

Christian Values

Our distinctly Christian Values influence actions, culture, atmosphere and way of life in our school. **They form an integral part of our vision** and are embedded in all that we do. The Christian values below were chosen by the children for greater exploration and we investigate them not only in Collective Worship and RE, but through our wider curriculum and everyday interactions and observations. We learn about their origins in the bible and how the values were made known to us by the life and person of Jesus. We are invited to reflect upon them in relation to ourselves and the way we choose to be. At St Bridget's we see the values in action.

Friendship	Friendship is explored throughout the bible. Jesus was criticized for being friendly with 'sinners' ; spending time with those whom society had rejected. Christians believe that the distance between people is diminished in a loving community and that all are welcome to choose to be a part of that community. Friends are not afraid to tell each other the truth and a friend's loving criticism is worth more than the empty compliments of someone who does not really care for you. 'Wounds from a friend can be trusted, but an enemy multiplies kisses.' (Proverbs 27:6). The writer of Ecclesiastes puts it very simply: 'If one falls down, a friend can lift him up'. (Ecclesiastes 4:10)
Koinonia	Koinonia comes from the Greek word meaning, 'That which is in common.' It is often interpreted as fellowship, partnership and community. In a Christian community we are all needed and valued. We work together and support each other. 1 Corinthians 12:12-31 describes a body in which each part has a vital contribution to make. When one part of the body hurts, the whole body hurts, when one part is honoured, the whole body is honoured. Koinonia is about fellowship and togetherness.
Wisdom	Wisdom is referred to many times in the bible, for example in the parable of the Wiseman and the Fool Luke 6: 47-49 Wisdom is an insight into the way life works. A deep understanding of our thoughts and actions and an awareness of the true value of things. It is something that can grow over time by learning from mistakes and listening and reflecting on our experiences. Christians believe that wisdom is rooted in a reverence for God who has complete wisdom. This is highlighted in Colossians 2: 1-3, 'My goal is that they may be encouraged in heart and united in love, so that they may have the full riches of complete understanding, in order that they may know the mystery of God, namely, Christ in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.
Creation	Genesis 1:1 In the beginning God created heaven and earth. Belief in God as creator is not merely a belief about how everything began; it is the perspective from which we are to view all life including our own. It means that we place the highest value on this earth and see life as God's gift. In Genesis, God gives humans certain rights over his creation. With these rights, come responsibilities. Christians believe that we have been given the earth to look after by God and to hold it in trust for future generations. If the earth is to sustain our children and succeeding generations, this clearly places limits on how we treat the earth. There have always been elements in the Christian tradition to remind us of our responsibilities and priorities.
Love	1 Corinthians 13: 4-7: Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It is not rude, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres. The value of 'Love' underpins what we do in school. We believe that through a focus on Love by working together as part of a strong and supportive family, we can all achieve more – socially, emotionally and academically. Matthew 22:38 "Love your neighbour as yourself."
Trust	Trust is the very essence of faith and Psalms has a central theme, 'Trust in the Lord.' Trust is at the centre of relationships. Trust involves not letting others down and developing integrity. With wisdom and discernment, we can develop trust in ourselves and others.
Justice	Biblical justice is more than fairness and equality, it is a strong bias towards the weak, the poor and the socially disadvantaged who are cared for, whether they 'deserve' it or not. All have a right to life, freedom and dignity. In God's eyes every person is precious and oppression or discrimination, on any grounds, has no place. Exodus chapter 23: 2,6 'God's justice is gracious'. Christians believe that God always acts justly and he calls on people to do the same. Justice is often interpreted in terms of seeking rights for oneself or one's own group ('we demand justice') when biblically it is really on behalf of others. This does not mean that one has to ignore injustices to oneself, but it does shift the focus. 'Justice' is not for 'just me'. This means that Christians will be more keen to protect others than themselves and will always wish to see right prevail.