.

Through vibrant, exciting and challenging teaching, students will take increasing responsibility for their own learning. Teachers will use varied methods to enhance learning, including individual research, collaborative learning and teamwork, whole-class discussion and thought-provoking presentations to even larger groups. Homework will be planned imaginatively, to make best use of the opportunities that home and community settings offer for students to undertake study that is impossible within the classroom. Each student's progress will be monitored to ensure the rigour of learning is maintained.

The Academy will exploit settings for learning beyond the Academy site and buildings, including the home, the local community, the workplace and the environment. The Academy will also bring global learning settings within easy reach through digital technologies, virtual learning environments, visits or other links to partner schools in the third world and through our global membership of Round Square.

Most particularly, the Academy will use the outdoors equally for boys and girls as a setting for developing skills such as leadership and teamwork, based on the outward bound approach. Outdoor education will feature strongly in the Academy's extra-curricular activities, and all students will be entitled to take part in an outdoor expedition of some kind during their Academy career. Furthermore, students will be encouraged to show commitment to the Round Square IDEALS (Internationalism, Democracy, Environment, Adventure, Leadership and Service) and to attend Round Square cultural events and conferences around the world and to feedback on their experiences to the whole Academy community.

By encouraging students to understand and develop a broad range of personal learning styles and techniques and by using very different settings for learning, all students will enjoy the process of learning. High speed digital technologies will be integral to learning and teaching.

Getting the curriculum, the teaching and the learning right, raising aspirations and extending horizons will enable students to excel. Improved results will therefore provide some, though by no means all performance indicators of the Academy's success.

- 6. Close partnerships with schools, colleges and the wider community will enrich the life of the Academy. We will play an active role in the social and economic development of the area providing service to the community wherever possible.**

The Academy will encourage parents to play a full part in developing their children's learning, especially by helping them at home. Through our website, parents and carers will receive details of the work that their child will be undertaking during the year, including the key

knowledge, skills and understanding associated with each of the units of study. Year by year, parents will build up a detailed record of their child's learning at the Academy.

The Academy will have a strong community education dimension, providing a wide range of social and learning opportunities for students, parents and other young people and adults as well as modern facilities for local clubs and community groups in the evenings and at weekends.

Local church leaders and communities will partner the Academy in promoting and upholding its Christian distinctiveness and service to the community and we will work closely within our diocese to the benefit of all children across the region.

The Academy will work closely with linked primary schools to ensure smooth transition. We will also work with the wider educational community in Mansfield to secure coherent educational provision affording maximum choice. The Academy will be a full partner in the Mansfield learning community. We will provide an experimental learning environment through which teachers and trainee teachers from across the Mansfield area can practise their craft in a range of learning environments.

The Academy will play a part in Mansfield's further social and economic recovery and development. Working collaboratively with development agencies and local training providers, particularly West Nottinghamshire College, the Academy will support the corporate development plans for Mansfield and the region.

Cultivating close links with universities and other providers of teacher training will result in high quality training and classroom experience from the Academy for their student teachers and high-level training for our staff. As experts in research techniques they will also help with our own evaluation and research programmes. Through these partnerships, the Academy will stay up-to-date with the latest thinking and practice in the field of education.

7. The environment is a critical resource for all our futures. In the design and management of our inspirational facilities we will respect and guard this at all times and take our responsibility for environmental stewardship seriously.

The Academy is committed to sustainable development, which involves a commitment to care for ourselves, each other and the environment. The building will incorporate the principles of ecological sustainability. It will consume less water and fossil-fuelled energy, minimise waste (especially of paper and plastics) and avoid the use of pollutants. It will make maximum use of natural light, shade, heating, ventilation and micro-climate and will recycle energy, rainwater and raw materials.

Wherever possible, food will be sourced locally and in season. The Academy's trading partners will be expected to abide by ethical business standards including the sourcing of third world products according to the principles of Fair Trade. We will also use our community allotment and green house to cultivate our own organic produce which will be used extensively in our kitchen and contribute to providing healthy and high-quality meals in our restaurant for our students each day. In addition, all students as part of their curriculum will be taught how to cook healthy and nutritious meals before they begin their exam pathway qualifications.

The Academy site will promote local biodiversity. This may include seeding roofs with indigenous wildflowers to provide a habitat for various bird species; planting trees and shrubs to provide natural wildlife habitats, or creating a variety of small garden areas for environmental study. It will incorporate sustainable drainage systems and short-cut access that encourages students to walk to school.

Being a sustainable school will contribute to higher levels of achievement. The Academy site and the local area will be used as a learning resource, so that students engage with real issues in real places among real people. The Academy will be a testing ground where students are able to think through the problems and opportunities on their doorstep while studying the connections to larger, sometimes global challenges. Students will learn about international development issues through links with schools in other countries and will leave the Academy aware of how their actions can affect the lives of others and of future generations.

** Hahnian philosophy is based on the educational ideas of Kurt Hahn. He believed that schools should not only prepare young people for academic success but also for life by giving them a range of experiences that demand courage, generosity, imagination, principle and resolution. This he felt would empower young people and develop in them the skills and abilities to make a full contribution to society.*

****Our Christian Values**

1. **Forgiveness** – Restoring wholeness and healing through Christ's forgiveness.

Peace, reconciliation, understanding, empathy, internationalism.

For if you forgive others their trespasses, your heavenly father will also forgive you [Matthew 6:14].

2. **Vocation** – Discovering our God given talents.

Self-discovery, education, adventure.

Lead a life worthy of the calling to which you have been called [Ephesians 4:1].

3. **Respect** – Looking for the image of Christ in everyone.

Equality and respect for all humans and the world we live in, environment.

Do to others as you would have them do to you; for this is the law and the prophets [Matthew 7:12].

4. **Positivity** – Developing a relationship with God through Jesus Christ.

Worship and reflection, God in charge, hope, self-sacrifice, democracy.

Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances [1 Thessalonians 5:16-18].

5. **Service** – Seeking true greatness.

Looking after others, service, finding God's way for every individual, leadership.

Whoever wants to be the first must be last of all and servant of all [Mark 9:35].