



## **St Andrew's Primary School, Chinnor**

### **Values Quality Mark Report**



Name of Consultant: Tracey Smith  
Date: 19<sup>th</sup> January 2026

School Information		
Name of School	St Andrew's CE Primary School	
Status of School (Maintained/Academy/Free/other)	Maintained	NOR 443
School Postal Address	Station Road Chinnor Oxon OX39 4HB	
School Phone Number	01844351353	
Local Authority/MAT	Oxfordshire County Council	
Headteacher: Name and Email	Annette Mashru	
Values Leader: Name and Email	Kendra Gerrish	
Date of Previous VbE Quality Mark (if applicable)	NA	
How did you hear about Values-based Education?	Tracey Smith - Education Consultant	
Other Relevant Contextual Information	School is a Gold Award holder of the UN Rights Respecting Schools Award	

## St Andrew's Primary School, Chinnor

### Introduction

**Tracey Smith** was invited to carry out a Values Quality Mark Audit on **19<sup>th</sup> January 2026**. The purpose of the audit was to determine the extent to which Values-based Education (VbE) is being successfully implemented and whether the school meets the criteria of the International Values-based Education Trust's (IVET) criteria for its Quality Mark.

### What is VbE?

Values-based Education underpins the life and work of school communities, colleges, and other settings, including the home so that they are values-based. The term values-based implies that every aspect of life, both personal and professional is based on the way that values are lived. It is transformational, in that it invites cultural change that is based on equity and respect for all. It is challenging, as it calls us to ask what we can give to life, as opposed to what can we get from life? It promotes a way of being that values the self, others and the environment. It is simple: yet profound in its effects. It is a developmental process that connects with the intrinsic qualities of human beings and actively nurtures them. It invites the individual to be aware of the potential power of their inner world of thoughts and feelings; how the way that these are used affects our own wellbeing, that of others and potentially the world. It sees the purpose of education as the flourishing of humanity. It is soundly based on research, which shows the positive effects on pupils, both socially and academically, when educators model and teach about universal, positive human values. The purpose of adopting VbE is to inspire young people to adopt positive values in their lives so that they can be the best people that they can be and actively demonstrate the values in their daily lives, thereby helping to create a sustainable world.

### Terminology

**Values-based Education** occurs when universal, positive human values underpin everything a school or other organisation does.

**Values Education** is any activity, which promotes the understanding of positive values, developing the skills and dispositions of adults and pupils so they can live the values as active members of the community.

**Values** are the principles, fundamental convictions and standards that act as the general guides to our thinking and behaviour. They include Peace, Justice, Respect, Love, Patience, Happiness, Caring, Trust, Honesty, Humility, Courage, Compassion, Tolerance and Hope.

**Positive character traits** are seen in pupils as the outcome of VbE.

## **Aspect 1 - 'Wellbeing'**

*Wellbeing is at the heart of a values-based school. The care of staff and pupils is paramount for their mental health and for creating a person-centred learning environment, which fosters mutual respect. It is crucial that once a school has agreed its values then there is a discussion about how adults will model (live) them. Being a role model, a person looked to by others as an example to be imitated, implies being the sort of person you hope children will want to become. The term **atmosphere** encapsulates other descriptors, such as ethos and environment. It refers to the palpable ambience that characterises a VbE school, which Neil describes in his book, *From My Heart, transforming lives through values* (Hawkes, 2013).*

<b>Criteria</b>	<b>Possible Evidence</b>	<b>School Comments</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Positive human values explicitly underpin the entire life of the school.</li> <li>There is conscious and explicit attention paid to the wellbeing of staff, pupils and their families. This is shown in the curriculum provision and all decision making in school.</li> <li>Staff understand that the school's special values-based ambience is created by a focus on being calm, peaceful, and purposeful.</li> <li>Staff have been given time to reflect on the ways that they will model the school's values.</li> <li>The individual is valued - all staff and pupils are shown care and respect.</li> <li>Staff are self-aware and conscious of the impact they have on others.</li> <li>Staff are authentic, give unconditional positive regard and empathy to all pupils and each other.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Minutes of staff meetings</li> <li>Minutes of Governor meetings</li> <li>Records of CPD</li> <li>OFSTED Report</li> <li>Displays</li> <li>Interviews with staff, pupils, governors, and parents</li> <li>Staff, parent, and pupil questionnaires</li> <li>Values Policy</li> <li>Photographs</li> <li>Curriculum maps</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Our school's Christian values form the foundation of all aspects of school life. Pupils, staff, and families experience these values daily, from assemblies and classroom activities to leadership opportunities and community projects. Displays around the school celebrate achievements and reinforce our ethos, ensuring that positive human values are consistently modelled and promoted. This is evidenced in surveys and feedback.</li> <li>The wellbeing of all stakeholders is central to our decision-making and curriculum design. Staff are supported through structured CPD, reflection time, and a welcoming work environment, while pupils benefit from a curriculum that promotes emotional health, creativity, and autonomy. Families are consulted through surveys, and support is offered when needed, ensuring the holistic wellbeing of our community.</li> <li>All staff are aware that the school's unique values-based environment is fostered through calm, purposeful, and consistent interactions. This ethos is reinforced in classrooms, assemblies, and daily routines, creating a secure and supportive space where pupils thrive.</li> <li>Staff are provided with regular opportunities to reflect on their practice and how they model school values. CPD sessions, team meetings, and INSET days include dedicated reflection time, enabling staff to develop self-awareness and embed the school's ethos in their teaching and interactions.</li> <li>We prioritise recognising and celebrating the individuality of every pupil and staff member. Positive relationships are nurtured through restorative practices, mentoring, and leadership opportunities, ensuring all members of the school community feel valued, respected, and supported.</li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Classrooms are enabling environments, where pupils and staff form positive relationships, enabling pupils to self-regulate.</li> <li>Staff are conscious of the need to focus on mental health in all aspects of school life.</li> <li>The wellbeing of all stakeholders (staff, pupils, parents, Governors/Trustees) is acknowledged and enhanced.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Staff regularly engage in reflective practice to consider the impact of their words and actions on others. This awareness ensures interactions with pupils and colleagues are respectful, empathetic, and aligned with the school's values.</li> <li>All staff demonstrate authenticity and unconditional positive regard. Empathy and care are embedded in daily practice, whether through pastoral support, classroom interactions, or collaborative working, creating a nurturing and inclusive environment.</li> <li>Classrooms are structured to promote autonomy and positive behaviour. Pupils are supported to self-regulate through clear routines, restorative conversations, and access to wellbeing resources such as Zones of Regulation. Staff-pupil relationships are built on trust and respect, supporting engagement and learning.</li> <li>Mental health is a priority across the school. The curriculum includes wellbeing sessions, ELSA support, and designated quiet areas. Staff model positive mental health practices and monitor emotional wellbeing, ensuring interventions are timely and effective.</li> <li>We actively promote the wellbeing of all stakeholders. Governors provide strategic oversight and act as critical friends, staff are supported through CPD and pastoral structures, and parents are consulted on values and wellbeing initiatives. Pupils' emotional needs are met through a robust pastoral system and direct feedback to governors during governor link meetings, contributing to an outstanding sense of wellbeing for the whole school community.</li> <li>Positive behaviour is promoted consistently through a clear policy, with staff monitoring and supporting pupils as needed. Age-appropriate homework supports learning without stress. Pupils have access to wellbeing resources and dedicated spaces, and achievements are celebrated both in and outside school, including musical and extracurricular successes. Safeguarding and pastoral structures, including 2 SENCOs, a family links worker, and an ELSA, ensure children's emotional wellbeing is prioritised, and OFSTED has recognised the outstanding wellbeing of both pupils and staff.</li> </ul>
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### Assessor Comments

Wellbeing – of all staff, pupils is very strong at St Andrew's. It is actively promoted for all stakeholders. Governors provide strategic oversight and act as critical friends, staff are supported through CPD and pastoral structures, and parents are consulted on values and wellbeing initiatives. Pupils' emotional needs are met through a robust pastoral system and direct feedback to governors during governor link meetings, contributing to an outstanding sense of wellbeing for the whole school community.

Staff spoke about how leadership prioritises staff wellbeing through providing opportunities for personal and professional growth, care and compassion and leadership modelling. Wellbeing days for staff, has impact on sickness. They are caring and compassionate, if people are unwell or need care. Staff don't like to be off work and let their teams down. They ascribe this to 'Knowing your contribution is genuinely appreciated and being trusted to do jobs well'. This includes accommodating for staff with young children, with caring responsibilities or illnesses. They feel supported and listened to. It is a culture of 'Family first.'

Pupil wellbeing is very much supported through VbE. There is also a Wellbeing Lead, an ELSA on the staff and Young Carers Lead. Mental health is a priority across the school. The curriculum includes wellbeing sessions, ELSA support, and designated quiet areas. Staff model positive mental health practices and monitor emotional wellbeing, ensuring interventions are timely and effective.

Parental wellbeing is supported in various ways too. Pupils feel safe in school, trusted, cared for and feel the psychological safety to make and learn from mistakes. Parents are happy because they know their children are happy in school. Parents know their children are cared for, listened to, so parents feel it too. Everyone feels cared for, compassion, friendship, responsibility.

## Aspect 2 – ‘Ethical Leadership’

*Values-based leaders have thought about their own core values that drive their behaviour. They are authentic and regularly communicate their values to colleagues and the wider school community. They consider themselves as ethical leaders i.e., they regulate their own behaviour based on enhancing values such as compassion, integrity and trust. They are role models as values-based leaders. Everybody in the school is involved, in their different roles, with leading and promoting a values-based approach. It is therefore evident in all areas of the school community. Adults are strong role models who encourage pupils to take on responsibility for themselves and others. Leaders empower and encourage others to develop their own potential. The school actively supports families. Values-based leadership informs all the school’s actions, provision and decision making; at times it is demanding – requiring a courageous and principled stance – but will always reap benefits for the individuals and the school as a whole. The quality of Leadership is paramount because without it a values-based school does not develop. The headteacher/principal is key because he/she is the principal architect of the school’s purpose and vision, affirming the school’s values. We observe that having the capacity to access their internal world and dream (use creative imagination) brings transformational positive energy (inspiration) into the formation of a VbE school - a prime characteristic of an altruistic leader.*

Criteria	Possible Evidence	School Comments
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Leaders and governors/trustees fully and actively support Values-based education. This is reflected in the school literature, including the policies, mission statement, prospectus, newsletters, and website, i.e. ‘We are a Values-based school.’</li> <li>Leaders are clear about their own core values and communicate them to others.</li> <li>VbE leaders use ethical reasoning when considering the dilemmas that they face in leading the school.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Interviews with staff, pupils, governors, and parents</li> <li>Policies</li> <li>Website</li> <li>Questionnaires from staff, pupils, and parents</li> <li>SDP.</li> <li>SEF</li> <li>Short case studies exemplifying the impact of compassionate leadership with e.g. LAC, staffing, support for families, SEN, etc</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>“We are a Values-based school” is clearly reflected in policies, prospectus, newsletters, and on the website.</li> <li>Leaders promote a different core value each term, evidenced through Big Question Books capturing pupil voice and photographs.</li> <li>The school vision is fully adopted by all staff and lived out in every aspect of school life.</li> <li>Short case studies exemplify compassionate leadership impacting LAC, staffing, support for families, and SEN.</li> <li>Leaders make decisions based on ethical reasoning and school values.</li> <li>Staff welfare is prioritised through wellbeing days, additional PPA time for administrative tasks, and optional participation in extra duties and clubs.</li> <li>Staff are given autonomy in planning and subject development, enabling ownership, creativity, and responsiveness to pupils’ needs.</li> <li>Leadership is shared across the school, with every staff member allocated responsibility for a subject or development area.</li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Leaders are clear about their own core values and communicate them to others.</li> <li>• VbE Leaders use ethical reasoning when considering the dilemmas that they face in leading the school.</li> <li>• The leadership creates time and space to ensure that there is alignment between the stated values of the school and the personal values of the staff.</li> <li>• The leadership actively releases the creative dynamic of staff and pupils, creating a sustainable school culture based on values. There is no hierarchy of relationships, only of roles. There is no limit put on potential.</li> <li>• Evidence (both qualitative and quantitative) is used to determine the impact that Values-based Education is having on learning, behaviour, and attendance in school.</li> <li>• Staff and Pupils are encouraged to take on a variety of leadership roles. They have real responsibility in their roles and can talk purposefully about how they see</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pupils are actively involved in decision-making through School Council representatives.</li> <li>• There is a culture of collaboration and unlimited potential.</li> <li>• Subject leaders present annually to Governors to support auditing, accountability, and high expectations.</li> <li>• Evidence from interviews, questionnaires, SEF, SDP, and policies is used to measure the impact of Values-based Education.</li> <li>• Every staff member has responsibility for a subject or area of development.</li> <li>• Pupils take purposeful leadership roles through School Council and other initiatives.</li> <li>• Staff and pupils can articulate their leadership influence.</li> <li>• Restorative justice approaches are consistently implemented, ensuring pupils feel valued, listened to, and supported.</li> <li>• Safeguarding training is delivered annually for all staff.</li> <li>• Staff are encouraged and supported to attend CPD to further develop subject knowledge and expertise. Their input brings change to longstanding procedures.</li> <li>• The appraisal system is robust and developmental, providing opportunities for reflection and appropriate CPD. Changes in appraisal have been instigated by staff.</li> <li>• Regular Open the Book sessions involve clergy engagement with pupils and staff, enriching school life.</li> </ul>
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their own leadership borne out in the school in their areas of influence.

### Assessor Comments

Leaders and governors/trustees fully and actively support Values-based education. This is reflected in the school literature, including the policies, mission statement, prospectus, newsletters, and website, i.e. 'We are a Values-based school.' Leaders are clear about their own core values and communicate them to others. Leaders and Governors use ethical reasoning when considering the dilemmas that they face in leading the school. Leaders are clear about their own core values and communicate them to others. VbE Leaders use ethical reasoning when considering the dilemmas that they face in leading the school. Welcoming environment both as staff, parent body, with pupils. The way the children conduct their lives as adults. People wanting/waiting for a job to come up here. School has a great reputation across the community. Leadership is compassionate, caring and responsive and all staff spoke highly of how this is borne out in practice. Pupil Leadership is a strength across the school. Pupils take purposeful leadership roles through School Council and other initiatives. Staff and pupils can articulate their leadership influence. Restorative justice approaches are consistently implemented, ensuring pupils feel valued, listened to, and supported.

I have copied the below from the school website, as it is a great example to other schools:  
**Junior Leadership Team**

At St Andrew's CE Primary School, we believe that children have the right to be heard. According to Article 12 of the Children's Convention, children have the right to express their views in all matters affecting them.

Our Junior Leadership philosophy is designed to:

- empower all the children in our school to make a real and lasting difference to their school community through positive actions.
- encourage values-led role modelling, so that even the youngest children take on responsibility for looking after one another and our school environment.
- inspire children to develop leadership skills and to become positive change-makers within their school lives and beyond.

As part of the St Andrew's Junior Leadership Team, children have opportunities to express their thoughts and opinions whilst contributing to the day-to-day running of the school. As School Council, KS1 Leaders, Junior Leaders, Play Leaders, Wellbeing Ambassadors and House Captains, children are given a range of leadership responsibilities across the school which you can read about in more detail below.

#### **Our Year 6 Wellbeing Ambassadors are responsible for:**

- being role models and offering support to their younger peers.
- offering guidance to children on the playground or to those having a difficult time.
- running activities on the Wellbeing Bus at lunchtime- including games, crafts, and PSHE stories.
- leading the school with a positive focus on anti-bullying through assemblies and School Council.

#### **Our Year 5 Play Leaders are responsible for:**

- independently setting up and running games on the FS, KS1, or KS2 playgrounds.
- ensuring that younger children are supported and know how to play the games and making sure that everyone is included.
- awarding stickers to children who they think demonstrate the school values at playtimes.

#### **Our Year 4 Junior Leaders are responsible for:**

- supporting happy and smooth-running lunchtimes for everyone.
- ensuring that tables are set for new classes coming through the lunch halls and supporting children to keep things clean, tidy and safe.
- awarding stickers to children who are sitting nicely, using their manners, and reflecting the school values.

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**Our Year 2 KS1 Leaders are responsible for:**

- leading FS and KS1 by being positive role models and making sure children are playing safely and following the school rules.
- making sure playground equipment is used safely and that it is tidied away at the end of every playtime and lunchtime.
- being trusted by their teachers to independently carry out 'responsibility tasks' around our school.

### **Aspect 3 – ‘Behaviour and Relationships’**

*Adults are excellent role models for values, and pupils are rewarded for their modelling of the Values. Behaviour and relationships are enhanced by a number of characteristics which include the quality of school displays; positively worded signage; cleanliness; the quality, organisation, and management of resources; the external environment; the calm working atmosphere, break time and catering arrangements; how staff are valued and supported as people; friendly and courteous behaviour of adults and children. The atmosphere reflects the school’s culture and fully supports its curriculum.*

<b>Criteria</b>	<b>Possible Evidence</b>	<b>School Comments</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Values-based Education underpins the school’s behaviour and related policies, expectations, and practice.</li> <li>• Staff are all consistent role models for Values</li> <li>• Relationships are seen to be positive between all stakeholders</li> <li>• As a result, pupils across the school demonstrate consistently positive behaviours and relationships.</li> <li>• Values-based Education demonstrably informs the development of character, learning behaviours and emotional and mental health.</li> <li>• Pupils show a high degree of personal autonomy and can talk cogently about their feelings and emotions.</li> <li>• Parents/carers are encouraged to take an active part in the values-based approach.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Interviews with, or questionnaires from, staff, pupils, governors, and parents</li> <li>• Curriculum plans</li> <li>• Assembly plans/observations</li> <li>• Daily practice</li> <li>• OFSTED Report</li> <li>• Displays</li> <li>• Reward/award systems</li> <li>• Staff demeanour &amp; the welcome to visitors</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Growth mindset displays in classrooms encourage a positive attitude to learning and towards others. Staff build trusting and respectful relationships with children and colleagues.</li> <li>• The positive behaviour policy is on display, with good behaviour recognised through house points and stickers. OFSTED noted that “relationships between pupils and staff are positive and mutually respectful.” Clear systems at lunchtime and breaktimes ensure safety and promote positive interactions.</li> <li>• Collaborative learning is encouraged through group work, including approaches like Kagan. The school council ensures pupil voice is valued, and restorative justice practices help children feel listened to.</li> <li>• Classrooms are welcoming and consistent across the school, supporting children to flourish. Staff use the school’s vision of love to foster relationships with children, parents, and colleagues, and reinforce values during trips.</li> <li>• Teamwork is emphasised, with teaching assistants seen as equal members of the school team. Forest Schools encourage collaboration and a love of nature. Pupils take</li> </ul>

responsibility for resources, creating a culture of respect and care. The PTA supports school life and community engagement.

- The school newsletter and website encourages parents to model and teach values.

### Assessor Comments

Behaviour and relationships across the school are excellent and well-modelled by all of the adults in school, which pupils could clearly articulate. There is a welcoming environment for and by staff, parent body, with pupils. Many staff commented on the positives that run through lives after pupils leave St Andrews, as seen in the way ex-pupils conduct their lives as adults. Many staff are or have been parents and have waited to work in St Andrew's, as they have been struck by the excellent behaviour of pupils here. The school has an extremely positive reputation across the community.

The school utilises the Paul Dix approach of "Ready, Respectful, Safe" and his approach to adults being the role-models for pupils, which they were very eager to tell me about. They know this is strong and they know to follow the adult's modelling of kindness, respect, and care for others.

The restorative and relational approach to behaviour was well-described by pupils, who told me: "Teachers sort things out – they ask for every side of the story and need to know why something has happened. Another told me: "Teachers stay calm and suggest apologising". My favourite comment was from a Year 6 pupil: Most of the time we don't need the adult's help anymore and can solve fall-outs for ourselves. An example is that a few weeks ago, I fell out with a friend. We decided to stay away from each other until we were ready to apologise to each other. We knew how to do this, as we have been taught this all the way through school.. We had learnt the skills when we were younger." This was corroborated by another pupil.

Observations throughout the day showed that whether in assembly, class, dinner hall, or on the playground, pupils are calm and respectful towards one another. The classrooms all had a calm and purposeful atmosphere, and pupils told me they enjoy learning and are motivated to work hard. Pupils are articulate in their ethical vocabulary, and this is underpinned and strengthened by all of the work that they do in relation to the RRS award. They are globally aware citizens, who know they can advocate for themselves and for others.

## Aspect 4 – ‘Teaching and Learning’

*The main focus of VbE is on the selection, practice and living of an **ethical vocabulary**. The ethical vocabulary comprises a community chosen set of universal, positive human values such as respect, tolerance, resilience, courage and compassion. The selection of these words finds universal support from all the major world religions and non-religious groups such as the humanist society. These values words, when actively lived by people, become their character traits or virtues (values in action). We believe that they help children to develop ethical intelligence, the most important of all the intelligences to nurture, as it is through EI that human beings can come together to solve world problems. This is because the development of an explicit ethical vocabulary enhances and enriches communicative competence, which we maintain could lead to a new universal narrative, problem solving, common language, based on values. The entire curriculum is purposefully planned to bring opportunities to enhance pupils’ understanding of Values. Teaching and learning includes opportunities to develop Critical Thinking – through discussion and analysis using an ethical vocabulary.*

Criteria	Possible Evidence	School Comments
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Understanding and use of an ethical vocabulary underpins learning.</li> <li>Pupils are given opportunities to explore ethical dilemmas, which help them to develop emotional strength and understanding the part played by values in real life contexts.</li> <li>Learning through Values-based Education is planned around key questions or concepts that deepen and broaden pupil knowledge and understanding.</li> <li>The school’s climate for learning is happy, calm, and purposeful; one that promotes quality teaching and learning. It also radiates joy!</li> <li>Values are embedded in every area of the curriculum.</li> <li>The school’s commitment to the principles of values-based Education is reflected in all areas of the school’s life. Values are reflected in the outdoor as well as indoor school environment.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Interviews with, or questionnaires from, staff, pupils, governors, and parents</li> <li>Displays and signage</li> <li>Policies</li> <li>General climate of the school</li> <li>Curriculum plans</li> <li>Lesson observations</li> <li>Pupils’ work</li> <li>Witness statements from</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Through PSCE lessons, children explore a range of dilemmas to develop a deeper understanding of others’ perspectives. Each classroom displays the children’s UNCRC rights and the Global Goals, and teachers work with their classes to create a class charter guided by these rights. This is evident in curriculum plans for all subjects across the school.</li> <li>The behaviour policy is clearly displayed and presented in a values-based way, helping children understand and uphold expectations during lessons. Growth mindset is promoted and displayed, supporting children to value themselves and their personal development. Welcoming wellbeing areas and book corners provide safe, inviting spaces for children.</li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Values have been selected and curriculum time allocated for their consideration.</li> <li>School assemblies are used to teach about the school's values.</li> <li>Values Education is taught consistently across all classes and year groups with the focus on the formation of caring, civil, and well-educated people.</li> <li>Values are explicitly and implicitly taught and referenced across the curriculum, including PSHE and RSHE.</li> <li>Values-based Education fully supports all pupils identified with SEND.</li> </ul>	<p>parents, visitors, leaders</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Weekly collective worship assemblies focus on different values each term, following a three-year cycle. Pupils engage with ethical dilemmas through the 'Big Questions Club,' Philosophy for Children, and the 'Big Questions Book.' The school follows a "Ready, Respectful, Safe" approach to behaviour and expectations.</li> <li>All teachers and some support staff have received training in mindfulness through Space makers training. The support materials explain the 'why' to support CPD.</li> <li>The school actively promotes equity and diversity, celebrating pivotal world events such as Black History Month, International Women's Day, Anti-Bullying Week, and Fairtrade. The curriculum includes diverse literature, international-themed terms, and embedded literacy books representing a variety of cultures. An annual competition promotes anti-racism and reinforces the school's commitment to equality and inclusion.</li> </ul>
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### Assessor Comments

Through PSCE lessons, children explore a range of dilemmas to develop a deeper understanding of others' perspectives. Each classroom displays the children's UNCRC rights and the Global Goals, and teachers work with their classes to create a class charter guided by these rights. This is evident in curriculum plans for all subjects across the school. Weekly collective worship assemblies focus on different values each term, following a three-year cycle. Pupils engage with ethical dilemmas through the 'Big Questions Club,' Philosophy for Children, and the 'Big Questions Book.' The school follows a "Ready, Respectful, Safe" approach to behaviour and expectations.

The school actively promotes equity and diversity, celebrating pivotal world events such as Black History Month, International Women's Day, Anti-Bullying Week, and Fairtrade. The curriculum includes diverse literature, international-themed terms, and embedded literacy books representing a variety of cultures. An annual competition promotes anti-racism and reinforces the school's commitment to equality and inclusion. Pupils were eager to tell me that they 'show racism the red card' and explained why.

The school curriculum has opportunities for the School Values and UN Articles to be strengthened, therefore these are firmly embedded, rather than seen as additional. Opportunities for oracy and Philosophy for Children are also built in, so pupils are articulate in the way they speak meaningfully about human rights, morals and values. Teaching and learning reflects this statement from the school website, which says: The central value – love – is seen in the delivery of a curriculum full of experiences which develops children's love of learning to enable them to reach their potential at St Andrew's and beyond.

## Aspect 5 – ‘Reflection’

**Reflection** is the means through which we access our internal world of thoughts, emotions, and feelings, and regulate them, which helps us sustain mental health and increases the capacity for self-determination. We argue that this is a key skill for children to learn - the fourth "R" of education. Reflective practices encompass a spectrum of activities including thinking about your work; reflecting on our behaviour and the impact it has on other people; reflecting on a story and then maybe having an opportunity to discuss your thoughts with others and hear differing perspectives; mindfulness and meditative practices. The Inner Curriculum (Hawkes and Hawkes 2018) teaches us how to be aware and in control of our internal world of thoughts, feelings, and emotions, enabling us to respond appropriately to others without hurting them or damaging our own sense of self. Indeed, it supports the development of a strong and secure sense of self, which develops the disposition of self-leadership sustaining wellbeing.

Criteria	Possible Evidence	School Comments
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Time is given for daily reflection in assemblies and classrooms. This is consistent throughout the school.</li> <li>The school teaches reflection as a key approach to thinking and learning and through this, pupils develop the confidence to challenge, question and consider.</li> <li>Staff understand the benefits of mindfulness activities in developing control over the limbic system.</li> <li>Pupils are able to discuss the impact of reflection on themselves.</li> <li>Staff understand that this ‘Inner Curriculum’ nurtures a secure sense of self, by enabling us to be aware and in harmonious control of our internal world</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Interviews with, or questionnaires from, staff, pupils, governors, and parents</li> <li>Curriculum plans</li> <li>Assembly plans</li> <li>Daily practice</li> <li>Policies</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Class assemblies and “Thought for the Day” activities give children the opportunity to reflect on the termly values, with presentations created by pupils. During Open the Book sessions, children are encouraged to reflect through prayer. Lessons include reflection on learning, using tools such as KWL grids and end-of-unit assessments.</li> <li>Forest School provides opportunities for reflection in and with nature. Pupils engage in leadership and responsibility through the School Council, Environmental Leaders, and Young Carers initiatives. Emotional support is available via ELSA, therapy dogs, and therapeutic art activities. PSHE lessons, global learning, and the Rights Respecting School programme promote understanding of social, emotional, and ethical issues.</li> <li>Behaviour is reflected upon through the school policy, with children encouraged to consider their own actions. Growth Mindset is promoted through classroom displays, individual and group discussions, and the Zones of Regulation or calming strategies. Sensory circuits support individual children’s needs,</li> </ul>

of thoughts, feelings, sensations, and emotions.

and marking policies incorporate peer and self-review to encourage reflection.

- All children are aware of British Values, and the school newsletter highlights achievements over a two-week period to help the wider community reflect on their impact. Pupils are supported in developing self-regulation through the behaviour policy and additional adaptations designed to ensure inclusion for all.

### Assessor Comments

Whole-school and class assemblies and “Thought for the Day” activities give children the opportunity to reflect on the termly values, with presentations created by pupils. The Thought for the Day assembly rehearsal that I saw, showed that Year 6 pupils and the Year 3 pupils they were presenting to, could think deeply about the current value of “Truthfulness”, giving some deeply thoughtful examples of this in practice.

The school teaches reflection as a key approach to thinking about behaviour and learning and through this, pupils develop the confidence to challenge, question and consider. This also works in tandem with their learning about the UN Articles as a Rights-Respecting School.

During Open the Book sessions, children are encouraged to reflect through prayer. Lessons include reflection on learning, using tools such as KWL grids and end-of-unit assessments. Pupils tell me that they also have reflection time if they need to think about their own behaviour, or to fix something that may have gone wrong. This helps them to understand the restorative approaches to behaviour that the school uses so well. Behaviour is reflected upon through the school policy, with children encouraged to consider their own actions. Growth Mindset is promoted through classroom displays, individual and group discussions, and the Zones of Regulation or calming strategies. Sensory circuits support individual children’s needs, and marking policies incorporate peer and self-review to encourage reflection. Pupils told me that they are always reflecting on their learning and their behaviour, to make sure they work as hard as they can and to make sure they can be the best person they can be.

### **Aspect 6 – ‘Values into Action’**

*We argue passionately that a core objective of education should be to nurture self-energy, in the context of thinking about and applying positive values such as resilience, empathy, courage, altruism and justice. So, how do your young people turn their knowledge and understanding of values into good action – things that will help others and the world? We remember that good deeds, however small, are the finest things and should be acknowledged and celebrated. Equally, this is an opportunity for our passionate young people to contribute to school, local, national and global action, such as sustainability or charity works. No two schools will approach this in the same way, but in all cases they will be helping children to develop a mindset and character for their lives that looks to make a positive difference.*

Criteria	Possible Evidence	School Comments
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The school's selected values underpin the culture, ethos, and work of the school.</li> <li>There is evidence of the school having an outward facing approach, taking their Values out into the community.</li> <li>Parents/carers are encouraged to take an active part in the values-based approach.</li> <li>Pupils have a high level of autonomy and are encouraged to use values intuitively to do good.</li> <li>All members of the school community are encouraged to develop self-leadership.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Interviews with/questionnaires from staff, pupils, governors, and parents</li> <li>Website</li> <li>Policies</li> <li>School Development Plan</li> <li>Self-Evaluation Form</li> <li>School Council notes</li> <li>Case study examples</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Pupils' achievements are celebrated in line with the school's values during assemblies.</li> <li>Each class agrees on a Class Charter, establishing classroom rules guided by children's rights and the school's values.</li> <li>Policies are developed in alignment with the school's values, regularly updated, and easily accessible to all stakeholders.</li> <li>The School Council plans and leads the Lent Appeal, with all children contributing to the selection of the charity supported each year.</li> <li>During the Maths Challenge, classes select charities to raise funds for.</li> <li>Writing lessons include activities such as corresponding with the local Member of Parliament about improving the local area.</li> <li>The school maintains a link with a school in The Gambia, sponsoring a child throughout her education, with letters exchanged between the pupils.</li> <li>A partnership of local schools planned a well-being INSET focused on values-based education.</li> </ul>

- Parents are consulted about the school's values via an online survey, with feedback provided in response.
- Parents have unrestricted access to the school website, which reflects the school's ethos through consistent branding and presentation of values.
- Across the school, student leaders have responsibilities for promoting positive playtimes, well-being, anti-bullying, and caring for the school environment.
- Children engage in restorative practices, reflecting on their behaviour and its impact on others.
- In the school garden, children help plant and nurture plants, observe changes, and reflect on the process.
- During interviews, prospective staff are made to feel welcomed and comfortable by all interviewers. Governors also support new staff members in understanding the school's values.
- SATA students are asked about the Christian values of the school and experience these values firsthand through interactions with staff and children.
- The school has strong links with the local church, with visits from the clergy team to support the instilling of values. Pupils contribute by producing displays for the church and decorating Christmas trees.

#### **Assessor Comments**

The school promotes courageous advocacy through its linked approach to VbE and UN Articles and Rights-Respecting. They know they can advocate for their own rights, alongside advocating for the rights of others across the world. They petition the Parish Council and parliament, writing letters and visiting in person. They often suggest ideas for fundraising and take part in community work across the village community, involving themselves in litter picking, food banks and singing in Care Homes.

Pupils' achievements are celebrated in line with the school's values during assemblies. Each class agrees on a Class Charter, establishing classroom rules guided by children's rights and the school's values. Policies are developed in alignment with the school's values, regularly updated, and easily accessible to all stakeholders. The School Council plans and leads the Lent Appeal, with all children contributing to the selection of the charity supported each year. During the Maths Challenge, classes select charities to raise funds for. Writing lessons include activities such as corresponding with the local Member of Parliament about improving the local area. The school maintains a link with a school in The Gambia, sponsoring a child throughout her education, with letters exchanged between the pupils. A partnership of local schools planned a well-being INSET focused on values-based education. Parents are consulted about the school's values via an online survey, with feedback provided in response.

### **What would you identify as being your 'stand out' area of excellence in Values-based education?**

(Think here about what you would like your school to be known for and what you would be able and willing to share in terms of your practice with other schools, either in this country or across the world.) VbE can help you to share this great practice!

There are many things we could highlight but our stand-out area of excellence in Values-based Education is the deeply embedded understanding and lived experience of values across the whole school community. Pupils demonstrate a strong knowledge of our core values and how these link to everyday behaviour, learning, and relationships. This commitment is further recognised through our Rights Respecting School Award, which underpins our inclusive and respectful ethos. We are confident from visitor feedback that our school vision is consistently visible not just displayed. It is evident in classrooms, collective worship, pupil voice, and interactions across the school, and is regularly affirmed by visitors, including through SIAMS and OFSTED feedback. Values are explicitly taught and revisited through a termly values focus, explored in depth during collective worship and reinforced through classroom practice. We have strong partnerships with families and the wider local and global community ensure values are shared beyond the classroom, creating a consistent and supportive values culture.

## **Where would you like to take your Values-based Education Practice next?**

(You will have lots of great ideas of your own – and/or see the Values-based Education Enhanced Quality Mark audit tool for ideas!)

We would like to further develop our Values-based Education practice in several ways:

1. Strengthening peer mentoring across year groups – for example, pairing younger children in Reception and Year 1 with older pupils. This would provide opportunities for leadership, guidance, and the sharing of values in action, fostering a strong sense of community, empathy, and mutual support.
2. Celebrating all forms of achievement – particularly recognising children who may not meet expected outcomes in Year 6 SATs. By focusing on the progress they have made and the personal growth they demonstrate, we can ensure that every child feels valued and encouraged, reinforcing the principles of resilience, perseverance, and self-worth.
3. Expanding community engagement – developing projects that connect pupils with local charities, community groups, or global initiatives, so that children can actively live out their values beyond the school and understand their role as responsible, compassionate citizens.
4. Embedding values across the curriculum – ensuring that values are not only part of collective worship but are consistently integrated into lessons, projects, and cross-curricular learning, so that children can see the practical application of values in every aspect of their education.
5. Sharing practice and learning internationally – creating opportunities for collaboration with other schools both in this country and abroad, through exchanges, joint projects, or virtual learning partnerships, to inspire children and staff alike and demonstrate the global relevance of Values-based Education.

By taking these steps, we hope to deepen the impact of Values-based Education on every child, every family, and our wider community, making values a lived, meaningful, and celebrated part of school life.

### **General Assessor Feedback**

I fully agree with the 'stand-out areas' as identified by the school. I agree with the ideas for taking the school's VbE forward.

In addition I would suggest that they work towards the Enhanced VbE Award, and I would like to write about the school in my forthcoming book (permission verbally granted but will need a written permission given via email also).

Share wider with the Thame Partnership and consider holding Open Days to share best practice.

Consider joining Paul Dix's When the Adults Change as a Partner School to further share good practice in terms of behaviour.

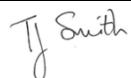
<https://www.whentheadultschange.com/partner-schools>

Visiting St Andrew's was an absolute joy, and they have much excellent practice to share with the wider community. The school ethos as a VbE school is strong, deeply embedded and apparent in everything they do. From the moment I entered the school Reception Office area, greeted with warm welcomes around, including from the Headteacher, then later all staff and pupils, the positive atmosphere was tangible. There is a real feeling at this school that everyone is there for everyone else. Belonging is strong and felt by everyone. Everyone knows that they matter to everyone else.

### Possible next steps

- Something on the website – the VbE award logo and also a mention of key school values and why they are important
- Share widely with the Thame Partnership and consider holding Open Days to share best practice.
- Consider joining Paul Dix's When the Adults Change as a Partner School to further share good practice in terms of behaviour.
- <https://www.whentheadultschange.com/partner-schools> Partner Schools hold Open Days each year when other schools are invited in to see best practice.
- Become holders of the Enhanced VbE Award (attached to email)
- Consider joining the next Values Conference which will take place in the Autumn.

Assessor: Tracey Smith



Date: 19<sup>th</sup> January 2026

*Please contact [info@valuesbasededucation.com](mailto:info@valuesbasededucation.com) to take the next step towards enhanced accreditation.*

#### *The small print:*

*The Quality Mark acknowledges and celebrates an organisation's successful engagement with values-based principles. It is a valuable tool to communicate the organisation's status to students, staff, parents, governors and inspecting bodies. The certification is valid for a four-year period on the basis of the school's continued excellence in its values-based approach. During the certification period, where the quality of the organisation's values-based approach becomes materially compromised, we reserve the right to re-evaluate the school's approach to VbE and, where appropriate, withdraw the certification.*